



National Adoption Day Fact Sheet #1

2011 Foster Adoption Facts

WASHINGTON STATE:

- **On August 31, 2011**, there were 9,861 children living in out-of-home care including licensed foster homes and relative placements. (*Source: FamLink, Department of Social and Health Services, Children's Administration*)
- **In state fiscal year 2011**, 1,676 children were adopted from foster care through DSHS Children's Administration. Since fiscal year 2009 DSHS has averaged more than 1,500 finalized adoptions per year. (*Source: FamLink*)
- **As of August 2011**, there were 1,574 Washington children in out-of-home care who had legally lost their parents — meaning parental rights had been terminated by the courts or relinquished by parents — and were waiting to be adopted. (*Source: FamLink*)
- **By DSHS region**, numbers of legally-free children: Region 1 – 466; Region 2 – 529; Region 3 – 579. (*Source: FamLink*) (DSHS consolidated from six regions to three regions in 2011)
- **While potential families** have been identified for many Washington foster children, hundreds of children have no parents or families waiting to adopt them.
- **The average** stay in foster care for Washington children is approximately 17 months (512 days) (*Source: FamLink*) while the average length of stay for children in out-of-home care nationally is about 25 months (*Source: Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), federal fiscal year 2010 data – October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010*).
- **Washington State** laws and rules that pertain to adoption are RCW 26.33, and WAC 388-27.

UNITED STATES:

- **In federal fiscal year 2010**, there were approximately 408,425 foster children in the U.S. and about 107,011 available for adoption. (*Source: AFCARS*)
- **In federal fiscal year 2010**, nearly 28,000 youth in foster care “aged out” of the foster care system (reached age 18) without ever having found a permanent family. (*Source: AFCARS*)
- **Nationally**, the average age of a foster child waiting to be adopted is eight years old. In federal fiscal year 2010, approximately 11 percent of foster children nationally spent five years or more waiting to be adopted. (*Source: AFCARS*)
- **While the majority** of adoptive parents are married couples (61percent), a growing number of single adults provide loving homes for foster children and represent 31 percent of foster child adoptions nationally. (*Source: AFCARS*)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

1. DSHS Children's Administration adoption information web page:
<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/adopt/index.asp>
2. Families for Kids, an adoption recruitment service contracted by DSHS to provide information and training to potential adoptive parents:
<http://www.lcsnw.org/ffk/index.html> , 888-794-1794
3. Northwest Adoption Exchange, information and services for adoption of special needs children (this includes older children, children of color and children with siblings) in the Northwest. Their website includes a photo listing and biographies of children waiting to be adopted: www.nwae.org, 800-927-9411,
4. Foster Parent Association of Washington: <http://www.fpaws.org/>, 800-391-2273.
5. Casey Family Programs, a Seattle-based international foundation providing services for foster children, and working to improve and eliminate the need for foster care: <http://www.casey.org/>, 206-270-4907, or 206-378-3389.
6. National Adoption Day Coalition, www.nationaladoptionday.org, 202-572-2993.
7. Foster Care Alumni of America:
http://fostercarealumni.org/welcome_int.jsp, 888-ALUMNI (0).
8. Child Welfare Information Gateway, a program of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: <http://www.childwelfare.gov/>