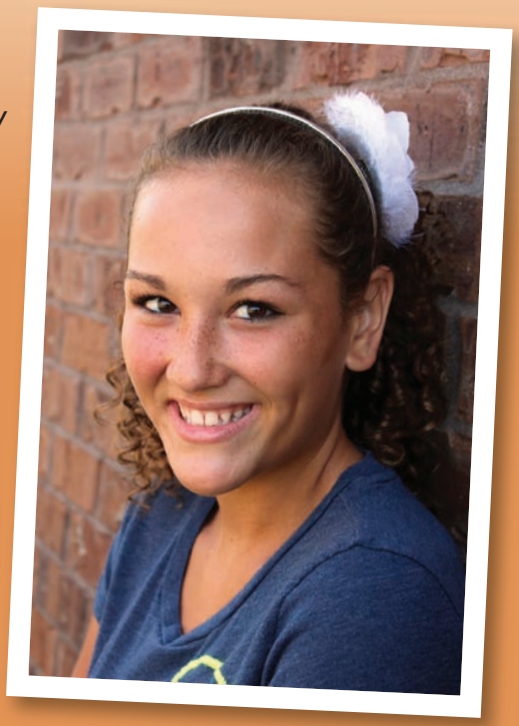
September / October 2012

adoption

opening hearts. changing lives.

Indiana's Adoption Program

Meet Julie (15)



Julie is definitely not shy! She has a bright smile and a joyful personality. She loves to have conversations and she makes friends easily. Julie recently took a trip to the southeastern part of the United States where she loved the beach, but surprisingly did not love Paula Deen's cooking! She ordered the buffet so that she could try all sorts of food, but she said everything was too salty. Julie is a funny girl who is not afraid to speak her mind. She is honest and straightforward and wants to be included in decisions that affect her future.

Julie is already thinking ahead to college, even though it is still a few years away. She wants to study to become an ultrasound technician who works with children and babies. Julie stays very active participating in things like volleyball, softball, drawing, cheering, tumbling, and singing. She has a beautiful voice and wants to record a country album someday. She also sings along to Christian songs and Justin Bieber songs. If you ask her what she collects, she answers, "clothes and shoes." She is a very fashionable young lady. She is helpful when it comes to cleaning and organizing because messy rooms stress her out. Julie loves all animals except birds and she thinks she would like to have a Pomeranian puppy for a pet.

Julie would like to live in the country because she likes to be outside. She has sisters with whom she would like to remain in contact. She needs a family that will be committed to her and patient with her while she forms a bond and adjusts to a new setting. A two-parent family that is able to provide plenty of love, support, and attention would be beneficial for Julie.

Welcome to the Indiana Adoption Program

The Indiana Adoption Program is a statewide effort to create permanence for children who are wards of the State of Indiana. It is a program of the Indiana Department of Child Services in collaboration with the Children's Bureau, Inc.

There are many aspects of adoption and the Indiana Adoption Program is just one of those aspects. We will help you consider some aspects of adoption in this book.

The picture book is also available on the internet. To view a current list of children available go to http://www.adoptuskids.org/states/in/index.aspx. You may download a PDF copy of this "Opening Hearts. Changing Lives" Adoption Picture Book at http://www.in.gov/dcs/2737.htm

To learn more about Children's Bureau, Inc., see us on the web at: www.childrensbureau.org or call for a brochure: 317-545-5281.

To mail correspondence to the Indiana Adoption program send to:

The Indiana Adoption Program
c/o Children's Bureau Inc.
3801 N. Temple Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46205

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN,
FAMILIES & FUTURE.

JAMES W. PAYNE, DIRECTOR

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES

The Indiana Adoption Program would like to thank Marisha for the cover Illustration.

Table of Contents

What is Adoption? 40

How Do I Start The Adoption Process in Indiana? 41

How to Adopt Overview 42
- Step 1: Educate Yourself about Adoption 42
- Step 2: Decide What Type of AdoptionYou Want to Pursue 44
- Step 3: Investigate Ways to Cover Adoption Expenses 44
- Step 4: Select an Adoption Agency 45
- Step 5: Let Your Agency Know You Are Serious about Adopting 45
- Step 6: Adoption Application 45
- Step 7: Attend Adoption and Parenting Classes 46
- Step 8: Begin the Family Preparation Process 46
- Step 9: Begin Searching for a Child 47
- Step 10: Considering a Child 47
- Step 11: Prepare for Your Child's Arrival 48
- Step 12: The Child is Placed in Your Home 48
- Step 13: File a Petition to Adopt 49
- Step 14: Finalize the Adoption 49

Common Challenges of Children With Special Needs 50

The Legal Aspects of Adoption 52

Adoption Chart 53

Youth Connections Program 54

If I inquire about a child, does this mean I will get to adopt this child?

A prospective adoptive parent must have completed the Family Preparation process and be approved to adopt a child introduced in this book. If you are just beginning that process or have not yet begun, a child you see here may be living with a new family before you complete the Family Preparation process.

If you become their adoptive parent, a child's future development, well being, and sense of family and community will rest with you.

Therefore, adoption requires serious considerations.

The child's social worker or adoption team will help determine if you and your family are compatible with the child and there may also be several families that are considering the same child.

Subscription Information

You can receive a six-month subscription to this magazine by mailing a $15 check along with your name and address to:

Children's Bureau Inc.
3801 N. Temple Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46205

If you have any questions please call 1-888-25-ADOPT.

Meet Our Children

In this book you will see many different faces of youth. The words next to their faces only tell a partial story. Their biography is not complete. Any young person's story is worthy of telling you, yet what you read here about them is just a few short sentences.

The paragraphs next to each child are an introduction. Beyond the paragraphs, we want you to know the whole biography of a child when you are considering making a commitment as a parent; however here in this book we balance your need to know with a child's need for privacy and sense of well-being.

Children who have experienced foster care all have one thing in common: they have had to leave their home. And by that very fact alone, their need for healing, stability and nurturing requires attention. Children who have had to endure neglect, abuse, or trauma can face many challenges. Those challenges can range from mild to severe and can also be temporary or permanent.

The challenges our children face will not be detailed in the introductions. Listing a short medical or mental health diagnosis can sometimes be misleading and can breach confidentiality. You can read about some of the challenges that are common to many children in the adoption program in a separate section of this book.

In the adoption program, many of the children are older and may have physical, mental or emotional impairments. Some have brothers and sisters in the program with them and they may need to live together or they may need to keep their essential connection to each other through different living arrangements.

The youth featured in this book are in foster care and they may live with a foster family or they may be living in a group home or other child-caring facility such as a treatment center. Every child needs the love and support of a family. We invite you to learn more about adopting children in the Indiana Adoption Program.

You will see a number next to each child's introduction. Please refer to this number when making an inquiry about them.

Ariel (12), Aaron (11), & Ladarion (8)

Ariel is a very intelligent, well-spoken little girl. She makes friends easily and likes to play with other children. She is creative and likes to draw and color. Ariel loves to sing and dance and will often make up her own songs and dance moves.

Aaron is a bright, inquisitive young man who likes to learn new things. His favorite subjects in school are Math and Science. Aaron enjoys reading and spending time with friends.

Ladarion loves to run around and has a lot of energy. He is talkative and playful and delights in doing new activities. Although he likes to be outside, Ladarion also enjoys playing video games and watching cartoons. Ladarion is looking forward to school and being around other children and learning new things.

These children look forward to being in a home where their parents can be patient and supportive as well as committed to keeping the three children together. These children will thrive in a structured, peaceful, loving environment.
(5058ABCIA) *Lake County*

Marisa (16) & Allissa (14)

Marisa volunteers at a pet shelter and likes to keep busy. She loves horses and wants to be a vet tech when she grows up. She hopes that her new parents are Christians because her church is very important to her. She would like to join the swim team and math is her favorite subject. She likes to go shopping and count out the correct money and change to pay for what she buys. Cheese pizza is her favorite food, pink is her favorite color, and "Titanic" is her favorite movie.

Allissa has a great imagination and a sunny disposition. She loves to play sports, especially basketball, football, baseball, and swimming. She has a great voice and will gladly sing for anyone who will listen. Her favorite movie is "The Help" and her favorite color is red. She enjoys reading the Twilight series and she loves to order chicken teriyaki and crab rangoon at Chinese restaurants. She likes animals and hopes to have pets at her new home.

These girls need an active, loving family that can provide structure, consistency, clear boundaries, and realistic expectations. These sisters need support and encouragement. Both single and two-parent families will be considered. (5086ABBD) *Scott County*

Chris (11) & Nicholas (10)

Chris is a very friendly and outgoing little boy. He loves country music and likes to sing. He also likes playing with his cars and trucks and other toys.

Nicholas is shy at first but warms up once he gets to know you. He loves going to school and being around people. He likes to draw and write his letters.

These boys have many special medical needs and developmental delays due to injuries suffered in a house fire. Chris uses a wheelchair at school but is able to scoot around the house without his chair. Both boys need close supervision and assistance with all self-care tasks. Interested families will need to be able to provide structure, routine and a well-supervised environment. The home will need to be wheelchair accessible for Chris. (6096ABBD) *Madison County*

Billy (12) & Allison (8)

Billy enjoys reading, games, projects, arts and crafts, and singing. He does well academically and can express empathy to others. He is learning to take responsibility for his actions and is making progress in this area. Billy is a good student and is academically successful. Billy needs a family that will be committed to him and provide support and guidance in helping him navigate peer relationships and interactions with adults in authority. Billy would love to live near a library and he would like to be an architect when he grows up.

Allison may be small in size but she has a big personality! She is outgoing, energetic and likes to be helpful. Due to developmental delays, including speech delays and cognitive challenges Allison can be easily overwhelmed. Allison needs a caring, supportive family willing to engage support services and advocate on her behalf. Allison has many, many appointments related to the support services she receives and will need caregivers that have the flexibility to attend appointments with her and also work with her on her issues at home with home-based providers. Allison needs a family that will accept and understand her limitations and be willing to work with her on a daily basis.

Billy and Allison need a loving, patient family that will provide good supervision and are willing to work with outside service providers. Families with knowledge of and/or experience with medical, developmental, psychological, and emotional special needs are desired. Because these children receive many services and have many therapeutic appointments, interested families will need to have the flexibility to take the children to and from appointments and work closely with the service providers.
(7056ABKY) *Allen County*

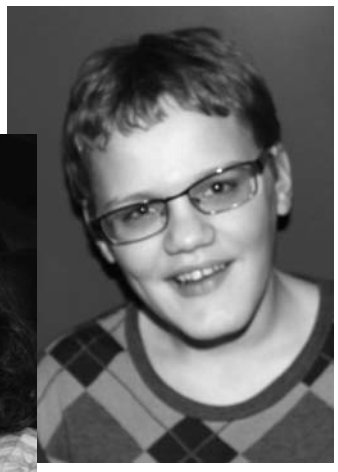
Keon (9) & Anthony (7)

Keon is a quiet and intelligent nine-year old. He enjoys playing basketball and baseball, but loves karate. He often is on honor roll at school and he loves to learn from books. Keon gets along well with his peers. He loves his little brother and is very protective of him. He also loves animals and enjoys playing with them.

Anthony is a lovable, adorable seven-year old. He loves doing karate with his brother. Anthony enjoys dancing and has been able to attend hip-hop dance classes. He is an outgoing and energetic child. He loves animals and playing games with his peers.

Anthony and Keon do well in a structured, nurturing, and stable environment. The children would benefit from a two-parent or single parent home with older children in the home. Having consistency in the home would also be beneficial to the children as they transition in their placement. (8009ABIA) *Lake County*

Alex (17) & Nicole (14)



Alex is a sweet, affectionate boy. He can write out his words and type them too, but mostly he uses sign language to communicate. If you tell him he can have one piece of cheese, he'll change your hand so that it is holding up three fingers instead of one. He is clever and has a hearty appetite! He is very ticklish and he loves spending time on the computer.

Nicole is a very gentle and sweet young girl. Though Nicole does not speak, she does smile. She likes to hear music, especially songs for children. She also enjoys having a roommate. She likes interactions with people and also likes objects that light up or make noise. She enjoys toys that stimulate her senses.

These children will need a family with an extended support system since they require 24/7 care. They need a family that can provide constant supervision and plenty of attention to their medical and physical needs. Families that are familiar with autism, cerebral palsy, and diabetes would be preferred. Single-parent and two-parent homes will be considered. (8047ABBD) *Madison County*

Anna (15) Makayla (14), & Destiny (10)

Anna is a creative and caring young girl. She volunteers at a nursing home, helps manage the basketball team, and enjoys shopping, especially for clothes and shoes. She loves to eat any meal that includes potatoes. Her favorite colors are orange and lime green. Anna likes school, especially art and English, and she would like to be a nurse when she grows up.

Makayla, also known as KK, loves to read, swim, draw on the sidewalk with chalk, volunteer, and hang out with friends. She is a respectful, helpful young girl who loves kids, basketball, and school. Her favorite meal is hashbrown casserole and pork chops. Church is very important to Makayla. She would like to be a nurse when she grows up. She would also like to visit Arizona someday.

Destiny is very outgoing and likes everyone! She enjoys school, especially writing. Her favorite color is dark blue and she loves horses, dogs, cats, rhinos, elephants, and wolves. She would like to be a vet when she grows up. Potato salad is one of her favorite foods and she loves to listen to country music. Destiny would like to visit the Bahamas one day.

These girls would like to live with a mom and a dad. Their school and church is important to them. An active family, possibly one with pets, would be a good fit for these siblings. Their new home will need to provide supervision and enough time and energy to dedicate toward one-on-one attention with each girl. (8079ABCBD) *Jackson County*

Jason (8), Sydney (6), Lyric (5), & Echo (3)

Jason is a vibrant, handsome little boy with a talent for drawing. He loves "building dragons" on his Wii. He loves dinosaurs and dragons and can identify many different types of dinosaurs. He enjoys hunting for bugs and fossils and being outdoors. Jason is very inquisitive and likes a good "what if ..." conversation. He loves going to camp and he likes to swim in the pool and play with his younger sisters. Jason is very intelligent and does well in school.

Sydney loves to play with Barbies and her doll house. Sydney may be shy at first but can be quite loving and talkative once she warms up to you. Sydney has lots of energy and likes to play with her friends and siblings. She loves school and would do well in a family that would help her with her schoolwork.

Lyric is a very energetic preschooler with curly hair and a quick smile. She loves physical activities and playing with her peers and siblings. Her favorite color is green and her favorite food is tacos. She enjoys outdoor activities like swimming. She is very soft spoken and has a great sense of humor.

Echo is a little sweetie who loves to cuddle and watch cartoons. She loves anything "princess." She loves to swim and play with her siblings. Her favorite colors are purple and pink and she loves chicken nuggets. She likes playing Barbies with her sister.

Jason, Sydney, Lyric, and Echo need a home with a family that enjoys being active and can provide them with attention and love. They will need a family that can nurture them, foster their curiosity, and help them grow and learn. Two-parent families with no other siblings will be preferred. (8084ABCDDH) *Montgomery County*

Mikayla (12) & Kimberly (10)

Mikayla is very ambitious and likes to try new things. When she grows up, she wants to be a teacher, a doctor, or an animal trainer. Her favorite subject in school is health and she loves to run track. Mikayla says that "fruits and veggies" are her favorite foods, especially carrots and watermelon. Hot pink, lime green, and other neon colors are her favorites. She loves to sing country songs and Justin Bieber songs while jumping on the trampoline. She loves school and her favorite thing about herself is that she is smart. Mikayla is a very helpful child who likes to cook, work in the garden, and help take care of pets.

Kimberly is a friendly, talkative, and artistic girl. She loves to draw animals. She also loves to help younger children learn new things. Math is her favorite subject because she is good at it. When she grows up, she would like to be a K-9 cop. Her two favorite activities are running in gym class and watching movies in bed. She prefers to live in the country to be close to outdoor parks. Peaches are her favorite fruit and she enjoys eating vegetables too. Someday Kimberly hopes to go to Florida and to have a cat named Buttercup.

These sisters will need an active, nurturing family that can provide stability, structure, and safety. Their new family will need to be patient, supportive of their academic pursuits, and willing to give them ample time to adjust to new surroundings. These girls enjoy being around children and pets and they would like to remain in contact with their siblings. Both single-parent and two-parent homes will be considered. (8089ABMO) *Jefferson County*

Summer Blast

A fun bunch of families and children gathered on June 22nd to compete in some very exciting outdoor games! These games took place at the Adoption Match Event in Muncie, IN, and the attendees spent the day tossing water balloons and footballs, dropping coins in a fish tank full of water, and balancing an egg on a spoon while racing each other. They also decorated backpacks. The children and families ate hot dogs together and had a sundae bar with almost every candy topping you could imagine! At the end of the event, the children were given gift bags. This was a well-attended event with lots of kids and families.

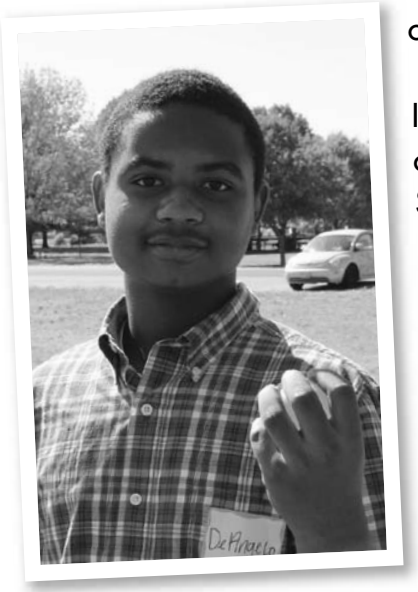
The idea at these Match Events is for the families and children to play and eat together while interacting and getting to know one another. This fun, comfortable atmosphere assists Indiana's waiting foster care youth by matching them with prospective parents in a natural environment.

If you would like more information on how to become a SNAP recommended family, please contact a SNAP Specialist in your region. You can identify the SNAP Specialist in your region by referencing the back page of this picture book.

Summer Picnic

Bring out the grill, the outdoor games, and lots of fun and you have the Marion County Adoption Match Event, which was held on August 11th in Plainfield, Indiana. The families and children who attended had a great time together eating hot dogs, decorating cookies, and getting to know one another. They played all kinds of games including corn hole, ladder golf, water balloon toss, and potato sack races. They also decorated clay pots in teams of two where each player could only use one hand. Their teamwork produced some beautiful results! The families and children also decorated aprons together. At the end of the event, the children were given gift bags donated by Wendy's Wonderful Kids in Central Indiana.

Match Events provide a time and a place for families and children to play and eat together while interacting and learning more about one another. This fun, playful atmosphere helps Indiana's waiting foster care youth to be matched with prospective parents in a comfortable, natural environment.



If you would like more information on how to become a SNAP recommended family, please contact a SNAP Specialist in your region. To identify the SNAP Specialist in your region, please flip to the back page of this picture book.

MAGIC

Justin (11)

When asked what he likes to do, Justin says he likes to, "swing on the swing and listen to the trees and the pond." He loves being outside, especially when he can jump on the trampoline. When he is inside, his favorite things to do are playing his Nintendo DS and playing anything related to Pokemon. Justin describes himself as "fun and adventurous." His favorite food is pizza and he loves to dance. Justin is an "A" student and math is his favorite subject. He gets along well with other children at school and enjoys playing and spending time with two good friends who live nearby. He would like to take kickboxing classes someday.

Justin is looking forward to being adopted. He says he hopes to find a family that will be "nice, encouraging, and understanding." He needs a stable family who can be patient and provide him with a lot of time and attention. He would benefit greatly from having an active father figure. Justin would love having brothers and sisters in his new family. (3641BS) *Monroe County*

Christopher (13)

Christopher loves anything that has a remote control. He keeps a sketchbook of his drawings of remote control cars and planes and all sorts of robotics that he hopes to build someday. He loves electronics and hopes to have an iPod in the future. His favorite drink is pop; he loves root beer, cherry Coke, and Mountain Dew. Christopher describes himself as "a creative, nice, clean hard worker" and he wishes he had a job. He has not decided what he wants to be when he grows up, but he knows he loves to build things. He also loves to sing, do math, and play with NERF toys. He would prefer to live on a farm, especially if it has bunny rabbits.

It would be beneficial for Christopher to be placed with two parents and preferably a home with older children or no other children in the home. The family would need to provide patience, support, encouragement and guidance to allow Christopher in adjusting to the home. Christopher is very eager to have a family of his own. (3672IA) *Lake County*

Jerry (12)

Jerry is a pleasant, affectionate little boy who likes to give and receive hugs. He enjoys wrestling and rough-housing on the floor. He likes music and will dance and sometimes babble, trying to sing along. He likes to rock in his rocking chair or on a rocking horse. Jerry likes swinging and climbing into things he can sit in.

Jerry is a sweet little boy who needs a family that can be patient and loving with him. Families with an extended support system, and knowledge and understanding of developmental delays and autism are preferred. (3682BD) *Bartholomew County*

Toby (11)

Toby just learned how to swim, and would gladly take your hand and ask you to play with him, whether it is in the pool, on the trampoline, or on the computer. Toby is a friendly, outgoing child who loves to be helpful. Toby has made great strides with communication skills and activities of daily living. He is eager to please others and responds positively to attention and affection. Toby needs an experienced family that can provide structure, routine and close supervision at all times. A two-parent or family with a strong extended support system is preferred.
(3716MO) *Delaware County*

Julie (15)

Julie is a joyful, funny, and fashionable young lady who is always smiling. She is already thinking about where she might want to go to college and she thinks she would like to be an ultrasound technician because she loves to work with children and babies. Julie is interested in art and she stays very active. She enjoys volleyball, swimming, playing baseball, and jumping on the trampoline. She has participated in piano, tennis, and voice lessons. Julie is outgoing and energetic and has a warm personality. She is helpful and she loves to keep things clean and organized. Someday she would like to visit Hawaii or California to see the beach.

Julie's sisters are an important part of her life. Julie would benefit from a two-parent home. She loves animals, especially little dogs, and would like to live in a home with pets. She would do well in a family that is supportive, understanding, and committed to encouraging her.
(3718BS) *Crawford County*

Justin (15)

Justin is fascinated by electronics. He loves visiting websites on the internet and has even designed a few web pages of his own—one is about fire safety. Christmas is his favorite holiday and "Elf" is his favorite movie. He thinks he might have the whole movie memorized! Justin is a friendly, intellectual, and outgoing young man. He loves to have conversations and he is very popular among his peers and adults. He enjoys watching television, playing outside, and being on the computer. When he grows up, he would like to work in the film industry, either making films or editing them.

Justin needs a family that can provide stability, structure, and consistency. A patient, loving family with no children or older children would be ideal for Justin. Single-parent and two-parent homes will be considered. (4000IA) *Lake County*

Kristian (13)

Kristian is an energetic young man who loves to jump and climb. His favorite activities are playing on the jungle gym and in the water. Kristian also enjoys spending quiet time cuddled in a blanket and watching a Disney video or having a book read to him.

Kristian has been making progress with some activities of daily living and responds well to positive rewards. He will need a loving and patient family who will support this growth and can provide structure, routine and close supervision at all times. (4016KY) *Allen County*

Christian (17)

Christian describes himself as easygoing, respectful, and friendly. He is a laid-back young man who enjoys listening to country music and participating in 4-H. He made a pie that came in 1st place and a poster that earned him a 2nd place ribbon. He is very talkative and likes helping others. Christian enjoys playing sports especially football and basketball. He also likes to go fishing. Christian is intelligent and does well in school. His favorite subjects are reading and spelling. He loves to read, especially mystery novels. He thinks he would like to study the culinary arts after he finishes high school and someday he wants to visit the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville.

Christian would enjoy living in the country. He likes to be busy and needs a loving family that can provide consistency, structure and support him in his continued growth. Families with parenting experience are preferred. (4023MO) *Blackford County*

Devonte (16)

Devonte is a charming and confident young man who is eager to be adopted. He is very athletic and enjoys wrestling, football, and basketball. Devonte has expressed an interest in joining a step team and he wants to play the clarinet. He says he is the class clown at school and he loves history and math because he has good teachers in those subjects. He also loves writing poetry. Devonte likes to listen to music, watch movies, and explore the internet. He wants to be an engineer someday or maybe go into the Army.

Devonte needs a family that can be patient and loving yet firm in their rules and expectations. He would do best in a two-parent home with a positive male father figure. Devonte has a brother with whom he will need to maintain contact. (4056KY) *St. Joseph County*

Look for this symbol throughout our children's pages; it indicates that they have recorded a video message. You can view their video on-line at **www.adoptuskids.org/states/IN**.

Logan (17)

Logan loves to talk and has a good sense of humor. He is very outgoing and enjoys interacting with both adults and peers. He enjoys taking trips, going to the movies, playing basketball, and eating out at restaurants. Logan's hobbies are playing video games and collecting Hot Wheels cars. He enjoys being outdoors and likes to do yard work. Logan has made a lot of progress in the last year and is currently on the A/B Honor Roll at school. He is interested in working with his hands and is considering becoming an auto mechanic.

Logan is at his best when he has a structured and consistent environment. Logan needs a loving family that can be attentive to his needs. He would do best as the only or youngest child in the family. (4057IA) *Jasper County*

Sylvester (10)

Sylvester is a very lovable, calm, and handsome little boy. In the summer he loves to play in the pool and he enjoys watching the Disney Channel, coloring, and dancing. His favorite movie is "Red Tails" and he enjoys when someone reads to him. Sylvester is bright and maintains good grades in school. Sylvester favorite classes are gym, music, and art. He would like to be a policeman when he grows up. When asked where he would like to go someday, he says, "to college."

Sylvester needs a nurturing family that can provide stability, supervision, and appropriate medical attention. He would greatly benefit from a two-parent home. Sylvester needs a strong male figure who will be consistent with discipline and who is willing to spend a lot of one-on-one time with him. He would do best in a home with only older children. He needs a family with a lot of patience and love to get him through the trauma that he has experienced. Sylvester has siblings with whom he will need to maintain contact. (4063IA) *Lake County*

Cyerra (16)

Cyerra is very exuberant and has a great smile. She has a good sense of humor and likes to laugh. She is full of energy and has many interests. Cyerra likes music and loves to sing and dance. She enjoys playing basketball, rollerblading, and doing crafts. Cyerra describes herself as a "girly-girl" in the sense that she likes getting her hair and nails done and loves to shop for clothes. She loves to sing and has a big voice! Cyerra has a love for animals and enjoys volunteering at the local animal shelter.

She would love to be part of a family that likes to be active and do things together. She enjoys helping around the house with chores and says she even likes to do dishes! Cyerra will do best in family that can provide consistent structure, boundaries, and consequences. Cyerra needs a family that can give her a lot of time and attention as she has missed this in her life.
(4073BD) *Bartholomew County*

Brianna (13)

Brianna is a very sweet and loving little girl. She very much enjoys one-on-one attention with adults. She is caring and empathic to those she feels are less fortunate. She loves playing with baby dolls and likes to have her hair brushed and styled. Brianna's favorite activities are playing on the playground and doing arts and crafts. She is also very enthusiastic about going swimming! Uno and SKIP-BO are her favorite card games and she hopes to go to the zoo someday.

Brianna needs a family that can give her a lot of care and attention. She needs a nurturing family that will be patient and encourage her to develop to her fullest potential. She would like to have two parents and maybe live in the city. Parents with experience with special needs children are preferred. (4077KY) *St. Joseph County*

Lewis (15)

Lewis is the best swimmer in his class! He loves to swim laps as fast as possible. He can hold his breath underwater for long periods of time, but he has no desire to go scuba diving because "those tanks can run out of air!" Lewis has a good sense of humor, a beautiful smile, and a contagious laugh. Reading is one of his favorite activities. "I could read every book in the library," he says. He also enjoys soccer and Chinese checkers. Lewis describes himself as kind and generous, nice and neat, and strong. He collects coins and loves to discuss them. He wants to be a scientist or a doctor someday, but also thinks he would make a great construction worker because he loves to dig holes and be outside.

Lewis would do best in a structured home that can offer stability and consistency. A family that is patient, understanding, and able to provide one-on-one attention would be ideal. Two-parent families are preferred. (4089IA) *Porter County*

Michael (17)

Michael likes to be out in nature and enjoys fishing, swimming, and camping. He also enjoys sports such as football, basketball, and soccer. Michael has a good sense of humor and likes to make people laugh. He likes drawing and is quite a talented artist. Michael is an avid reader and likes to read comics and all kinds of books, particularly scary books.

Michael very much wants to be part of a family and hopes to have a sibling or two as well as a pet. He will need a family that can provide structure and consistency and someone willing to assist him with his school work. Michael would do best with older siblings or as an only child. Two-parent families are preferred. (4090IA) *Porter County*

Look for this symbol throughout our children's pages; it indicates that they have recorded a video message. You can view their video on-line at **www.adoptuskids.org/states/IN**.

Cheyenne (17)

Cheyenne is friendly and affectionate and has an upbeat sense of humor. She enjoys playing basketball, watching television, listening to rap music, and going shopping. Cheyenne's favorite thing to shop for is shoes! She is very talkative and is not shy about expressing her thoughts and feelings. She enjoys school and says math is her favorite subject.

Cheyenne would like to join a family. Ideally she would like to have a mother and a father, but she is open to considering a single-parent or non-traditional family as well. Cheyenne needs a loving, patient family that can provide structure and consistent rules and expectations. Cheyenne has a sister with whom she will need to maintain contact. (4096KY) *Allen County*

Terry (14)

Terry loves to ride quad bikes. He also likes to play football and basketball and go fishing. In school, Terry likes math and reading classes. He gets along with his peers and adults, participates in school activities, and has a good sense of humor. Terry enjoys playing video games and watching movies. He listens to a variety of music, from country to rock'n'roll. Terry is very outgoing, funny, and playful. He likes dogs and cats. His favorite foods are fried chicken and mash potatoes and McDonald's cheeseburgers. The Lakers and the Patriots are his favorite sport teams.

Terry would thrive in a two-parent home or with a family that is able to show him affection and patience and provide consistency and structure. Having clear expectations and being placed with no other children or older children would be beneficial to Terry. (4098MO) *Rush County*

Austin (10)

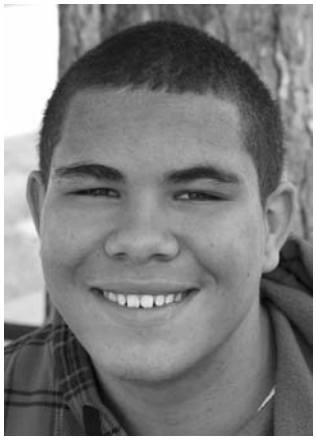
Austin is an inquisitive and friendly little dynamo! He likes going to the playing ground, swimming, riding bikes, and rollerblading. He is very interested in dinosaurs, Transformers, and Spiderman. Austin is also very interested in cause-and-effect relationships and how things work. He enjoys being part of a group, but really thrives with one-on-one adult attention. He enjoys being read to and has a vivid imagination. Austin is very bright and is doing well in school. He wants to be a singer when he grows up and he describes himself as "smart, excited, and charismatic."

Austin needs a family that can give him a lot of attention while providing structure and close supervision. An adoptive family will need to be patient and committed to providing stability while he works on developing a bond with them. Austin needs to be the youngest or only child in the family. (5002DH) *Tippecanoe County*

Jeremy (12)

Jeremy is a lively, delightful conversationalist! He is a loving, affectionate little boy who is full of energy and likes to play sports. Jeremy says he, “loves, loves, loves, school!” He is doing well academically and gets along well with peers. Jeremy has a good sense of humor and can be very funny. He enjoys entertaining people around him. He is a big fan of Michael Jackson's music and will enthusiastically sing “Beat It” for the willing listener. When he grows up, Jeremy wants to play for the NFL until he retires, then he wants to go into the NBA. Jeremy is fascinated by iPods and MP3 players and would like to have one of his own. Jeremy likes to help others. Doing so gives him a sense of accomplishment. He likes animals, especially big dogs, and enjoys helping to care for them.

Jeremy is excited about joining a family and hopes to have both a mom and a dad. Ideally, he would like to live out in the country and be around animals. Jeremy needs a loving family that can provide structure, routine, patience, and security. (5014BS) *Knox County*



Brian (15)

Brian is a bright young man who smiles often and learns things quickly. He loves to tell stories and he loves to listen to them too. He describes himself as "funny and caring" and says he, "loves being around people" and "makes friends easily." Brian enjoys listening to music and singing. He likes to play on the computer, but also enjoys outdoor activities such as baseball and rock climbing. He loves to be the center of attention and is never at a loss for words. Brian hopes to one day have a job where he can work with animals in the wild. Ideally, he would like to help the Timber Wolf population.

Brian needs a family that will provide firm, loving boundaries and structure. He says that he wants a father figure because he "never had one." A home in the country would be best for Brian because "the country is open and free" and he "feels trapped in cities." Brian would benefit greatly from having a strong, positive male role model. (5026IA) *LaPorte County*

Steven (13)

Steven is an energetic and friendly little boy with a mega-watt smile! He is very excited about being adopted and joining a family. He likes to learn new things and says math is his favorite subject in school. He loves playing outside and playing football and basketball with his friends. Steven says, “I’m a really good artist and I like to draw!” He also likes helping others in whatever way he can. He thinks he would like to be a teacher when he grows up so he can help other kids. Steven loves to eat and some of his favorite foods are Big Macs, spaghetti and meatballs, and Chinese food. His favorite restaurant is Bob Evans and he loves their dinner rolls.

Steven needs a family that can be patient with him and provide structure and clear expectations and boundaries. Ideally, Steven would like to have a mom and a dad and be part of a family that has pets. Steven would do best in a home where he could be the only child or the youngest child. (5037MO) *Jay County*

Look for this symbol throughout our children's pages; it indicates that they have recorded a video message. You can view their video on-line at **www.adoptuskids.org/states/IN**.

Morgan (16)

Morgan is friendly and likes to meet new people. She has a great sense of humor and can be very playful. She loves to sing and dance! Morgan also loves to go shopping, especially for clothes and shoes. She likes going to the movies and going to Golden Corral, her favorite restaurant.

Morgan says she would like to have both a mother and a father, and wouldn't mind having an older brother or sister to look up to. She will do well with a family that can provide structure and clear boundaries, rules, and expectations. (5084BD) *Clark County*

Brittany (15)

Brittany loves to learn and works hard in school. Her teachers say that she is very helpful in class and gets along well with other children. Brittany likes having her hair done and wearing pretty clothes. Her favorite colors are rainbow colors and pink. She likes playing outside, swimming, reading, and playing computer games. Brittany loves Justin Bieber and thinks she would like to take hip hop dance classes and perform in from of audiences. When she grows up, she would like to be an interior designer. She would design a Justin Bieber-themed room first and then try other ideas. She would like to go to California someday.

Brittany is looking forward to having a family that can give her a lot of one-on-one attention. She likes doing family activities like going to the movies, taking walks, and playing games. Brittany needs a family that can provide structure, routine, and consistency. Two-parent families are preferred. (5090IA) *Porter County*

Crystal (17)

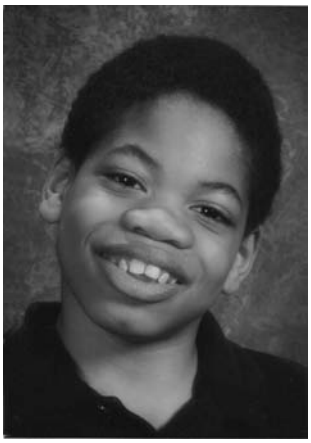
Crystal would like to be a foster parent when she is older so that she can share her experiences with others and teach children about forgiveness. Crystal is an intelligent and intuitive girl who enjoys going to church. Crystal also likes spending time with her friends and talking on the phone. Her favorite food is pizza and her favorite color is blue. Crystal enjoys the Twilight movies and books, and is looking forward to the continuance of the series.

Crystal prefers living in a city rather than in the country, but is most interested in being with a family that will love her and spend time with her. Crystal needs a family that can provide structure and clear boundaries and expectations. Crystal would benefit from being placed in a single-parent or a two-parent home with a family that is patient. She has siblings with whom she will need to maintain contact. (6001MO) *Delaware County*

Damar (14)

Damar is a creative, engaging young man who is eager to be adopted! He is friendly, outgoing, and very likeable. Damar enjoys music, playing video games, doing computer searches, and shopping at gaming stores. He thinks he might like to design gaming systems and games for a living someday.

Damar is looking forward to having a father who will spend time with him doing things like working on electronics, playing video games, or going fishing. Damar needs a loving family that can provide consistent rules, boundaries, and expectations. He is at his best when he has a routine in a stable environment. Damar has a brother with whom he will need to maintain contact. (6004KY) *Allen County*



Roger (14)

Roger is a very helpful young man. He enjoys helping his foster mother around the house by cleaning and assisting with the laundry. He loves to read books and enjoys having others read to him. Roger has become involved in Irish dancing through a local church and greatly enjoys that activity. Roger gets along well with others and loves receiving attention.

Roger needs a family that can be patient and will nurture his development. A two-parent home that can provide supervision and consistency would be ideal. Families with knowledge and understanding of developmental disabilities are preferred. (6023KY) *St. Joseph County*

Samantha (14)

Samantha describes herself as "creative and girly." She enjoys talking to her friends, listening to music, getting her hair done, and shopping for shoes, clothes, and purses. When asked what she likes, she says that "HUGS!," animals, and the colors purple, black, and neon green are her favorite things. She likes to be outdoors to go swimming or to walk on trails through the woods. Samantha would love to ride a roller coaster at an amusement park, go on a shopping spree, and go swimming in Florida someday.

Samantha is eager to have an adoptive home and would do best in an active family that can provide structure and clear boundaries and expectations. (6026SS) *Marion County*

Summer (15)

Summer loves animals very much. She once fixed a dog's paw and it inspired her to want to be a vet someday. In the meantime, she would like to volunteer at an animal shelter. Summer's favorite food is ice cream and she likes to give and receive hugs. Though shy at first, she actually loves being the center of attention. She describes herself as a "country girl" and would enjoy living out in the country and having pets. She especially loves wrinkly dogs. Summer likes to play games and is known among her friends as a "card shark." Her favorite card game is Rummy. Summer enjoys being outdoors and likes playing soccer and softball. She also likes to go fishing.

Summer needs a family that can provide structure and stability. She thinks she would be most comfortable with a single mother, but she is open to other families as well as long as they are able to give her a loving home. (6046BS) *Dubois County*

Dustin (17)

Dustin is a very compassionate and caring young man. He enjoys playing football, swimming, and fishing. He likes listening to music, playing video games, and drawing. Dustin likes to have fun and enjoys participating in activities with both peers and adults. He likes being outdoors and enjoys working in the yard.

Dustin is eager to join a family and would like have both a mom and a dad. He would like to have siblings and hopes his new family will have pets. Dustin needs a loving family that will set clear boundaries and expectations and advocate for him educationally. (6054SS) *Marion County*

Brandon (14)

Brandon wants to be a famous actor when he grows up! He will soon begin acting classes. He is a charming young man and he has a wonderful smile. Language Arts is his favorite subject in school and someday he would love to visit Times Square. Brandon likes playing video games, drawing, and making comics. He is very much into martial arts and has received a black belt in three different arts!

Brandon is a friendly, polite, and respectful young man who needs a patient family that will continue to encourage him and can give him a lot of time and attention. Brandon would like to have both a mother and a father and he hopes his new family will enjoy spending time together. He would do best in a home where there are younger children, or where he can be an only child. (6064IA) *Lake County*

Brandon (16)

Brandon is bright and creative. He even invented his own board game! Brandon has a great personality and loves to joke and tease. Brandon likes playing video and computer games, fishing, and playing sports. He likes being outdoors and enjoys gardening and bee keeping.

Brandon needs a family that can provide a structured environment with clear boundaries and expectations. Two-parent families are preferred. (6065IA) *Starke County*

Brandon (17)

Brandon is a friendly, profound, and intelligent boy. He says he admires Ghandi and Martin Luther King, Jr. because they stood for their beliefs. Brandon is a great conversationalist and he has a winning smile. He thinks that he would like to be neurosurgeon, not for the pay but because they help people. Brandon also admires Ben Carson, a neurosurgeon, and is currently reading Dr. Carson's books. Brandon likes science as well as writing and reciting poetry. He calls himself a "nature freak" and wolves are his favorite animal.

Brandon is eager to be adopted and longs to have a sense of belonging. Ideally he would like to have both a mother and a father. Having a positive male role model would be of great benefit to him. Brandon needs a family that will be patient and supportive as he transitions into his new family. (6066IA) *LaPorte County*

Brandy (11)

Brandy is very friendly and outgoing. She enjoys being the center of attention and loves to talk! She likes to play all kinds of games and enjoys being outdoors, learning to swim, and collecting Sing-a-ma-jigs and coins that she finds on the ground. Brandy has an independent nature and has a creative side. She loves singing, dancing, and learning to cook new dishes. She is very bright and likes learning new things in school. Brandy would love to be part of a two-parent family and is wishing for a big sister. Her face lights up when she talks about animals and says she would really like to help care for a pet. She loves puppies, kittens, baby birds, and squirrels. Her favorite thing about herself how everyone compliments her red hair!

Brandy will do best with a family that can provide close supervision and guidance. She will benefit from a stable home environment where there is a consistent routine with clear expectations and boundaries. She will do best in a home where she can be the youngest child.
(6069SS) *Vigo County*

Nathan (15)

Nathan likes to know how things work and enjoys taking things apart and putting them back together. He likes to be helpful and often offers to set the table for dinner. Nathan loves horses and likes to care for them, even if it means cleaning the stalls! He also likes skateboarding, NASCAR racing, and watching movies. Nathan can be a sweet, loving boy. He likes to engage in one-on-one activity with adults. Nathan likes playing basketball and is a Pacers fan. Nathan's favorite food is bacon and he would like to visit Nevada or Kenya someday.

Nathan needs a family that can provide a safe, stable home environment with good supervision and clear expectations and boundaries. Nathan has a brother with whom he will need to maintain contact. (6086DH) *Putnam County*

Paul (12)

Paul is a friendly and kind little boy who likes to help others. He is known for helping his peers with their school work or even with their chores! Paul likes playing video games and reading comic books. He likes being outdoors and playing basketball with his friends too. Paul enjoys school and is making mostly A's and B's on his report card. He enjoys science and learning about space. He likes rap music and says one of his favorite artists is Lil' Wayne.

Paul needs a loving family and would benefit greatly from having positive adult role models. He will do best with a family that will be supportive and encouraging. He needs a stable home with structure and consistent rules and consequences. (6089BD) *Madison County*

Damont (14)

Damont is a sweet and lovable boy. He enjoys playing video games, PlayStation, and Xbox, especially football and basketball games since those are his favorite sports to play. He likes school and is a good student. He describes himself as "nice and fun." He loves reptiles and dogs. Damont is eager to be part of a family and enjoys participating in activities with his foster family. He enjoys going to church and hopes his new family will share this value. He would love to travel "everywhere" and thinks he will play football for the Saints someday.

Damont needs a loving family that will make a permanent commitment to him. He would prefer a home in a city with a mom and a dad. He is at his best in a structured environment with clear boundaries and expectations. (6099KY) *Allen County*

Opening hearts. Changing lives.

De'Angelo (16)

De'Angelo is creative in many areas including art, sculpture, music, and poetry to name a few! He is gifted at drawing cars and airplanes. During the summer he enjoys playing basketball and football. During the winter he uses his energy to build forts, pack snowballs, and make snow angels.

De'Angelo needs to feel a true sense of belonging with a strong family that can dedicate themselves to meeting his multiple needs and helping him develop a sense of self-worth. De'Angelo will do best in a home with a consistent routine and structure, as well as clear boundaries and expectations. (7000SS) *Marion County*

Jory (16)

Jory is a laid-back, friendly young man who likes DC and Marvel comic books. He enjoys playing video games and watching television. He is a funny young man and he describes himself as "nerdy, nice, and sleepy." He writes fictional stories and likes to make illustrations. He loves big dogs and if he had one, he would name it Krypto since that was Superman's dog's name. Jory gets along well with others, especially when they have similar interests. He enjoys being around people and thinks he would like to have siblings around his age. He hopes to travel to Japan and Italy and to learn French. He wants to be a physicist or a cartoonist when he grows up and he wants to go to Harvard for college.

Jory would like to be part of a small family that is loving and caring and has time to spend with him. He would do well in a home that fosters his talents and encourages him in his writing, drawing, and schoolwork. His new family will need to be supportive as he continues to work through his grief and loss issues. He would do well in a home where he can have a structured environment and educational support. Two-parent homes with older or no other children are preferred, but single-parent homes will be considered. (7001DH) *Morgan County*

Andrew (14)

Andrew likes to draw things and then give his drawings to others. He is a bright young man who is very creative, artistic, and athletic. He is very likable and has a good sense of humor. Andrew has a great imagination. He can be very kind and giving. Andrew loves animals and says his favorite animals are dogs, cats, and bunnies. He likes watching the Colts, building with Legos, and collecting Hot Wheels cars and Bakugans. Andrew has an interest in the military and would like to build or design machines someday.

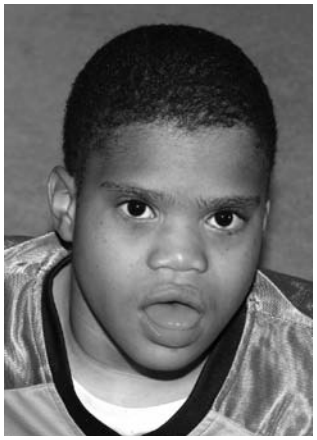
Andrew needs a family that can provide clear boundaries and expectations as well as good supervision. He would benefit from having a strong, positive male role model. The family best suited for Andrew will be able to commit to spending the time necessary to bond with him and help him feel secure while he heals from past traumas. (7004BS) *Monroe County*

Robert (16)

Robert is a bright, articulate young man who loves playing sports. He is friendly, outgoing, and loves to be the center of attention. Robert's favorite sport is basketball and he hopes to play on a team once he joins his new family. Robert is eager to be adopted and has stated, "I want to be part of a family that loves me for who I am and enjoys doing things I like." Robert especially hopes his new parents will want to attend his school athletic events to support him when he plays. In addition to sports, Robert enjoys playing video games and spending time with friends.

Robert hopes to be part of an active two-parent family either as an only child, or with other children near his age. Robert has siblings with whom he will need to maintain contact. (7010BD) *Bartholomew County*

Da'Jaion (11)



Da'Jaion has a cheerful demeanor and a contagious laugh! He enjoys playing with small toys, especially ones with lights, sounds, or music. His favorite toy is a tambourine in the shape of a turtle. While he cannot walk independently, Da'Jaion utilizes a wheelchair and a stander. He is able to scoot around on the floor and can cover ground pretty quickly! Da'Jaion can drink from a sippy cup and feed himself finger foods. His favorite food is probably Cheetos.

Da'Jaion needs a loving family that can provide 24-hour supervision and total care for him. Families with knowledge and experience with special needs children are preferred. (7016KY) *Allen County*

Zen (15)

Zen is a friendly and easygoing young man. He describes himself as an "outdoorsy kind of person" who is "easy to get along with, funny, and hardworking." His favorite outdoor activities include hunting, fishing, camping, and riding dirt bikes. He likes sports and enjoys both playing and watching football, basketball and baseball. Zen likes school and says his favorite subjects are math and science. He thinks he would like to join the army one day and perhaps become a weapons technician. He loves animals and has always wanted to name a dog "D-O-G."

Zen gets along well with other children and says he would really like to have an older brother or siblings near his age. He would like to have both a mom and a dad, but is open to being part of a single-parent family as well. Because he loves the outdoors so much, Zen would love to live in a rural setting. He would enjoy being able to have pets too. An active family that likes outdoor activities and sports would be a good match for Zen. He will do best in a home that has structure and communicates clear boundaries and expectations. He would benefit greatly from having a strong, positive, male role model. Zen has some birth family members with whom he would like to maintain contact. (7018BS) *Knox County*

Matthew (16)

Matthew likes being outdoors and enjoys playing sports, camping, and landscaping. He is very interested in electronics and likes playing video games and being on the computer. Matthew loves music, dancing, and art. He is a big eater and he likes to cook when he has the opportunity.

Matthew would like to be part of a family. He will need a family that can provide structure and clear boundaries and expectations. He would benefit greatly from having strong, positive male role models in his life. (7027SS) *Marion County*

Zach (13)

Zach is very athletic and enjoys taking part in sports activities. His favorite sports are basketball and hockey, but he also likes football, skating, and golf. Zach loves being outdoors and likes riding his bike and going swimming. He has an artistic side as well and likes to do drawings. He would love to be a clothing designer in Paris when he grows up. Zach is very well-mannered and fun to be around. He has a sweet, shy smile and is easy to talk to. Zach likes school and says his favorite subject is Math. His favorite books are ones about Martin Luther King, Jr. He loves to learn about history. Zach enjoys attending church and hopes his new family will share that value.

Zach needs a family that can provide a healthy combination of structure and nurturing from strong, loving parents. He would benefit greatly from having a strong, positive male role model. (7037SS) *Marion County*

Nathan (13)

Nathan is a lively boy with energy to spare! Nathan is bright and inquisitive and has a good sense of humor. He likes to help others and likes to please adults. Nathan enjoys hands-on work and would do extremely well working alongside a father figure. He enjoys playing with and working with electronics. He loves the outdoors and likes fishing, biking, and camping. Nathan loves animals and likes to help care for them and play with them.

More than anything, Nathan wants to be adopted and to have a permanent family. Nathan is looking for a family that will stick by him and give him a sense of belonging. Nathan might be at his best as the youngest child in the family, or in a context where he could be the main focus. He is affectionate and responds to firm, loving boundaries and consistent discipline. Nathan has a brother with whom he will need to maintain contact. (7040BD) *Bartholomew County*

Look for this symbol throughout our children's pages; it indicates that they have recorded a video message. You can view their video on-line at **www.adoptuskids.org/states/IN**.

Emily (11)

Emily likes to go to the park and play on the swings. Her foster mother describes her as, "the sweetest little girl in the world!" Emily is unselfish and generous and likes to help others. She likes school and says her favorite subjects are reading, math, and free time. Emily likes to play matching games, read rhyming books, sing, and play outdoors. She describes herself as, "nice, thoughtful, and only silly a little tiny bit." She wants to play soccer and be a cheerleader someday. When she grows up, Emily wants to be a police officer because, "they are nice and they help people and they wear police hats and drive police cars."

Emily is an affectionate little girl who needs a family that can provide structure, consistent rules and consequences, support, and encouragement. She would like a mom and a dad and she prefers to have no animals in the home. Emily has siblings with whom she will need to maintain contact. (7041KY) *Allen County*

Joshuah (13)

Josh is looking forward to being part of a family that will enjoy spending time with him. He likes going to new places and he wants to visit Africa someday. Josh loves playing catch and watching television. His favorite subject in school is science "because it is so fun!" He enjoys playing video games, playing outdoors, and wrestling. He wants to be a famous wrestler when he grows up. Josh also likes drawing and playing with toy cars and action figures. He thinks he would like to take martial arts or kung fu lessons.

Although Josh would love to have a mom and a dad, he would also be open to a single-parent family. He enjoys attending church and participating in church life. Josh needs a loving family that can provide structure, clear boundaries, and close supervision. (7045KY) *Allen County*

Vince (7)

Vince is a sweet, loving little boy who likes to cuddle and play. He has a bright smile and enjoys interacting with people. Vince likes playing with musical toys, playing with puzzle shapes, and jumping on the trampoline. He is very mobile and likes to walk while holding on to things or crawl around on the floor. Vince is able to communicate using gestures and some sounds.

Vince needs a loving family that will work with him to achieve his full potential. He needs a family that can provide 24-hour care for all his basic needs. Families that have experience caring for medically fragile children are desired. (7046SS) *Marion County*

Jerome (12)

Jerome is a very likeable, easygoing young man. He is bright and does very well in school. He is active in extra-curricular activities and especially enjoys theatre and being in school plays.

Jerome is eager to be adopted and would like to have siblings if possible. He would like to be part of an African-American family says he would be most comfortable with a single mother. Jerome needs a loving, nurturing family that will support him as he deals with grief and loss issues, and also help him achieve his potential. (7048KY) *St. Joseph County*

Jasmine (13)

Jasmine is active and energetic and loves to sing and dance! Her favorite artist is Beyoncé. Jasmine enjoys being the center of attention. When she grows up, she wants to be a model or a babysitter. Jasmine thinks she would like to live in the city because a city could provide more opportunities to become what she wants to be. Jasmine is outgoing and friendly and gets along well with other children. She describes herself as, "pretty, smart, and nice," and she likes shopping and playing with her dolls. She enjoys going to and singing at her church.

Jasmine wants to have a normal life and longs to be part of a family. She will need a family that will be patient and nurturing as she continues to heal from past trauma. Jasmine would do well with or without siblings, as long as she is able to have one-on-one time with her parent or parents. Both single-parent and two-parent homes will be considered. (7051KY) *Allen County*

Morgan (15)

Though shy at first, Morgan can be very charming and friendly once she gets to know you. She likes to be active and enjoys playing sports such as volleyball and basketball. Morgan is very bright and is a good student. She likes spending time with friends, listening to music, and going to movies. She also likes playing board games, doing craft activities, and working on her scrapbook. Morgan loves animals and has even been a volunteer for the local animal shelter.

Morgan thinks she would do best with a single mom and hopes to have other children in the home near her age. She needs a family that can provide structure and understanding as she adjusts to her new home. Morgan has a sister and a grandfather with whom she will need to maintain contact. (7054MO) *Randolph County*

Sean (14)

Sean is a great musician and plays the trumpet. His favorite thing about himself is that he is musically inclined. Sean can also play the guitar, banjo, and piano. He loves being around animals, especially horses and big dogs. His hobbies are stamp collecting and fishing. He also enjoys swimming and boating. Sean likes to play basketball or video games for fun. Sean's favorite place to eat out is KFC and he likes to get the gizzards there. Sean has an above average IQ. Sean can be very helpful, friendly, and outgoing in the right setting. When he grows up, he would like to go into construction management or bounty hunting. If those two careers do not work out, he would like to become a policeman or go into the Navy.

Sean would benefit from a loving, nurturing home with a strong male role model. He would like to have an active mom and a dad and he prefers the city to the country. (8004BD) *Hamilton County*

Breion (13)

Breion would love to have a pet Komodo dragon, which he would name "Awesome." Breion has an active imagination and loves to create art and draw pictures. He hopes to design computer games for a living when he grows up. Breion has a very strong sense of determination and likes to be able to try new things. He would love to go surfing in California someday. Breion spends his days playing basketball and paintball, swimming, and making new friends. He also really enjoys jumping on the trampoline and shopping. Chips are his favorite thing to purchase.

Breion is an easygoing child who likes to talk, be listened to, and feel as though what he says matters. Breion would benefit from a two-parent home with a strong father figure and a structured, consistent schedule. (8006IA) *Lake County*

Justin (14)

Justin is very sweet-natured. He has a great sense of humor and a great smile. He loves martial arts! "Karate Kid" is his favorite movie and he will happily show off the karate moves he learned from the movie to anyone who will watch. He hopes to one day take martial arts classes. Justin takes pride in accomplishing new things. He would like to play on a softball team during the summer and he would love to learn Chinese.

Justin enjoys activities that help him grow and develop. With assistance, he is able to identify and complete tasks that he needs to complete. Justin would like to maintain contact with his brothers and current foster parents. He is very loving and caring towards his siblings and caregivers and he has a close bond with his friends and family. He hopes to have a big brother in his new home. (8008BS) *Vanderburgh County*

Jennifer (17)

Jennifer has a wonderful sense of humor and loves to play practical jokes. She relates well with peers and adults. Jennifer enjoys doing arts and crafts and coloring. Jennifer also likes fishing, drawing, shopping, attending movies, talking on the phone, and watching television. She is very friendly. She is shy when meeting new people, but when she becomes comfortable in social situations, she becomes talkative and engaging.

She would like to live on a farm with animals. She enjoys chores related to taking care of pets. She especially enjoys caring for bunnies and horses.

Jennifer needs a home to provide her with love and attention. (8014BD) *Jennings County*

Victor (16)

Victor has a winning smile and enjoys giving back to the community through his volunteerism. Volunteering is very important to Victor. Victor likes animals and his favorite animals are horses.

Victor enjoys being around people and plays well with children of all ages. He has many interests including, drawing, doing puzzles, taking bike rides, and participating in sporting activities. Victor likes to be active and has participated on both soccer and basketball teams. Victor likes to assist in preparing meals and his favorite food is pasta. Victor would like to be a Marine when he grows up.

Victor will do well in a two-parent or single-parent home. The family would need to be patient and flexible as this would be help Victor transition into the home. Victor's family will need to be loving, stable, and supportive of Victor and his interests. (8018MO) *Delaware County*

Nicole (16)

Nicole is a shy, sweet, and loving girl. She takes a little while to warm up in social settings, but once she does, she is helpful and has a good sense of humor. Nicole is cooperative and well-behaved. She is a good listener and responds well to redirection.

Nicole participates on the volleyball team and is athletic. She enjoys working out and running! Her favorite subject is history and she likes to learn about it. She is very intelligent and she does well academically. Nicole is artistic and she enjoys reading, writing, drawing, and photography. She is active in her church youth group.

Nicole needs consistency, structure, and a family that likes to keep busy. She also needs a family that is committed to supporting her emotionally. She is open to all types of families, but would really thrive with a strong female role model. (8019KY) *Elkhart County*

Keirsten (16)

Keirsten loves sushi! She is an outgoing child with a lot of personality. She is very calm and kind. Keirsten enjoys being around people and animals and thinks she would like to be a vet or a doctor someday. She is a skilled artist and enjoys singing and playing the guitar. Soccer, volleyball, and basketball are her favorite sports to play. She also likes to read and write poetry. Keirsten enjoys camping and going on road trips. One day she would like to go to Australia to try surfing. She is not even afraid of sharks!

An ideal family for Keirsten would be either a single or two-parent family with younger children. The family should be supportive and patient and be able to provide a structured and nurturing family life. (8027BS) *Daviess County*

Brenna (15)

Brenna is extremely friendly and outgoing. She smiles and laughs often. Brenna is a bright, energetic, and highly intelligent child. She enjoys reading and watching movies. She also loves to spend time outdoors and learning about nature. Brenna has an active and creative imagination. She is active in the school choir and loves to sing. She does well in school and interacts well with her teachers and peers. Brenna is passionate about animals and their wellbeing. Brenna has expressed interest in becoming a veterinarian when she is older.

Brenna would benefit being placed with a couple or a single-parent home with older or younger children. The family would need to be patient, supportive, encouraging, and nurturing. Brenna has a half-brother who is very important to her and she would need to maintain contact with him on a regular basis. (8031DH) *Montgomery County*

Jose (15)

Jose is polite and friendly. He is a great speller and does well in school. He likes to play video games, construction games, and do puzzles. Jose likes to help around the house doing chores like making his bed, cleaning his room, taking out the trash, and cooking. He has expressed interest in working on cars and would like to be a mechanic when he is older. Jose likes dogs and enjoys watching "Animal Planet." His favorite colors are blue, red, green, and orange. Jose's favorite foods are meatloaf and spaghetti. His favorite places to eat are Red Lobster and Golden Corral. He likes county music and going fishing.

Jose would thrive in a two parent home that is able to provide structure, affection, and stability. The family would need to be clear with their expectations and be very consistent. It would be beneficial for Jose to be the youngest in the family or to be in a home with no other children.
(8032SS) *Marion County*

Dakota (15)

Dakota is a very intelligent, polite, athletic boy with a good sense of humor. He does well at competitions; he was the co-champion at his summer camp's canoe race last year and he cannot wait to race again someday! Dakota enjoys playing basketball and doing tricks with his yo-yo. He also likes to lift weights and play video games. His favorite holiday is Christmas. He wants to be an aviation mechanic when he grows up and he is great at math, which he thinks will help him in his career. Dakota appreciates art and music, especially R&B music. He likes to draw tattoo and tribal art. Dakota's favorite book is A Game of Thrones. He hopes to visit Greece and Italy someday to learn their history, see the ruins, and eat authentic food.

Dakota will be most successful in a two-parent home with no other children in the home. He needs a family that will challenge him intellectually and provide him with consistency, structure, and a sense of security. Dakota desires to be a part of a family that has family values and routines, such as eating together at the table and going to church. (8034DH) *Montgomery County*

Daniel (12)

Daniel loves to go fishing, ride his bike, and play outside! He has a lot of energy and loves all things outdoors. He likes to go camping with his foster family, climb trees, swim, and build forts. He is a very bright little boy and likes reading, playing video games, and learning about sharks. Daniel is very creative and has a talent for drawing. He has a big heart and is very friendly. Daniel loves animals and would enjoy having a dog.

Daniel would do well in a loving home that can provide encouragement, structure, and clear boundaries and expectations. Daniel will need to maintain contact with his brother. (8038MO) *Jefferson County*

Cassie (12)

Cassie likes to stay busy! She spends her time playing baseball, doing science homework, and shopping for clothes and jewelry. Her favorite color is purple and she likes to eat at Golden Corral. When she grows up, she would like to be a singer. Until then, she would just like to go to movies, amusement parks, and a Justin Bieber concert.

Cassie needs a faithful family that will help her with accountability and guidance. She would do well in a two-parent or single-parent home where she can be the youngest child. Cassie would like to live in the city, but more importantly, she has stated that she wants a place to call home. (8051KY) *Allen County*

Look for this symbol throughout our children's pages; it indicates that they have recorded a video message. You can view their video on-line at **www.adoptuskids.org/states/IN**.

Kristian (10)

Kristian loves penguins, lions, BBQ, meatballs, cheesy potatoes, baseball, and the colors blue and green. He would like to be a police officer or work in an ambulance someday. He loves to play Xbox, ride mopeds, and play with toys. He especially likes Harley building kits. Baseball is his favorite sport. He also enjoys attending and singing along at church. He is silly, funny, active, and an especially good listener. He is the top speller in this class and he loves reading!

Kristian would do well in a family that can provide a highly structured environment, clear expectations, and encouragement regarding his education. Single-parent and two-parent homes will be considered. (8052MO) *Delaware County*

Taylor (16)

Taylor is a bright girl with a great attitude! She has a natural charisma and is friendly and outgoing. She converses easily with others and is creative, talented, intelligent, athletic, and resilient. She loves to learn new things and she has a good sense of humor. She likes to keep a journal and loves to be active.

Taylor needs a nurturing, stable family that is wholeheartedly committed to her on a long-term basis. She needs a family that can provide lots of supervision and support. A single mother or two-parent home that can provide clear expectations, consistent discipline, and structure would be best for Taylor. (8061KY) *St. Joseph County*

Chris (17)

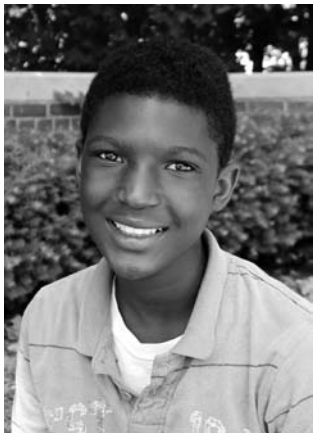
Chris is a laid-back, shy, and imaginative child who likes to play video games, color, and watch movies. He also likes to shop for shoes and video games. Chris loves playing with action figures, telling jokes, and playing independently. His favorite thing about himself is that he is very good at spelling. Chris would like a room of his own and would love to have a dog or a turtle. His favorite kind of dog is a Great Dane and if he had one, he would name it Scooby Doo after his favorite cartoon.

Chris has stated that if he could have a family, he would not mind siblings as long as he will not be forgotten. He is hopeful for his future, but may take extra time to bond since he is quite shy. The ideal family for Chris would enjoy the indoors as much as he does. They would need to be very patient, nurturing, and consistent with their routine. Two-parent homes or single-parent homes with a strong support system will be preferred. His new family should be willing to commit to his emotional health and educational needs. (8065DH) *Howard County*

Brandon (13)

Brandon is a charming and fun-loving child. He likes to play basketball, football, and baseball. He prefers to be outdoors and loves going to parks to ride bikes, skateboard, or go for walks. Brandon would like to be a truck driver someday because he likes to travel. If he could pick a place to go on a vacation, he would choose Georgia. He also hopes to have a pet gerbil at his new home.

Brandon needs a family that will provide structure for him and understand how to best meet his educational and emotional needs. He would do well in a two-parent home with older siblings. (8067MO) *Jay County*



Caleb (13)

Caleb is a very loyal friend. He makes friends easily and he enjoys telling jokes and making other people laugh. He is compassionate and caring and will defend those he feels are being mistreated. Caleb enjoys video games and watching movies. He has a desire to succeed in life and works hard to achieve his goals. He would like to be an astronaut someday.

Caleb would like to have older siblings. He would prefer to live with a single mother who is African-American, but two-parent homes will be considered as well. He needs a patient family that understands the importance of healing and will advocate for his education. He needs love, stability, and a sense of security. He would do well in a structured environment with firm boundaries. (8070BS) *Vanderburgh County*

Precious (13)

Precious is quiet, artistic, and very funny. She enjoys writing fictional stories and writing in her journal. She loves to listen to music and she enjoys drawing and making crafts. Precious hopes to one day visit Jamaica because it looks beautiful and she thinks she would enjoy the weather there. She also hopes to have her own room at her new home.

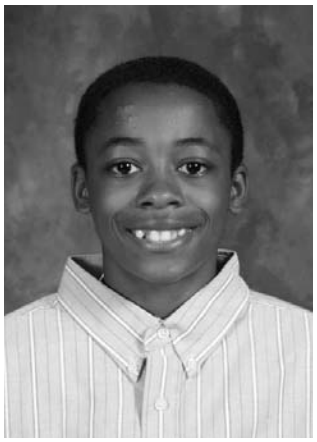
Precious would do well with an active family that can provide nurturing, structure, and consistency. She would like to live in the city and have a mom and a dad, siblings, and pets. Her new family will need to be able to provide appropriate supervision and give Precious time to adjust to a new environment. (8072BD) *Clark County*

Niccole (16)

Niccole finds the humor in situations rather than dwelling on the negative. She is very outgoing and funny. She has a great personality and enjoys laughing and making others laugh. Niccole can crochet baby blankets and she has played drums in the past. She enjoys reading and she likes to write poetry. If she could choose a place to vacation, she would visit Portland, Maine. Nicole loves to dance, especially to country or hip-hop music, and she hopes to one day play softball on a team.

Niccole will need a home where the family is active and able to provide appropriate nurturing, structure, and consistency. She needs supervision and clear boundaries, as well as a family that is patient while she adjusts to a new environment. She would do well in a family that has a good understand of teenagers who have experienced trauma and loss. Single-parent and two-parent homes will be considered. (8073BD) *Clark County*

Bernard (13)



Bernard is a sports enthusiast! He loves to play basketball and football. Bernard wants to be a professional football player when he grows up. He also likes video games and drawing. Bernard has a real sense of pride and just loves to be praised. He readily shows his trophies that he has received.

Either a two-parent or single parent home will be considered. Bernard needs someone he can identify with who has an interest in sports i.e. football and/or basketball. He needs the caregivers to be firm and fair. Bernard needs nurturance almost as much as bread and water, and needs an abundance of unconditional love. (8085KY) *St. Joseph County*

Aiden (8)

Aiden is a friendly and outgoing little girl who loves to tell jokes. Her foster mom describes her as a "funny prankster." Aiden likes to watch SpongeBob SquarePants and Gilmore Girls. She hopes that she can play on a soccer team someday. Her favorite subject is math and she enjoys going to school. In her free time, she likes to ride her bike, swim, watch Harry Potter, listen to country music, or eat cheese pizza. She would love to have a pet cat and she wants to someday visit an amusement park with roller coasters and water rides.

Aiden would like a mom and a dad. She prefers homes in the country because she likes to play outside. She would do well in an experienced family with a lot of structure and patience. She needs a family that can provide time, energy, and close supervision. Aiden loves animals and would do well with pets. Single-parent and two-parent homes will be considered.
(8087MO) *Dearborn County*

Zion (12)

Zion is very charming and outgoing! He has a great sense of humor and loves to be the center of attention. He is very good at competitions, especially games and sports. Basketball is his favorite sport, but he is great at football, running, and a variety of other sports. He loves video games and hanging out with his friends. He excels at math, is very insightful, and enjoys helping others.

Zion would do best in a two-parent home with older or no other children. His new family should be loving, but also firm with their boundaries and supervision. (8088SS) *Marion County*

What is Adoption?

Adoption is meant to establish a legally recognized, lifelong relationship between a parent and child who are not parent/child related biologically. The adoptive parent(s) becomes legally and morally responsible for the child's safety, education, health care, value development, development of life skills, as well as the day-to-day care of that child.

Our society acknowledges that the man and woman who biologically create a life are traditionally the ones responsible for the child. Our society created adoption as a means to meet the needs of children whose biological parents are not able to assume the responsibilities of parenting.

Originally, adoption laws were based on "ownership"-type principles and focused on the rights of adults. However, over time, laws have become much more focused on meeting the emotional, physical, spiritual and developmental needs of the child.

In the past, the two people who biologically gave them life raised most children. This is no longer the case in our country. Today, single parents, grandparents, stepparents, foster parents or other parents acting as guardian are parenting a majority of children. Many children are now experiencing what it is like to have multiple sets of parents, grandparents and extended families. It is common for a child to experience a series of adults functioning in parental roles in their family.

Children who are adopted always have at least two sets of parents. For these children to be able to understand who they are, it is important for them to come to know, at some level, each of the parents who have had a part in creating the life they are living. All children try to make sense of these complex relationships. The more they know about the people to whom they have had any type of parental tie, the more successful they will be at developing a more complete picture of themselves.

According to Vera Fahlberg, a child and family expert and author, we can divide the parenting role in a child's life into three parts. Part One, ***the Biological Aspect of Parenting***, gives life itself to a child. The biological parent also determines the sex of the child, eye color, hair color and texture, intellectual potential, temperament, potential talents as well as some of the medical conditions that may surface as the child develops. Racial and ethnic heritage are also determined by the biological factors.

Part Two, ***the Legal Aspect of Parenting***, is financially responsible for the child. It is the legal parent's responsibility to keep the child safe and secure. The legal parent makes all important decisions for the child, for instance, deciding where the child will live, what school the child will attend, what medical care is given, etc. This parent is also legally and financially responsible for the child's actions.

Part Three, ***the Parenting Aspect of Parenting***, sees to the day-to-day care of the child. This parent is responsible for providing love and discipline. This parent models behavior for the child to copy. This is the person who cooks meals, washes clothes, helps with school work, takes care of the ill child, watches the child's ball game etc. This person is the child's primary educator who teaches values, religion, and most life skills.

For any child, it would be much easier to understand life if the same one or two people filled all three of these parental roles throughout the child's entire life. For many children, and all adopted children, multiple people are involved. Most children are able to do quite well with multiple "parents" as long as transitions are handled appropriately and the child has someone to talk with about the changes. In fact, many very successful adults credit their success to having had many parent models and mentors along the way.

Circumstances and the legal system may change who provides two of these three parts of parenting to a particular child. However, circumstances and the legal system cannot change the biological connection. **The child's bonds to the biological parents are permanent and important to whom that child is as a person.** Anyone planning to adopt a child needs to recognize and value this fact.

Recognizing this is the only way that you will be able to understand the identity questions that the child will wrestle with as he or she grows and matures. The adoptive parent, who assumes both the role of legal parent and parenting parent for their adoptive child, can help them reach their highest potential by helping the child deal with such issues.

In a legal sense, people become a member of a family in one of three ways: by birth, by marriage or by adoption. "Family" is defined in our legal structure as two or more people who: 1)

have biological ties; or 2) make a long-term legally binding commitment to each other.

When entering a family by birth, the child shares genetics as well as cultural and ethnic heritage with others in the family.

When entering a family through adoption or marriage, family members blend themselves emotionally with another person or persons who usually differ in genetics and heritage. There generally is no biological tie. However, governments and societies have developed ways to recognize the great importance and permanence of such deep, emotional commitments.

Laws, regulations and practices have been developed to give persons related by adoption and marriage comparable rights and responsibilities as those related by birth. Our society expects all families, whether formed by birth, adoption or marriage, to be permanent connections that offer love, acceptance and support for all members.

How Do I Start The Adoption Process in Indiana?

The Adoption Process for a child who is a ward of Indiana requires the supervision of the Department of Child Services. The process begins with Family Preparation and parents are required to attend educational workshops and complete a Family Preparation Assessment, sometimes called a Home Study. You can learn more about the process in another section of this book. Prospective Adoptive parents must be recommended to the Indiana Adoption Program after their Family Preparation is complete and approved.

You will be given the contact information of those in your community responsible for helping you with Family Preparation and your contact information will be submitted to your local Training Coordinator and to your local county Department of Child Services. The Training Coordinator will send you a schedule and they may contact you about registering for the educational workshops. You can also choose to contact your community agencies.

If you have an approved Family Preparation Assessment or Home Study from the Indiana Department of Child Services and want more information on a child introduced in the Picture Book, contact the Indiana Adoption Program. You will be given the contact information for the child and your contact information will be submitted to the child's social worker and Special Needs Adoption Specialist.

We encourage you to contact the Indiana Adoption Program first in order to ensure that you communicate to the proper individuals responsible for any child featured in this book

To begin to inquire about Family Preparation contact the Indiana Adoption Program:

Call 1-888-25-ADOPT or e-mail at snap@childrensbureau.org

How to Adopt Overview

The information below provides an overview of the steps involved in adopting a child from the foster care system. This information has been reprinted in part from the National Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) and can be read in more detail on their website at **www.nacac.org** or at **www.adoptachild.in.gov**.

Step 1: Educate Yourself about Adoption

Where Do I Start Learning?

Ask adoptive parents where they started their adoption journey and you will get many answers. For some their process began with reading a newspaper or magazine article. Maybe they found adoption material on the Internet. They may have checked out a book on adoption from their local library. Others may have known someone who had already adopted and talked with them about expectations and what steps to take. Others may have looked in the phone book for adoption agencies in their area, then called and received basic information, either on the phone or in the mail.

The more information you have, the better choices you can make for yourself and your children-to-be. Individuals must choose for themselves when and how to gather the information they need.

National Adoption Organizations

The National Adoption Information Clearinghouse (NAIC) publishes a wide variety of adoption fact sheets, many of which are free or very inexpensive. It also provides information about state and federal adoption laws, and tracks upcoming adoption conferences. NAIC's web site includes a searchable collection of adoption-related articles and report abstracts, as well as a directory of more than 5,700 public and private adoption agencies, support groups, and government officials. To learn more, contact:

NAIC
330 C St. S.W.
Washington, DC 20447
888-251-0075 or 703-352-3488
fax: 703-385-3206
e-mail: NAIC@calib.com
web: www.childwelfare.gov

North American Council on Adoptable Children

This national organization offers information and resources to support adoption of children from the foster care system. They host a national conference each year for adoptive families and families waiting to adopt.

970 Raymond Avenue, Suite 106
St. Paul, MN 55114
phone: 651-644-3036
fax: 651-644-9848
e-mail: info@nacac.org

Adoption Conferences

Many national, regional, and local groups hold annual adoption conferences with workshops geared toward new or prospective adoptive parents.

- Some publishers and booksellers produce or market many child welfare and adoption-related materials. Some of the best known include:

Written Materials

Child Welfare League of America
440 First St. N.W., 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20001-2085
202-638-2952 • fax: 202-638-4004
web: www.cwla.org/pubs/welcome.htm
Headquarters
2395 Crystal Dr., Suite 250
Arlington, VA 22202
Phone: 703-412-2400 • fax: 703-412-2401

Tapestry Books
P.O. Box 651
Ringoes, NJ 08551
877-266-5406 • fax: 609-737-5951
e-mail: info@tapestrybooks.com
web: www.tapestrybooks.com

- Your phone book. Adoption agencies, advocates, attorneys, support groups, and more can be found listed in the Yellow Pages under "Adoption."
- Use your public library. Most libraries now have online access so you can use the Internet, find listings of periodicals, and do inter-library transfers. A wealth of free information can be located through these means.
- Your home computer can be a gateway to adoption information. The Internet has no shortage of information about adoption.

Self Assessment

Children don't need perfect parents, just one or two individuals willing to meet the unique challenges of parenting and make a lifetime commitment to caring for and nurturing their children. One of the advantages of special needs adoption is that almost any responsible adult can become an adoptive parent. Prospective parents do not have to be rich, married, under 40, highly educated, or homeowners to adopt. Far more important are personal characteristics like:

- a belief in adoption and an ability to commit
- patience and perseverance
- a good sense of humor and talent for keeping life in perspective
- a love of children and parenting
- the ability to roll with unexpected changes, stresses, and challenges
- the ability to deal with rejection without taking it personally
- the ability to accept without judging
- tolerance and understanding for your child's conflicting feelings and your own
- an awareness that healing doesn't come quickly, all wounds cannot be healed, and your child may not attach to your family
- the strength to be consistent and set limits
- a willingness to learn new parenting techniques and advocate for your children's educational and medical needs
- resourcefulness

If you have all or most of those qualities, then ask yourself these questions:

- Do I clearly understand why I want to adopt?
- If applicable — do my partner and I work as a team? Are we both committed to adoption?
- If applicable — have I talked with my own children and considered their feelings?
- Does my lifestyle allow me the time necessary to meet the needs of a special child?

Think carefully about your answers to these questions. You may decide to pursue a different type of adoption, consider foster care, or realize that adoption really is not for you. Take the time to make a good decision, because it is a decision you and your adoptive child will live with for life.

In addition, before seriously contemplating special needs adoption, prospective parents must honestly evaluate their desire and ability to successfully parent children who have troubling pasts and uncertain futures. Many children who become available for adoption at older ages have not received the early care that kids need to develop a strong sense of security, trust, and self-esteem. Many also suffer from conditions caused by past trauma, or prenatal exposure to alcohol or drugs. Children whose backgrounds include traumatic experiences, abuse, and/or neglect may exhibit symptoms of distress such as:

- aggressiveness
- attachment disorders
- attention deficits and hyperactivity
- bed wetting
- defiance
- depression
- impulsiveness
- learning disabilities
- low self-esteem
- lying
- poor peer relationships/social skills

Fortunately, through therapy, medication, and consistent care, children can overcome or at least better cope with many of these challenges.

Most children put their new adoptive parents through a period of testing to see if the parents are truly committed or just waiting for an excuse to desert the child as others have done before. To improve your chances of successfully adopting a child who has special needs, be prepared to offer a home environment that combines extra love, support, and attention with clear structure and consistent limit-setting. Parents should also be ready to actively advocate for their child at school, with peers, and within the community. It can be immensely helpful for parents to have a support network or belong to an adoptive parent support group.

Step 2: Decide What Type of AdoptionYou Want to Pursue

Even if you already know that you want to adopt a child who has special needs, you still need to make a number of choices about your adoption. Most importantly, you need to decide what type of child you are willing to bring into your family. What disabilities and challenges (physical, mental, emotional, or behavioral) can you comfortably handle? What age range, background, and ethnicity would fit best within your household and community? Are you open to helping your adopted child maintain contact with some of his or her birth relatives? Can you welcome a group of two or more siblings into your home?

Next, you might want to consider whether you would rather work through a public or a private adoption agency. Though most children who have special needs become available for adoption through the public foster care system, both public and private agencies can help you locate a child or sibling group to adopt.

Step 3: Investigate Ways to Cover Adoption Expenses

Many agencies do not charge service fees to families who adopt children from the foster care system. However, you will need a home study, and because adoption is a legal process, you may need an attorney. The cost of a home study can vary from $0 to $3,000. Attorney fees and court costs can range from $2,000 to $5,000, and special needs adoptive families often incur additional costs for medical services, counseling, etc. — costs that may continue throughout the child's lifetime. Fortunately, due to federal and employer-initiated programs, parents have several options for covering the cost of special needs adoption.

Employer Assistance

Employers who offer adoption benefits may provide workers with:

- direct cash assistance for adoption expenses
- reimbursement of approved adoption expenses
- paid or unpaid leave (beyond federal leave requirements established through the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993)
- resource and referral services

To request a list of employers who provide adoption benefits or learn more about employer provided adoption benefits, contact: Adoption Benefits Coordinator, National Adoption Center, 1500 Walnut Street, Suite 701, Philadelphia, PA 19102; 800-TO-ADOPT or 215-735-9988.

Tax Credits and Exclusions

For tax years beginning 2008–2009 the adoption or credit has increased. See form 8839, "Qualified Adoption Expenses" and its instructions for more information. Check the Internal Revenue Services website at www.irs.gov and look under Forms & Publications.

Adoption Subsidies

If you adopt a child who has special needs, he or she may be eligible for federal adoption assistance. Adoption assistance payments are designed to help offset the short- and long-term costs associated with adopting children who need special services. Children who are wards may be eligible for adoption assistance benefits if they meet specific eligibility guidelines. Ask your child's Family Case Manager about the child eligibility for subsidies.

Indiana Adoption Subsidy

The new adoption subsidy guidelines can be found on the Department of Child Services website. Go to www.in.gov/dcs — when you look at the page, on the left-hand side are tabs. Go to the pull-down arrow of Policies and click on Child Welfare policies. When you get to that page you will see a list of Policy Changes via Administrative Letters. About 3/4 of the way down, you will find an Administrative Letter from Director Payne, titled "Indiana Adoption Program" and it has a January 2009 date. The letter is 15 pages long and outlines the entire subsidy program.

Step 4: Select an Adoption Agency

How to Find Agencies

To find as many agencies to choose from as possible, consider several of the options listed below:

- The Indiana Adoption Program is coordinated through the County Department of Child Services (CDCS) and private Licensed Child Placing Agencies (LCPA) that are contracted with the local counties to provide adoption services, including Family Preparation. You can contact the Indiana Adoption Program at 1-888-25-ADOPT or view a list of SNAP Specialists at http://www.in.gov/dcs/2747.htm for agency information in your area.
- Look in the Yellow Pages under "Adoption" or "Social Services" for private adoption agencies. If you live in a small town, you may want to check in a phone book from a larger community nearby.
- Contact adoptive parent support groups or adoptive parents for suggestions. Both are a great source of information about agencies and adoption, plus they are usually eager to share what they know with prospective adopters. To find an adoptive parent support group in your area contact your local county DCS to see if they know of one or use the Internet to search. Support groups are generally very informal and you may need to ask people in your community who have adopted to find out if a group meets near you.

Finding the Right Agency for You

To find a public or private agency that is a good fit for you, your beliefs and values, and your unique situation, compare information from several different agencies. Most will gladly provide details about their services and requirements upon request. Before selecting an agency, take the initiative to interview agency representatives by phone or in person to learn more about them. You may want to ask:

- Who can adopt from the agency?
- What kinds of children does the agency place (ages, backgrounds, etc.)?
- Does the agency work with the foster care system or is it exclusively a private adoption agency?
- Where do the agency's children come from, and how many are legally free for adoption?
- How long, on average, must one wait for a child? What is the time lapse between application and placement?
- How much does a completed adoption cost-in total and part by part?
- What are the assessment or home study requirements?
- What services — such as parenting classes, support group activities, access to therapy and counseling, and respite care — will the agency provide before and after a child is placed in your home?
- Can the agency provide references from parents who recently adopted from the agency?

Step 5: Let Your Agency Know You Are Serious about Adopting

When you call an agency to let staff there know you are interested in adopting, the person you talk to may ask a series of screening questions or simply volunteer to send literature about the agency. If you want to adopt relatively soon, find out how you can get the process started.

One common first step is an orientation meeting or training session for prospective adoptive parents. At the meeting or training you will likely:

- meet social workers and learn about policies and practices regarding adoption
- learn what types of children are available for adoption through the agency
- learn about foster care
- be asked to examine your feelings about adoption, and judge if adoption is the right choice for you
- gain insight into the challenges and rewards of adoptive parenting
- obtain application materials

Step 6: Adoption Application

The application process may be different between private agencies and those agencies (LCPA) that contract with the DCS for the Indiana Adoption Program. If you are adopting a child who is in foster care, you may need to attend several of the educational workshops before you begin the application or Family Preparation process.

If you find that the application process is hard to understand, ask the agency or another adoptive parent for help. Don't let the challenges of completing forms keep you from pursuing adoption.

Find out how long it will take for the agency to process your application once you have completed the forms. Ask when you should next expect to hear from the agency, and how you can schedule and prepare for an assessment or home study.

Step 7: Attend Adoption and Parenting Classes

Public agencies commonly require pre-placement training to acquaint prospective parents with issues that can arise after a child or sibling group is placed with them. School-aged adoptees bring not only unique special needs, but also a history of life experiences that will affect interactions with adoptive parents, new siblings, schoolmates, and others. Issues related to disability, culture, early abuse, and a child's birth family should all be discussed before a child is placed in your home.

Prospective adoptive parents who want to be approved to adopt children through the Indiana Adoption Program must complete 26 hours of adoption preparation training in scheduled workshops. Pre-Adoption Training is scheduled through your local Training Coordinator. To find out who the Training Coordinator is in your area contact the Indiana Adoption Program.

Step 8: Begin the Family Preparation Process

The Family Preparation process can loosely be defined as an educational process designed to help your social worker learn more about your ability to parent and provide a stable home, to teach you about adoption and its effect on children and families, and to prepare you to parent a child whose experiences and history are very different from your own. Everyone who hopes to adopt must have a completed Family Preparation Assessment, also called a home study. Depending on the agency, the worker, and the prospective parents' cooperation, the process can take anywhere from two months to a year.

Items You May Need for a Family Preparation Assessment (Home Study)

Specific requirements for assessments or home studies vary by agency, so be sure to ask for a list of the items and information your agency needs. The following items are commonly required during the assessment process:

- an autobiographical statement — a statement you create about your life history
- certified copies of birth certificates for you, your partner, and any children
- a certified copy of your marriage license
- certified copies of divorce decrees
- the death certificate of a former spouse
- certified copies of the finalization or adoption decrees for any adopted children
- child abuse and criminal record clearances, or a notarized statement from the police declaring that you and your partner have faced no felony convictions
- income verification (may include tax returns, W-2 forms, and paycheck stubs)
- a statement of health provided by a physician, which might include lab test results or a statement of infertility
- written references from friends, employers, neighbors, etc.

At some point in the process, you may also need to pay for the home study. The cost through a public agency may be quite low or even free; other agencies typically charge between $500 and $2,000 for a completed study.

Questions You May Be Asked

During Family Preparation meetings with your worker, you can expect to answer questions about your background, your education, your job history, your marriage, your leisure activities, your religion (particularly for religiously affiliated agencies), and your experiences with children. For instance, the worker may ask:

- What is your family like? How will you integrate your new child into your family?
- How will your extended family treat an adopted child?
- How is your marriage? How do you make decisions, resolve conflicts, and express your feelings?

- Why do you want to adopt?
- What is your home like? Are there places for your child to play or spend time alone?
- What is your neighborhood like?
- How do you plan to address discipline issues with your new child?
- What was your family like when you were growing up? How were you raised? Are you close to your parents?
- Where do you work? Is your schedule flexible enough to accommodate the responsibilities that come with parenting?
- What sort of child care arrangements will you make for your child?

The aim of any assessment or home study is to help the agency locate the best home for each child it places, and make good matches between prospective parents and children. If you have questions about the process, ask your social worker or agency.

Step 9: Begin Searching for a Child

If you adopt through the Indiana Adoption Program, you are urged to complete training and your Family Preparation process before you begin searching for a child. It may take several months for you to complete the process and become approved to adopt, so a child that you see listed in the Picture Book now may not be available several months from now.

The children are listed in the Picture Book by their first name, followed by an identification number. The last two letters of the identification number are the initials for the SNAP specialist for the child. The SNAPs and their contact information can be found on the back inside cover of the Picture Book.

If you adopt through a private agency, learn how the agency will conduct a search. What criteria do they use to match children with families? Are they willing to search outside your immediate area for a child? If you learn of a child in another state, will the agency pursue the child for you?

Step 10: Considering a Child

Before agreeing to accept any child or sibling group for adoption, learn as much as you can about the child — including prenatal care and exposure to drugs or alcohol, birth parents' medical histories, attachments to foster families or other relatives, foster care placements, relationships with siblings, interests and talents, etc. Most agencies want adoptive parents to get to know children before agreeing to adopt. If the child has certain medical conditions or other disabilities, decide if your family is prepared to address issues that may arise from the child's situation.

If you agree to adopt and accept placement of a child whose birth parents' rights have not been voluntarily surrendered or involuntarily terminated (known as a legal-risk placement), you must accept the chance that the child could be returned to his or her birth parents. Until birth parents' rights are terminated, the child cannot legally become a member of your family and must instead stay in your home as a foster child.

Questions for Prospective Adoptive Parents to Ask

a. What is known about the child's birth history?

b. What is known about the child's developmental history — physically, mentally, emotionally and socially?

c. Is there any evidence of handicap? Any suspected learning difficulties?

d. When was last contact with any birth family member?

e. Are there pictures the birth family can pass on, or any family memento?

f. Is there a Life Book for the child?

g. Are there any siblings? Will it be possible or beneficial for ongoing contact with siblings (if they have been separated)?

h. What social and medical history is available on the parents? On extended family members or siblings?

i. Do the parents have a history of drug or alcohol abuse? Was the mother using substances during the pregnancy?

j. What was the home environment like? What was the environment of the foster home(s) like?

k. How many moves or placements did the child experience and why did they occur?

l. What is the child's current adjustment status?

m. Has the child been prepared for the adoptive placement? How can you help?

n. What is the child's current health status? Does the child have any allergies?

o. Is there any history of physical, sexual or emotional abuse? What treatment has been pursued?

p. What method of discipline works best with the child?

q. Does the child accept and give affection?

r. Does the child have any therapeutic needs or treatment plans?

s. What adoption subsidy options are there for the child?

Step 11: Prepare for Your Child's Arrival

Anticipate how the addition of a new family member will affect your life and plan accordingly. Depending on your situation and the child you adopt, you may need to:

- Update the family's insurance. Adoptees can be covered under your health insurance from the date they are placed with your family. Group health insurance carriers must insure adoptees under the terms of their parents' policy and cannot deny coverage due to pre-existing conditions. Add a child to your health insurance plan within 30 days after he or she is placed in your home. If your child is eligible for an adoption subsidy, he or she may be covered through Medicaid. Also change beneficiary designations on life insurance policies and update wills as needed.
- Get and keep a copy of the adoption decree with the child's amended birth certificate. Once the adoption is finalized, that document may be sealed and neither you nor the adoptee can access it. Without it, some adoptees have had trouble getting passports and other official documents. With it, adoptees may have an easier time searching for their biological roots, if and when they decide to do so.
- Prepare to get a new social security card and birth certificate for your child that recognizes the child's new last name and family situation. To claim your child as a dependent for tax purposes, the child must have a social security number.
- Learn as much as you can about the child's habits and personality. Talk to the child's foster parents and worker so you can learn information that will help ease the child's transition into your family. What are the child's favorite foods and games? What is the best way to comfort the child?
- Keep items that tie to the child's past. Encourage the child to bring all his possessions from previous homes, and ask the foster parents and workers for copies of any pictures they have of the child. Never throw away broken toys or worn out clothes unless the child wants to. Familiar objects and smells are comforting, and the child needs you to respect that he has a past and prior attachments and loyalties.
- Make your house child-friendly. Reposition or remove household objects that could be dangerous to your new child. Prepare the child's room to make it welcoming and to signal that the area belongs to him or her.
- Inform your other children about changes that will occur. Tell your children how their roles may change when the new child arrives. Prepare them to share, adjust schedules, and withhold judgment during the transition. Include everyone in visits and trial weekends before the child is placed, and establish clear ground rules for behavior, interaction, and discipline.
- Negotiate an adoption assistance agreement. Parents who adopt an eligible child with special needs from a public or private agency can receive federal or state benefits for their child. Ask your agency what steps you must take to obtain a subsidy and negotiate an adoption assistance agreement, including any post-adoptive services and subsidies.

Step 12: The Child is Placed in Your Home

If you adopt a younger child, you may need to find day care. If you adopt an older child, you may need to enroll him or her in school; arrange for therapy, counseling, or tutoring; and identify respite care options. You might also want to join an adoptive parent support group.

Children who are placed for adoption through public agencies may move in with an adoptive family as soon as the parents complete required pre-placement visits and are approved to adopt-provided the timing is not unnecessarily disruptive to the child's schooling or other activities.

When a new child is placed in your home, you will assume temporary legal custody. For a few months, while your family undergoes the inevitable adjustment period, your agency will monitor how the placement is proceeding.

The monitoring period typically lasts about six months to a year. During this time, the worker may call or visit to assess how you and your new child are adjusting, and to answer questions. If all goes well, at the end of the monitoring period the agency will recommend to the court that the adoption be approved.

Step 13: File a Petition to Adopt

An adoption petition is the document filed in court that initiates the legal aspect of adoption. Through the petition, adoptive parents formally request permission to adopt a specific child. To file a petition you will likely need the following information and documentation:

- the child's birth certificate or birth date and place of birth
- a written statement that confirms your desire and suitability to adopt, as well as your ability to provide financially for the child
- a written declaration that the adoption is in the child's best interest
- your name, age, and address
- the date on which and from whom you received custody of the child
- a statement of the legal reason why the birth parents' rights are being (or have been) terminated
- a disclosure of any relationship that you share with the child (other than as an adoptive parent) — such as being the child's aunt, grandparent, or stepparent

Step 14: Finalize the Adoption

Your adoption is not legally complete until your newly created family goes through the finalization process. Finalization hearings usually take place within a year after a child is placed in the home. Before scheduling a hearing, check with your agency to make sure you have completed the necessary paperwork. If you are missing required documents, the finalization could be delayed.

The finalization hearing is a judicial proceeding, sometimes held in the judge's chambers, during which adoptive parents are granted permanent legal custody of their adopted child. The hearing, which usually lasts only 30 to 60 minutes, is designed to establish the legality of the new family unit, and confirm that the adoptive parents are willing and able to provide for their new child.

Who Should Attend the Hearing

The following individuals generally attend the finalization hearing:

- the adoptive parents and adoptee(s)
- the adoptive family's lawyer
- the agency social worker who placed the child with the adoptive parents

What the Hearing Involves

To verify that the adoption should take place, the court will attempt to establish that the child has been placed in a safe, loving home. Expect to list all the identifying information included in your adoption petition and answer questions such as:

- Why do you want to adopt?
- How will you care for your new child?
- How will your family adjust to a new child?
- Is there anything the court should know before finalizing this adoption?

As soon as the judge signs the adoption order, you gain permanent legal custody of your child. Finalization is the last formal step in the adoption process and marks the official beginning of your new family. From this point, learn as much as you can about post-adoption services (like respite care, support groups, etc.) that can help you make the most of your new role as an adoptive parent.

Common Challenges of Children With Special Needs

Children in the Indiana Adoption Program are often considered to have "special needs." Special Needs can mean different things to people. The Adoption Program has been referred to as a Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP) and the regional representative coordinating the adoption process for a child is called a SNAP Specialist.

Special Needs are the unique challenges each child faces and will require parents to assist them in their childhood development and schooling in a knowledgeable way. Special Needs can describe physical disabilities, medical conditions, emotional difficulties and developmental issues.

Children in the Indiana Adoption Program are often considered to have "special needs." Special Needs can mean different things to people. The Adoption Program has been referred to as a Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP) and the regional representative coordinating the adoption process for a child is called a SNAP Specialist.

Special Needs are the unique challenges each child faces and will require parents to assist them in their childhood development and schooling in a knowledgeable way. Special Needs can describe physical disabilities, medical conditions, emotional difficulties and developmental issues.

Abuse

Many of the children, regardless of their age, in the Indiana Adoption Program have experienced abuse. This can mean physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or any combination of these types of trauma. Abuse generally leaves its mark with behavioral problems, physical impairments and therapeutic needs that require the attention of parents and professionals working together to benefit the child's future development.

Attachment

This term describes a child's ability to form relationships. Children who have been abused, neglected, or have experienced disruptions in significant relationships may face challenges in creating new relationships.

Attachment Disorder

An attachment disorder is a condition in which children have difficulty forming loving, lasting close relationships. Attachment disorders vary in severity, but the term is usually reserved for those who show a nearly complete lack of ability to be genuinely affectionate with others. They may seem distant, insincere or uncaring and have difficulty trusting others.

Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD)

ADD/ADHD is a diagnosable, treatable, biologically based disorder. The primary symptoms include some combination of being inattentive and being distracted, being impulsive, and in some children, physical restlessness or hyperactive behavior.

Developmental Disabilities (DD)

This term describes many conditions that may be mild or severe and generally includes any physical, mental or emotional condition, which will continue to inhibit the normal developmental progress of a child. Many children have educational requirements that must be met through the Special Education process of their school

Drug-Exposed

A child born to a mother who used drugs such as cocaine or certain pharmaceuticals while she was pregnant may have damage to their nervous system. A newborn will appear stiff and rigid and have prolonged crying episodes and be at an increased risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Some children will develop behavior and learning difficulties.

A child's challenges can range from mild to severe, and be temporary or permanent. The environment provided in a child's future development, that may include you as their parent, will to a great degree affect the measure of their challenges.

Emotional Disability (ED)

Abuse, trauma and sometimes genetics can result in various degrees of multiple emotional challenges. This term is also used as eligibility criteria for services at school through Special Education under state and federal law.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAS/FAE)

Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND)

FAS/FAE is a set of physical, mental and neurobehavioral birth defects associated with alcohol consumption by a child's birth mother during pregnancy. Prenatal alcohol exposure does not always result in FAS—although there is no known safe level of alcohol consumption during pregnancy. Some children affected by alcohol exposure before birth do not have the characteristic facial abnormalities and growth retardation identified with FAS, yet they have brain and other impairments that are just as significant. Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND) describes the functional or mental impairments linked to prenatal alcohol exposure.

Learning Disability

Children with learning disabilities may be of average or above average intelligence but have difficulties remembering or understanding information. This term is also used as eligibility criteria for services at school through Special Education under state and federal law.

Mental Disability

Mental disabilities is a term that is used to describe a wide variety of different challenges and can affect children in ways that are unique to each child, especially in regards to levels of severity. This is also a term used as eligibility criteria for Special Education services.

Neglect

Neglect is the absence of essential and healthy nurturing of a child for their physical, intellectual, and emotional development. Neglect includes physical neglect, child abandonment and expulsion, medical neglect, inadequate supervision, emotional neglect and educational neglect by parents, parent substitutes, and other adult caretakers of children. Children who have experienced neglect may be--problems.

The Legal Aspects of Adoption

Prospective adoptive parents should consult an attorney for legal advice and as they prepare to adopt a child.

Selecting an Attorney

Federal and state laws that apply to foster care and adoption require certain steps to be followed prior to the finalization of an adoption. It is important to have an attorney to represent you in the adoption process. Your family, friends or individuals you know who have adopted may be able to recommend an attorney for legal advice and you can find out more information on attorneys from your local county Bar Association. Sometimes it is helpful for an attorney to have knowledge of the foster care system.

For a referral to an attorney trained by ACT in adoptions from foster care, or for a free consultation with an ACT-trained attorney, please view the following website for contact information at: www.adoptioninchildtime.org

Attorney Fees

Attorney fees vary around the state. You will need to ask the attorney what fees they charge and how they bill their services. Since some children are eligible for an adoption subsidy (a one-time reimbursement of legal fees or non-recurring adoption expenses with a maximum expenditure of $1500 per child) your attorney may be able to assist you in applying the subsidy to their fees.

Approval

Prospective adoptive parents need an approved Family Preparation Assessment (Home Study) to be recommended for a child who is a ward. Your local county Department of Child Services (DCS) and/or the private agency (LCPA) that contracts with the county must determine if you have been approved. You are required to have written approval before a child can be placed with you for adoption and through your local court jurisdiction.

Agency Supervision

Indiana law requires that adoptions be granted only after a period of supervision has been met. The child and adoptive family relationship must be supervised by a local county Department of Child Services or private child placing agency (LCPA) that contracts with them. The length of the supervision period is at the discretion of the court, however most courts require a standard time period of six months.

Required Consents

The consent of the child's mother, if she is living, is required by law to complete an adoption. The consent of a child's father who has established paternity or signed a paternity affidavit is also required. The county Departent of Child Services (DCS) may have completed a court action to terminate the parent-child relationship so that a child who is a ward can be legally free for adoption, whether the child's parents have consented or not determines the type of court action that is necessary. You will need the consent of the CDCS that has the responsibility of care and supervision of the child you wish to adopt for the court proceedings, unless the court finds that their consent is not necessary to serve the best interests of the child.

Adoption Petition Filing

In Indiana, an attorney needs to file the adoption petition and represent the family through the court process. A petition may be filed in the county where the pre-adoptive parent resides, or in the county where the child resides, or where the Department of Child Services (DCS) or private agency (LCPA) has custody of the child. If you are not an Indiana resident, you may petition to adopt a child who is a ward of Indiana in the county where the LCPA or DCS has custody or the county where the child resides.

If you are married, both you and your spouse must sign the adoption petition. Partners of an unmarried couple may not petition to adopt together and in such cases, only one partner may be the petitioner.

Adoption Filing Fees

The adoption filing fee consists of the following: The adoption history fee, which is $20 and the putative father registry fee, which is $50. Both of these fees are sent to the State Department of Health for records maintenance; and the county clerk's office fee, which can range from $100 to $200. The court may not require payment of the clerk's fee if you are unable to pay it based on an affidavit regarding your income and expenses.

Adoption Assistance

If a child has been determined eligible for adoption assistance, the adoption assistance agreement MUST be signed by all parties before the final adoption is entered.

Adoption Chart

There are four basic types of adoption: public agency adoption, domestic private agency adoption, international adoption, and independent adoption. As the chart below shows, requirements, costs, and timing vary between and within the different types of adoption. To decide which type of adoption is best for you, think seriously about the type of child you would like to adopt (for example, an infant, an older child or group of siblings, a child from another country, a child who has special needs, etc.).

Type of Adoption	Definition	Children Available	Approximate Cost	Who Can Adopt	How Long It Takes
Public agency adoption	an adoption directed and supervised by a state or local Department of Human Services (or Social Services, or Human Resources, or Health and Welfare, or Child and Family Services, etc.)	children with special needs (kids who are harder to place due to emotional or physical disorders, age, race, membership in a sibling group, backgrounds); rarely infants	from $0 to $1,500 (depending on the state, up to $1,500 of "nonrecurring" adoption costs for eligible special needs children may be reimbursed)	flexible eligibility requirements for adoptive parents; on a case-by-case basis, will consider single parents, parents over the age of 40, parents who have other children, parents with low incomes, etc.	starts slowly, but for those who have an updated home study, placement can occur as soon as a few months after selecting a child
Private agency adoption	an adoption directed and supervised by a privately funded, licensed adoption agency	sometimes handle special needs children; more commonly associated with younger children and infants	$6,000 to $25,000; lower for special needs children; some agencies have sliding fee scales	agencies may recruit parents based on race, religious affiliation, etc.; for infant adoptions, birth mother often chooses	a few months to a few years (sometimes longer for infant adoption)
International adoption	process of adopting a child who is not a U.S citizen, which may be accomplished privately through an attorney, or through an international adoption agency	about 88 countries currently allow their children to be adopted by U.S. citizens—6 countries in Africa, 20 in Asia, 32 in Europe, and 30 in Latin America; ages range from infant to teens; health conditions vary; generally infants	$7,000 to $30,000 (varies by country; travel and travel-related expenses may be additional)	depends on agency and country requirements; some will accept single parents, most prospective parents are between 25 and 45 years old	six months to several years depending on the child's age and health, and the country's political climate
Independent adoption (not legal in all states; also known as private adoption)	an adoption initiated by prospective adopters and completed with help from an attorney or adoption counselor		$5,000 to $40,000 (includes prospective parents' cost of finding a birth mother, certain birth mother expenses, and attorney's fees)	birth mothers typically choose the adoptive parent — preferences tend to run toward younger, affluent, married couples	variable; as long as it takes to find a birth mother who will see the process through to finalization

Reprinted by permission from the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC)

Youth Connections Program

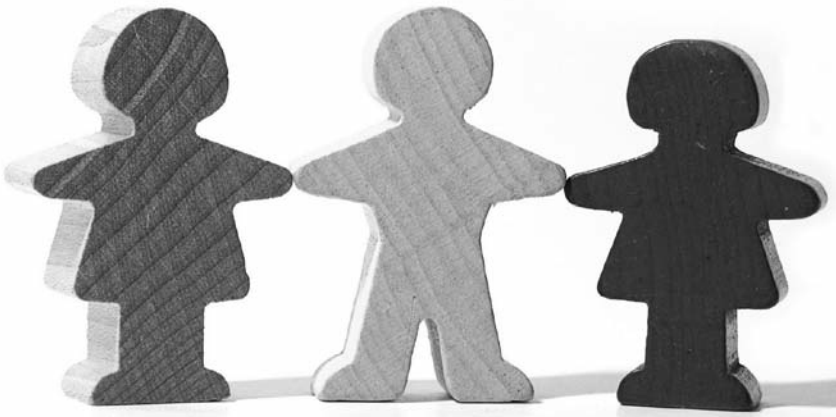
The Department of Child Services (DCS) works with teens who are ages 14 through 18 for whom an adoptive family has not been identified or who have expressed that they do not want to be adopted; but the youth need a caring adult in their life to help them make the transition to adulthood.

The Youth Connections Program has been implemented to assist teens who will be on their own when they leave foster care. Every young person aging out of foster care should have at least one caring adult in their life whom they can count on to be there for them when they need support, guidance, advice and resources.

What can you do? Consider that a teen on their own will need someone to talk to; for advice or a sympathetic ear or to celebrate a birthday, they may need help finding a job, finishing school, or locating a safe place to live, a place to do laundry or use the telephone, a ride to work, an occasional meal, some emergency cash, they may need a coat or someone to advocate for them.

Youth Connections Program Specialists will provide support to the adults and teens to help build and sustain a relationship that will nurture a long-term connection. They will assist in identifying Independent Living services and community resources for the teen.

To find out how you can help and to receive further information on the program, please contact one of the people listed below, nearest to your own location.



Beth Prebeck
Southern Youth Connections Specialist
DCS Brown County Office
121 Locust Lane, P.O. Box 325
Nashville, IN 47448-0325
812-988-2239 (Work)
317-439-6599 (Cell)
812-988-1279 (fax)
Beth.Prebeck@dcs.in.gov

Barbara A. Gainer
Northern Indiana YCP Specialist
Youth Connections Program
217 East Southway Blvd, Suite 202
Kokomo, IN 46901
765-865-2212
765-864-3000 fax
Barbara.Gainer@dcs.in.gov

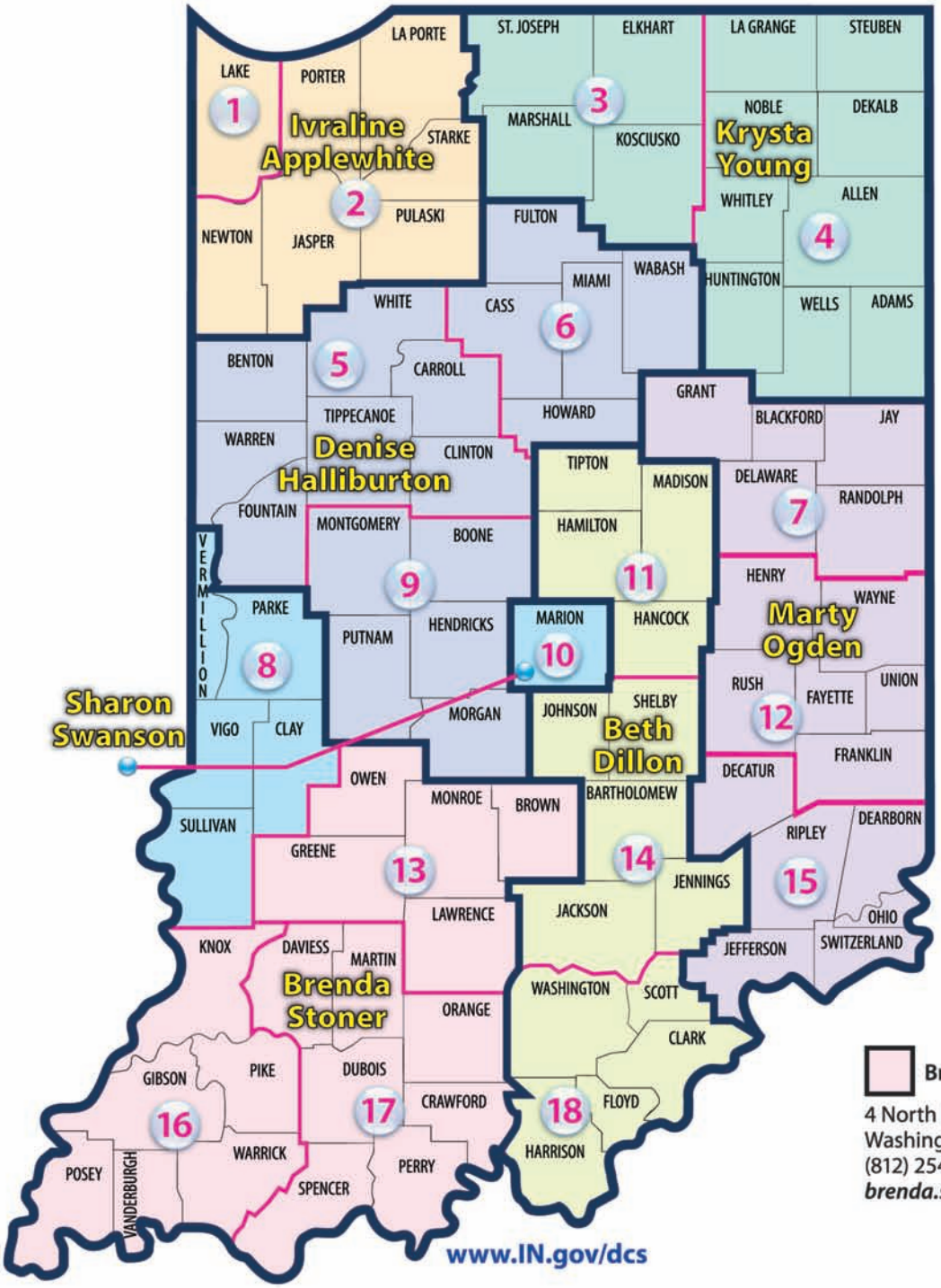
Area Specialist Locator Map

Thank you for your interest in Indiana's Adoption Program.

This map shows the Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP) specialist who coordinates adoption information for their Team.

For more information, please call the toll-free number—

1-888-25-ADOPT



Sharon Swanson

4150 N. Keystone Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana 46205-2843
(317) 544-3890
Sharon.Swanson@dcs.in.gov

Ivraline Applewhite

661 Broadway
Gary, Indiana 46402
(219) 881-2043, *ext:* 13280
Ivraline.applewhite@dcs.in.gov

Krysta Young

201 East Rudisill Avenue
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46806
(260) 458-6498, *ext:* 10373
krysta.young@dcs.in.gov

Denise Halliburton

953 Monument Drive
Lebanon, Indiana 46052
(765) 482-3023, *ext:* 12862
denise.halliburton@dcs.in.gov

Marty Ogden

1025 East Freeland Road, Suite B
Greensburg, Indiana 47240
(812) 663-6768, *ext:* 12954
marjorie.ogden@dcs.in.gov

Beth Dillon

2535 Parkway Drive, Ste. 1
Shelbyville, Indiana 46176
(317) 392-5040, *ext:* 11917
elizabeth.dillon@dcs.in.gov

Brenda Stoner

4 North East 21st Street
Washington, Indiana 47501
(812) 254-0024, *ext:* 12191
brenda.stoner@dcs.in.gov

www.IN.gov/dcs

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN, FAMILIES & FUTURE.

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES

JAMES W. PAYNE, DIRECTOR

DCS Job #1014
R7(01/12)

The Indiana Adoption Program
c/o Children's Bureau Inc.
3801 N. Temple Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46205

NONPROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Indianapolis, IN
Permit No. 7777

Opening hearts. Changing lives.

The Indiana Adoption Program
c/o Children's Bureau Inc.
3801 N. Temple Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46205

www.adoptachild.in.gov

1-888-25-ADOPT

Subscription information is availble in this book on page 3.