



Matching Assistance Program Newsletter

Waiting, waiting, and waiting some more

<http://foster-child.adoption.com/parents/waiting-waiting-and-waiting-some-more.html>

In the words of Tom Petty,

"The waiting is the hardest part
Every day you see one more card
You take it on faith, you take it to the heart
The waiting is the hardest part."

You will wait to hear from the state agency. Wait for the appointment for your first meeting. Wait for meetings for your home study. Wait for the home study to be completed. Wait to hear if you are approved. Wait to hear about a child. Wait for the informational meeting. Wait for your first visit. Wait for the final move. Wait for your finalization date.

Some placements are very quick, but most of the time you will have to wait. This is a very emotional time. You are searching for a child to add to your home. You spend time scouring the photolistings, and preparing your child's room. Why hasn't the social worker called you with a child match yet?

The simple answer is, they're busy. Social workers are working with lots of parents, and lots of kids. It is OK to remind your worker that you are still waiting and what "type" of child you are interested in. You know the old saying, "the squeaky wheel gets the oil." If you find a profile of a child that you are interested in, get the information to your case worker. This also helps them to understand what you're looking for in a child.

The age and type of the child you are looking for will greatly impact the length of your wait. If you are looking for a Caucasian child, under the age of 3, you can expect to have a very long wait. If you are willing to accept an older child, a sibling group, or a child of color, you can expect a much shorter wait.

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Foster care adoption facts from Dave Thomas Foundation

On any given day in North America, more than 500,000 children are in the foster care system, and nearly 145,000 of them are available for adoption, just waiting for the right

family to find them.

- There are 423,773 children in the U.S. foster care system; 114,556 of these children are available for adoption. Their birth parent's legal rights have been permanently terminated and children are left without a family.
- More children become available for adoption each year than are adopted. In 2009, 69,947 children had parental rights terminated by the courts, yet only 57,466 were adopted.
- Children often wait three years or more to be adopted, move three or more times in foster care and often are separated from siblings. The average age of waiting children is 8 years old.
- Last year, 29,471 children turned 18 and left the foster care system without an adoptive family.
- Adopting from foster care is affordable. Most child welfare agencies cover the costs of home studies and court fees, and provide post-adoption subsidies. Thousands of employers offer financial reimbursement and paid leave for employees who adopt and Federal and/or state adoption tax credits are available to most families.
- Every child is adoptable. Many children in foster care have special needs. All of them deserve the chance to grow up in a safe, loving, permanent home. Support and other post-adoption resources are available.
- Adopting from foster care is permanent. Once a child is adopted out of foster care, the birth parents cannot attempt to claim them or fight in court for their return. A family formed through foster care adoption is forever.
- According to a National Adoption Attitudes Survey commissioned by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, 63 percent of Americans hold a favorable view of adoption and 78 percent think more should be done to encourage adoption.
- Nearly 40 percent of American adults, or 81.5 million people, have considered adopting a child, according to the National Adoption Attitudes Survey. If just one in 500 of these adults adopted, every waiting child in foster care would have a permanent family.

NOTE: Statistical source is Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System; Department of Health & Human Services (October 2009), unless otherwise stipulated.