2021 National Adoption Month

Key Messages

(updated for National Adoption Month 2021)

Elevator Pitch
November is National Adoption Month, a month set aside to raise awareness about the urgent need for adoptive families for children and youth in foster care. Every year, in recognition of National Adoption Month, the Colorado Department of Human Services reaches out to all of the county human services departments, child placement agencies, community partners and Tribal communities in Colorado to ask for nominations of inspirational families to recognize. These families are honored at a special event and featured in a campaign aimed at inspiring other Coloradans to get involved and support Colorado’s kids.

Key messages regarding adoption
- There are 436 kids in foster care in Colorado waiting to be adopted today.
  - You’re never too old to need a family. Many of the kids waiting to be adopted are teens.
  - To learn more about some of the children and youth waiting to be adopted visit the Colorado Heart Gallery at coheartgallery.org.
- The primary goal of foster care is to reunify children with their parents. However, if that option is not available, adoption or another type of permanency is the secondary goal.
- Most kids in foster care who are adopted are adopted by their foster parents.
- Since January 2021, 551 children and youth in foster care have been adopted.
- Adoption from foster care has little to no cost.

Who can adopt from foster care
- Everyone who adopts through foster care must become a foster parent first.
- A foster parent can be anyone 21 or older who is ready to make a difference in the life of a child or youth.
- We are looking for many types of foster and adoptive families.
  - Foster and adoptive parents can be single, married, partners or friends; they can own or rent a house or apartment; and they can be all religions, races and ethnicities, and all sexual orientations, gender identities or gender expressions.
  - It does not matter if a parent is older or young, has never been a parent or is an experienced parent.
  - Colorado encourages members of the LGBTQ+ community to become foster and adoptive parents. Go to CO4Kids.org/fosterpride to learn more about Colorado’s commitment to inclusion.
- Colorado is diverse, and it is important that foster and adoptive families reflect that diversity.
  - Black, Latinx and Native American children and youth are disproportionately represented in foster care.
  - We want to encourage everyone - especially people of color - to become foster or adoptive parents.
To learn more about adoption through foster care in Colorado and to find opportunities to get involved to help children and families in your community, visit CO4Kids.org.

Businesses, nonprofits, community groups and religious organizations can host the Colorado Heart Gallery and raise awareness about the need for adoptive families in every Colorado community. Visit coheartgallery.org to help.

**Supporting messages regarding foster care**

- Children are resilient. Even when they've experienced adverse childhood experiences, such as abuse or neglect, they can overcome and reach their full potential with support from a dedicated foster or adoptive parent.
- Currently, there are 3,878 children and youth in foster care.
- In 2020, 7,970 children and youth lived in an out-of-home placement like a foster family, group home or residential treatment center for their safety.
- There are currently 2,559 certified kinship and foster families in Colorado.
  - Kinship families are trusted, safe adults who a child or youth already knows. They can be biological family members, like an uncle or grandparent, or adults who are “like family,” such as a neighbor, friend’s parent or coach. It can be scary to live with people who you have never met, which is why kinship families are preferred.
- If you’re not ready to foster or adopt, you can volunteer or mentor. Visit CO4Kids.org to find a local organization that helps families and children.