



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## CDHS Recognizes Five Colorado Adoptive Families in Celebration of National Adoption Month

*Adoptive families needed in every community in Colorado*

**DENVER** (Nov. 7, 2022) – In celebration of National Adoption Month in November and to encourage more Coloradans to consider adoption from foster care, the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) recognized five exceptional adoptive families from across the state in an event at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science on Saturday.

**“The five families we celebrate this month demonstrate the power of unconditional love and support that helps kids thrive,”** said Michelle Barnes, Executive Director of CDHS. **“This year we are celebrating several families who have adopted family members and children they know through kinship care.”**

Since January 2022, 475 Colorado children and youth in foster care have been adopted in Colorado. Currently there are 408 Colorado children and youth who are waiting for a family. Most children and youth who are adopted from foster care are adopted by their foster parents.

Every Colorado community needs adoptive and foster parents, especially families who are willing to care for children with complex behavioral and mental health needs, sibling groups and children whose first language is not English. Foster parents must be at least 21 years old and be able to provide a safe, loving and stable family environment. There are no limitations based on income, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

**“We know that people are curious about foster care and adoption and want to know more about the process,”** said Minna Castillo Cohen, director of the CDHS Office of Children, Youth and Families. **“By sharing their stories in our public awareness campaign, these five families will help us inspire others to support children and youth who need foster or kinship care.”**

The five families being recognized for National Adoption Month are:

### **Eric and Keshian Holcomb from Campo (certified by Otero County DHS)**

In 2021, first-time foster parents Eric and Keshian went from having never been parents to being parents to two boys. Soon after meeting Chazwick, now 12, they had a strong bond and wanted to provide the permanency he needed. Shortly after meeting Chazwick, Eric and Keshian received a call about another little boy named Austin, now three years old, who needed a home. The boys moved into the Holcomb’s home together in July 2021. Austin and Chazwick quickly developed a close sibling bond. Both boys were adopted by Eric and Keshian on Feb. 22, 2022. The family enjoys spending time together camping, fishing, riding four-wheelers, and being active members of their close-knit community.

### **Elisa and Evan Hopper from Colorado Springs (certified by Kids Crossing)**



Elisa and Evan first met their daughter through a foster family at their church in 2020. Elisa had briefly provided foster care previously, but Evan had not. They quickly started the process of getting licensed as foster parents and learned everything they could about Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) in order to help them better understand their daughter's unique challenges and create an environment of safety and connection. Elisa and Evan adopted their daughter, now 10 years old, in March 2021 and she has thrived with a community of professionals and extended family who formed a loving community around her. The family also provides respite care to other children and youth in foster care in their community.

**Joe and Rebecca Humenansky from Littleton (certified by Hope and Home)**

Joe and Rebecca already had four children when they became foster parents five years ago. They wanted to be a support to biological families and provide a temporary safe place for children and youth to heal. Since 2017, they have provided short- and long-term care for 48 children and youth, and have also adopted four children and youth and continue to provide foster care. They currently have 10 children and youth aged four to 19 in their home. Despite their busy schedules, Joe and Rebecca make time for all of their children to have one-on-one time with them and ensure that the children they have adopted also have regular contact with important, safe people in their lives.

**Dylan and Taylor Ledford from Del Norte (certified by Weld County)**

Dylan and Taylor were elementary school teachers in Greeley when Dylan made a connection with three of four siblings at his school who were in foster care. When Dylan and Taylor moved to Del Norte in 2020, they stayed in touch with the kids and opened up their home when a permanent place was needed for the sibling group. The couple quickly got certified as foster parents with Weld County and the sibling group of four moved in with them in October of 2020. Now ages 12 to 16, Dylan and Taylor adopted the sibling group in a virtual ceremony in November of 2021. They enjoy spending time together at home and traveling together as a family.

**Kimberly and William Murray from Denver (certified with El Paso County Kinship Foster Care)**

In 2019, when Kimberly and William's granddaughter was only a few months old, she faced severe injuries and needed round-the-clock care and a safe place to go, so they opened their home. Kimberly and William also were granted custody of a second child, her sister, in 2020 when she was only a few days old. Kimberly was transitioning into her career as an Early Childhood educator but decided to dedicate herself to caring for her grandchildren. Kimberly obtained her CNA license and started a non-profit organization, The Shaylee Foundation, which brings awareness to foster kinship care and child maltreatment. Kimberly and William legally adopted their granddaughters into a loving home a day after Williams's birthday in August 2022 after overcoming many challenges. A few weeks later, they were called upon by Arapahoe County to care for their 15 year-old niece, who recently joined the family.

*The Colorado Department of Human Services CO4Kids campaign encourages all Coloradans to strengthen families and communities. For information about how to become a foster or adoptive parent, visit [CO4Kids.org](http://CO4Kids.org).*

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