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About National Adoption Day

National Adoption Day is a collective effort to raise awareness of the more than 125,000 children waiting to be adopted from foster care in the United States.

A coalition of national partners – the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, Alliance for Children’s Rights and Children’s Action Network – founded National Adoption Day.

On November 18, 2000, the coalition and the Freddie Mac Foundation encouraged nine cities to open their courts on or around the Saturday before Thanksgiving to finalize and celebrate adoptions from foster care.

The first National Adoption Day was inspired by the innovative efforts of Michael Nash, a former presiding judge of Los Angeles County’s Juvenile Court. He opened the court on Saturdays, engaged the volunteer efforts of court personnel and finalized adoptions to reduce the backlog of one of the busiest courts in the nation.

Today, policymakers, practitioners and advocates collaborate to plan these annual, one-day events in 400 cities across the United States.

To date, the dreams of 75,000 children in foster care have come true as part of National Adoption Day events.
**Toolkit Overview**

This toolkit offers an event checklist and several sample templates to help plan your Adoption Day event.

Visit [nationaladoptionday.org](http://nationaladoptionday.org) to register your event and access brand and planning resources.

- Foster Care Adoption FAQs
- Adoption Guides
- Stories of Impact
- Your Story

**SHOP**
- National Adoption Day Gifts
- Teddy Bears
- Adoption Apparel

**LEARN**
- Foster Care Adoption FAQs
- Adoption Guides

**SHARE**
- Stories of Impact
- Your Story

**MEDIA**
Send Inquiries to news@davethomasfoundation.org

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Thank you for sharing our belief that every child deserves a permanent home and loving family.
The first step in planning an Adoption Day event is to organize a coalition of local partners to support and/or promote the event.

Participants may include:
- Courthouse(s)
- Department of Children’s Services
- Court Appointed Special Advocate Office (CASA)
- Attorneys who will finalize the adoptions
- Children’s rights groups
- Adoption agencies
- Adoptive parent groups
- Business leaders
- Religious leaders
- Elected officials and community leaders

Once event coalition members are confirmed, engage a subcommittee of volunteers to lead the implementation of the following tactics.

8 TO 10 WEEKS PRIOR

- Schedule a series of planning meetings to coordinate event details and provide updates
- Develop the event agenda, including date, time, speakers and post-event celebrations for families, as applicable
- Invite speakers and partners to participate
- Develop a communications plan to promote the event (e.g., invitation emails, social media, community calendar listings, media outreach, etc.)
- Register the event at nationaladoptionday.org
- Visit nationaladoptionday.org to download brand templates (logos, letterhead, poster, social media images and more) to create event materials
- Contact businesses, faith-based organizations and other community groups about funding, event donations (e.g., refreshments) and volunteer opportunities
- Request a proclamation of support from state and local elected officials
- Consider purchasing Adoption Day gifts and teddy bears for participating families
Event Planning Checklist

6 WEEKS PRIOR

☐ Rent audio-visual equipment, as needed
☐ Determine the stage set up, including podium, microphone and signage placement
☐ Follow up with speakers, participating families, partners, funders and elected officials regarding details of involvement, as needed

4 WEEKS PRIOR

☐ Draft the post-event press release; collect quotes to incorporate
☐ Compile a media list and submit requests to promote the event on community calendars (e.g., TV, radio, local government, schools, newspapers), as appropriate

2 WEEKS PRIOR

☐ Finalize speaker and partner bios, as needed
☐ Designate a photographer
☐ Promote the event via social media

WEEK OF THE EVENT

☐ Finalize rental equipment deliveries, set up and tear down plans
☐ Review final details with the coalition event planning committee
☐ Review the agenda and talking points with speakers and partners, as applicable
☐ Secure signed photo & video release forms from families to highlight in post-event promotion materials, as applicable
☐ Provide the media with event details (e.g., date, time, location and interview opportunities) via an email or as an advisory and determine attendance

DAY OF THE EVENT

☐ Arrive early to set up staging, signage, balloons, post-event refreshments, etc.
☐ Welcome families and partners
☐ Greet media and coordinate interviews
☐ Take pictures for follow-up articles
☐ Collect any additional quotes to include in the post-event press release and/or feature articles
☐ Coordinate post-event tear down/clean up

FOLLOWING THE EVENT

☐ Return rented equipment
☐ Distribute the post-event press release to media who did not attend
☐ Send event updates and recaps to Cynthia Billey at c.billey@kids-alliance.org
☐ Send media coverage and photos to news@davethomasfoundation.org
☐ Send a thank you note to speakers, coalition/planning committee members and others who helped make your Adoption Day event a success!
Release and authorization to photograph, video and interview.

The undersigned does hereby consent to the use of photography, video and spoken word, and does hereby authorize the [INSERT LOCAL ORGANIZATION] and National Adoption Day coalition to share in media and agency communications materials associated with National Adoption Day.

The undersigned does hereby release the [INSERT LOCAL ORGANIZATION] and National Adoption Day coalition, its affiliates and their assignees from any and all claims whatsoever arising out of, related to or based on the use of such material.

Participant first and last name (Please print)

Signature _______________________________ Date _______________________________

Address _______________________________ City _______________________________

State _______________________________ ZIP _______________________________

Email _______________________________ Phone _______________________________

Child’s name and age (please print) _______________________________ Child’s name and age (please print) _______________________________

Child’s name and age (please print) _______________________________ Child’s name and age (please print) _______________________________
[NAME OF COUNTY] COUNTY CELEBRATES NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

[CITY, STATE] — On [DATE OF ADOPTION DAY EVENT], [NAME OF COUNTY] County Court Judge [JUDGE NAME] presided over the court’s [NUMBER] annual Adoption Day. At this event, [NUMBER] children were adopted into safe, loving homes.

[NAME OF ORGANIZATIONS] supported this year’s Adoption Day celebration (if applicable).

[INSERT QUOTE FROM THE JUDGE, ADOPTION AGENCY OR A PARTICIPATING FAMILY]
“Congratulations to all of the families who are finalizing their adoptions today,” said Rita Soronen, president & CEO of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. “Collaboration among adoption professionals, judges and child welfare advocates is essential during National Adoption Day and year-round to find the more than 125,000 children waiting to be adopted from foster care the forever families they deserve.”

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About National Adoption Day
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Learn more at nationaladoptionday.org.

About the Name of Organization(s)
[ADD BOILERPLATE PARAGRAPH FOR THE PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION(S)]
Engaging Elected Officials

Following are a few ways to engage elected officials to support National Adoption Day events:

- Send a letter encouraging judges and child welfare administrators in your state to coordinate National Adoption Day events
- Issue a proclamation or co-sponsor a resolution in support of National Adoption Day
- Submit an op-ed about the importance of foster care adoption
- Provide quotes of support for use in the event press release or media interviews
- Visit davethomasfoundation.org/library to access adoption guides, PSAs, FAQs and other resources to inform your messaging and articles
- Use the hashtag, #nationaladoptionday, in social media posts and tag @DTFA so that the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption can share your posts
WHEREAS: [STATE OR CITY] recognizes the importance of giving children permanent, safe and loving families through adoption; and

WHEREAS: More than 125,000 children in the United States foster care system are waiting to be adopted; and

WHEREAS: More than [NUMBER] children in [STATE OR CITY] are waiting for permanent families; and

WHEREAS: To help find forever families for these children, the local courts of [STATE OR CITY] will open their doors on [DATE OF ADOPTION DAY], to finalize the adoptions of local children and join other organizations to celebrate all adoptions; and

WHEREAS: This effort, along with similar celebrations in all 50 states will offer children the chance to live with stable and loving families and encourage other dedicated individuals to make a powerful difference in the lives of a child through foster care adoption;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ____________________________, [ELECTED OFFICIAL TITLE] of ____________________________, by virtue of the authority vested in me, do hereby proclaim [MONTH, DAY, YEAR], as ADOPTION DAY in [CITY, STATE], and in so doing, all citizens to join in a national effort to raise awareness about the importance of foster care adoption.

_________________________________________

[ELECTED OFFICIAL NAME, TITLE]
On [DATE OF ADOPTION DAY], a special celebration is happening in our community. The [INSERT NAME OF FAITH ORGANIZATION] will celebrate [NAME OF CITY, STATE OR COUNTY] Adoption Day. Each year, Adoption Day events across the country raise awareness of the need to find permanent, loving homes for the more than 125,000 children waiting to be adopted from foster care in the United States.

This year, we join hundreds of communities across the country to celebrate all families who adopt during National Adoption Month.

Our celebration will include [LIST ADOPTION DAY ACTIVITIES], and we invite you to be involved with one day that changes families’ lives forever. At the heart of Adoption Day are the community members who help make the day memorable for new forever families. Lawyers, child advocates, judges and adoption professionals volunteer their time to finalize adoptions, and community volunteers help make this day possible.

In addition to adopting, there are many ways to show your support for adoption from foster care. Become a foster parent, mentor children in foster care or volunteer.

Learn more at nationaladoptionday.org.
EVENT REGISTRATION

Cynthia Billey
Alliance for Children’s Rights
c.billey@kids-alliance.org

ELECTED OFFICIAL INVOLVEMENT

Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute
info@ccainstitute.org

MEDIA INQUIRIES

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption
news@davethomasfoundation.org

GENERAL AWARENESS

Children’s Action Network
caninformation@aol.com

Connect

NATIONAL

ADOPTION DAY
Celebrating a Family for Every Child

nationaladoptionday.org