



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 20, 2020

Contact: Juana Aguilera
DCFS Office of Public Affairs
(213) 760-5883

****PRESS RELEASE****

**VIRTUAL NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY CELEBRATION
92 Families Welcome Foster Children into Forever Homes**

On Saturday, Nov. 21, the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the Superior Court of Los Angeles County and pro bono attorneys with the Alliance for Children's Rights and Public Counsel will complete virtual adoption ceremonies for 149 children in foster care as part of National Adoption Day.

The latter offers an opportunity for child welfare agencies, local courts and communities to raise public awareness about the need to find adoptive families for youth in foster care, and to celebrate all families who adopt nationwide.

"These children will have a stable and loving family to call their own for the rest of their lives," DCFS Director Bobby D. Cagle said. "Today, foster parents will legally become parents, reminding their child that they deserve to be loved, protected and, most importantly, that they are not alone. With this foundation, their futures are immeasurably brighter."

DCFS is one the largest public adoption agencies in the country. In 2019, 1,855 children in foster care were adopted. DCFS is committed to maintaining family connections by keeping siblings together, whenever possible, and placing children with relatives. More than 60 percent of the adoptions being finalized are for siblings including 36 groups of two or more siblings.

Last year, more than 50 percent of DCFS' finalized adoptions were relative adoptions. Currently, there are more than 300 children still waiting for an adoptive family. In past years, families gathered in the Edmund D. Edelman Children's Courthouse for their adoption hearings amid a festive celebration including refreshments, entertainment and cherished family photo shoots. The COVID-19 pandemic required substantial changes to this year's 21st National Adoption Day event to keep everyone safe.

By using an existing court-developed program to allow for the finalization of remote adoptions, hearings will be held safely using Webex to connect the judicial officers presiding in courtrooms to the families appearing from their homes.



“The court is pleased to continue our support for National Adoption Day during the pandemic,” Juvenile Division Presiding Judge Victor H. Greenberg said. “To ensure social distancing and public health, we are unfortunately unable to celebrate together in person at the Edelman Courthouse this year. However, the most important aspect of this event is the formation of new families for children and their adoptive parents. While we may not be able to enjoy National Adoption Day in our usual environment, we are together in this moment, and remain dedicated to pursuing permanence for every child we have the privilege to serve.”

Judge Greenberg will lead off a recorded virtual news conference via YouTube scheduled to begin at 8:15 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 21. To view the news conference, visit: <https://youtu.be/PyLcwLTHKnw>.

About the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

The Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) promotes child safety and well-being by partnering with communities to strengthen families, keeping children at home whenever possible, and connecting them with stable, loving homes in times of need. As the largest child protective services agency in the nation, DCFS is responsible for ensuring the safety of more than two million children across 88 diverse cities in Los Angeles County. Established in 1984 to keep children safe and support families in crisis, it is one of the 35 Los Angeles County Departments governed by the five-member Board of Supervisors with nearly 9,000 staff across 20 regional offices, specialized bureaus, and administration that cover a broad array of services and programs. The Department is led by Director Bobby D. Cagle - a former foster child and longtime social worker. For more information, visit <http://dcfs.lacounty.gov>.

#####

November 21, 2020 - 21st Annual National Adoption Day Fact Sheet

Los Angeles Foster care and adoption statistics*:

- Virtual adoptions scheduled for today: **149 children (92 families)**

23% of the children being adopted today are 10 years or older

63% are sibling groups (36 groups of two or more siblings)

Age range:

o 0-2 13%

o 3-5 37%

o 6-9 26%

o 10-14 18%

o 15+ 6%

- Number of Los Angeles children receiving child welfare services: 38,450 o 2,360 of these are youth age 18 and older in extended foster care (AB12)
- Number of Los Angeles children in out-of-home care: 21,829
- Number of Los Angeles children waiting to be adopted: 2,700 o Over 300 of those “waiting” children have yet to be matched with an adoptive family



- In 2019, there were 1,855 adoptions from foster care in Los Angeles o Of those, 940 were relative adoptions and 915 were non-relative adoptions

*Source: L.A. County DCFS Fact Sheet, Child Welfare Services – September 2020 (Data from CWS/CMS)

California Foster care and adoption statistics

- 60,778 children in out-of-home care (on 7/1/20)*
- 14,436 waiting to be adopted**
- 5,241 foster care adoptions finalized*
- 3,037 youth aged out/emancipated from foster care (in the 12-month period 7/1/19 – 6/30/20)*

*Source: Center for Social Services Research, School of Social Welfare, University of California, Berkeley

**Source: U.S. Children’s Bureau, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, AFCARS Report No. 27: Preliminary FY 2019 Estimates as of June 23, 2020

National Foster care and adoption statistics*

- 424,000 children in out-of-home foster care
- 122,200 waiting to be adopted o Of those, 41% are over the age of 8 and 21% are teenagers
- 66,000 adoptions finalized (the largest number since AFCARS began reporting in 1995)
- 20,445 (or 8%) youth aged out of foster care without permanent families

*Source: U.S. Children’s Bureau, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, AFCARS Report No. 27: Preliminary FY 2019 Estimates as of June 23, 2020

National Adoption Day (NAD) statistics*

- Number of children adopted on 2019 NAD: 5,200
- Total number of children adopted on NAD since 2000: 79,700
- Number of participating cities/counties 2019 NAD: 430
- Due to COVID-19, many participating cities are holding virtual adoption events this year. So far, over 30 NAD events across 20 states are scheduling including in Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Nebraska, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and Washington. Visit www.nationaladoptionday.org .

*Source: Alliance for Children’s Rights