

# Foster Care Adoption

## Quick Facts<sup>1</sup>



- On any given day, more than 420,000 children are in the U.S. foster care system.
- More than 114,000 children in the U.S. are waiting to be adopted - just waiting for the right family to find them.
- More children in foster care wait for adoption each year than are adopted.
- In 2009, almost 70,000 children had parental rights terminated by the courts, yet:
  - Only 57,466 were adopted from the foster care system;
  - A child waiting to be adopted has been in foster care an average of 38 months;
  - A child in foster care can wait *five years or more* to be adopted.

- The average age of the children waiting to be adopted from foster care is almost 8 years old. Many are older, in sibling groups, are minority children and/or have special needs.
- Each year, an estimated 20,000 young people "age out" of the U.S. foster care system at age 18 without an adoptive family – of those:
  - 2% earn a bachelor's degree or higher
  - 51% are unemployed
  - 25% have been homeless at some point
  - 30% receive public assistance
- In a recent survey of public opinion, 45% of those surveyed believed children were in foster care because of juvenile delinquency when the reality is that these kids have been abused, neglected or abandoned.

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<sup>1</sup> Information compiled from [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats\\_research/afcars/tar/report17.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/afcars/tar/report17.htm), [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats\\_research/afcars/trends.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/afcars/trends.htm), [http://www.fostercarealumni.org/resources/foster\\_care\\_facts\\_and\\_statistics.htm](http://www.fostercarealumni.org/resources/foster_care_facts_and_statistics.htm), and National Foster Care Adoption Attitudes Survey. November 2007. Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. P 3.