

For Immediate Release

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New Report Shows Child-Specific Recruitment Program Raises Adoptive Placements Significantly

January 6, 2012 - There are more than 107,000¹ children in the foster care system awaiting adoption in the United States, including more than 2, 400² here in North Carolina.

Nearly half of Americans have considered adoption. If just a small percentage of these families adopted, every waiting child could grow up with a permanent, safe, and loving family.

Research has shown that the children who wait the longest for adoption are more likely to have documented emotional and behavioral problems due, at least in part, to having experienced more changes—both in placements and social workers.

The Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) child-focused recruitment program by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption gives special attention to children in foster care for whom adoptive placement has traditionally been difficult. Several of CHS's recruiters are funded by the foundation and follow its model.

The [recently released research](#) from a five-year study of the WWK program shows that children served by the model are at least 1.7 times more likely to be adopted, while older children and those with greater special needs are up to three times more likely to be adopted.³

Child-Specific Recruitment

Unlike many other programs, WWK recruitment focuses on the child and the child's world.

Each child-specific recruiter carries a small caseload of 10-15 children. They carefully review each child's past experience and examine the child's present situation, including: how the child spends his/her time, whom he/she is connected to, and what activities and interests the child enjoys.

This deeper understanding and closer contact allows child-specific recruiters to:

- Develop an individualized and incisive recruitment plan for each child.

- Evaluate resources in a child's life such as extended family, coaches, teachers, and other caring adults who know the child well.
- Advocate for the child personally—in their school, place of worship, neighborhood, and larger community—to inspire a host of other advocates and identify possible placements with people who the child already has a connection to.
- Identify and recruit prospective adoptive families state-wide who are highly likely to match well with the child.
- Film an Adoption Chronicle, a video interview with the waiting child, to aid in placement.
- Facilitate placement meetings between the child and prospective families.

¹ As of September 30, 2010, according to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Administration for Children & Families' *Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System Report*.

² As of June 15, 2011, according to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Administration for Children & Families' report.

³ According to the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption's 2011 report.

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Since 1902, Children's Home Society has been one of North Carolina's leading resources ensuring that every child has a permanent, safe, and loving family. CHS works with public social service agencies and many community partners to help parents create a safe, positive setting for children to grow and thrive, to preserve families, and when necessary, to provide children with a healthy family setting through foster care or adoption. CHS is committed to our vision of being a leader in transforming families and communities so children can thrive. CHS staff and programs serve children and families in 60+ North Carolina counties each year. For more information, please visit www.chsnc.org.