



2014 Adoption & Foster Guide

Wait No More

Kansas, Missouri kids cry out for families. Focus on the Family effort will help on Nov. 1

“When, God?” the Smiths wanted to know. “When is the right time to add to our family?”

Adam and Carol already felt totally comfortable with the idea of adoption. Not only were they emotionally ready (Carol has siblings who were adopted and she considers the experience “an amazing blessing”), they were also spiritually ready. They believe that “God calls us to care for the orphans among us.”

All they needed was confirmation that the time was right.

That confirmation came when they attended a Wait No More conference organized by Focus on the Family (See side-note), and heard testimonies from families who shared how God had carried them through the difficulties and challenges that can come with adoption.

“The Lord used this time to calm our fears and quiet our hearts,” Adam recalls. “We feared our own inadequacies at meeting the challenges of these children. But the event created such excitement that we couldn’t wait for this next phase of Christ’s journey for our family.”

A few months after the Wait No More conference, the Smiths, who live in Missouri, were presented with the profiles of two kids in foster care. So Adam and



Carol committed their hearts to move forward with foster care adoption.

“They were a good fit for our family,” Adam recalled. And the children’s social worker agreed. Two months after first meeting them, Rebecca and Ryan moved in with the Smith clan. Four months later, the adoption was complete.

“The kids are bonding and growing. Both Rebecca (now age 8) and Ryan (now age 6) have become Christians and been baptized.”

The hardest part of any adoption, Carol says, is learning to blend so many different personalities and different ways of relating.

“But God has united us and made us a family,” she says.

“It has been a joy to introduce them to our God, who loves them with an unend-

ing love and has already adopted them as His sons and daughters!” Eighteen months have passed since the adoption. And Carol says, “The kids are bonding and growing. Both Rebecca (now age 8) and Ryan (now age 6) have become Christians and been baptized.”

In fact, the adoption experience has been so great that the Smiths are in the process of adopting again. Carol says, “We have more room, we have more love and with the power of Christ and our community of believers behind us, we are able to step out in faith to love these kids.”

The Smith kids realize that this will require sacrifice.

But they’ve all prayed about it and asked themselves, “Am I willing to pay the cost of answering God’s call?”

The answer they’ve come back with is YES!

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Adopt Kansas Kids



• www.adoptKSkids.org • 877-457-5430

Adopt Kansas Kids works to connect foster and approved adoptive families with children throughout Kansas who need adoption. This service is provided by the Kansas Children's Service League through a contract with the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF).

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Caring Pregnancy Options has some openings for volunteers. Please call 785-249-6130 for info or stop by our office, 2041 SW McAlister Ave, Mon - Thur 10-5. Ask for Kathy Hart.

6,167 Kansas Children in Foster Care

Each child needs a safe, stable, loving home like yours

Churches in Kansas
What are you being called to do?

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Contact: Rachel Burton
 Community Resource Specialist
 Phone: 785.409.6980

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MEET THE KIDS

continued from page 1

his bike, going swimming and spending one-on-one time with the adults in his life. Jorge really likes to read and says that reading is his favorite class in school. He enjoys being responsible for things and does well at helping around the house. Jorge struggles with transitions and will need consistency in his life. Jorge does have a few friends but likes to play by himself. Emilio is very loving and likes to be praised. He always likes helping out! He enjoys playing sports and video games. He does well at school but needs assistance in math and reading. Pilar is very aware of others feelings. She is loving and enjoys giving hugs. She is a quick learner and a strong reader.

Christopher

Case # 100928

Male, 16 years old

Siblings: None

Christopher enjoys Spiderman, Batman and going swimming. His favorite class in school is PE. Christopher requires one-on-one attention and is in a special educational setting at school. He will need frequent reminders daily to follow the rules and expectations. Christopher does not always listen to adults and will not always be truthful especially if he thinks that he is going to get in trouble. He will need to be supervised when playing with peers to make sure that his play is appropriate. He needs a family that will understand his limitations and provide him with a stable and loving environment.

Alexus

Case # 101533

Female, 12 years old

Alexus is a friendly and affectionate girl who very much wants to be a part of a family! Her hobbies include arts and crafts and cooking. Her favorite classes in school are reading, math and science; she says that these subjects are fun. Alexis will need additional supports in place at school in order to be successful academically and behaviorally. Alexis struggles with controlling her anger and can become verbally and physically aggressive whenever she is told no or when she is upset about something. Alexis needs a family who is committed, structured and loving.

Kansas foster and adoptive families get support from Project Belong

Currently in Kansas there are approximately 1,000 children waiting to be adopted and over 6,000 children in foster care.

"There are far more churches in Kansas than there are waiting children," stated Brandon Hoffman, co-founder of Project Belong. "If the Church will stand up and get involved, answering the call of James 1:27, we could provide homes for every waiting child. It would make it possible to have a waiting list of families rather than waiting children."

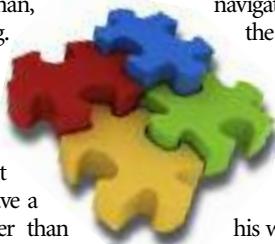
Project Belong reaches out to churches throughout Kansas to promote awareness about the need for foster and adoptive parents for children in foster care. Through church presentations and clergy meetings, Project Belong's experienced

staff strives to inform and educate the Church about the need to provide loving, safe and stable families to care for children in foster care and those awaiting adoption. Project Belong's Family Partner process allows families of faith to

navigate the beginning stages of the foster care and adoption process in Kansas with highly informed support, prayer, and encouragement for every step of the way.

Brandon Hoffman and his wife Missy are the parents of 12 adopted children, ages 9 to 33. "Throughout our journey, God has proven Himself more than faithful, and it is by His grace that we are able to share this message of love and the blessing of adoption with others," says Hoffman.

Project Belong's Northeast Kansas



Wait No More Event Details Focus On Family Hopes Public Responds

Focus on the Family has joined the Kansas Department for Children and Families, the Missouri Children's Division, local churches, adoption leaders and Metro Voice to raise awareness of and recruit permanent families for waiting children and youth in foster care.

The Wait No More adoption conference will be held on Saturday, Nov. 1, at Colonial Presbyterian Church, 9500 Wornall Rd., in Kansas City. The conference will highlight the fact that almost 400 legal orphans in Kansas foster care and 1,400 in Missouri are awaiting adoption. The conference is from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. The conference is free, however, because conference-related materials will be offered, pre-registration is strongly preferred.

"These kids are dealing with feelings of rejection, fear and mistrust, and we want to shine the light of God's love to them through adoption," said Kelly Rosati, who adopted her four children from foster care and serves as vice president of Community Outreach at

Focus on the Family. "Orphans are just one of the many groups that cannot speak for themselves, and we want to raise awareness of these precious children awaiting adoption in Kansas and Missouri."

One goal is to gain the support of churches. Kansas has more than 4,000 churches and Missouri has almost 9,000.

Conference participants will have the opportunity to hear more about the waiting children, the process of adoption from foster care and ways to support adoptive families. In addition, agency and county representatives will be on site to answer questions and help families begin the adoption process.

Since November 2008, more than 2,800 families (out of approximately 6800 that have attended events) have initiated the process of adoption from foster care as a result of Focus on the Family's 24 Wait No More events in 17 states.

For more info or to register, visit icareaboutorphans.org or call 1-800-A-FAMILY. Also, see ad on page 24.

Peoples can be reached at 785-207-9760 or kat@projectbelong.org. Schumm can be reached at 785-410-4810 or allison@projectbelong.org.

To learn more or to find out how your church can partner with this ministry, visit www.projectbelong.org or visit Project Belong on Facebook at www.facebook.com/projectbelong.

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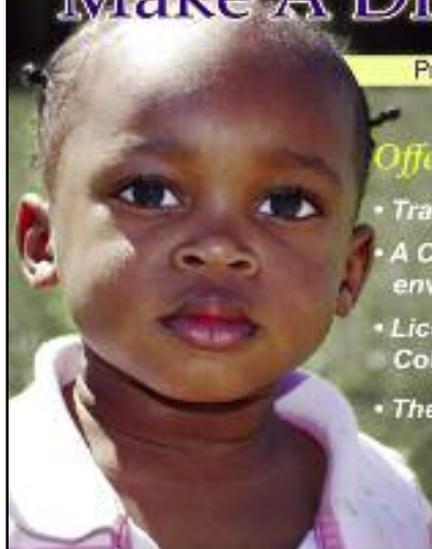


Kansas Children's Service League

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www.projectbelong.org

In Northeast Kansas, contact:

Allison Schumm 785-410-4810 allison@projectbelong.org	Kathryn Peoples 785-207-9760 kat@projectbelong.org
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Statewide the number of children awaiting adoption on 7/31/14 was **977**
Statewide, of the adoptions finalized, **66%** were by foster parents.

Help with finding a child their home.

for more information on adoptive resources visit www.st-francis.org or call (866) 999-1599

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An Informed Birthparent

By Amanda Lord
Students For Life of America

Placing my son for adoption is the hardest thing I've ever done and probably will ever do. It is uncertainty that causes much of the anxiety. The biggest stressor during the placement process was fear that my son's parents wouldn't follow through with our plan of an open adoption.

Open adoption refers to the sharing of information and/or contact between the parents and birthparents of a child, before and/or after the placement of the child, and perhaps continuing for the life of the child. Research has shown that open adoption is best for all members of the adoption triad – child, parents and birth parents. Open adoption varies with every situation.

Unfortunately many states don't yet legally recognize contracts that set the perimeters of an open adoption. Which means parents can



choose to not follow through with what they agreed to in the contract. This can leave a birthparent feeling helpless and uncertain of how their child is doing.

I went on gut instinct when choosing my son's family. I didn't have all the tools available to me to best spot adopting parents who may not fulfill a written or oral contract. There were many wonderful people surrounding me who did all they could to help but they weren't trained in the process of relinquishment. This article gives signs for birthparents and their allies to watch for when choosing a couple to raise their child. These signs will help them spot parents who may not follow through with the open adoption agreement. I encourage you to bookmark the page so you can share it with potential birthparents.

Birthparents and/or their allies should also do research on the adoption agency they are thinking

of using. Find out if the agency provides pre and post counseling. Ask to speak with a birthparent who used the agency to find out his or her experience with staff. Contact a local PRC to see if they recommend the agency. Google the agency to see if you can find complaints. In cases where communication is made through the agency, ask if there is a plan in place to keep contact between parents and birth

parents open in case the agency shuts down.

Uncertainty is a fact of adoption but that doesn't mean birthparents and adopting parents shouldn't do all they can to diminish the amount that exists.

A pro-lifer should be fully equipped to help a mother in a crisis pregnancy situation. That means being knowledgeable about all parenting options – including adoption.

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You can help a kid love Christmas

What happens when a kid is afraid at Christmas? It's not an unusual feeling for the boys and girls who enter the foster care and adoption programs at Saint Francis Community Services.



Destiny is 13 and looking for a home. Her hobbies include drawing and star gazing. Science is her favorite class in school.

Many of the kids in our program have been abused and neglected. Holidays can be the hardest time of the year.

Annie came to Saint Francis two years ago. She spent most of her Christmas Day hiding from the fights and abuse in her household. Last Christmas was the first time she felt safe and learned to enjoy Christmas. She got two gifts because generous donors to Saint Francis made sure that Annie and the rest of our 10,000 children and families under care would know the joy and love of Christmas.

Each year Saint Francis conducts our annual Christmas for Kids Campaign. We ask hundreds of people to multiply their gifts and grant Christmas wishes to children up to age 18.

Whether in our foster care program or kids waiting adoption, Saint Francis wants to ensure that all our children have a great Christmas. You can be a vital part of this outreach ministry by contacting Saint Francis at 800-898-4896 or online at www.st-francis.org.

Perhaps your church would like to sponsor a family or several individual

children. The Christmas for Kids Campaign is a great way to teach the spirit of giving and helping others during this sacred time of year.

We invite you to join with us in making sure kids have a safe and joyous Christmas.

Saint Francis is a non-profit behavioral healthcare organization, dedicated to the well-being of children and families providing community based services including foster parenting, family preservation, adoption and counseling.

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