



n a t i o n a l
adoption day
Massachusetts

*Helping CHILDREN find
"a place to call HOME"*

Adoption Fact Sheet

There are approximately 2,500 Massachusetts children in foster care with the goal of adoption, and about 600 who do not have an identified grandparent, aunt, foster parent, or other potential adoptive family. Nationwide, there are about 114,000 children in foster care in need of adoption. The waiting children in need of families tend to be school-aged children, sibling groups, children of color of all ages, and children with intellectual, physical or emotional difficulties or disabilities. The majority of these children have come into foster care due to neglect and/or abuse in their birth homes.

Who Can Adopt in Massachusetts?

- Prospective adoptive parents must be at least 18 years old. There are no strict limits on how old is "too old" to become an adoptive parent. Older, experienced parents can be valuable resources for waiting children.
- Single parents are eligible to adopt, as are gay and lesbian singles and couples.
- Parents with or without other children are eligible.
- Parents can have almost any income level, as long as there is a stable source of income to support the family.
- Prospective parents are not required to be homeowners. Many living situations are acceptable provided they are safe and suitable to the child's needs.
- There are no specific health requirements for adoptive parents, but physical disabilities or medical conditions may be a consideration when deciding what kind of child one can best parent.

What is Involved?

There is a training and approval process, known as a homestudy, which all prospective adoptive families must undergo. Once prospective parents complete the training and approval process, they are eligible to adopt children from foster care nationwide. Children who are adopted from the Massachusetts foster care system are eligible to apply for medical and adoption subsidies from the Department of Children & Families, but all will receive Massachusetts state college tuition waivers if the adoptive family lives in the Commonwealth. There are a number of free post-adoption support services available to families statewide, including support groups, respite care, counseling and advocacy.

Benefits for Adoptive Families

Many prospective parents do not know that adopting children from foster care is virtually free. A growing number of employers offer adoption assistance as part of their employee benefit packages, including time off for maternity/paternity/adoption leave, and financial incentives. In addition, Congress has made federal tax credits available for families who adopt children from foster care to help offset adoption-related costs. Benefits such as these are enabling more people to adopt children from foster care into their families. Now, all these children need is a leap of faith and courage from adults with love to share.