

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS LINDSEY P. HORVATH AND

SUPERVISOR KATHRYN BARGER

November 26, 2024

Declaring November 2024 as Adoption Awareness Month

There are over 200 children and youth in the foster care system in Los Angeles County (County) waiting for a permanent family and a place to call home. Every adopted child and youth are unique and has the potential to flourish in a loving and stable home. For this reason, it is important to promote awareness of the need to recruit loving, committed prospective adoptive families. Caring for a child or youth in foster care and making them a permanent member of one’s family requires a special kind of person—someone who is patient, accepting, affirming, nurturing, compassionate, and caring. These qualities are critical for providing long-term commitments to children and youth that include the opportunity to grow and thrive in loving environments that allow them to reach their full potential. The Departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation seek interested individuals and family members regardless of age, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, martial or domestic partnership status, physical characteristics, or national origin, to provide permanent and loving adoptive homes for children and youth in foster care.

Every year in November the County-promotes awareness to the community and

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family members about the issue to recruit loving, committed prospective adoptive families, including prospective adoptive families from a child or youth's own family or community. Due to the nature of adoption, there are several potential challenges that many adoptive parents need to be prepared to confront. These include the aftereffects of trauma or neglect, feelings of abandonment, questions of identity, and social and emotional challenges related to race. Additionally, it becomes increasingly difficult to find permanent placements for justice involved youth or youth with complex care needs. It is vital for parents to remember that not every problem, whether physical or mental, can be directly traced to a child's adoption and focusing on the whole of the child and youth's life and needs is the best way to address challenges and promote overall well-being.

During this month of November, the County is celebrating the 25th annual Adoption Day in Court on November 23, 2024, at the Children's Court in Monterey Park, California. This day is set aside for the Court to help finalize Adoptions of over 200 children and is a partnership with DCFS, the Superior Court of California, The Alliance for Children's Rights, Public Counsel, and the Dave Thomas Foundation.

Also to be highlighted is the support and service programs that contribute to adoption efforts long after an Adoption is finalized. The County's Post Adoption Services (PAS) is a specialized program within the DCFS Adoptions Division, which offers support to families and Adoptees whose adoptions have been completed and finalized by DCFS. PAS provides essential services related to Adoption Assistance Program (AAP), such as rate renegotiations, referrals to wraparound services, address change assistance, and support for residential treatment placements if needed, to name a few. Currently, the Department issues approximately 24,000 AAP checks to families who are eligible to

access PAS services. PAS also assists adult adoptees, and adoptive parents in coordinating connections between birth parents and adult adoptees.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Declare November 2024 as “Adoption Awareness Month” dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of adoption.
2. Declare November 23, 2024 as “National Adoption Day.”
3. Encourage families and community members to consider the benefits and rewards of adopting an available child by calling (888) 811-1121, visiting www.FosterLAKids.org, or seeing some of our children at <http://HeartGallery.org>.
4. Instruct the Auditor-Controller to print, “November is National Adoption Awareness Month - Adopt a Child - Call 888-811-1121 to become a foster or adoptive parent” on all County warrants; and for the Department of Human Resources to include the same message on the electronic paystub viewer on e-CAPS.

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