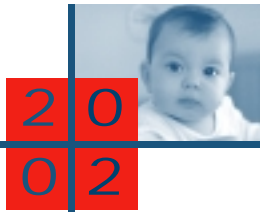


Adoption Opportunities Program



2002

ACTION

- Reauthorize the Adoption Opportunities Program and increase funding to \$50 million in FY 2003.

HISTORY

Congress will reauthorize the Adoption Opportunities Program, Title II of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, this year. The program provides discretionary grants for demonstration projects that eliminate barriers to adoption and provide permanent loving homes for children who would benefit from adoption, particularly children with special needs.

Several resources and supports exist under the Adoption Opportunities Program to assist the adoption of children. Among these is the National Adoption Exchange, which recruits homes for U.S. children waiting to be adopted. In 2000, 52,000 families received information from the Adoption Exchange on how to proceed with adoption. Currently, 5,500 children waiting to be adopted are listed with the exchange.

The Adoption Opportunities Program has funded a National Resource Center on Special Needs Adoption, which provides technical assistance and training on current issues in special-needs adoption—such as compliance with federal laws and regulations, permanency planning, and cultural competence—to state, tribal, and other child welfare organizations. Nearly 65,000 people in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands have received special-needs adoption training through the center.

Adoption Opportunities funds also support the National Adoption Assistance Training Resource and Information Network. The network's services include a hotline that provides free information on adoption subsidies to parents interested in adopting children with special needs, and a booklet on adoption assistance programs available in each state.

Adoption Opportunities funding has also helped establish the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse (NAIC), a comprehensive information center on adoption. In 1999, NAIC responded to 10,603 requests for information on adoption and disseminated more than 127,000 materials to the public.

Adoption Opportunities funds also provide support services to kinship caregiving families who have adopted the children for whom they are caring.

KEY FACTS *

- Of the 588,000 children in foster care on March 30, 2000, approximately 127,000 were free for adoption.
- Of the children waiting to be adopted from foster care as of March 2000, 38% were black non-Hispanic, 35% were white non-Hispanic, and 15% were Hispanic.
- In 1999, the average age of children waiting to be adopted was 8. Three percent of the children waiting to be adopted were younger than 1 year old, 34% were ages 1–5, 35% were 6–10, 23% were 11–15, and 3% were 16–18.
- The number of children adopted from foster care has increased in recent years: 28,000 in 1996, 31,000 in 1997, 37,000 in 1998, and 46,000 in 1999.
- Of the children adopted from foster care in 1999, 2% were younger than age 1, 45% were ages 1–5; 36% were 6–10; 15% were 11–15; and 2% were 16–18.

Child Welfare
League of America
202/638-2952
Fax 202/638-4004
www.cwla.org

- Of the children adopted from foster care in 1999, 64% were adopted by their foster parents, 20% were adopted by a nonrelative, and 16% were adopted by a relative.
- Of the children adopted from foster care in 1999, 46% waited more than one year from the time they became legally free for adoption until they were adopted.

SOURCE

* Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [The AFCARS report](#). (April 2001). Available online at www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb. Washington, DC: Author.

CWLA CONTACT

John Sciamanna

202/639-4919

jsciamanna@cwla.org



CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

Headquarters

440 First Street NW, Third Floor

Washington DC 20001-2085

202/638-2952 • Fax 202/638-4004 • www.cwla.org