



Media Relations

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**LOS ANGELES MAYOR KAREN BASS JOINS JUVENILE COURT
PRESIDING JUDGE AKEMI ARAKAKI TO CELEBRATE THE ADOPTION
OF MORE THAN 200 CHILDREN TOMORROW AS PART OF THE
COURT'S 25th ANNUAL NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY**

News Conference Kicks Off Event at 8:15 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 23

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass will join the Superior Court of Los Angeles County's Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court, Akemi Arakaki, pro bono attorneys with the Alliance for Children's Rights (Alliance) and Public Counsel, leadership and staff from the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and volunteer judicial officers to commemorate the adoption of more than 215 children by more than 130 Los Angeles County families as part of the 25th annual National Adoption Day celebration.

Juvenile Court Presiding Judge Arakaki will introduce Mayor Bass and others during a live news conference beginning at **8:15 a.m. tomorrow, Nov. 23**, with additional remarks from Alliance President and CEO Jennifer L. Braun, Public Counsel President and CEO Kathryn Eidmann, DCFS Deputy Director Kym Renner and Judge Michael Nash (ret.). The event will take place on the 4th floor of the Edmund D. Edelman Children's Courthouse located at 201 Centre Plaza Drive in Monterey Park. The news conference will also be livestreamed via YouTube at <https://bit.ly/3A0dDKP>. Media are invited to attend the in-person news conference, followed by select adoption hearings that will be open to the media beginning at 9 a.m.

"As part of the 25th Annual National Adoption Day, the Court is proud to work with its partners at the Alliance for Children's Rights, Public Counsel, and DCFS to finalize the adoptions of hundreds of children in foster care throughout Los Angeles County," said Juvenile Court Presiding Judge Arakaki. "We are so pleased to welcome Mayor Karen Bass to this special event as we celebrate the families and the safe, loving homes they are creating for their children."

"National Adoption Day is a time to celebrate the power of family and the lives transformed as a result," said Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass. "Whether you are a prospective adoptive parent, a mentor, or an advocate, your role is essential in creating a community where every child and young person has the ability to thrive with a future they deserve. Thank you to all who make this day possible and to the National Adoption Day Coalition for their tireless work to transform lives."

"National Adoption Day marks a significant milestone in the lives of countless children who have experienced foster care. For 25 years, this special day has brought hope, joy, and permanence to these exceptional young people," said Cynthia J. Billey, Director of Adoptions at the Alliance of Children's Rights. "As we celebrate this

silver anniversary, we are grateful for the dedication of social workers, attorneys, court staff, judges, and most importantly, the loving families who open their hearts and homes to children.”

“For 25 years, we at Public Counsel have been incredibly proud to partner with the Court, DCFS, the Alliance for Children’s Rights, and so many pro bono volunteers to support and celebrate families transitioning out of the foster care system,” said Kathryn Eidmann, President & CEO of Public Counsel. “We look forward to many more years of LA’s unique adoption partnership that provides families with pro bono legal support to finalize their adoption and to get in place all of the supports necessary to ensure children and their families are supported and strengthened.”

The Los Angeles Adoption Saturday program began in the late 1990s. Judge Nash (ret.), the Court’s former Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court and current Executive Director of the Los Angeles County Office of Child Protection, worked with the Alliance for Children’s Rights, Public Counsel and DCFS to organize adoption day events on Saturdays in Los Angeles County. The Los Angeles model led to the launch of “National Adoption Day” in 2000 by a coalition of national partners including the Alliance and the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, which has since expanded to courts in over 400 communities across the country. National Adoption Day is traditionally held the Saturday before Thanksgiving and celebrates the adoption of children throughout Los Angeles County and nationwide.

“Becoming a permanent part of a supportive, stable, loving family helps children grow to be confident and secure adults,” said Brandon T. Nichols, DCFS Director. “National Adoption Day celebrates new beginnings, hope and unbreakable family bonds.”

For more information on the Court’s current programs and services, follow the Court on X ([@LASuperiorCourt](#)), Instagram ([@LASuperiorCourt](#)), Threads ([@LASuperiorCourt](#)), or visit the Court’s website, www.LACourt.org.



November 23, 2024 – 25th Anniversary National Adoption Day Fact Sheet

Los Angeles Foster care and adoption statistics*:

- Adoptions scheduled for today: **224 children (143 families)**
 - 32% of the children being adopted today are 10 years or older
 - 38% are sibling groups (54 groups of two or more siblings)
- Age range:
 - 0-2 12%
 - 3-5 30%
 - 6-9 26%
 - 10-14 26%
 - 15+ 6%
- Number of Los Angeles children receiving child welfare services: 20,658 / Adoption Caseload 5,291
 - 2,509 (or 12.1%) of these are youth age 18 years and older in extended foster care (AB12)
- Number of Los Angeles children in out-of-home care: 13,557
- Number of Los Angeles children waiting to be adopted: 2,588 (freed children)
 - Approximately 250 of those “waiting” children and youth have yet to be matched with an adoptive family
- In 2023, there were 2,316 adoptions from foster care in Los Angeles (up 46% from 2022)
*Source: L.A. County DCFS Fact Sheet, Child Welfare Services – September 2024 (Data from CWS/CMS); AIS Data as of 11/1/24

California Foster care and adoption statistics

- 45,924 children in out-of-home care
- 8,180 waiting to be adopted
- 5,865 foster care adoptions finalized
- 3,520 (or 8%) in extended foster care program (age 18-20)
- 2,887 (or 13%) exited foster care through emancipation / 5,668 (or 26%) exited through adoption
*Source: U.S. Children’s Bureau, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, state-by-state-AFCARS, California Report, Preliminary FY 2022 Estimates as of May 9, 2023 – No. 30

National Foster care and adoption statistics*

- 368,530 children in out-of-home foster care
- 108,877 waiting to be adopted
 - Of those, 43% are over the age of 8 and 23% are teenagers
- 53,665 adoptions finalized
- 18,538 (or 11%) youth aged out of foster care without permanent families
Sources: U.S. Children’s Bureau, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, national-AFCARS-trends-data as of June 28, 2022; AFCARS No. 30 preliminary estimates FY 2022 as of May 9, 2023

National Adoption Day (NAD) statistics*

- Number of children adopted on 2019 NAD: 5,200
- Total number of children adopted on NAD since 2000: over 85,000
- Number of NAD participating cities/counties annually: over 400
- This year, 75 jurisdictions in 27 states across the country registered their events on the National Adoption Day website, and the NAD coalition anticipates over 400 events across the country will take place. Visit www.nationaladoptionday.org and scroll down to Events.
*Source: Alliance for Children’s Rights, Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption

National Adoption Day Los Angeles **news conference** on Saturday, November 23 @ 8:15 am (PST) on the 4th Floor of the Edmund D. Edelman Children’s Court in Monterey Park. The news conference will also be livestreamed at <https://bit.ly/3A0dDKP>.



About National Adoption Day

Today is the **25th annual** National Adoption Day.. A coalition of national partners – the Alliance for Children’s Rights, Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Freddie Mac Foundation, Congressional Coalition on Adoption, and Children’s Action Network – founded National Adoption Day to raise public awareness of the thousands of children in foster care in the United States waiting to be adopted and to celebrate all loving families that adopt.

The first National Adoption Day was inspired by the innovative efforts of Michael Nash, former presiding judge of Los Angeles’ Juvenile Court, in collaboration with the Alliance for Children’s Rights, Public Counsel, and the Department of Children and Family Services to open the court on Saturdays and engage the volunteer efforts of *pro bono* attorneys to finalize large numbers of backlogged adoptions. Based on Los Angeles’ “Adoption Saturday” model, on November 18, 2000, the Alliance and its national coalition partners the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, and Children’s Action Network organized the first-ever National Adoption Day, when *nine* cities opened their courts on the Saturday before Thanksgiving to finalize 1,100 foster care adoptions. As this grassroots effort took hold, the number of participating cities grew quickly, from 17 in 2001 to 340 in 2009 to 400 in 2018; as did the number of adoptions, from 1,500 in 2001 to 4,835 in 2009 to 5,200 in 2019. By 2007, National Adoption Day was celebrated for the first time in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Today, judges, social workers, attorneys, adoption advocates, and policymakers collaborate to plan these annual, one-day events in over 400 cities across the country and to date, the dreams of over **85,000** children in foster care have come true as part of National Adoption Day. Visit www.nationaladoptionday.org

Los Angeles “Adoption Day” Program

The Los Angeles “Adoption Day” program is a collaborative effort of the Los Angeles Juvenile Court, Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services, the Alliance for Children’s Rights, Public Counsel, and hundreds of *pro bono* attorneys to finalize large numbers of adoptions of children from the Los Angeles foster care system. The Los Angeles Adoption Days are normally held four times throughout the year. Over **44,000** adoptions have been finalized since the inception of this program in 1997.

National Adoption Month

November is also National Adoption Month. This year’s National Adoption Month theme, “*Honoring Youth: Strengthening Pathways for Lasting Bonds,*” highlights the importance of child welfare professionals helping young people build and sustain lifelong networks of support and community to provide a sense of belonging and relational permanency. Each year, around 20,000 youth leave foster care in the United States (over 2,500 in Los Angeles alone) without the support of a permanent family and consequently are at high risk of negative outcomes, such as homelessness, joblessness, poverty, and substance abuse. Finding permanency for all youth, so they don’t face aging out of the system alone, is an urgent local, state, and national priority. www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam.

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