



Adoption from Foster Care Campaign: “You Can’t Imagine the Reward” Talking Points

Key Talking Points:

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, AdoptUSKids, and the Ad Council launched a new series of national public service ads (PSAs) that encourage prospective parents to consider adopting teens from foster care.
- Teens have lower adoption rates than younger children, and they often wait longer to be adopted. But no matter their age, all kids need a supportive, loving family, and the teenage years are an especially critical period for parental help and guidance.
- Created pro bono by the advertising agency Barbarian, the campaign’s latest round of creative continues to build on previous campaign efforts to showcase the rewards of adopting a teen from foster care and how the relationships of adoptive teens and parents grow through steady love, support and understanding and the little moments that strengthen a family’s bond.
- Since this campaign launched in 2004, more than 36,000 children who were once photolisted on AdoptUSKids.org have been reported as placed in adoptive homes.
- Of the 407,000 youth in the U.S. foster care system, roughly 117,000 youth under the age of 18 are currently waiting for adoptive families.
- Now in its 17th year, this successful campaign has contributed to the more than 900,000 children and youth that have been adopted from the U.S. foster care system.

Why Teens?

- All of us – and that includes teens in foster care who are waiting to be adopted – need and want a family that can support them and be there to share important life events together. Learning to drive a car, applying for higher education, and celebrating holidays are just a few examples of the times in life we need and want to create memories with family.
- On AdoptUSKids.org, roughly 42 percent of the children and youth actively photolisted are between the ages of 15 and 18 years old. *(Most recent stats as of September 2019)*
- Youth aged 15-17 years of age comprise 12% of those waiting yet represent only 5% of those adopted in FY 2020.
- Finding families for older teens is especially critical as youth that age out of the foster care system at 18, or 21 depending upon the state, face greater challenges and risks.
- Families who adopt teens are providing them with the support and stability of a family during a critical period of normal adolescent concerns and additional self-identity issues.

- Last year, almost 20,000 young people ‘aged out’ of foster care without the love and support of a family.
- Older teens have lower adoption rates, and 15-17-year-olds often have to wait longer to be adopted than younger children.
- There were nearly 58,000 finalized adoptions in FY 2020.

More About AdoptUSKids:

- To find permanent families for children and teens, AdoptUSKids maintains a photolisting website which provides nationwide exposure for children and teens in foster care waiting to be adopted.
- The photo listing serves the children and teens who often wait the longest to be adopted . More than 36,000 children who were once photo listed on AdoptUSKids.org are now with their permanent families.

More About the PSAs:

- Inspired by real family moments, the new PSAs feature TV and radio ads that highlight the heartwarming, fulfilling moments that adoptive parents can share with their teens. The PSAs feature the tagline, “You can’t imagine the reward,” reassuring prospective parents that adopting a teen can also help parents grow in new and life-changing ways.
- Audiences are directed to visit [AdoptUSKids.org](https://www.adoptuskids.org). Prospective parents interested in learning more can also call 1-888-200-4005 for English-speaking staff or 1-877-236-7831 for Spanish-speaking staff, to receive current, accurate information about the foster care system and the adoption process.

Target Audience / Who can adopt from Foster Care:

- Most adoptions from U.S. foster care are free. The minimal costs that can be associated with them are often reimbursable. In addition, the vast majority of youth adopted from foster care are also eligible for a monthly adoption subsidy.
- In most instances, you’re eligible to adopt regardless of age, income, marital status, or sexual orientation.
- You don’t need to own your own home, be wealthy, or have a college degree to adopt. However, you do need to demonstrate that you can support yourself without any additional income, such as adoption assistance.
- You don’t have to be a stay-at-home parent or have children already. And you don’t have to be of child-bearing age — experienced parents and empty-nesters are encouraged to adopt.



- In most states, you do not have to be married to adopt. Many children have been successfully adopted by single parents.
- Families living outside of the United States, including military families stationed overseas, are eligible to adopt from the U.S. foster care system.

Campaign Background:

- This year, the campaign is celebrating 17 years of helping children and teens in foster care find their forever families.
 - Now in its 17th year, this successful campaign has contributed to the more than 900,000 children and youth that have been adopted from the U.S. foster care system since 2004.
 - Since the AdoptUSKids project began in FY 2003, more than 36,000 children who were once photo-listed on AdoptUSKids.org have been reported as placed in adoptive homes.
- In 2003, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Children's Bureau partnered with AdoptUSKids and the Ad Council on a national adoption recruitment campaign to encourage the adoption of children from foster care. PSAs have been developed with a specific annual focus, which in the past has included teens, preteens, Spanish language, African-Americans, sibling groups, and children 8 and older.

Campaign Distribution, Social Media and Partners:

- **Media:** The new English TV PSAs were created *pro bono* by Barbarian and will be distributed to the Ad Council's national media network.
- **Distribution:** The new PSAs were distributed in November and will air in advertising time and space that will be entirely donated by the media.
- **Ordering:** These PSAs and other assets from the adoption campaign can be downloaded on the Ad Council's Website (<https://www.adcouncil.org/campaign/adoption-from-foster-care>).
- **Social:** The campaign has a social media presence on the following channels:
 - Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/adoptuskids>) – 217,000+ likes
 - Twitter (<http://www.twitter.com/adoptuskids>) – 27,700+ followers
 - YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/user/adoptuskids>) – 4,800+ subscribers
 - Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/adopt.us.kids/>) – 5,500+ followers

Campaign Sponsors:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families

Within the federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is responsible for Federal programs that promote the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities. The Administration on



Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) administers national programs for children and youth; works with States, Tribes, and local communities to develop services that support and strengthen family life; seeks joint ventures with the private sector to enhance the lives of children and their families; and provides information and other assistance to parents. Many of the programs administered by ACYF focus on children from low-income families; abused and neglected children; children and youth in need of foster care, independent living, adoption or other child welfare services; preschool children; children with disabilities; runaway and homeless youth; and children from Native American and migrant families.

AdoptUSKids

AdoptUSKids is a multi-faceted, federally funded project whose mission is to raise public awareness about the need for families for children in foster care, and assist states, territories and tribes to recruit, develop and support foster and adoptive families and connect them with children who are waiting. The project is managed through a cooperative agreement with the Children's Bureau of the Administration of Children and Families of the Department of Health and Human Services. To learn more visit adoptuskids.org, or find us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and view our inspiring videos on YouTube.

The Ad Council

The Ad Council is where creativity and causes converge. The non-profit organization brings together the most creative minds in advertising, media, technology and marketing to address many of the nation's most important causes. The Ad Council has created many of the most iconic campaigns in advertising history. Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk. Smokey Bear. Love Has No Labels. Its innovative social good campaigns raise awareness, inspire action and save lives. To learn more, visit AdCouncil.org, follow the Ad Council's communities on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#), and view the creative on [YouTube](#).