



Main Office: 222 East Central Parkway • Cincinnati, Ohio 45202-1225

Neighborhood Center: 237 Wm. Howard Taft • Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

General Information: (513) 946-1000

General Information TDD: (513) 946-1295

FAX: (513) 946-2250

www.hcifs.org

www.hcadopt.org

www.hcfoster.org

Media Contact:

Brian Gregg

Media Spokesperson/Communications Manager

E-mail: greggb@jfs.hamilton-co.org

Phone: 513-946-1728

Fax: 513-946-2248

**Hamilton County Plans Mass Adoption Ceremony,
Other Activities to Celebrate Adoption Month**

Cincinnati (Nov. 12, 2009) Six children will officially join permanent, loving families Nov. 20 in Hamilton County's third annual mass adoption ceremony to celebrate National Adoption Month.

The county's Job and Family Services Department is teaming with the county's Probate Court to organize the adoption event. Six children, all victims of abuse and neglect, will join new families. A celebration will be held afterward. While adoption finalizations are normally confidential, the families have agreed to invite the media to this event.

"This is one of the most exciting times of the year for me and for our staff," said Moira Weir, director of the Job and Family Services department. "Often, this is the culmination of a tremendous amount of work to find the right family for a child who has experienced a tough life. Seeing that work result in an emotional, touching ceremony is an uplifting moment for our staff."

Hamilton County investigates more than 6,000 reports of child abuse and neglect a year. When intensive services fail and a child can no longer remain safe in a parent's care, the county will seek custody of the child and attempt to find a safe and loving adoptive home. That sometimes takes months or years.

The agency currently has more than 200 children available for adoption. The Nov. 20 ceremony stands as a symbol for all of the adoptions we do – more than 70 so far in 2009.

All of this year's adoptees will permanently join the foster families who have cared for them most, if not all, of their lives. Included:

- A 1-year-old boy who will join three biological sisters who were adopted by their foster family last year. The legally blind, but very bubbly, child has three big sisters who enjoy helping mom and dad with feedings, play time, reading books, etc.
- A 1-year-old boy who came to live with his foster family straight from the hospital. He will join two older biological siblings – twins -- who have previously been adopted by his foster family. The adoptive family has also formed a relationship with another adoptive family caring for the older biological siblings of their three children.
- A 4-year-old boy who is being adopted by the foster parents who have loved and nurtured him most of his life. He joins three other adoptees in the family.

- A 6-year-old girl who is being adopted by the foster parents who have cared for her the past four years.
- A 1-year-old boy who will join two older brothers in a foster family that has cared for him for almost his entire biological life.
- A 1-year-old boy who is being adopted by biological relatives who have fostered him since he left the hospital. The boy has thrived in the loving care of his new parents.

While the mass adoption ceremony is the most visible event of the month, several other events have or will occur to celebrate National Adoption Month:

- **Nov. 3:** An information session for prospective adoptive parents at the Forest Park library.
- **Nov. 4:** An online chat with agency officials for the public to learn more about adoption.
- **Nov. 7:** A skating party at The Skatin' Place in Colerain where prospective adoptive parents can meet children available for adoption.
- **Nov. 20:** An adoption appreciation event for the agency's adoptive families and children at the Jewish Community Center. The Amazing Portable Circus will be on hand for kids to enjoy carnival games, dancing, music, an aerial show, food and more!
- An official proclamation from the Hamilton County Commissioners proclaiming November National Adoption Month in Hamilton County.
- Appearances on public broadcasting and public access television throughout the month.

The children available for adoption come from a variety of backgrounds, neighborhoods, economic circumstances and living situations. They may have varying levels of medical, emotional or behavioral problems. They all bring their own personalities, strengths, interests and gifts.

Any Ohio resident over 18 years old is eligible. Adoptive parents must:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Pass a physical to show they are in good physical health and capable of caring for children
- Pass a local, state and federal (if not a resident of Ohio for the past five years) background check
- Pass a home study process (includes fire inspection as well as other rules and regulations)
- Pass more than 30 hours of specialized training

Those interested in adopting or becoming foster parents can learn more at www.hckids.org or by calling (513) 632-6366 or e-mailing adoption@jfs.hamilton-co.org.

About Hamilton County's Department of Job and Family Services

The Department of Job and Family Services administers federal, state and local programs for those in need. The Department helps with local child protection, adult protection, child care, tuberculosis control, child support enforcement, workforce development, cash assistance, food stamp disbursement and Medicaid disbursement. Servicing Hamilton County since 1947, the Department helps hundreds of thousands of residents each year. The Department of Job and Family Services is accredited by the Council on Accreditation, an international, independent, not-for-profit child and family service accrediting organization.