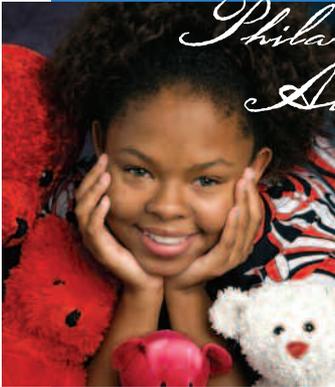


Winter 2007-08 Edition

PhillyKids CONNECTION

*Snapshots of
Philadelphia's Children
Awaiting Adoption*



Department of Human Services



We Make A Difference
In The Lives Of Philadelphia's
Children And Families



Presented by the Heart Gallery of Philadelphia

Heart Gallery
Philadelphia



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We Make A Difference
In The Lives Of Philadelphia's
Children And Families

Dear Friend:

It has been said that the true measure of a society's worth is how well we care for our children and youth.

The Greater Philadelphia region cares deeply about its young people, especially those children and youth who have been disadvantaged by poverty and broken homes.

Each year on average, more than 200 Philadelphia children are available for adoption. They are children and youth who have already experienced too much hardship in their young lives. All they want is a home and a family to call their own. All we ask of you is to open your hearts and homes to a child in need.

This year, we are pleased to join with our counterparts in Bucks County to find adoptive homes for these deserving young children and youth. We hope you will contact us for more information and consider adopting a child.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Arthur Evans
Acting Commissioner
Philadelphia Department of Human Services

The Heart Gallery of Philadelphia

collaborated with the Philadelphia Department of Human Services to create the Heart Gallery of Philadelphia. Professional photographers donated their time and skill to create beautiful, compelling portraits of foster children in Philadelphia as part of the Heart Gallery's goal of finding permanent, loving homes for these youth. Over the course of the year, these photographs will be part of a traveling exhibit. The exhibit raises adoption awareness, but more importantly it gives voice to the many foster children in our community looking for their "forever family."

Ultimately, the hope is that through these portraits prospective parents will be moved to adopt. These children are deserving of our attention, our compassion, our help, and our respect.

To learn more about the Heart Gallery of Philadelphia

or to find the location of the exhibit, visit

www.heartgalleryphiladelphia.org



List of Contributing Photographers

Michelle DuSold
David DeBalko
Christine Foster
Ed Wheeler
Terry Hirst
Karen Carey
KP Pictures
Dan Naylor
Heather S. Hughes
Brad Gellman
Salli Mickelberg
Chris Crisman
William Hooper
Mel Rakerd
KB Pictures
Charles Callaghan
Tony Wood
S. John Wilkin
Jared Castaldi
Debra DiFulvio
David DeBalko
Ron Richards
Ruth DeBardeleben
Jessica Griffin
David Fonda
Allenbach Photography

PhillyKids CONNECTION

The “PhillyKids Connection” Fact Sheet

What is the “PhillyKids Connection?”

The “PhillyKids Connection” is a collaborative effort between the Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS) and the National Adoption Center to recruit adoptive parents for Philadelphia’s population of children-in-waiting. The National Adoption Center expands adoption opportunities for children living in foster care throughout the United States, and is a resource to families and to agencies who seek the permanency of caring homes for children.

Do you have to reside in Philadelphia to adopt a Philadelphia child?

Although the Philadelphia Department of Human Services is interested in recruiting more adoptive parents from within the city, being a resident of Philadelphia is not a requirement in order to adopt a child from Philadelphia.

What is a typical profile of a Philadelphia child-in-waiting?

The majority of Philadelphia’s children-in-waiting are between the ages of eight and twelve, although there are some children younger and older than this median age range and more and more are becoming teenagers. The vast majority of Philadelphia’s children-in-waiting are African-American. Caucasian and Hispanic children make up the balance. Some of the children have emotional, psychological and developmental challenges stemming from histories of poverty, abuse and neglect. Despite these circumstances, every one of these children deserves and would greatly benefit from the love and support of an adoptive family.

What are the requirements for becoming an adoptive parent of a Philadelphia child?

The first requirement is that you have plenty of love in your heart, space in your home and a true sense of commitment. The profile of adoptive parents has changed dramatically over the years. Single people, same sex couples, retirees, and trans-racial

adoptive parents have joined the traditional nuclear family. Becoming an adoptive parent of any child is not easy. Children with special needs have endured varying degrees of trauma in their young lives, and therefore require a great deal of love, patience and support. Prospective adoptive parents must first submit an application to the National Adoption Center. This application will then be forwarded to a licensed adoption agency that conducts background checks, an in-home assessment, and the necessary training and orientation. The prospective family then works with the licensed agency and with the DHS social worker through the adoption process.

Can I choose the child I am interested in adopting?

The licensed adoption agency works closely with prospective adoptive parents to achieve the most ideal match between a family and child. Because this is a recruitment initiative for Philadelphia children, please emphasize with the adoption agency that you are interested in a child from Philadelphia. Although it is not always possible to adopt a specific child - primarily because the needs of the child may not fit ideally with the capabilities or home circumstances of the prospective adoptive parent – the adoption agency and DHS will work closely with adoptive parents to bring about a union between family and child that is in everyone's best interests.

How do I get started with the adoption process?

You have already taken the first step by contacting our colleagues at the National Adoption Center. The next step is to fill out and mail the application you are sent by the National Adoption Center and follow up with the licensed adoption agency that contacts you about your interest.

What ongoing help and support can I expect from DHS?

There are various levels of financial subsidies available to adoptive parents. Additionally, the adoption agency and DHS will work closely with adoptive parents throughout the adoption process and beyond, in a committed effort to ensure that the bonds of love and family are fully developed. For example, you will be provided with information on adoption support groups in your area.

Who can I speak with if I have additional questions about the adoption process?

There are several organizations that stand ready to assist you:

National Adoption Center 215-735-9988

Statewide Adoption Network (S.W.A.N.) 1-800-585-SWAN

CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Andrew



Andrew, born 09/29/1991, has an avid interest in technology and specifically computers. He is a friendly and social young man who enjoys spending time with others. Andrew is very responsible and is proud that he has secured part-time employment.

Photographer Michelle DuSold

Some of the children awaiting adoption have special needs and may be receiving services accordingly.

If you are interested in this specific child and you have already completed a home study, please ask your adoption agency to contact DHS Social Worker Joan Jenkins at 215 683-6301.

Department of Human Services



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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Timothy & Antonio



Photographer David DeBalko

Timothy, born 8/30/1990 and Antonio, born 7/24/1991, are two very outgoing and active young men. This sibling duo can be lots of fun. Both of them have a great sense of humor and will always find a way to make you laugh. Timothy is currently in the 11th grade and enjoys basketball, acting, dancing and playing the drums. Antonio is in the 10th grade and likes football, listening to music and reading. They are looking for a home that is willing to adopt both of them.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Bladimar



Photographer Christine Foster

Bladimar, born 8/01/2002, is a smart young man who wants to grow up to be a police officer. His favorite subject in school is art and he likes to spend time drawing and coloring. Bladimar also likes to play with cars and video games. He enjoys eating macaroni and cheese as well as peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Carolyn



Carolyn, born 2/15/1992, is an extremely helpful and friendly child who enjoys talking to others around her. She enjoys helping staff around the classroom and participating in weekly classroom jobs. Carolyn likes jumping rope, playing basketball, swimming and going out to the movies and to dinner. She also is an avid dancer and has recently taken an interest in cooking delicious meals.

Photographer Ed Wheeler

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Cavonne



Photographer Terry Hirst

Cavonne, born 11/18/2005, is a darling little toddler with a bright and outgoing personality. She has a love for nature and can often be found playing outdoors. Cavonne loves affection and interacts well with other children. She is especially caring towards children younger than herself.

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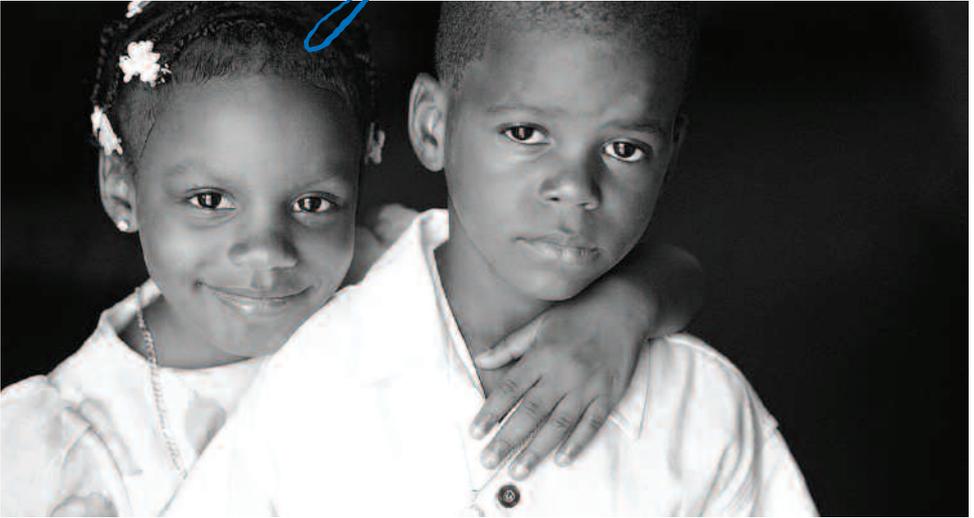
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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Corey & Talisa



Photographer Karen Carey

Corey, born 4/15/00 and Talisa, born 4/2/01, are a sibling group in need of a loving and nurturing family environment. They have lived in predominately Hispanic homes and as a result can speak Spanish as well as English. Corey is very energetic and outgoing and enjoys playing games and riding his bike. Talisa is very upbeat and enjoys singing and dancing. They are looking for a home that is willing to adopt both of them.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Da Nae & La Shea



Photographer KP Pictures

Da Nae, born 02/22/2005 and La Shea, born 02/22/2005 are identical twins who love being in each other's company. Da Nae has an outgoing and inquisitive personality. She loves watching "Dora the Explorer" on television and riding her scooter. La Shea is a shy and mild mannered child who is very affectionate. She enjoys playing with books and is comfortable following her sister's lead. They are looking for a home that is willing to adopt both of them.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

David



Photographer Dan Naylor

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David, born 7/10/1997, is a very active and energetic child. He enjoys basketball as well as many other sports and particularly loves being creative and using his hands to build things. David is making great efforts to achieve academically. He would do well in a home where he is the youngest child or an only child.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Diamond



Photographer Heather S. Hughes

Diamond, born 11/5/1992, is a young lady who loves all kinds of animals. She is very smart and open to affection. Her hobbies include photography and learning to play various instruments. Diamond also enjoys taking long walks and listening to music.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Dominic



Photographer Brad Gellman

Dominic, born 8/5/1994, is a very bright child with loads of potential. He is an excellent student who thrives academically. Dominic is a healthy eater who loves all types of food. In his spare time, he plays video games, rides his bike and plays basketball with his friends.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Dylan



Photographer Dan Naylor

Dylan, born 9/2/1996, is an active young man who enjoys school and especially recess. His favorite sports are football and basketball and he enjoys playing board games and watching movies. Dylan's favorite foods are stromboli and hot wings and he loves spending time with others.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Ebony



Photographer Salli Mickelberg

Ebony, born 8/30/2005, is a sweet, happy and affectionate little girl who needs a nurturing family to encourage the progress she continues to make. Ebony needs times to complete developmental tasks but once she catches on she “hits the ground running!” She loves her “bath time” and is Elmo’s number one fan.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Esequiel



Photographer Chris Crisman

Esequiel, born 11/3/1999, is a quiet child who opens up and is playful when he adjusts to his surroundings. Esequiel is confident that he is handsome and thoroughly enjoyed posing for this photo. He also enjoys using the computer, playing games and drawing. His favorite television show is “The Transformers”

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Evelyn



Photographer Karen Carey

Evelyn, born 02/25/2001, is a beautiful little girl with a winning smile. Evelyn is bilingual and loves dancing to hip-hop music. She enjoys playing in the park, art and watching cartoons. Evelyn loves attention and would do well in a home with no younger children.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Filisha



Photographer William Hooper

Filisha, born 07/23/1991, is a bright and attractive young lady with a strong sense of fashion. She has amazing stage presence and would someday like to become a model. She loves to read, sing, dance and shop for clothes. Filisha is very resilient and with her strong religious faith and belief in God, she is hopeful about her future and finding a family.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Javana



Photographer Mel Rakerd

Javana, born 10/25/2000, is a very special, non-verbal little girl who needs a loving and dedicated family who will continue to encourage the amazing progress she has been making. She has learned to walk with a walker and can play with her toys. Javana loves interacting with others and enjoys getting attention from those around her.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Charnae Josephina & Lisa



Photographer KB Pictures

Josephina, born 7/8/94, Lisa, born 8/16/00 and Charnae, born 1/29/02 are a close knit sibling group. Josephina is a polite and caring 8th grader. She is an honor roll student who enjoys reading and likes animals. Josephina is very helpful around the house and looks out for her younger sisters. Lisa is an energetic, outgoing and inquisitive little girl. She enjoys playing with Barbie dolls and can often be found watching her favorite cartoon, "Dora the Explorer." Charnae is a friendly and outspoken 4 year old who loves to eat all kinds of food. Charnae likes playing with her Bratz dolls and watching Sponge Bob cartoons. They are looking for a home that will adopt all three of them.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Michael & Malachi



Photographer Terry Hirst

Michael, born 11/20/1997 and Malachi, born 8/27/2001, are two very loving siblings. Michael is a sports fanatic who loves playing football and watching his favorite team, the Dallas Cowboys. Although he enjoys swimming among other sports, he would like to participate in track and field. Malachi is a smart young man with a bright smile. He loves to read books, color and put puzzles together. Malachi admires his older brother because he takes care of him and makes him laugh. They are looking for a home that is willing to adopt both of them.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Michael



Photographer Charles Callaghan

Michael, born 11/30/1997, is well on his way to fulfilling his goal of becoming a football player and coach of his favorite team, the Philadelphia Eagles. He loves playing football as well as basketball and volleyball. He enjoys going to the gym and riding his bike. He is also a serious student who is very determined academically.

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Myira



Photographer Tony Wood

Myira, born 1/20/1994, is a very pleasant and social young lady. She performs well academically and enjoys learning. She also enjoys singing but is shy when it comes to singing around others. Myira loves to shop, and get her hair and nails done and aspires to turn these interests into a career as a fashion designer.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Ronald



Photographer S.John Wilkin

Ronald, born 5/30/1991, is a pleasant, friendly, and helpful young man. He is always eager to be of assistance towards peers as well as adults. Ronald enjoys outdoor activities such as swimming and fishing.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Stacey



Photographer Terry Hirst

Stacey, born 3/4/1990, loves going to the zoo and learning about exotic animals. She also loves art and fascinating drawings. Music, culture and history are some of Stacey's interests. She likes styling hair and shopping for clothes. Stacey hopes to one day become a fashion designer.

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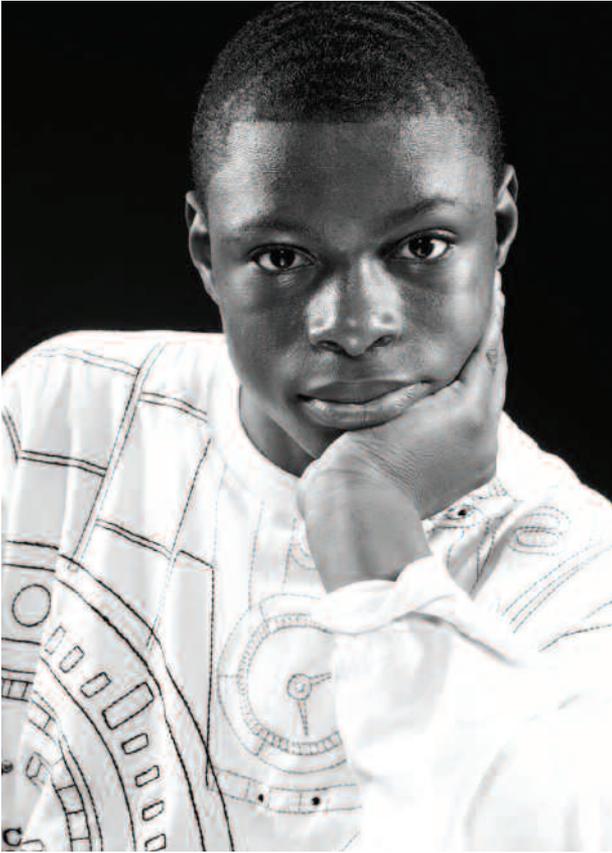
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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Steven



Photographer Jared Castald

Steven, born 11/26/1991, is in 9th grade. He is a quiet young man with an easy-going and engaging personality. Steven likes school and his favorite classes are computers and gym. He enjoys playing video games and is an avid reader.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Zamir



Photographer Debra DiFulvio

Zamir, born 8/31/1996, is a handsome boy who is also very creative. He uses his imagination to write stories and draw the characters in his stories. Zamir also likes to play basketball and dance. He excels in school where reading is his favorite subject.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Andrew



Photographer Karen Carey

Andy, born 4/9/96, is an outgoing and endearing young man with lots of interests. He loves just about any outdoor activity - going to the beach, fishing, gardening or riding his bike. He also likes to work with his hands building toy houses and painting. Most of all he loves music and plays both the piano and the guitar. When asked what he wants to be when he grows up, he says without hesitation, an actor or a singer. Andy likes the fact that he's smart and good at "taking care of things," but says he's trying to "get better at listening to his peers." Andy's three wishes: nice parents, a hamster and a go-kart, in that order. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please contact caseworker Stacy Wilson at (215)340-8985.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Arielle



Photographer William Hooper

Arielle, born 6/8/92, is a beautiful and talented teen who will steal your heart. A very intelligent young woman, Arielle takes honors classes in school and does well in all of them. Her favorites are English, Italian and band where she is learning to play the drums. In her free time, she reads, writes, and plays music. Most of all, she loves to sing and has a great voice. Arielle is a hard worker who is proud of her accomplishments both in school and out, though she admits that she'd like to be better at sports and math. When asked whom she admires, she responds, "Ashlee Simpson because she's modest, funny and down-to-earth." Her dream for the future is to be a singer, an actress, a musician or a writer. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please contact caseworker Thérèse Wilson at (215)348-6945.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Courtney



Photographer David DeBalko

Courtney, born 8/13/93, is a very likeable and very smart young woman who has her sights set on being a science teacher when she grows up. Courtney loves to read, ride her bike and of course, like any teenager, she likes to spend time with her friends. Noticed at first for her beautiful eyes, Courtney has a great sense of humor and is always ready to laugh at a good joke. When asked what she wishes for, her answer is unequivocal - a family (hopefully with pets) "who cares for me." If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please contact caseworker Jeneen Overberger at (267)880-5905.

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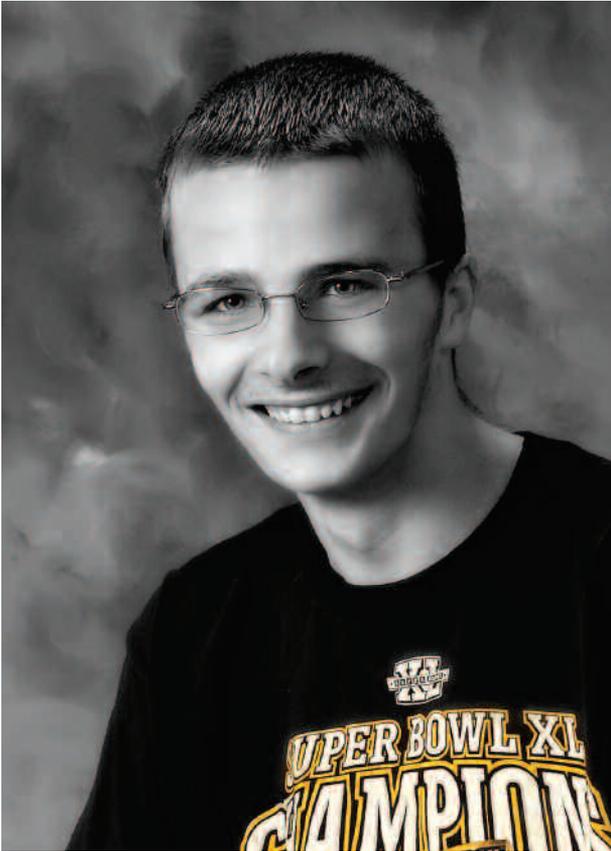
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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Ethan



Photographer Ron Richards

Ethan, born 12/10/90, is a happy, easy-going, very likeable young man with a great smile and sense of humor to match. Always respectful and mannerly, Ethan is considerate of others and always looks for ways to be of help. Ethan loves sports, both as a participant and as a die-hard Pittsburgh Steelers' fan. Asked whom he admires, he says, "Willy Parker, the running back of the Steelers, because he's athletic and hard-working." When he grows up, Ethan would like to be in the military or work as an auto technician. And to have a family! If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please contact case-worker Thérèse Wilson at (215)348 -6945.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Jorge



Photographer Ruth DeBardleben

Jorge, born 10/20/91, is a magnetic young man who's engaging and full of life. A real athlete, Jorge likes football, basketball, fishing, swimming and karate. Music is a real favorite with him too and for him, rap is where it's at. Most of all, Jorge loves animals and would love to be like the crocodile hunter when he grows up, working with and taking care of animals. Asked for his three wishes, Jorge says he'd like to be rich so he could help the poor; he'd like to see world peace; and lastly, he'd like to own the fastest car in the world. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please contact caseworker Joan Milewski at (215)340-8967.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Ricky



Photographer Tony Wood

:Ricky, born 9/17/96, loves sports. He's an avid fan of his favorite Philadelphia teams but also plays football himself, an ace at catching and receiving. In school, math is his favorite subject, and although he's good at it, he says he wants to get even better so he can be a banker when he grows up. In his free time, Ricky plays video games and likes funny movies. Like any soon- to-be teenager, Ricky can't wait to drive a car. In the meantime, he'd love to have a Gameboy DS, or a day at Dorney Park or the chance to see an Eagles' game in person. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please contact caseworker Beverly Wizlofsky at (215)348-6935.

Some of the children awaiting adoption have special needs and may be receiving services accordingly.

If you are interested in this specific child and you have already completed a home study, please ask your adoption agency to contact DHS Social Worker Joan Jenkins at 215 683-6301.

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Ryan & Faith



Photographer Jessica Griffin

Ryan, born 7/16/98, and Faith, born 2/11/03, are brother and sister, an adorable and inseparable pair. Big brother Ryan “can do lots of stuff” like ride a bike, do math and jump very high. His favorite subject in school is math; his favorite sport is kickball. When he grows up, he says he’d like to be firefighter. For Faith, there is nothing as wonderful as her Barbies except maybe when her friend makes her laugh. When she grows up, she’d like to be a princess. For the time being, they both wish for a mom, a dad, a home, a cat, a fish and a dog. If you would like to open your heart and home to these children, please contact caseworker Jeneen Overberger at (267)880-5905.

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Sabian



Photographer David Fonda

Sabian, born 9/21/95, is an intelligent, interesting and loving young man. He likes school and does well in math, his favorite period besides recess. Two things he likes to spend time doing include eating, particularly Chinese food, and playing video games. Sabian is, above all, crazy about dogs and would love one day to breed dogs for a living. His wishes include owning one of every kind of dog in the world. When asked whom he admires, he says, “the foster families who cared for me.” If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please contact caseworker Beverly Wizlofsky at (215)348-6935.

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Sada



Photographer Ed Wheeler

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Sada, born 8/15/90, is a lovely, confident young woman with a smile a mile wide. She loves music and loves to sing, and is proud of her abilities in both. It's not surprising then that music is her favorite subject in school too. Her dream for the future is to become a famous musician and performer. In the meantime, she likes to go out and to go shopping just like any other 17 year old. Besides finding herself a "forever" family, Sada is wishing for the end of the war. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please contact caseworker Jeneen Overberger at(267)880-5905..

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Steffi



Photographer Allenbach Photography

Steffi, born 6/18/92, is a wonderfully warm and bright teenager with a kind heart and a great personality. She's got lots of interests too. She loves to listen to music, play basketball and football, collect posters and play video games. Her favorite subjects in school are English and gym. Steffi's dream for the future is to go to college and have a family although, as a big fan of T.I., Steffi wouldn't mind being a rapper when she grows up. For now, she'd just like to be a part of a family and to meet T.I. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please contact caseworker Joan Milewski at (215)340-8967.

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Sikahema introduces viewers to children
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