

Superior Court of California County of Santa Clara



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 21, 2014

National Adoption Day – 45 Kids, 31 New Families *Superior Court and County of Santa Clara Celebrate National Adoption Day, Bringing Together 45 Children with 31 New Families.*

SAN JOSÉ, California (November 21, 2014): Today, the Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara and the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency are joining together to celebrate National Adoption Day, helping place 45 children into 31 permanent homes. The day's goal is to increase public awareness of the need for adoptive parents, to educate would-be parents about the adoptive process, and to celebrate the local families who have opened their lives to children in need of permanent homes.

"Today, the Court celebrates with the more than 30 families who opened their homes and hearts to these very special children," said Presiding Judge, Hon. Brian C. Walsh. "Because the primary work of the Court is overseeing an adversarial legal system, today is one of those rare occasions when we get to facilitate a legal process that only brings unmitigated joy and happiness."

With help from Superior Court and Santa Clara County Department of Family and Children's Services staff, this year 12 Santa Clara County Superior Court judges will forgo their regular duties and turn the Downtown Courthouse into "Adoption Central," expediting the processing and finalizing of 45 local adoptions.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, there are approximately 400,000 children in the foster care system with more than 100,000 of them awaiting forever homes. Santa Clara County has processed more than 7,000 adoptions in the past 52 years. Last year, the Department of Family and Children's Services finalized 101 adoptions.

"It is such a rewarding experience to be instrumental in the creation of new families through the adoption process," said Social Services Director Bruce Wagstaff. "This is a win-win situation for everyone involved."

Celebrations for Adoption National Day will continue on this Saturday, November 22, 2014, at the Tech Museum. This event will be attended by newly formed and former families of children adopted through the Department of Family and Children's Services, as well as the Santa Clara County adoption public agency and their families.

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MEDIA NOTES AND DISCLAIMER

Although adoption proceedings are generally confidential, the Court is allowing media coverage of the activities within the courthouse to increase public awareness about the adoption process in Santa Clara County. Adoption hearings will be closed to media; however, if families agree to allow media to capture the actual adoption ceremony proceedings, media will be permitted to film or record. As of now, no families have provided consent forms. The court has notified participating families that there will be media present. Those who agree to media interviews will be wearing badges to identify them. The Court asks the media to respect individual's decisions and only approach those who are wearing these badges.

ABOUT NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

Every year, more than 100,000 Children in foster care are available for adoptions. On National Adoption Day, courts and communities in all 50 states collaborate to finalize thousands of adoptions of children and to honor adopting families. More than 350 community events are held each year to finalize the adoptions of children in foster care and celebrate adoptive families. According to the National Adoption Day Campaign, since its inception in 2000, the National Adoption Day effort has helped over 25,000 children find permanent, loving families.

ABOUT THE RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL PROGRAM

All children need and deserve a safe, loving, nurturing, accepting and consistent place to live where they can thrive and mature. A Resource Family provides a home for a child to do just that. The Resource Family Approval Program is a streamlined, family-friendly and child-centered process. We define a Resource Family is any individual, couple, or family who wants to provide care to a related or unrelated child(ren) who is under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court, or otherwise in the care of a county child welfare agency or probation department. Please visit <http://www.sccgov.org/fpr> for more information.

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