

Adoption Program Expands to Find Homes for Older Children

Children's Home Society of North Carolina expands partnership with Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption and NC Department of Health and Human Services

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GREENSBORO, NC – Coinciding with National Adoption Month, Children's Home Society of North Carolina is announcing a significant expansion of a statewide program to find loving and permanent homes for older children languishing in foster care.

In partnership with the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Division of Social Services, Children's Home Society will expand the Foundation's signature program, Wendy's Wonderful Kids, an intensive child-focused recruitment program, within county social services agencies across the state.

"Older youth who are adopted are more likely to finish high school, go to college, be employed, and lead more stable lives than those who age out of foster care with no permanent family," said Sharon Barlow, Director of the Division of Children's Services in Guilford County. "We know that being connected to a family makes a life-long difference."

"I don't want to be in foster care until I'm 18," said 15-year-old Nick, still longing for a family and a place to call home after 10 years in foster care. A big fan of participation sports, camping and fishing, Nick dreams of becoming a mechanic and designing cars when he grows up. A sincere, determined,



15-year-old Nick – Courtesy of Children's Home Society of North Carolina



Children's Home Society
OF NORTH CAROLINA



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and polite boy, Nick likes going to the YMCA, the library, and church.

“Expanding the Wendy’s Wonderful Kids program and using its child-focused recruitment model means more children like Nick will leave foster care faster and find safe, loving, and permanent families,” said Rebecca Starnes, Vice President of Children’s Home Society of North Carolina. “Compared to one year ago, we are nearly tripling the size of this program from 13 to 35 caseworkers.”

In an independent study by Child Trends, children in foster care were up to three times more likely to be adopted when using the Wendy’s Wonderful Kids child-focused recruitment program, compared to children receiving traditional adoption services from community and public agencies.

An essential difference between the child-focused recruitment program and traditional services is smaller caseloads, giving each child as much attention as he or she needs and deserves and focusing on appropriate adults already in the child’s life.

“The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption is driven by a single goal: finding a loving and permanent family for every child waiting to be adopted from foster care,” said Rita Soronen, President & CEO of the Foundation. “We have a successful and growing relationship with Children’s Home Society of North Carolina, who shares our core value of assuring a home for every child in need.”

The children served by the Wendy’s Wonderful Kids program are those who have been in foster care the longest. Most are older than age 8; more than one-third had six or more foster homes; and, about half have been in foster care for more than four years.

“These children are just like any other child,” said Soronen. “They’ve simply had a rough start in life.”

“On any given day there are thousands of children in need of families in North Carolina,” said Starnes. “Individuals or families interested in adopting Nick, siblings, or another child, should call Children’s Home Society. We will guide parents-to-be through the adoption process.” (800-632-1400)

Informational programs for adoptive parents and foster parents are held every month in cities across the state. During November, meetings will occur in Asheville, Belmont, Burlington, Charlotte, Elizabeth City, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Greenville, Lenoir, Morganton, Wilmington, Winston-Salem, Durham County and Wake County. Click here for dates and times: <https://www.chsnc.org/events/>

Individuals and organizations can make a positive difference in the lives of youth in foster care by contributing time, goods or services, or by giving to the annual Little Red Stocking Fund for the holidays. <https://www.chsnc.org/donate-today/hope-for-the-holidays/>

Founded in 1902, Children’s Home Society of North Carolina serves more than 20,000 children and families each year with the mission of promoting the right of every child to a permanent, safe and loving family.

[Click for information about Children’s Home Society](#)

[Click for information about Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption](#)

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