Equal Opportunity Employer/Program • Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Department must make a reasonable accommodation to allow a person with a disability to take part in a program, service, or activity. For example, this means that if necessary, the Department must provide sign language interpreters for people who are deaf, a wheelchair accessible location, or enlarged print materials. It also means that the Department will take any other reasonable action that allows you to take part in and understand a program or activity, including making reasonable changes to an activity. If you believe that you will not be able to understand or take part in a program or activity because of your disability, please let us know of your disability needs in advance if at all possible. This document is available in alternative formats by contacting 602-542-3598.

Disponible en Español.
SPECIAL NEEDS ADOPTION

Adoption is the legal process by which qualified adults can become parents of children not born to them. The laws that cover all adoption cases are necessary to protect children themselves, the persons who wish to adopt children, and the birth parents of the children. Children who are adopted have the same rights and privileges as a child born to a family.

Although there are several adoption agencies in Arizona, the Department of Economic Security (DES) is the largest. Almost without exception, the children placed by DES have special needs; that is, they may be older or have physical or emotional handicaps. The information presented here is based on DES’ statewide adoption program. You can obtain further details by calling 1-877-KIDS NEEDU (1-877-543-7633), or by logging on to the DES website at www.azkidsneedu.gov.

DES contracts with several adoption agencies to complete adoptive home certification and training for families applying to adopt through DES.

This pamphlet has been prepared to answer some of the most frequently asked questions about adoption.

WHO ARE THE CHILDREN IN NEED OF SPECIAL ADOPTION?

Children needing to be adopted are of all ages, races, religions, and intellectual and physical development. Children currently needing homes are age 10 and older, school age sibling groups and children of color. DES is recruiting families who will accept the following types of “special needs” children:

♦ age six or older
♦ children of color
♦ sibling groups of three or more
♦ physical, mental or emotional disabilities
♦ high risk of physical, mental or emotional disabilities

These children have been legally entrusted to the Department of Economic Security. The birth parents may have voluntarily surrendered the children, or the court may have terminated their parental rights to the children.

Children who no longer live with their birth parents usually have some challenges and can take a long time to adjust to a new family. Adoption case managers and foster parents do their best to prepare children for adoption, but the actual living experience with the new family may reveal unique adjustments. In the long run, adoption is a happy and rewarding experience.
WHERE CAN YOU ADOPT A CHILD?
You can adopt a child through your local DES office/contract adoption agencies, or one of the adoption agencies listed in this booklet.

IS THERE A FEE?
An $800.00 certification, investigation and report fee may be charged by the contract agency. This fee may be reimbursable after a special needs child is placed in your home and the adoption is finalized. DES and its contracted provider agencies may waive the certification, investigation and report fees if the applicant demonstrates and the Department finds that payment would:

♦ cause financial hardship to the applicant;
♦ be detrimental to an adoptive child; or
♦ preclude the applicant from making application.

DES will collect the adoption certification, investigation and report fee from families who adopt a child outside DES, who is not a ward of this state or any other state.

ARE YOU THE KIND OF ADOPTIVE PARENT WE ARE LOOKING FOR?
Adoptive parents come from all types of backgrounds and economic situations, and are of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. Some are single parents, some are couples, and often both work outside the home. Some live in apartments, some own their homes. Some already have children, some don’t have children yet, and some are grandparents. If you enjoy children and the challenge of parenting a child or children who need very special care and love, you may be the parent for a waiting child.

WHAT IF DES HAS NO CHILDREN TO OFFER YOU?
The Department of Economic Security has professional affiliations with national and international adoption agencies and organizations. Listings of adoption agencies and organizations, including state, national and international, are at the end of this Resource Directory. However, DES cannot guarantee the placement of a child through these agencies and organizations.

WHAT IS AN ADOPTION SUBSIDY?
Adoption subsidy is a program intended to help foster children achieve permanency through adoption. The adoption subsidy program assists special needs children in different ways. It can provide a monthly payment to help with the extra expense of caring for a special needs child. It
also pays for medical, dental, psychiatric/psychological services and therapies not covered by private insurance or other public resources such as AHCCCS, school district, etc.) It may also pay for certain nonrecurring adoption fees that are reasonable and necessary expenses such as adoption fees, attorney costs and home study fees. An adoption case manager can help you find out more about the program and completing an application.

**WHAT IS FOSTER ADOPTION?**

There may be a wait from the time it is certain that a child will not be able to live with his or her birth parents, until the time all legal matters are settled, freeing the child for adoption. During this time, frequent moves and living with temporary parents and relatives can cause emotional damage to the child.

To prevent this damage, DES is seeking families who are willing to take children before they are legally free for adoption, with the plan that adoption will occur in the future. Each situation is different, and the particular situation would be fully explained to you before you agree to take a child into your home.

Foster-adoptive parents are certified to adopt, and comply with DES Foster Home Licensing requirements.

**WHAT ARE THE STEPS TO ADOPTION?**

1. **INTEREST**
   You, as a single person or a couple, begin to consider adoption.

2. **INQUIRY**
   You contact an adoption agency or call 1-877-KIDS NEEDU (1-877-543-7633) to gather more information. An adoption case manager will talk to you individually, or invite you to an orientation meeting where you will learn about the adoption process. You will be asked to complete an inquiry form, with information about yourself and about the type of child you are considering. You will also be asked to select an adoption agency to do your adoptive home certification and training.

3. **HOME STUDY**
   You begin the home study process, which takes about three months. This may consist of individual meetings, or a combination of individual meetings and training classes with an adoption case manager from an adoption agency contracted with DES. You will learn more about the types of children needing homes and the special care they need.

   During this time, you will be asked to complete an application, which includes a financial statement, and each member of your household will have a medical examination. In addition, all of the adults in your household must be fingerprinted.
The adoption case manager will complete a written report about your family, which the agency will submit to the court for certification. The court certification remains in effect for 18 months.

**NOTE:** When adoptive applicants have adopted a child in Arizona or are foster parents licensed by this state, Arizona law requires DES or an adoption agency to provide only an update report on any change in circumstances that have occurred since the previous certification or licensing report.

4. **SELECTION**
After your home study is completed and certified by the court, you will be placed on the Central Adoption Registry. Your home study may be requested by a child’s case manager when an Arizona child is available and compatible with your family. The case manager and others involved in planning for the child will consider your home study. If they agree that your family may meet the child’s needs, you will be contacted.

5. **PRESENTATION**
You will receive information about the child, such as background, medical history, behavioral problems, possible adjustment problems, therapy needs, sibling contacts, and the type of subsidy for which the child may be eligible. You will be asked to consider whether this child is right for you and your family.

6. **VISITATION**
If you decide this is the right child for your family, visits will begin.

All children need time to get acquainted. The arrangements for these visits vary depending upon the child’s needs.

7. **PLACEMENT**
Finally, the day arrives! Your child moves in. There will be adjustments for your family, and adjustments for your new child. Your adoption case manager will be available to answer questions or help you with your concerns. Sometime during this period, if applicable, an Adoption Subsidy Agreement will be completed.

8. **FINALIZATION**
You, your adoption case manager and your new child (if age 12 or older) will decide when the time is right to complete the adoption. Your adoption case manager will assist you with the paperwork necessary in filing a petition to adopt.

In most cases, less than six months after the petition to adopt is filed, your family will go before the judge to finalize the adoption. Soon after, you will be sent information on obtaining a new birth certificate showing the child’s new name and you as the parent(s).

9. **ASSISTANCE**
Should you experience difficulties after the adoption is final, adoption subsidy case managers are available to assist you in finding the services you need. DES wants your adoption to be successful and will do everything possible to help you.
ARIZONA LICENSED
ADOPTION SERVICES

A PLACE TO CALL HOME
1830 S. Alma School Rd., Bldg. 5, #122
Mesa, AZ 85210
(480) 456-0549
Fax (480) 456-0553
Services include finding homes for children in the areas of adoption and foster care.

ADOPTION JOURNEY OF ARIZONA, INC.
4065 E. Roberts Pl.
Tucson, AZ 85711
(520) 327-0899
Fax (520) 327-0899
Services to birth parents adoptive parents and children.

ADOPTIONS SPECIALIST OF ARIZONA
1118 E. Missouri Ave., Ste. A-1
Phoenix, AZ 85014
(602) 248-8248
Fax (602) 264-8967
Services to birth parents adoptive parents and children.

AID TO ADOPTION OF SPECIAL KIDS (AASK-AZ)
2320 N 20th St.
Phoenix, AZ 85006
(602) 254-2275
Fax (602) 212-2564
Non sectarian services specializing in the placement of special needs children.

AMERICAN ADOPTIONS
8676 W. 96th St., Ste. 140
Overland Park, KS 66212
(913) 383-9804
Fax (913) 383-1615
Out-of-state agency licensed in Arizona, specializing in traditional adoptions in the U.S.

ARIZONA BAPTIST CHILDREN’S SERVICES
6015 W. Peoria Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85032
(623) 349-2229
Fax (623) 776-0343
Nonsectarian adoption services to children, mothers planning adoptive placement, and adoptive families.

ARIZONA FAMILY ADOPTION SERVICES
346 E. Palm Ln.
Phoenix, AZ 85004
(602) 254-2271
Fax (602) 254-1587
Primarily home certifications and relative adoptions.

BIRTH HOPE ADOPTIONS AGENCY, INC.
3225 N. Central Ave., Ste. 1217
Phoenix, AZ 85012
(602) 277-2860
Fax (602) 277-3939
Nonsectarian adoption services to children, mothers planning adoptive placement with the agency, and to adoptive applicants from the U.S. or abroad.

BLACK FAMILY AND CHILDREN’S SERVICES, INC.
2323 N. 3rd St., Ste. 202
Phoenix, AZ 85004
(602) 256-2948
(602) 276-1984
Nonsectarian services to all minority children and to minority or biracial adoptive applicants living in the United States. Primarily a DES/ACYF contract provider.

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES OF SOUTHERN AZ
P.O. Box 5746
Tucson, AZ 85703-0746
(520) 623-0344
Fax (520) 770-8578
Branch Offices
Bisbee (520) 458-3530
Yuma (520) 783-3308
Nonsectarian services provided by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Tucson to any child and to adoptive applicants living in the Tucson diocese (Cochise, Gila, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz, and Yuma counties).
Nonsectarian adoption services to birth parents and to any child and adoptive applicants living in the northern half of state of Arizona covered by the Diocese of Phoenix, and that portion of northeastern Arizona included in the Diocese of Gallup, NM.

CHRISTIAN FAMILY CARE AGENCY
3603 N. 7th Ave. (602) 234-1935
Phoenix, AZ 85013-3638
Tucson Office:
1585 E. River Rd., Ste. 121
Tucson, AZ 85718
Fax (520) 296-8255
Services to any child and to adoptive applicants living in Arizona and meeting the agency’s Evangelical Christian standards.

COMMONWEALTH ADOPTIONS INTERNATIONAL, INC.
4601 E. Fort Lowell Rd., Ste. 200 (520) 327-7574
Tucson, AZ 85712
Fax (520) 327-8640
Primarily international adoptions.

DILLON SOUTHWEST, INC.
3014 N. Hayden Rd., Ste. 101 (480) 945-2221
Scottsdale, AZ 85251
Fax (480) 945-3956
Nonsectarian services specializing in placement of children from the Republic of Korea with Arizona families.

FAMILY SERVICE AGENCY
1530 E. Flower St. (602) 264-9891
Phoenix, AZ 85014
Fax (602) 234-2639
Nonsectarian adoption services to an child and adoptive applicants living in Maricopa County.

FIRST STEPS INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION AID, INC.
2320 Sausalito Trail (520) 825-3446
Tucson, AZ 85737
International adoptions, primarily in Guatemala.

HAND-IN-HAND INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS
931 E. Southern Ave., Ste. 108 (480) 892-5550
Mesa, AZ 85204
Fax (480) 381-1725
Nonsectarian adoption services to children, birth parents, and adoptive applicants living in Arizona.

HOME BUILDERS FOR CHILDREN, INC.
5040 E. Shea Blvd., Ste. 262 (480) 429-5344
Scottsdale, AZ 85254
Fax (623) 321-6444
Nonsectarian services to children, birth parents, and adoptive applicants living in Arizona.

INTERNATIONAL FAMILY SERVICES OF ARIZONA
1465 S. 58th St. (480) 924-1779
Mesa, AZ 85206
Nonsectarian services to children from other countries and the U.S., and adoptive applicants living in the U.S.

LDS FAMILY SERVICES OF MESA
www.itsaboutlove.org
235 S. El Dorado Cir. (480) 968-2995
Mesa, AZ 85202
Fax (480) 967-4103
Branch Office:
Tucson (520) 745-6459
Services to any child and to adoptive applicants identified as members in good standing with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (the Mormon Church) living in Arizona. All adopted children are expected to be raised within the Mormon faith.

LDS SOCIAL SERVICES OF SNOWFLAKE
641 S. Main (928) 536-4117
Snowflake, AZ 85937
Fax (928) 536-7626
Services to any child and to adoptive applicants identified as members in good standing with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (the Mormon Church) living in Arizona. All adopted children are expected to be raised within the Mormon faith.
OASIS ADOPTION SERVICES, INC.
11795 N. Via De la Verbentia
Tucson, AZ 85742
www.oasisadoption.com
(520) 579-5578
Fax (520) 579-5578
Branch Office
Phoenix 602-254-1991

Primarily home certifications, birth parent services and post-placement visits.

RISE, INC. dba ARISE
4542 E. Inverness Ave., Ste. 116
Mesa, AZ 85206
www.riseinc.net
(480) 497-1889
Fax (480) 497-8387
Services include finding homes for children in the areas of adoption and foster care.

ADOPTION PHOTO LISTS

NATIONAL
www.AdoptUSKids.org
AdoptUSKids is a national photo listing service for children awaiting adoption across the United States. You may browse the “Meet the Children” area without registering as site member. Access more in-depth information about a child by registering.

www.adoption.com
Photolisting.Adoption.com is a popular photo listing of children awaiting adoption. It is a free community service dedicated to helping U.S. foster children and children in orphanages around the world find loving, permanent homes.

STATE
www.de.state.az.us/dcyf/adoption
Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Children Youth and Families Foster Care and Adoption webpage, with useful information for adoptive families and applicants. From the menu, click on “Meet Arizona’s Waiting Children.”

www.aask-az.org
Aid to Adoption of Special Kids is a private, nonprofit adoption and child placement organization dedicated to building families through adoption and foster care, and to finding permanent, loving, culturally sensitive homes for Arizona’s foster children. Click on “Child Profiles” to meet a few of these special kids.

ADOPTION EXCHANGES

ARIZONA ADOPTION EXCHANGE BOOK
P.O. Box 17951
Tucson, AZ 85731-7951
(520) 327-3324

NATIONAL ADOPTION CENTER
1500 Walnut St., Ste. 701
Philadelphia, PA 19102-3504
www.adopt.org
(215) 735-9988
Fax (215) 735-9410

NORTHWEST ADOPTION EXCHANGE
600 Stewart St., Ste. 1313
Seattle, WA 98101
www.nwae.org
1-800-927-9411

POST-ADOPTION RESOURCES

LODESTAR FAMILY CONNECTIONS CENTER
2320 N 20th St.
Phoenix, AZ 85006
www.familyconnectionscenter.org
(602) 218-9110

K.A.R.E. FAMILY CENTER
4710 E. 29th St., Bldg. 7
Tucson, AZ 85711
www.kare.org
(520) 323-4476
FAX (520) 323-9830