

**NEWS – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Court To Hold Special Saturday Session In Fargo To Finalize Adoptions**

BISMARCK, N.D. – Adoption is the final step in providing some foster children with loving permanent homes. Court officials in Fargo are holding a special Saturday morning court session on National Adoption Day - November 19, 2005 - to draw attention to some happy endings and to raise awareness about the foster children who are still waiting for families and homes of their own. Judges John C. Irby and Wade L. Webb will preside over hearings to finalize the adoptions of 14 children from the foster care system.

The National Adoption Day event will begin with a reception from 9 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. followed by a press conference at the Cass County Courthouse Rotunda at 211 Ninth St. S. The public is invited to attend the reception and press conference.

Cass County Social Services Director Kathy Hogan will deliver a welcome, and Julie Hoffman, Adoption Administrator for the N.D. Department of Human Services, will share information about adoption in North Dakota. Judges Irby and Webb will provide brief comments followed by comments from the Kent and Melissa Rademacher family. The Rademachers and two of their children will share their story. One of the children will have her adoption finalized on Saturday. A balloon release will take place directly after the press conference.

“This is the third year in a row that Fargo court officials are participating in a special Saturday session in recognition of National Adoption Day,” said local event organizer Leanne Johnson of Catholic Charities North Dakota. “We appreciate the court’s support. This event would not be possible without the efforts of so many people – especially the participating adoptive families.”

Since its inception in 2000, National Adoption Day has grown from events in eight jurisdictions in the United States to events in hundreds of communities across the country. Over 3,000 adoptions were finalized across the United States during National Adoption Day events last year.

In 2004, 95 foster children were adopted in North Dakota; most by their foster parents. At any given time, the Adults Adopting Special Kids (AASK) program, which includes the N.D. Department of Human Services, Catholic Charities North Dakota, and PATH ND, works with about 100 children and their families with an active goal of adoption. The AASK program is also involved in case planning for an additional 110 -120 foster children. Currently AASK is seeking families for about a dozen children in the state who do not have identified adoptive families.

For information about adoption or foster care, contact the Children and Family Services Division, N.D. Department of Human Services, at 701-328-2316, 1-800-245-3736, e-mail [dhsdfs@state.nd.us](mailto:dhsdfs@state.nd.us), or go on-line to <http://www.nd.gov/humanservices/services/childfamily/>.

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