

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Fargo to Host 2006 Adoption Celebration

Fargo is hosting North Dakota's 2006 Adoption Celebration on November 9, 2006. According to event organizers, the public is invited to attend and to join families, adoption advocates, North Dakota Department of Human Services staff, and others as they recognize children along with some special parents and adoption workers.

The celebration is from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Metropolitan Baptist Church, 2612 25th St. S., Fargo. The recognition program starts at 4 p.m. followed by a "calling out ceremony" to raise awareness about the North Dakota children who are currently waiting to be adopted. Refreshments will be served.

"So many people deserve to be honored for giving children roots to grow in forever families," said state Adoption Services Administrator Julie Hoffman.

Hoffman said that North Dakota licensed child placing agencies, the Adults Adopting Special Kids (AASK) Program, and the human services department organize the annual event.

Organizers will present the following awards to North Dakotans from across the state: 2006 Special Needs Adoptive Family of the Year Award; the Adoption Triad Award, which celebrates individuals involved in an open adoption; Adoption Advocate Award; the Multi-cultural Family Award; and the Adopted Youth Excellence Award.

In 2005, 319 adoptions took place in North Dakota. Of the adopted children, 119 involved children who had been in foster care prior to adoption; 11 involved foreign-born children; and 45 involved healthy infants. Stepparents adopted 144 of the children.

Hoffman said children in foster care may have special placement needs because of disabilities, being part of sibling groups that seek to be placed together, being older than age seven, or being an ethnic or racial minority. Foster families often adopt children in their care.

Adults Adopting Special Kids (AASK Program) is a collaboration involving the department's Children and Family Services Division, Catholic Charities North Dakota, and PATH ND. They work together to promote and facilitate the adoption of children with special needs from the foster care system.

For adoption information, contact the N.D. Dept. of Human Services' Children and Family Services Division at 701-328-2316, 1-800-245-3736, or dhscfs@nd.gov, or go on-line to www.nd.gov/humanservices/services/childfamily/adoption/.

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