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For immediate release

WVDHHR one of 38 states to receive adoption incentive funds

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources received more than \$1 million in adoption incentive funds in federal fiscal year 2009.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awards states \$4,000 for every child adopted over the state's baseline total in 2007. States are awarded an additional \$8,000 for every child adopted age 9 and older or with special needs. West Virginia is one of 38 states receiving adoption incentive funds for FFY 2009. In 2009 the state completed 541 adoptions from foster care, an increase of 140 adoptions over the 2007 total of 401 adoptions.

The WVDHHR partnered with two TV stations to air segments on children who are awaiting an adoptive family. WTAP features *Wednesday's Child* typically on the second Wednesday of every month. *Carrie's Kids*, aired on WSAZ, features children from both Kentucky and West Virginia who need a permanent home.

Mission West Virginia is a non-profit agency collaborating with WVDHHR in its efforts to increase adoptions, recruit and retain foster/adoptive parents and share information about the importance of the children in foster care finding adoptive families. Mission West Virginia has helped increase the numbers of adoptions through its efforts of *Sunday's Child*, a newspaper article highlighting a child in foster care. The feature is seen in numerous newspapers statewide. Other DHHR partners trying to find permanent homes for West Virginia children in foster care *Wendy's Wonderful Kids* and the *Heart Gallery of WV*, a traveling exhibit of children in foster care in West Virginia.

WVDHHR features children in foster care who need permanent families on their Adoption Resource Network (www.adoptavvchild.org) as well as on the AdoptUSKids website (www.adoptuskids.org). These informative websites allow children to be seen nationwide in hopes of finding a family for them.

The adoption incentive award funding also allows specialized foster care agencies to manage and finalize WVDHHR foster care adoptions and to pay for post-adoptive services and training for staff.

Visit WVDHHR online at <http://www.wvdhhr.org/oss/adoption/> to learn more about foster care and adoption services.

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