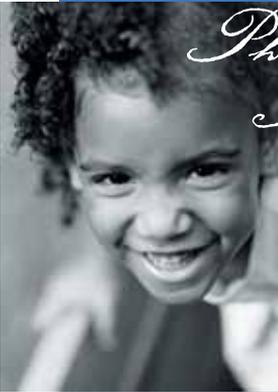


Winter 2005-06 Edition

# PhillyKids CONNECTION

*Snapshots of  
Philadelphia's Children  
Awaiting Adoption*



Department of Human Services



We Make A Difference  
In The Lives Of Philadelphia's  
Children And Families

Presented by

Heart  Gallery  
Philadelphia

## **The Heart Gallery of Philadelphia**

More than 20 professional photographers donated their time and skill to create beautiful, compelling portraits of foster children in Philadelphia as part of the Heart Gallery's goal of finding permanent, loving homes for these youth. Over the course of the year, these photographs will be part of a traveling exhibit.

The exhibit raises adoption awareness, but more importantly gives a voice to the many foster children in our community looking for their "forever family."

Ultimately, the hope is that through these portraits prospective parents will be moved to adopt. These children are deserving of our attention, our compassion, our help, and our respect.

To learn more about the Heart Gallery of Philadelphia or to find the location of the exhibit, visit [www.heartgalleryphilly.org](http://www.heartgalleryphilly.org).



### **List of Contributing Photographers**

Kara Barnett  
Bob Bueding  
Charles Callaghan  
Karen Carey  
Chris Crisman  
David DeBalko  
Debra DiFulvio  
Aimee Dilger  
Michelle DuSold  
Lynn Fenimore  
David Fonda  
Christine Foster  
Jessica Griffin  
Terry Hirst  
William Hooper  
Peter Lester  
Jennifer Levitt  
Tom McKean  
Dan Naylor  
Sabina Louise Pierce  
Judy Silverstein  
Paul Simeone  
Ed Wheeler  
Tony Wood



## CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

Dear Friend of Children:

Welcome to the Winter 2005-2006 edition of the PhillyKids Connection: Snapshots of Philadelphia's Children Awaiting Adoption presented by the Heart Gallery of Philadelphia.

This year the Heart Gallery of Philadelphia volunteers donated their services to collaborate with the Philadelphia Department of Human Services and the National Adoption Center to fill these pages with extraordinary images of our children awaiting adoption. Through the hard work and commitment of all those involved we hope to find loving families for each of Philadelphia's children in waiting.

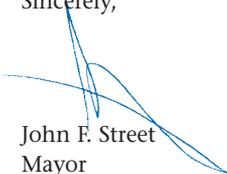
In the City of Philadelphia, there are more than 100 children waiting to become part of a loving family. DHS commits itself and its resources to protecting children, preserving their safety, and establishing permanency in their lives. We have witnessed the positive impact a stable living situation and the love and support from an adoptive family has on transforming the lives of these children.

As you review this booklet, make a connection as you open your heart and read about the children who are waiting for families to make a lifelong commitment. They deserve the chance to be part of a loving family. Look within these pages to meet each child, read their description and look into their eyes, taking the time to make a personal connection. While adoption may not be for everyone, those who decide to make this lifelong commitment will experience a unique bond with their adoptive child.

Every child deserves the chance to grow up in a stable, nurturing and supportive family environment. Adoption requires a willingness to open your home and a commitment to create a lasting connection between parent and child.

Pick up the phone today and change a life forever. Call 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the PhillyKids Connection.

Sincerely,



John F. Street  
Mayor



Cheryl Ransom-Garner  
Commissioner

# PhillyKids CONNECTION

## The “PhillyKids Connection” Fact Sheet

### **What is the “PhillyKids Connection?”**

*The “PhillyKids Connection” is a collaborative effort between the Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS) and the National Adoption Center to recruit adoptive parents for Philadelphia’s population of children-in-waiting.*

### **Do you have to reside in Philadelphia to adopt a Philadelphia child?**

*Although the Philadelphia Department of Human Services is interested in recruiting more adoptive parents from within the city, being a resident of Philadelphia is not a requirement in order to adopt a child from Philadelphia.*

### **What is a typical profile of a Philadelphia child-in-waiting?**

*The majority of Philadelphia’s children-in-waiting are between the ages of eight and 12, although there are some children younger and older than this median age range and more and more are becoming teenagers. The vast majority of Philadelphia’s children-in-waiting are African-American. Caucasian children and Hispanic children make up the balance. Some of the children have emotional, psychological and developmental challenges stemming from histories of poverty, abuse and neglect. Despite these circumstances, every one of these children deserves and would greatly benefit from the love and support of an adoptive family.*

### **What are the requirements for becoming an adoptive parent of a Philadelphia child?**

*The first requirement is that you have plenty of love in your heart, space in your home and a true sense of commitment. The profile of adoptive parents has changed dramatically over the years. Single people, same sex couples, retirees, and trans-racial adoptive parents have joined the traditional nuclear family. Becoming an adoptive*

parent of any child is not easy. Children with special needs have endured varying degrees of trauma in their young lives, and therefore require a great deal of love, patience and support. Prospective adoptive parents must first submit an application to the National Adoption Center. This application will then be forwarded to a licensed adoption agency that conducts background checks, an in-home assessment, and the necessary training and orientation. The prospective family then works with the licensed agency and with the DHS social worker through the adoption process.

### **Can I choose the child I am interested in adopting?**

The licensed adoption agency works closely with prospective adoptive parents to achieve the most ideal match between a family and child. Because this is a recruitment initiative for Philadelphia children, please emphasize with the adoption agency that you are interested in a child from Philadelphia. Although it is not always possible to adopt a specific child - primarily because the needs of the child may not fit ideally with the capabilities or home circumstances of the prospective adoptive parent - the adoption agency and DHS will work closely with adoptive parents to bring about a union between family and child that is in everyone's best interests.

### **How do I get started with the adoption process?**

You have already taken the first step by contacting our colleagues at the National Adoption Center. The next step is to fill out and mail the application you are sent by the National Adoption Center and follow up with the licensed adoption agency that contacts you about your interest.

### **What ongoing help and support can I expect from DHS?**

There are various levels of financial subsidies available to adoptive parents. Additionally, the adoption agency and DHS will work closely with adoptive parents throughout the adoption process and beyond, in a committed effort to ensure that the bonds of love and family are fully developed. For example, you will be provided with information on adoption support groups in your area.

### **Who can I speak with if I have additional questions about the adoption process?**

**There are several organizations that stand ready to assist you:**

National Adoption Center 1-800-TO-ADOPT

Statewide Adoption Network (S.W.A.N.) 1-800-585-SWAN

# CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

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Ronald



Ronald, born 5/30/1991, enjoys outdoor activities such as swimming and fishing. Ronald has an inquisitive personality but is always pleasant and polite with everyone he meets. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

Photographer Aimee Dilger

*Some of the children awaiting adoption have special needs and may be receiving services accordingly.*

***If you are interested in this specific child and you have already completed a home study, please ask your adoption agency to contact DHS Social Worker Joan Jenkins at 215 683-6301.***

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# CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

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Tiffany



Photographer Judy Silverstein

Tiffany, born 4/20/1991, is an outgoing and friendly bundle of energy. She has many friends at school and likes her teachers. Tiffany enjoys going to the park, eating out, singing and participating at summer camp. She aspires to go to college and become a nurse. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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# CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

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Nadirah



Photographer Charles Callaghan

Nadirah, born 6/15/1998, is an intelligent girl that loves playing with her toys. Sometimes, she has difficulty interacting with peers and accepting direction from authority. The family that adopts Nadirah will ideally be a two parent family unit that has experience with special needs, no small children, and possibly resides in the Philadelphia area. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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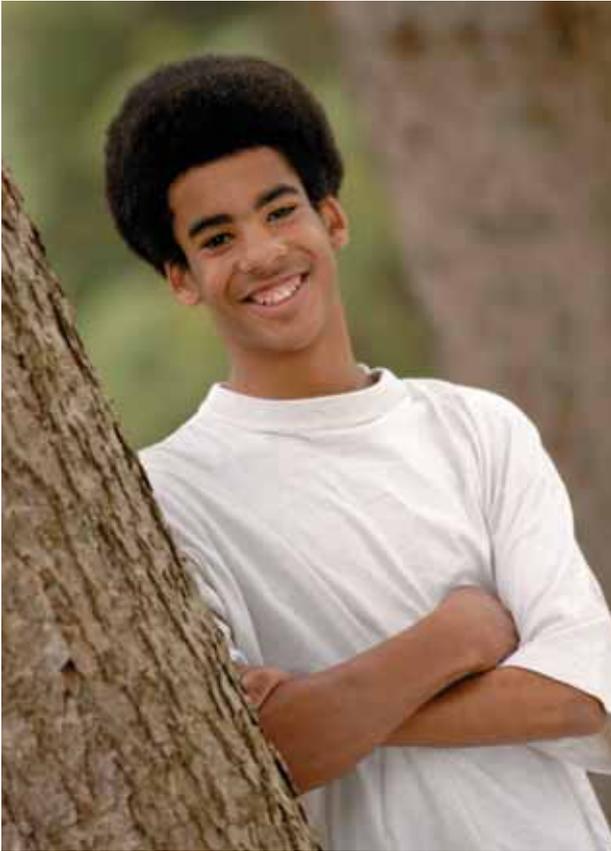
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# CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

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Luis



Photographer David DeBalko

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Luis, born 8/07/1992, is a young man who loves to be challenged with problems to solve. At school, his favorite subject is math and he always impresses teachers with his aptitude. Luis develops positive relationships with his teachers and classmates and always volunteers to help the teacher with classroom projects. After school, Luis loves to play basketball and participate in church activities. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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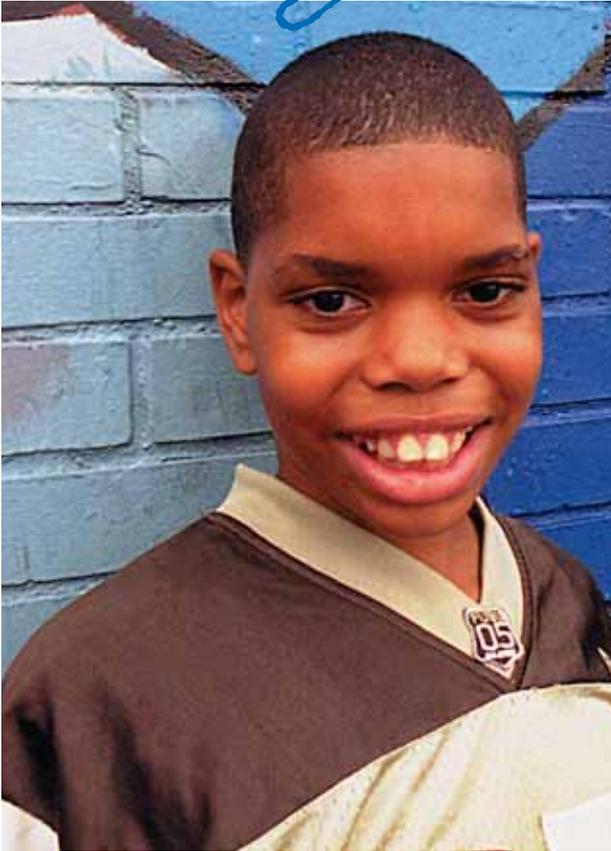
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Heart  Gallery  
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# CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

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## Jonathan



Photographer Jennifer Levitt

It's no wonder that Jonathan's favorite restaurant is McDonald's. He loves to smile and loves to see you smile. Jonathan, born 5/15/1995, is an active and inquisitive young man that loves to play video games, watch movies and listen to hip-hop music. He enjoys reading and prides himself on being a good reader. The family that adopts Jonathan must provide him with a structured and nurturing environment. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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Shawn



Photographer Terry Hirst

Shawn, born 2/29/1998, is a pleasant, non verbal young man. He is attentive and cooperative with everyone around him. He enjoys listening to music, dancing, and playing with objects that make sound or light. Shawn is a special needs child who requires assistance in most areas of daily living. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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# CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

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*Evelyn*



Photographer Karen Carey

Evelyn, born 2/25/2001, is a charming little lady with a winning smile and a laugh full of joy. She enjoys watching Dora the Explorer and Disney feature films. Evelyn is bilingual and loves dancing to music. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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## Timothy & Antonio



Photographer Sabina Pierce

Timothy, born 8/30/90, is a smart and well spoken young man. He has a great sense of humor and quickly bonds to people. He is very caring and loves to help others. Timothy belongs to a sibling group and is looking for a home that is willing to adopt he and his brother Antonio. If you would like to open your heart and home to these children, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

Antonio, born 7/24/1991, is a playful and polite young man who can easily carry a conversation with adults. His favorite sport is football but he also enjoys playing other sports. Antonio works hard in school where his favorite class is reading and his least favorite is math. Antonio belongs to a sibling group and is looking for a home that is willing to also adopt his brother Timothy. If you would like to open your heart and home to these children, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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Raheem



Photographer Aimee Dilger

Raheem, born 1/22/1991, is a handsome and charming young man with a winning smile. He enjoys watching and playing all types of sports. He listens to Hip-Hop and Gospel Music. Raheem has a healthy appetite and loves fried chicken, macaroni & cheese, and corn bread. One of Raheem's favorite things to do is to go to Church. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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Troy



Photographer David Fonda

Troy, born 6/26/1997, is an extremely intelligent child with brown eyes and brown hair. He is always eager to help with activities and often displays a positive attitude. Troy enjoys playing video games, watching cartoons and spending time with animals. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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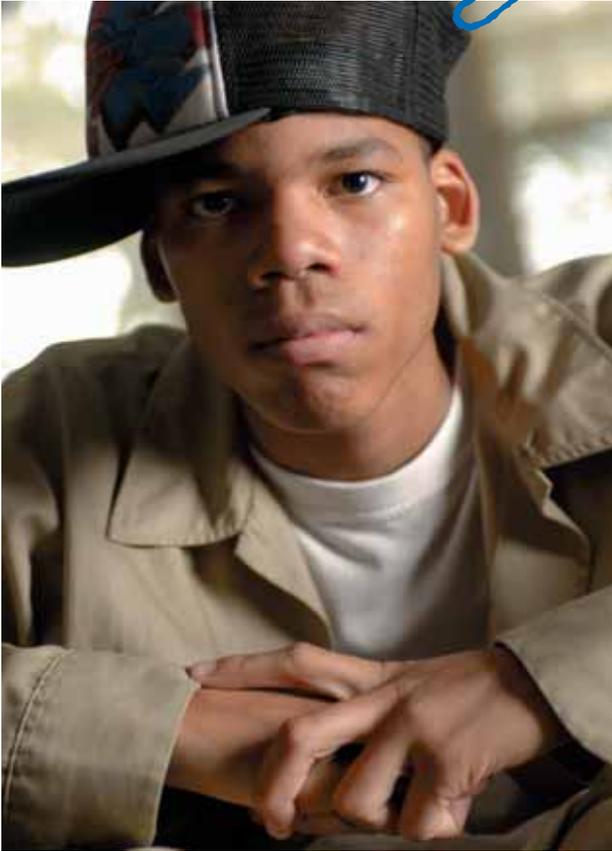
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Joseph



Joseph, born 03/29/1991, developed an interest in traveling after visiting Virginia and Washington, D.C. He enjoys camping and taking hikes through the woods. Joseph is a highly creative young man who loves to spend time drawing and coloring. At school, his favorite classes are math, spelling and gym. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

Photographer David DeBalko

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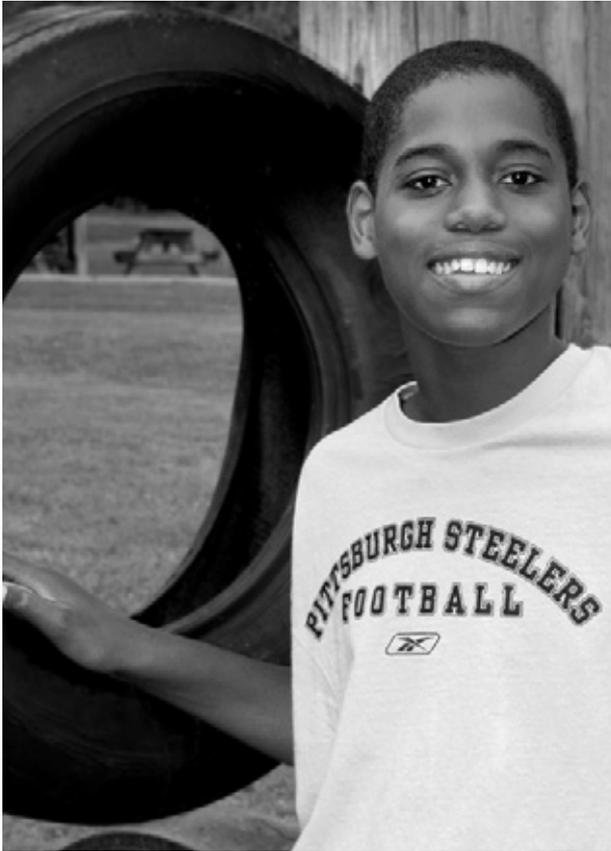
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# CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

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## Darnell



Photographer Peter Lester

Darnell, born 2/8/1990, is a sweet, considerate young man with a good sense of humor. He enjoys the company of adults and is great at remembering names and faces of people he meets. He loves arts and crafts and is often drawing or coloring. Darnell likes school and does well in his classes with one on one attention and assistance. Darnell aspires to be a part of a family and wants a mother and father. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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## Sade



Photographer Kara Barnett

Sade, born 10/10/1990, is a friendly, fun-loving girl. She enjoys playing games and swimming. Sade is looking for a family that will be open to her maintaining contact and visits with her biological brothers and sister. Sade has made great strides in improving her ability to get along with her peers, and would do well in a home with other children or by herself. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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## Patricia



Photographer Tony Wood

Patricia, born 4/19/1994, has an ear for music. She enjoys singing and wants to learn how to play the piano. This seventh grader is an avid reader who is making a great effort to achieve academically. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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Chaka



Photographer Terry Hirst

Chaka, born 7/01/1991, is a remarkable young lady with a positive outlook on life. She loves to play sports, especially basketball and aspires to be a professional basketball player. Chaka really wants to have a family of her own. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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Mikal



Photographer Tom McKean

Mikal, born 3/07/1996, is an amazing child who does well in school. He attends church on a regular basis and socializes well with most adults. Mikal enjoys dressing nicely, swimming, football, drawing and creating things with his hands. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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Stacey



Stacey, born 3/04/1990 loves trips to the zoo because she gets to learn about exotic animals. One days she hopes to be a hairdresser. She loves learning about music, culture and history. Stacey enjoys playing many sports, drawing and learning about art. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

Photographer Karen Carey

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## Tashime



Photographer Jessica Griffin

Tashime, born 12/30/1993, is a handsome child with a beautiful smile. He enjoys playing outside, shooting hoops, throwing the football and riding his bike. One of his favorite pastimes is learning how to play the drums. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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Steven



Photographer Debra DiFulvio

Steven, born 11/26/1991, is a bright student who is in the seventh grade. He enjoys playing different sports and watching his favorite shows on the television. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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## Marquise



Photographer Ed Wheeler

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Marquise, born 3/30/1994, has a special interest in cars and collects model cars as a way to learn more about the different types. He enjoys participating in various sporting events but basketball will always remain his favorite sport. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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## Monte



Photographer Dan Naylor

Monte, born 8/15/1996, is a handsome and intelligent youth. One day he hopes to join a soccer team. Monte is a friendly child who loves riding his bike. His two favorite holidays are Halloween and Christmas. If he could travel anywhere, Monte would want to visit Disney World. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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Michael



Photographer Chris Crisman

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Michael, born 2/08/1994, is a shy young man. He loves participating in outdoor activities such as football, basketball and bike riding. Michael enjoys the company of others and loves to do arts and crafts projects. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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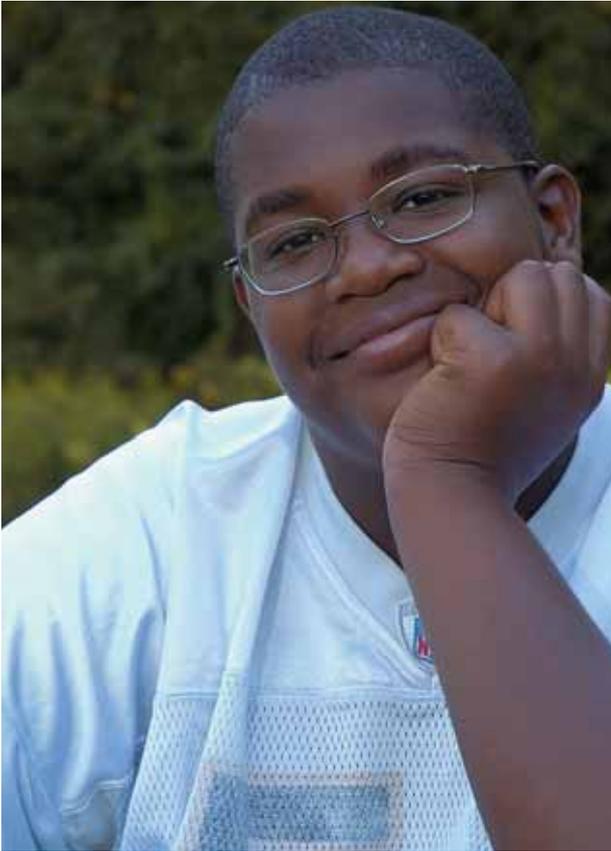
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David



Photographer William Hooper

David, born 3/30/1992, is a young man with a wonderful sense of humor and a talent for making people laugh. David attends an alternative education program where his favorite subjects are science and math. He is in a physical fitness program that he enjoys and he wants to get into better shape. David has put much thought into his future plans and would like to go to college. After college, he would like to enter the Army or become a fire fighter. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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Ziare



Photographer Michele Du Sold

Ziare, born 8/17/2001, loves playing with his cars and action figures. He enjoys watching cartoons and cuddling up to people. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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Aisha



Photographer Christine Foster

Aisha, born 1/8/1994, is a sociable young lady who loves to smile and laugh at jokes. Aisha enjoys dancing to Hip-Hop music, playing dress up and singing along to the radio. She is a hard worker and is making progress in school. In addition to enjoying time on the computer she loves physical education and reading. Some of Aisha's favorite foods are BBQ ribs, greens, chicken and ice cream. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

*Some of the children awaiting adoption have special needs and may be receiving services accordingly.*

***If you are interested in this specific child and you have already completed a home study, please ask your adoption agency to contact DHS Social Worker Joan Jenkins at 215 683-6301.***

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**Heart Gallery**  
Philadelphia

# CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

## Tiffany & Joseph



Photographer J. Paul Simeone

Tiffany, born 5/31/2000, is a bright energetic little girl with dark hair and dark eyes. This young lady loves attention and works hard to obtain it. Tiffany loves all types of food but is partial to junk foods. Tiffany belongs to a sibling group and is looking for a home that is willing to adopt her and her brother Joseph. If you would like to open your heart and home to these children, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

Joseph, born 7/01/2001, is a young man who loves to sing and imitate Michael Jackson. He has a quiet nature and interacts very well with other people. He loves to try new food but also enjoys eating junk food. Joseph belongs to a sibling group and is looking for a home that is willing to also adopt his sister Tiffany. If you would like to open your heart and home to these children, please call the National Adoption Center at 1-800-TO-ADOPT and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

*Some of the children awaiting adoption have special needs and may be receiving services accordingly.*

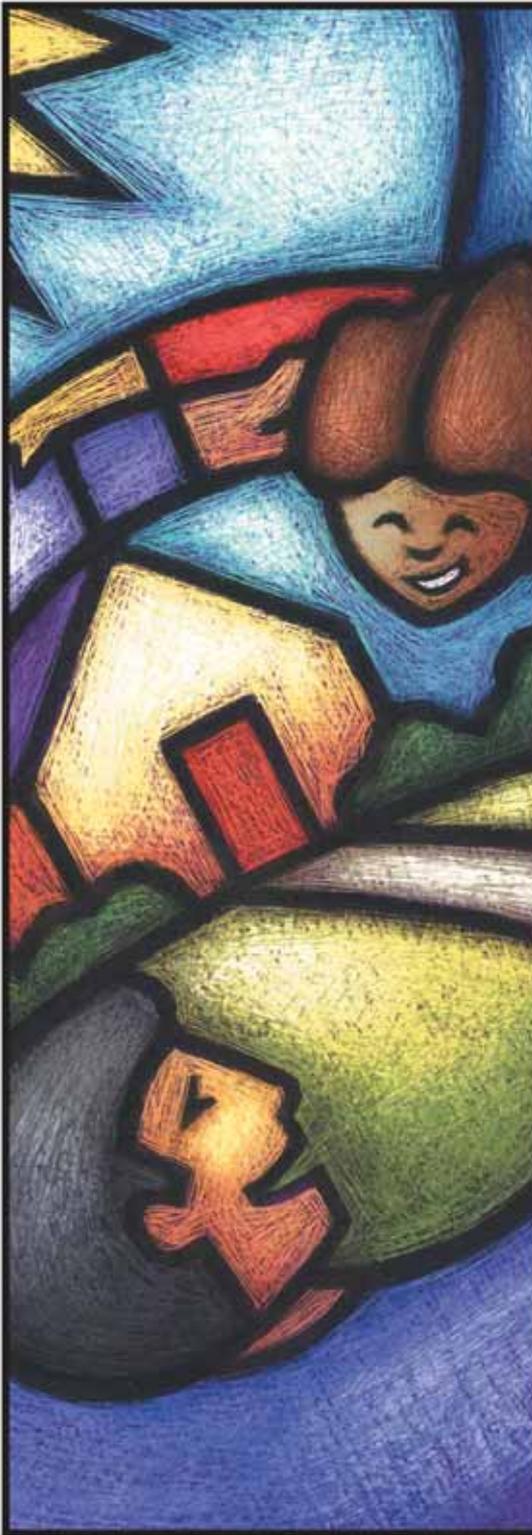
***If you are interested in these specific children and you have already completed a home study, please ask your adoption agency to contact DHS Social Worker Joan Jenkins at 215 683-6301.***

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*Wednesday's Child* - Philadelphia

Hundreds of children  
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adopted.

There's a child waiting  
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**Visit**

[www.adopt.org/wednesdayschild/](http://www.adopt.org/wednesdayschild/)

And watch the *Freddie Mac Foundation's Wednesday's Child* with Vai Sikahema on NBC10:

- ♥ Wednesday evenings - During the 5 p.m. news
- ♥ Saturday mornings - During the 9 a.m. news

For more information, call  
1-866-DO-ADOPT

The *Freddie Mac Foundation's Wednesday's Child* program in Philadelphia is a weekly adoption feature on NBC10 News. News anchor Vai Sikahema introduces viewers to children in foster care who need loving, adoptive homes.

The Freddie Mac Foundation, in partnership with the Philadelphia Department of Human Services and the National Adoption Center, sponsors this special program.

*Freddie Mac Foundation's*  
**Wednesday's**   
*Child*





*The City of Philadelphia and the Department of Human Services thank the Heart Gallery of Philadelphia and the photographers who have generously donated their services and time.*

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