

Winter 2006-07 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 the Heart Gallery of Philadelphia

Heart Gallery
Philadelphia

The Heart Gallery of Philadelphia

collaborated with the Philadelphia Department of Human Services to create the Heart Gallery of Philadelphia. 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 to give 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. They 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.heartgalleryphiladelphia.org



List of Contributing Photographers

Karen Carey

Jared Castaldi

Chris Crisman

David DeBalko

Ruth Debardeleben

Debra DiFulvio

Michelle DuSold

Lucy Durfee

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William Hooper

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Tom McKean

Dan Naylor

Mel Rakerd

J.Paul Simeone

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S.John Wilkin

Tony Wood

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. The National Adoption Center expands adoption opportunities for children living in foster care throughout the United States, and is a resource to families and to agencies who seek the permanency of caring homes for children.

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 twelve, 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 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 215-735-9988

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

CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Stacey



Photographer Terry Hirst

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.

Stacey, born 3/4/1990, loves going to the zoo and learning about exotic animals. She also loves art and fascinating drawings. She likes styling hair and hopes to one day become a hairdresser. Music, culture and history are some of Stacey's interests. She also enjoys many sports. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Troy



Photographer David Fonda

Troy, born 6/26/1997, is an extremely intelligent child who is outgoing and energetic. He has a positive attitude and is always eager to help with activities. Troy enjoys playing sports, video games and watching cartoons. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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Ronald



Photographer S. John Wilkin

Ronald, born 5/30/1991, is a pleasant, friendly, and helpful young man. He is always eager to be of assistance towards peers as well as adults. Ronald enjoys outdoor activities such as swimming and fishing. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Timothy & Antonio



Photographer David DeBalko

Timothy, born 8/30/1990 and Antonio, born 7/24/1991, are two very outgoing and active young men. This sibling duo can be lots of fun. Both of them have a great sense of humor and will always find a way to make you laugh. Timothy is currently in the 10th grade and enjoys basketball, acting, dancing and playing the drums. Antonio is in the 9th grade and likes football, listening to music and reading. They are looking for a home that is willing to adopt both of them. If you would like to open your heart and home to these children, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

David



Photographer Dan Naylor

David, born 7/10/1997, is a very active and energetic child. He enjoys basketball as well as many other sports and particularly loves tumbling. He is also learning how to play the drums. David is making great efforts to achieve academically. He would do well in a home where he is the youngest child or an only child. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Timyatta



Photographer Chris Crisman

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Timyatta, born 10/18/1991, prefers to be called Shamir. He is an 8th grade student who is doing well academically. Shamir has many interests including drawing animated cartoons, playing video games and participating in sports. He is an extremely polite and caring young man who relates well with his peers and adults. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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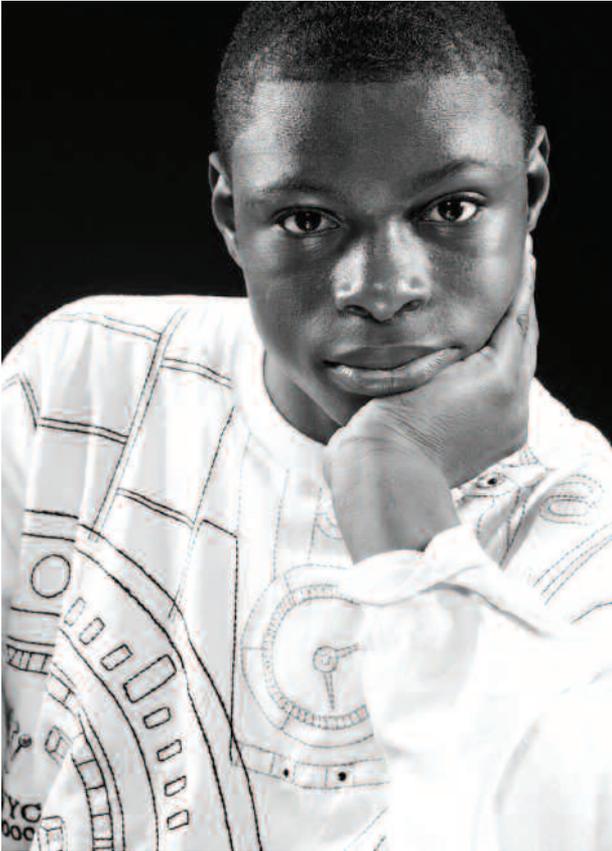
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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Steven



Photographer Jared Castald

Steven, born 11/26/1991, is in 8th grade. He is a quiet young man with an easy-going personality and does very well in a small group setting. His favorite class is gym. He enjoys playing video games and is an avid reader. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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Darnell



Photographer Chricel Portela

Darnell, born 2/8/1990, is a sweet, considerate young man with a good sense of humor and a big heart. He enjoys the company of adults and is great at remembering the 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. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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Tiffany



Tiffany, born 04/20/1991, loves pets, especially cats. She is a shy young lady when it comes to meeting new people, but is very outgoing once she gets to know you. Tiffany's favorite subjects at school are math, spelling and science. She aspires to become a veterinarian. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

Photographer Debra DiFulvio

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Carolyn



Carolyn, born 2/15/1992, is an extremely helpful and friendly child. She enjoys helping staff around the classroom and participating in weekly classroom jobs. Carolyn likes jumping rope, playing basketball, swimming and going out to the movies and to dinner. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

Photographer J.Paul Simeone

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Javana



Photographer Mel Rakerd

Javana, born 10/25/2000, is a very special, non-verbal little girl who needs a loving and dedicated family who will continue to encourage the amazing progress she has been making. She has learned to walk with a walker and can play with her toys. Javana loves interacting with others and enjoys getting attention from those around her. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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Joseph



Joseph, born 7/01/2001, is a little boy who loves to sing and imitate Michael Jackson. He has a quiet nature and takes his relationships very seriously. Joseph loves most food, but is partial to junk food. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

Photographer Terry Hirst

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Khileel



Photographer Tom McKean

Khileel, born 4/26/1994, is a bright and funny young man with a great imagination. He gets along well with his peers and makes friends, easily. Khileel enjoys a variety of sports, including baseball, track and basketball. His favorite sport is football and he is a fan of the “Eagles”. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Mikal



Photographer Lisa Hause

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Mikal, born 7/13/2003, is a handsome and charming child who can always be found laughing. He is full of life and enjoys having fun, playing outside and looking at picture books. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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Myira



Photographer Tony Wood

Myira, born 1/20/1994, is an aspiring teacher who performs well academically and enjoys learning. Her favorite subjects are reading and spelling. She also enjoys singing but is shy when it comes to singing around others. Myira is a very pleasant and social young lady. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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Filisha



Photographer William Hooper

Filisha, born 07/23/1991, is a bright and attractive young lady with a strong sense of fashion. She has amazing stage presence and would someday like to become a model. She loves to read, sing, dance and shop for clothes. Filisha is very resilient and with her strong religious faith and belief in God, she is hopeful about her future. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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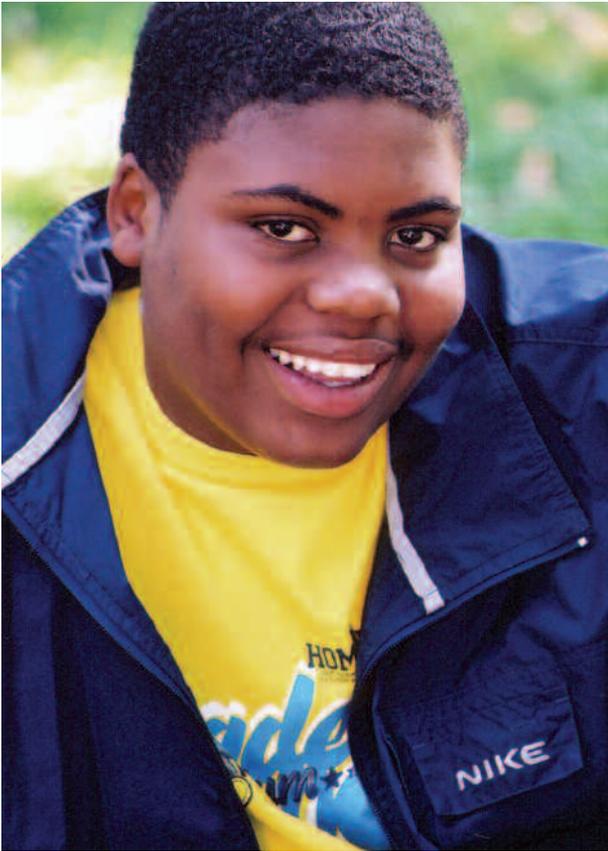
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Andrew



Photographer Michelle DuSold

Andrew, born 09/29/1991, has an avid interest in technology and specifically computers. He is a friendly and social young man who enjoys spending time with others. Andrew is very responsible and is proud that he has secured part-time employment. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Kani



Photographer David DeBalko

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Kani, born 10/01/2002, is an affectionate little boy who loves to receive attention. Although he is verbally limited, he plays well with other children. Kani enjoys putting puzzles together and loves to play with animals. In addition, he enjoys sports and always gives his best effort when playing. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Bryan & Rasual



Photographer kb pictures

Bryan, born 11/16/2002 and Rasual, born 05/17/2004, are two charming little boys with winning smiles. Although they are not biological siblings, they have lived together their entire lives. Rasual is a bundle of energy and Bryan has taken on the role of “older brother”. They both like to play with cars and blocks and enjoy listening to stories. They are looking for a home that is willing to adopt both of them. If you would like to open your heart and home to these children, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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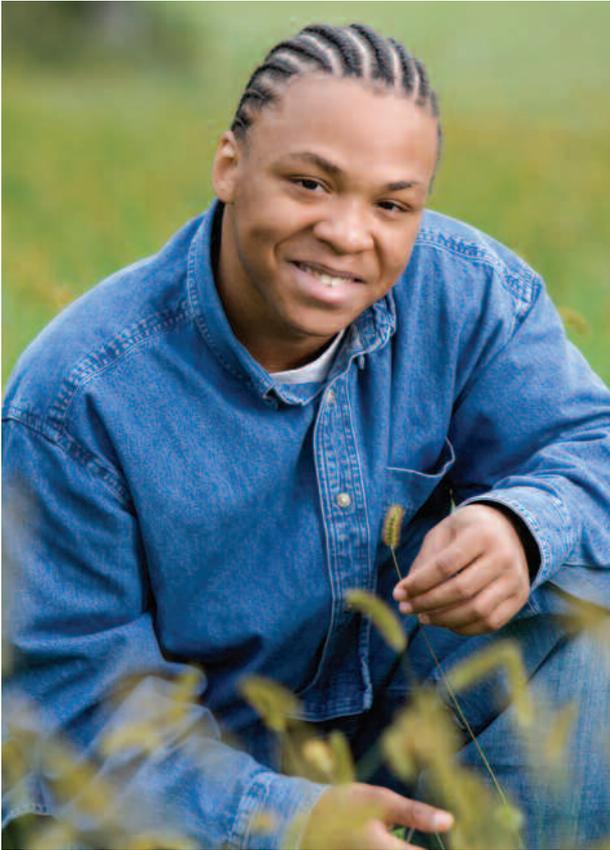
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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Mike



Photographer Ed Wheeler

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Michael, born 10/16/1989, is a quiet young man who is very polite and respectful of adults. He is soft-spoken but can be assertive when necessary. He loves comedy and his favorite comedians are the Wayans brothers. In addition, he enjoys science, art and playing basketball. If you would like to open your heart and home to this child, please call the National Adoption Center at 215-735-9988 and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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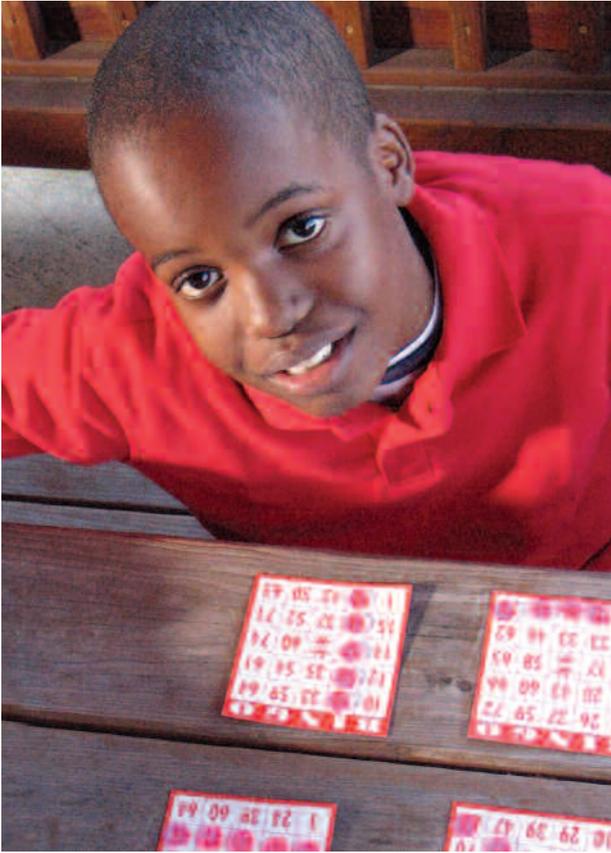
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Michael



Photographer Ruth DeBardleben

Michael, born 02/08/1994, 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 215-735-9988 and ask for the "PhillyKids Connection."

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

Corey & Talisa



Photographer Karen Carey

Corey, born 4/15/00 and Talisa, born 4/2/01 are a sibling group in need of a loving and nurturing family environment. They have lived in predominately Hispanic homes and as a result can speak Spanish as well as English. Corey is very energetic and outgoing and enjoys playing games and riding his bike. Talisa, is very upbeat and enjoys singing and dancing. They are looking for a home that is willing to adopt both of them.

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CHILDREN WAITING FOR ADOPTION

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 215-735-9988 and ask for the “PhillyKids Connection.”

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The Freddie Mac Foundation's
Wednesday's Child program in
Philadelphia is a weekly adoption feature
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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
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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 for use of the photographs in the PhillyKids Connection.

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