

National Adoption Month 2020 Outreach Toolkit

Communication Tools to Spread the Word
#NationalAdoptionMonth #YouthVoice



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Introduction

Tagline

“Engage Youth: Listen and Learn”

Theme

National Adoption Month is an initiative of the Children's Bureau with the goal to increase national awareness and draw attention and support for the thousands of children and youth in the U.S. foster care system.

Each year, we focus our outreach and awareness-raising efforts around a new adoption-related theme to help support professionals working each day to find permanency for children and youth in foster care in their community. This year's National Adoption Month theme is “Engage Youth: Listen and Learn.” It is well known that teenagers are less likely to be adopted, often because of their age, and are much more likely to age out of foster care without strong or stable family support. Securing lifelong connections for teens in foster care, both legally and emotionally, is a critical component in determining their future achievement, health, and well-being.

This year's National Adoption Month microsite includes resources and tips to help child welfare and legal professionals develop and support both formal and informal opportunities for young people to effectively share their voice and perspective. Hearing from youth who have experience in foster care—whether they've been reunited with family, achieved permanency with an adoptive family, or entered adulthood independently—can help educate communities and shape child welfare and adoption processes and policies. Their stories can inform recruitment practices, training resources for families, and other permanency support services. This year's website also contains resources designed specifically for youth, including how to get involved and ways to share their story effectively.

Stay connected to the campaign and [subscribe](#) to email updates.

If you have any questions, please contact us at info@childwelfare.gov.

Social Media

Use your social networks to help raise awareness by sharing these sample messages to help promote National Adoption Month.

Tips

- Include the following hashtags: **#NationalAdoptionMonth** and **#YouthVoice**.
- Share local information.
- Feature a quote or something personal (e.g., photo, artwork, video) featuring the work of a teen in your network.
- Follow our social media accounts to share resources and information.

Twitter:

[@childwelfaregov](https://twitter.com/childwelfaregov)

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/childwelfare

www.facebook.com/childrensbureau

Sample Social Media Posts

- Thousands of teenagers age out of foster care without a permanent family. Find out what your community can do to help. **#NationalAdoptionMonth #YouthVoice**
www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/youth/
- Help raise awareness during National Adoption Month. Follow [@childwelfaregov](https://twitter.com/childwelfaregov) and **#NationalAdoptionMonth** to share resources and strategies that help older youth find permanent families. www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/
- Connection and belonging are human needs. Visit the National Adoption Month website to find strategies to help older youth find their forever families.
#NationalAdoptionMonth #YouthVoice www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/
- Learn how sharing your experience in foster care and adoption can inspire change and help others. **#NationalAdoptionMonth #YouthVoice**
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/youth/>
- Put youth in the driver's seat to give them a better future after foster care.
#NationalAdoptionMonth. #YouthVoice
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/professionals/resources>

- Youth voice should be an everyday way of life. Take time to “listen and learn” to help youth in foster care find their forever family. #NationalAdoptionMonth. #YouthVoice <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/professionals/resources>
- “Engage Youth: Listen and Learn” to help teenagers overcome barriers to finding their forever family. #NationalAdoptionMonth. #YouthVoice <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/>
- Give youth in foster care an opportunity to create their own future. Listen and learn. #NationalAdoptionMonth #YouthVoice <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/>
- Youth are never too old to be adopted. #NationalAdoptionMonth #YouthVoice <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/>

Key Facts and Statistics

Include these key points in your messaging to help educate communities and shape child welfare and adoption processes and policies.

- There are over 122,000 children and youth waiting to be adopted who are at risk of aging out of foster care without permanent family connections. (AFCARS report)
- Approximately one in five children in the U.S. foster care system waiting to be adopted are teens.
- Only 5 percent of all children adopted in 2018 were 15 - 18 years old.
- The risk of homelessness and human trafficking is increased for teenagers in foster care.
- According to the most recent [AFCARS report](#), of the 122,000 children and youth waiting to be adopted:
 - o 52 percent are male
 - o 48 percent are female
 - o 22 percent are African American
 - o 22 percent are Hispanic
 - o 44 percent are white
 - o The average age is eight years old
 - o 11 percent are between 15 and 18 years old
 - o Average time in foster care is 31 months

Graphics

Grab attention with these free graphics! Add them to your social media pages, websites, blogs, newsletters, emails, and other print or digital communications. Each graphic uses the National Adoption Month 2020 branding and style approved by the Children's Bureau.

To download, right-click on the graphic and select "Save Picture As." The graphics are also available on the [website](#).

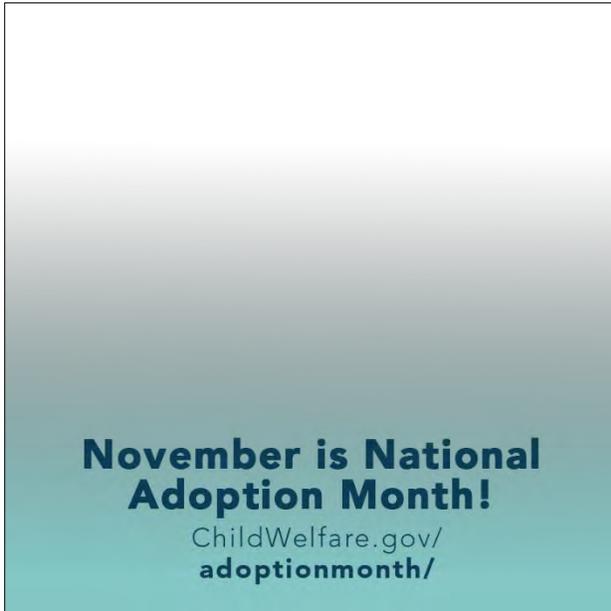
Facebook Cover Photo



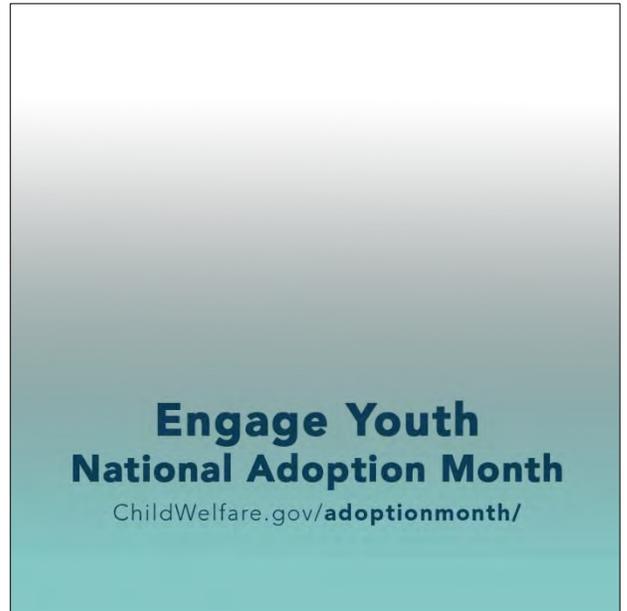
Twitter Cover Photo



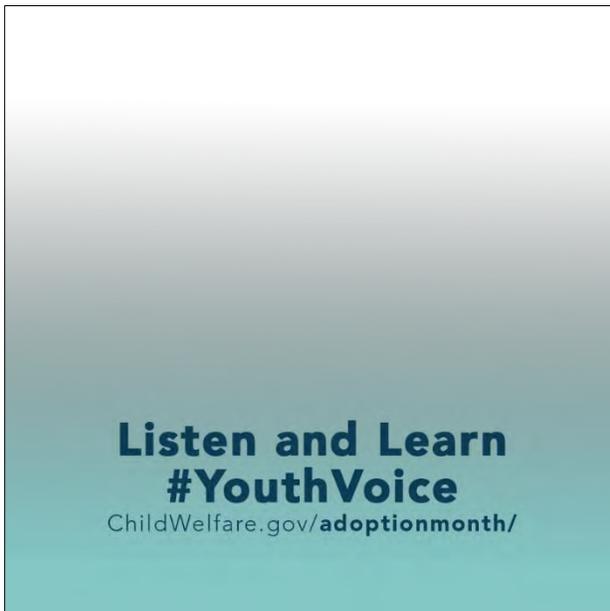
Facebook Profile Frames



[Add to your profile picture](#)

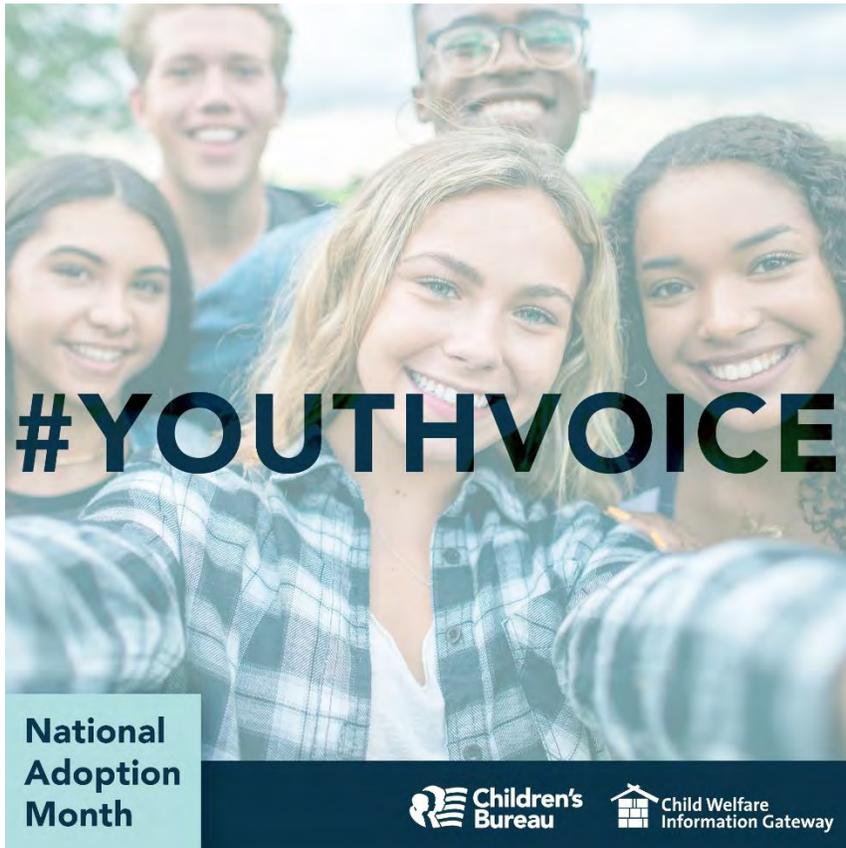


[Add to your profile picture](#)



[Add to your profile picture](#)

Shareable Graphics



November is National Adoption Month

childwelfare.gov/adoptionmonth/

#youthvoice



Children's
Bureau



Child Welfare
Information Gateway

Engage Youth: Listen and Learn

childwelfare.gov/adoptionmonth/

National
Adoption
Month



Children's
Bureau



Child Welfare
Information Gateway



**National
Adoption
Month**



How to Include #YouthVoice in Permanency Planning

- 1** Use their strengths to guide their participation
- 2** Empower youth to take part in decision-making
- 3** Give youth time to consider their options

National Adoption Month
childwelfare.gov/adoptionmonth/



“Teens in foster care are strong, resilient, and smart, and, given the chance, they can overcome their past and influence the world for better.”

—ARIA WILLIAMS

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“Everything should happen at the youth's pace. Never rush, never assume, never force.”

—SAM, AGED OUT

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Adoption
Month



#youthvoice

Sample Messages

Use these sample messages to share this year’s resources with people in your network through email blog posts, newsletters, and more. Tailor the messages to fit the format that works best for you.

Message #1: National Adoption Month Announcement

Audience: General/Families

Subject: November is National Adoption Month!

Thousands of teenagers across the country are at risk of aging out of the foster care system without permanent families or a sense of belonging.

Often youth themselves are reluctant to consider adoption or other permanency because of trauma they’ve experienced, conflicting loyalties to family and caregivers, or fear of lost identity.

Yet studies show lifelong connection to a caring adult is critical at every age.

That is why this year during [National Adoption Month](#), the U.S. Children’s Bureau urges us to consider how we can engage youth by listening to their perspectives, understanding their needs, and learning from them to support their path to permanency.

When we open a channel of communication with youth, we can begin to address the barriers to achieving permanency, and we create opportunities for their well-being along the way.

National Adoption Month is an annual campaign sponsored by the Children’s Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in partnership with [Child Welfare Information Gateway](#) and [AdoptUSKids](#).

Visit the [website](#) to find important resources and tools to learn more about how to achieve better outcomes for children and youth in need of finding their “forever family.”

Stay connected throughout the month to help educate your community and raise awareness by following [#NationalAdoptionMonth](#) on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Message #2: Highlight Resources From National Adoption Month Website
Audience: Professionals

Subject: National Adoption Month Highlights Resources to Help Professionals Integrate Youth Voice

November is National Adoption Month, and this year's theme focuses on how to make youth voice an everyday way of life.

There are thousands of teenagers across the country currently in the foster care system who need permanent family connections to carry them into adulthood. The U.S. Children's Bureau urges all communities to remain steadfast in the pursuit of permanency for older youth.

One way to overcome some of the barriers to permanency is to "listen and learn" from youth by creating opportunities to connect with them and understand their needs and challenges.

Visit the National Adoption Month website to learn cutting-edge strategies and practices, find state examples of success, and see some of the work being developed by Children's Bureau grantees on trainings for foster and adoptive parents, mental health competency, and more.

Help spread the word about the unique challenges and opportunities facing older youth waiting for adoption during the month of November and throughout the year, and stay connected on Facebook and Twitter. #NationalAdoptionMonth #YouthVoice

Email Signature Blocks

Raise awareness every time you send an email! Choose a message to add to your email signature during the month of November!

- November is [National Adoption Month](#)!
Help raise awareness & visit the website today!
- [Listen and Learn from Youth](#) | National Adoption Month 2020!
- Engage Youth: Listen and Learn | [National Adoption Month 2020](#)
- Permanency is possible. [Engage #YouthVoice](#).