



## Foster Children's Adoption Project

Families who adopt children through the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) are eligible for free legal services from the Alliance for Children's Rights. The Alliance assists adoptive parents in finalizing the adoption by securing a private attorney who is trained and volunteers to finalize the adoption.

Families assisted by the Alliance may have their adoption finalization hearings on an Adoption Day or a regular weekday at the Children's Court. Adoption Days are typically held quarterly on a designated Friday, and on one special Friday in November for National Adoption Day. Adoption Days are special celebrations of adoptions for foster children where the courtrooms are dedicated exclusively to completing adoptions, and there is an extra festive feel with balloons, refreshments, and entertainment for the children and families. In addition to these Adoption Days, adoption finalization hearings occur on an ongoing basis every week at the Children's Court. The Alliance and its *pro bono* attorneys will schedule the family's adoption hearing as the family chooses either on an Adoption Day or a regular weekday. At Adoption Days as well as weekday adoption finalization hearings, friends and relatives of the adoptive family may attend and bring their cameras.

Unless prospective adoptive parent(s) have chosen to hire a private attorney, DCFS will refer the case to the Alliance or Public Counsel for potential legal representation.

### About Us

The Alliance for Children's Rights is a nonprofit legal service organization dedicated solely to protecting abused and neglected children. We place special emphasis on completing adoptions for children in foster care and providing post-adoption assistance.

The Alliance and our *pro bono* attorneys provide assistance to prospective adoptive parents, including:

- Education about the adoption process
- Preparation and filing of all the necessary legal documents to finalize the adoption
- Representation at the adoption finalization hearing
- Adoption Assistance Program (AAP) and Foster Care payment rate advocacy
- Medi-Cal coverage and denials advocacy
- Special Education and ILP advocacy
- Mental Health advocacy
- Post-adoption benefits and services advocacy

DCFS will refer your case to the Alliance after they have completed your Adoption Home Study and you have signed Adoptive Placement Papers. After the Alliance receives the referral from DCFS, we will contact you for a telephone interview to learn more about you, the child(ren) you are adopting, and if you need any assistance obtaining additional services and/or AAP funding. Formal legal representation by the Alliance or one of our *pro bono* attorneys to finalize the adoption begins after you have been interviewed and after you have signed a representation agreement sent to you by the Alliance or one of our volunteer attorneys.

We look forward to speaking with you. We will contact you when we receive the DCFS referral. However, if you have any questions or need assistance earlier in the process, please call us at (213) 368-6010. Please ask for Cynthia Billey, Esq., Director, Foster Children's Adoption Project, or Anderson Stone, Legal Assistant.