

## THE DAVE THOMAS FOUNDATION FOR ADOPTION RENEWS ADOPTION RECRUITMENT GRANTS WITH LICKING COUNTY JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES

Licking County Job and Family Services - Children Services, has received renewals on its grants from the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. The grants are dedicated to funding two child focused adoption recruiters for Wendy's Wonderful Kids, a signature program of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption.

The Wendy's Wonderful Kids model is simple and effective: Wendy's restaurants and their customers raise funds for the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. The Foundation issues grants to local adoption organizations to hire adoption professionals that implement aggressive child-specific recruitment programs targeted exclusively at placing foster care children in loving, adoptive families. Each recruiter is required to dedicate 100 percent of his or her workday to this program.

Today, there are more than 123,000 children in the U.S. foster care system waiting to be adopted, including 78 children in the permanent custody of Licking County Children Services.

"Each year 10 to 15 Licking County foster children age out of the child welfare system without a permanent family," said Bruce Anderson, Children Services Administrator. "Through Wendy's Wonderful Kids, Licking County Children Services can focus dedicated time to matching foster care children who have been waiting the longest with families who hope to adopt."

According to Rita Soronen, executive director of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, the Wendy's Wonderful Kids model is having a direct impact already. "Since the national launch in April of 2004, 122 recruiters throughout the U.S., the District of Columbia and two provinces of Canada (British Columbia and Ontario) have joined Wendy's and the Foundation to serve children waiting in foster care.

As of today, more than 10,000 children have been served by the Wendy's Wonderful Kids program nationwide. Of those children, over 6,630 have had families identified for them and more than 4,480 children have been adopted or waiting for a final court hearing as a direct result of this terrific partnership."

To learn more about the program or how to adopt from foster care, call your local Wendy's Wonderful Kids recruiters, Ashley Miravalle at 740-670-8845 or Christina Jenkins at 740-670-8814.