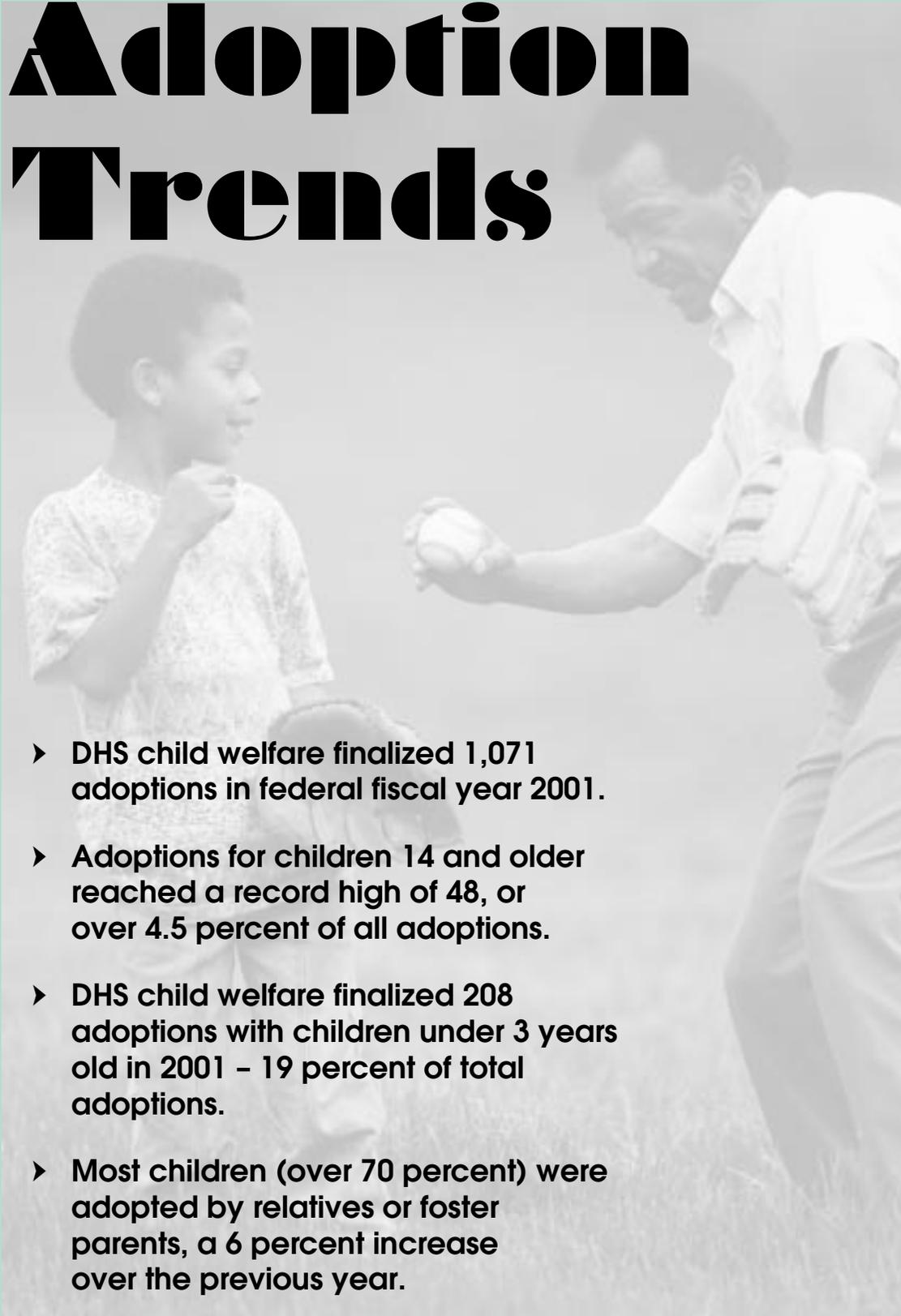


2001 Adoption Trends

- 
- ▶ DHS child welfare finalized 1,071 adoptions in federal fiscal year 2001.
 - ▶ Adoptions for children 14 and older reached a record high of 48, or over 4.5 percent of all adoptions.
 - ▶ DHS child welfare finalized 208 adoptions with children under 3 years old in 2001 – 19 percent of total adoptions.
 - ▶ Most children (over 70 percent) were adopted by relatives or foster parents, a 6 percent increase over the previous year.

ADOPTIONS

**DHS FINALIZED
1,071 ADOPTIONS IN
FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR* 2001**



Adoptions of children from foster care have continued to increase dramatically because of adoption reform initiatives begun in 1997 at both the state and national level. The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) passed by Congress in 1997 and Oregon's SB408 (passed in 1999 to conform to ASFA) share the goal of moving children more quickly from temporary foster care to permanency.

When adoption is the goal, a family is recruited that best matches the child's needs. Many factors are considered, including keeping siblings together if it is in the best interests of the children.

**OREGON WAS ONE OF TWO STATES HONORED
IN 1999 BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES WITH THE ADOPTION
2002 AWARD FOR INNOVATIVE PRACTICES
LEADING TO INCREASED ADOPTIONS.**



Special needs

Most of the children placed for adoption by DHS child welfare have "special needs."

- Are 6 years of age or older.
- Are part of a sibling group.
- Have a physical, emotional or mental handicapping condition.
- Are part of an ethnic/racial/cultural minority.

**In 1998 the federal government began requiring states to use a single system to report where children go when they leave foster care. This report on adoption trends is the data Oregon reported to the federal government for the federal fiscal year from October 1, 2000 through September 30, 2001.*

THE CHILDREN

Of the 1,071 children adopted in the federal fiscal year which ended September 30, 2001, 208 were under the age of three. As children get older, the chances for an adoptive placement decrease dramatically, creating a severe need for adoptive homes for children over age seven.



AGE of ADOPTED CHILDREN

less than 3	208	19.4%
3-4 years	215	20.1%
5-7 years	270	25.2%
8-10 years	208	19.4%
11-13 years	122	11.4%
14 and older	48	4.5%

CHILDREN ADOPTED IN 2001

Area of State	Children	
	came from	went to
SDA 1 Clatsop/Columbia/Tillamook	33	29
SDA 2 Multnomah	391	225
SDA 3 Marion/Polk/Yamhill	143	119
SDA 4 Benton/Lincoln/Linn	47	54
SDA 5 Lane	134	104
SDA 6 Douglas	29	24
SDA 7 Coos/Curry	28	17
SDA 8 Jackson/Josephine	61	62
SDA 9 Gilliam-Wheeler/Hood River/ Wasco-Sherman	7	15
SDA 10 Crook/Deschutes/Jefferson	38	37
SDA 11 Klamath/Lake	39	27
SDA 12 Morrow/Umatilla (Pendleton/Hermiston)	21	16
SDA 13 Baker/Union/Wallowa	15	18
SDA 14 Grant/Harney/Malheur	12	27
SDA 15 Clackamas	39	48
SDA 16 Washington	31	33
Central Office	3	
Oregon private licensed adoption agencies or out of state		216



CHILD'S ETHNICITY

Ethnicity

White	763	71.2%
African American	90	8.4%
Hispanic	141	13.2%
Native American	41	3.8%
Asian	4	0.4%
Unknown ethnic	8	0.7%
Multiracial	24	2.2%

28.0 percent of children adopted in the federal fiscal year which ended September 30, 2001 belonged to ethnic minorities

Gender

Finalized adoptions in 2001 included more girls than boys:

578 (54%)	Females
493 (46%)	Males



ADOPTIVE FAMILIES

Federal and Oregon statutes both require that consideration must be given to relatives as the placement of choice for children unable to live safely with their parent(s). Relative caregivers, including those who foster and those who adopt, must meet the same criteria for safety that nonrelated caregivers must meet.

The length of time to achieve adoption depends on the complexity and severity of a child's needs and the availability of appropriate caregivers already known to the child.

TWO-THIRDS OF THE CHILDREN ADOPTED FROM DHS ARE ADOPTED BY RELATIVES OR NONRELATED FOSTER PARENTS

- Nonrelative foster parents became adoptive parents for 359 (33.5 percent) of the finalized adoptions.
- 357 finalized adoptions (33.3 percent) were with relatives providing foster care.
- An additional 36 finalized adoptions (3.4 percent) were with relatives who were not providing foster care.

ADOPTIVE HOMES FOR OLDER CHILDREN, CHILDREN OF COLOR, AND SIBLING GROUPS CONTINUE TO BE IN HIGH DEMAND



Recruiting homes

- Families recruited by DHS child welfare adopted 855 children (79.8 percent).
- Families recruited by Oregon private adoption agencies adopted 44 children (4.1 percent).
- Families recruited by out-of-state private agencies adopted 73 children (6.8 percent).
- Families recruited by out-of-state public agencies adopted 99 children (9.2 percent).

RECRUITING/FAMILIES FOCUS ON CHILD



Since 1990, the number of children in state custody freed for adoption has increased from fewer than 500 per year to more than 1,000 per year. About one-third of these children are voluntarily released for adoption by their parents. The remaining two-thirds are freed through a court process called termination of parental rights (TPR).

Oregon was the first state in the nation to use mediation in parental rights termination cases. This process avoids the costly and stressful process of a court trial and lays the groundwork for the birth parents to be involved in planning for their child's future. In this process, the birth parents voluntarily relinquish their parental rights but play a role in planning for their child and, in some cases, have ongoing communication with the child after the adoption is finalized.

An open adoption can work in the best interest of the child. Open adoption is defined as one in which there is some communication or contact between the birth parent and the child and adoptive parent after finalization.



Life-long special needs

MANY ADOPTED CHILDREN HAVE LIFE-LONG SPECIAL NEEDS

For many of these children, their early histories of abuse and neglect have resulted in conditions or behaviors that will require specialized services throughout their lives.

A 2000 survey of adoptive parents conducted by the Oregon Post Adoption Resource Center (see box) showed that almost 73 percent of adopted children have more than one special need, condition or behavior.

SPECIAL NEEDS OF ADOPTIVE CHILDREN

Behavioral/emotional problems	62%
Learning disabilities	59%
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome	57%
Attention deficit/hyperactivity	50%
Attachment problems	39%
Speech or language problems	35%
Developmental delays	26%
Sensory problems	25%

AFTER THE ADOPTION

Low disruptions

DHS child welfare works diligently to recruit families who match the needs of the child. This careful adoption process helps assure the adoption will be successful. Statistics show 92.4 percent of Oregon adoptive placements continued without disruption. The national average is 85-90 percent.

92.4 PERCENT OF OREGON ADOPTIONS CONTINUE TO FINALIZATION WITHOUT DISRUPTION

Partnerships

The success of the DHS Adoptions Program in achieving timely adoptions for children relies on strong partnerships with a wide variety of private sector agencies and individuals. These partnerships include:

- Special Needs Adoption Coalition, a group of 11

licensed Oregon private adoption agencies that recruit, train, and link adoptive families with children.

- Boys and Girls Aid Society, which coordinates recruitment, training, screening families, and contracts to operate the foster/adopt family inquiry telephone line.
- Northwest Adoption Exchange for nationwide recruitment of qualified adoptive families.
- More than three dozen out-of-state private adoption agencies who bring forward prospective adoptive families.

Preserve families

DHS provides services to preserve adoptive families. As of December 2001, 7,538 adopted Oregon children had identified special needs and

were receiving one or more adoption support services. The Adoption Assistance program provides benefits such as medical coverage, monthly payments or one-time payments for unexpected needs until a special needs adopted child reaches the age of 18. The number of children receiving Adoption Assistance has increased 153 percent from 1995 to 2001.

Support

PAFT (Post Adoption Family Therapy) provides specialized counseling and other support services for adoptive families. Since 1999, the Oregon Post Adoption Resource Center (ORPARC) has provided regional trainings, a lending library and resource center, a Web site and assistance to start local adoption support groups for families adopting children from DHS foster care.

If you need this document in an alternate format, contact your local DHS child welfare office.



DHS Adoptions
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PAM 9079 Rev. 05/02
<http://www.scf.hr.state.or.us/adoption/index.htm>