

HAND IN HAND INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS DECEMBER, 2011 NEWSLETTER

OUR CONTINUED EFFORT TO FIND FAMILIES FOR WAITING CHILDREN

If you are already home with your child, please consider writing a short testimonial for our new blog at www.KidsWait.org. It is very helpful for parents considering the adoption of children who are older, who have a special need, or who are members of a sibling group to know that other parents have already traveled that path. We are also looking for more testimonials from those of you who have participated in the hosting programs. We would like these both for the blog and for an article on the hosting program. A picture or two would be wonderful if you are comfortable sharing those! Send these to indiana@hihiadopt.org. Meanwhile, please check out our blog, bookmark it and recommend it to anyone you know who may be considering adoption!

NEW PROGRAM OPENING IN JAPAN FOR HAND IN HAND FAMILIES!!!!

Over the past two months, we have been in communication with a Christian orphanage in Japan which has three children who survived the Tsunami/Quakes but lost their parents. All of the children are healthy and legally free for placement. Once these children are placed, we will also be presented with other children in the orphanage who are available for adoptive homes. We are now beginning the Pilot program with Japan and looking for interested families. Requirements are: Christian families, between the ages of 25 and 75 years of age, married, a stable income, and the ability to spend a few weeks in Japan as the court work is completed. If interested, please contact either your local office or MaryLee at 352-873-9721.

COUNTRY UPDATES

China – The China Center of Adoption Affairs has most recently matched families with log-in dates of August 7, 2006. If your dossier is logged in for a regular match and you are getting discouraged with the wait, please know that you can consider the match of a special needs child without removing your dossier from your “place in line” at CCAA. If you know you want to do this, please contact Vickie Truelove at hihiadopt@frontier.com and submit an updated Type of Child form so that our staff in China can know which child may be a possibility for you.

China/Special Needs – We can now assist families with adoption of children with special needs from China in three ways, including being matched from the Shared List, being matched to a child who has been designated “Special Focus” because he or she has waited over a month to be matched, or by adopting a child from Guizhou Province where Hand In Hand has a direct relationship to help match waiting children.

China and Single Applicants – As of March 15, 2011 it is now possible for single females to adopt a child through China’s Special Focus program. The specific requirements the applicant has to meet can be found on the US State Department website at:

[http://adoption.state.gov/country_information/country_specific_alerts_notices.php?](http://adoption.state.gov/country_information/country_specific_alerts_notices.php?alert_notice_type=notices&alert_notice_file=china_1)

[alert_notice_type=notices&alert_notice_file=china_1](http://adoption.state.gov/country_information/country_specific_alerts_notices.php?alert_notice_type=notices&alert_notice_file=china_1) Persons interested in this option can contact any Hand In Hand office for information on which Special Focus children are currently waiting for families. Brief information on the children is also posted on Hand In Hand’s Facebook page.

China – Two children - It is now possible for a married couple to adopt two children from China at once or successively in the same year if at least one of them is a Special Focus child. In most cases the same dossier can be used (with a few additions) so the costs can be reduced for the second case.

Haiti - Adoptions are progressing in Haiti, and Hand In Hand is excited to have several families matched with children through this program. The adoption process in Haiti now requires that adoptive parents make two trips to Port-au-Prince in order to complete the adoption. After the

dossier is approved by IBESR (the government department responsible for approving international adoptions), one or both adoptive parents must travel for one trip of four or five business days to appear in both lower and higher courts (these court hearings will take place in the same week). Then, one or both adoptive parents must travel again after immigration has been approved in order to bring the child home to the United States.

Philippines – The Philippines has issued a temporary moratorium on applications from families wanting young, healthy children. Their goal is to place children with the already approved applicants before opening their doors for more applications. (The moratorium does not apply to children over 9 years old or those with special needs.)

Philippines Special Home Find - There are many Filipino children who are older or who have special needs or who are a part of a sibling group who need families. They are listed on a Special Home Find list and families can review the list and apply to adopt a child they think could fit well into their family. Contact the Indiana office to have the list emailed to you.

Philippines Summer Hosting Program – We are planning to have summer hosting programs in 2012 in Indiana and Florida. If you live in or adjacent to those states and are interested in participating, contact either office as soon as possible. If there is enough interest, we can have programs in other states too.

Russia – Families are needed for children between 18 months old and ten years old. We are also excited about a special program we have in Russia where we can assist in the placement of children with Down Syndrome. If this interests you, please contact us for more information.

CALLING ALL ENTERTAINERS

The Indiana office of Hand In Hand is seeking adults or children who are willing to be a part of the Talent Show at our Holiday Party in Albion on December 17, 2011. (See the article about the Parties elsewhere in this newsletter.) Contact us soon so we can add you to our list and have an excellent evening of entertainment!

CHILDREN RECENTLY PLACED WITH THEIR FOREVER FAMILIES

<u>Name</u>	<u>Age at Arrival</u>	<u>Country from</u>	<u>State Living in</u>
Lori L.	12	China	Florida
Connor H.	5	Russia	Texas
Luke R.	7 ½	Russia	Texas
Elizabeth C.	8	Russia	Maryland
Ian S.	5	Russia	Georgia
Alexander M.	5	Russia	Oklahoma
Alexander K.	3	Russia	Oklahoma
Dmitri H.	5	Russia	Virginia
Maria Z.	4	Russia	California
Ramsey S.	5	Philippines	Indiana
Lydia L.	13	Philippines	Louisiana
Santino W.	1 ½	Philippines	Texas
JJ M.	12	Philippines	Missouri
Meilee B.	5	China	Indiana
Tian B.	5 ½	China	Indiana
Marcos H.	2	Philippines	Minnesota

COULD YOU BE A HOST FAMILY FOR A FILIPINO CHILD?

In the summer of 2012 our goal is to have two host programs, one each in Indiana and Florida with at least ten families per state. Could you be one of them? This is a program where an older child who is waiting for adoption (or a sibling group) from the Philippines gets to stay in your home for one month. After that period, if you feel a bond has been formed, you can apply to adopt that child. Here is a testimonial from a family who participated in the 2011 hosting program:

Hosting a 14-year-old girl during the Philippines Hosting Program was a delightful and life-changing experience for our family, allowing us to learn about aspects of her culture, and allowing her to join in our daily family activities. Our four young children loved her from the start, and by the end of the hosting period they had all settled into a comfortable routine as best of friends. As the parents, we thoroughly enjoyed having her as part of our family, particularly in the last two weeks of the program when her initial shyness wore off. Her month-long visit gave us the comfort level to confidently proceed with her adoption, and we would recommend this program highly to anyone considering the adoption of an older child or sibling group.

A BROTHER FOR CHRISTMAS

by Analese Mounts

This year for Christmas, I got something better than toys.
I didn't get a dog or cat, but he does make a lot of noise.
I got a brother for Christmas, even though it might sound insane.
He didn't come wrapped under the tree, he came on an airplane.
He might have not been on my wish list, but he is what God wished us to have,
Because he needed a family, he needed a mom and dad.
People may call him different, or maybe even not right.
But I know God made him and he is perfect in God's eyes.
He is always joyful, even when it's not the holidays.
Mom says he will teach us to be that way.
He has the cutest laugh and he loves to make us smile.
This is one Christmas present that will last more than a while.
We love him already; he means so much to us.
I got the best present ever; I got a brother for Christmas.

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Analese, 14, recently became the big sister to a 5 year old boy with Down syndrome adopted from Russia.

"NO MORE ORPHANS" IN RUSSIA

The following letter comes from an organization dedicated to helping Russia achieve its dream of "no more orphans."

Almost a year ago, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev declared in his annual "state of the union" address that "there should be no orphans in Russia because the main goal for orphanages is to help families to adopt children". Early in 2011, Big Family Mission launched an initiative to encourage the church in Russia to take the lead so

that the dream of "Russia with no orphans" can be realized. Big Family and other ministries and organizations formed an Alliance for Russia without Orphans... and throughout the year, churches and Christian organizations have been encouraged to get involved. Just this past Sunday, hundreds of churches in Russia observed a special day of prayer for orphans. We are indeed praying for an awakening among the churches in Russia as a result of the prayers that went up for orphans. We recently published Ivan Iklyushin's update on "Russia with No Orphans" on our website:

www.BigFamilyMinistry.org/Russia_with_no_orphans_update.pdf. This update was written before Orphan Sunday in Russia. We are looking forward to hearing more about how churches participated in the day of prayer for orphans in Ivan's next update. Please keep "Russia with no orphans" in your prayers!

Ken and Dianne Dockery

Volunteers and International Coordinators

Big Family Mission

www.BigFamilyMinistry.org

TEACHING OUR CHILDREN ABOUT U.S. HISTORY

For families who home school or families who adopt older children from other countries, it is important that our children learn about the history of their new country. USCIS has developed some lesson plans that are geared toward new English learners. You can find them at the Citizenship Resource Center at www.uscis.gov/citizenship. Some of the topics include: Thomas Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence, Benjamin Franklin and the US Constitution, Thanksgiving 1 – Pilgrims and Indians, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Branches of Government, Civil War, and Capitols, Oceans and Border States.

HOLIDAY PARTIES

Isn't it fun to get together with other families who have adopted children or who are in the process of adoption? Here are several opportunities:

COLORADO – The Colorado HAND IN HAND party will be Saturday, December 3, 2011 from 1 PM to 3 PM in the Community Room at St. John's Lutheran Church, 700 South Franklin St., Denver. Call 970-226-8948 for more information.

INDIANA –

The FILIPINO-AMERICAN SOCIETY will have a Christmas Party on Saturday, December 10th at the Franke Park Pavilion adjacent to the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo, beginning at 5 PM. Bring a dish to share and be prepared to enjoy the hospitality, friendship, entertainment and good food provided by our Filipino friends in Fort Wayne who love to have adoptive families join them!

HAND IN HAND will host a Holiday Party on Saturday, December 17, 2011 from 5PM to 8 PM at Central Noble High School, Albion, Indiana. We will have a carry-in dinner followed by entertainment. Our entertainment will be Talent provided by Hand In Hand families and children. Please call or email at 260-636-2566 or Indiana@hihiadopt.org to both RSVP and to sign up to be a part of the Talent Show.

CAN YOU HELP CHILDREN WHO ARE STILL WAITING?

As a non-profit agency, we are the voice for homeless and abandoned children of the world. These children have year-round needs. If you are not able to provide an adoptive home for another waiting child, please consider a donation that will assist another family to do so or that will assist in a project for children who wait. Send your tax deductible donations to Hand In Hand, c/o MaryLee Lane, Founder and Director, 9520 SW 9th Terrace, Ocala FL 34476. Blessings, peace and thanks to all of you for your generous help. You will be blessed as you have blessed others!

SEARCHING FOR PERFECT GIFTS THIS SEASON? GET INSPIRED HERE!

Adoptive Families' annual gift-giving directory presents a selection of heritage and adoption products from our sponsors. Go to AdoptiveFamilies.com/holidaygifts to see AF's picks for gifts that give back to organizations benefiting kids worldwide.

A REQUEST FROM OUR FRIENDS IN PAKISTAN

Dear Sister MaryLee Lane,

Greetings in Jesus' Name. I hope you and your all family are fine by the Grace of God and doing great job for Lord Jesus Christ. As you know Christmas is coming few weeks later. Every year we are distributing warm clothes and shoes to orphan children and Sunday school children. I would like to request for help for these very special children because now they are waiting for their new dresses and shoes. We also give them special lunch on Christmas program. We want to make this Christmas very special for these deserving and Orphan Children. We want to give warm cloths and shoes on this Christmas and also want to give them special lunch on Christmas to 175 children. We request you that kindly send us your generous donation for our Christmas programs. We have 15 orphan children and 125 school children and 35 Sunday school children in five different areas. One child expense is \$12 and total budget for Christmas programs is \$2100. Your small donation can make this Christmas very special for orphan children, school children and Sunday school children. Kindly keep these Christmas programs in your regular prayers. We are also praying for this purpose that Lord give us finances to help these special children on this Christmas. If you need more information feel free to contact with me. I am waiting for your reply as earliest.

God bless you richly,

Your brother in Christ, Pastor Ahsan Ishaq

"This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God". 2-Corinthians 9:12

SPECIAL FOCUS CHILDREN

The following are children waiting in China through our Special Focus program. Contact us to see photos and read complete medical information on these children. Visit our blog at www.KidsWait.org to learn more about the implications of each child's medical condition. Maybe something that seems scary on first glance will not be after you learn more about what the condition is and what services we have available to us in the US for children with these conditions!

Girl 1013B - born 8/10/07 – mild cerebral palsy

Boy 1013A - born 5/20/07 – cleft lip and palate, heart condition

Boy 75A - born 7/12/10 – under-development of brain -: 1. skull ossification delay; 2. delayed development.

Boy 1017C –boy born 12/10/08 - hematic disease, B Thalassemia, normal physical growth

Boy 1017E – boy born 8/13/06 – congenital heart disease
Boy 1017F – boy born 8/8/02 - red-green blindness, though otherwise healthy
Boy 1017G – boy born 3/9/07 – Down Syndrome
Boy 1017H – born 1/20/02 – albinism
Boy 1017J – born 7/16/09 – congenital heart disease, post-operative, and missing left ear
Boy 1017K – born 9/6/09 – malformed lower limbs
Boy 614A – born 8/17/07 – post-operative hemangioma
Girl 1121A – girl born 2/21/09 – post-operative congenital heart defect; developmental delays

PHILIPPINE CHILDREN FOR SPECIAL HOME FIND

Our list of waiting children, which is comprised mostly of children in the Philippines, is now 23 pages long (that's one brief description per child and small font!) Email us if you want to receive a copy of the list. Or look for it on our website. Then if you see children who interest you we can send you photos and more complete information. Here is one set of two sisters who are waiting.

A 11 years old/ F 8178 (10-0295) and B 9 years old / F 8179 (10-0296)

The children were voluntarily surrendered by their birthmother after their birthfather died in a vehicular accident. **A** is a Grade 3 student. She studies well and is given with continues tutorial lesson to develop proper study habit. The child is jolly and talkative. She has established good relationship with other children and is protective of her sister. She and her sister occasionally have conflict but both can accept their mistakes. At home, she can perform household chores and has the initiative to help others. She desires to have an adoptive family. **B** is in Preparatory and was observed to have improvements in her studies. She can now read simple sentences and recognize the alphabet, numbers, and colors. She has developed her sense of responsibility and has the initiative to do her assignments. She is friendly and always smiles. At home, she performs her household chores diligently and shows respect with adults. Spiritually, she participates in their daily prayer. She regularly attends Sunday Eucharistic Mass Celebration. She desires to be placed for adoption together with her sister.

We have complete medical and psychological information on these sisters, as well as photos, and can share them with those who are interested.

RAINBOW KIDS

Hand In Hand is now on Rainbow Kids. This provides us an opportunity to use their extensive networking to help find families for waiting children. Check them out at www.rainbowkids.com and sign up to receive their free on-line newsletters.

YOU CAN BENEFIT BY REFERRING A FAMILY TO HAND IN HAND

If you are already a Hand In Hand family (past or present) and you refer a family to Hand In Hand and they submit an application any time after May 1, 2010 and indicate on it that you referred them, Hand In Hand will give a \$200 credit toward your next Hand In Hand payment for either your current adoption process or your next adoption through Hand In Hand.

HAND IN HAND ON FACEBOOK

Search for Hand In Hand International Adoptions or visit the following link:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Hand-In-Hand-International-Adoptions/126410800748612>

Please “like” our page and suggest it to your Facebook friends so that we can spread the word about the many waiting children around the world.

HAND IN HAND IS A HAGUE-ACCREDITED ADOPTION AGENCY

Since February 29, 2008 Hand In Hand has had full accreditation by the US Department of State to perform adoptions under the Hague Convention. This means we are able to assist families with adoptions from any other country that is party to the Hague Convention. The purpose of the Hague Convention is to safeguard the rights of children being adopted as well as the rights of the adoptive parents. Being accredited means we have met such standards as education of adoptive parents, professional qualifications and training of staff, ethical practices, maintenance of records, services after an adoption, etc.