

# Media Release



Contact: **Megan Smith**  
PR Manager  
Youthville  
4505 E. 47<sup>th</sup> St. South  
Wichita, KS 67210  
Phone: 316.529.9100 ext. 8105  
E-mail: [msmith@youthville.org](mailto:msmith@youthville.org)

## Youthville Hosts National Adoption Day Celebration

(Wichita, Kan., Oct. 15, 2008) – Hundreds of families who have adopted children this year through Youthville will gather on Saturday, Nov. 15 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Exploration Place, 300 N. McLean Blvd., to celebrate National Adoption Day. More than twenty children will finalize their adoption at the event, changing their lives forever as they become a part of an adoptive family.

“We celebrate National Adoption Day to say thank you to those that enrich their families and the child’s life through adoption,” said Shelley Duncan, Youthville’s President and CEO. “It is also a chance to raise awareness of the hundreds of children still waiting to be adopted.”

\* National Adoption Day is a very special day for Randall and Gail Whitley, Jamestown, Kan., and their family. Two years ago, the Whitley’s finalized the adoption of two of their children and they will add two more children to their family this year when they finalize another adoption on National Adoption Day. The Whitley’s have been foster parents for years and said they always knew they would adopt. They have eight children; two biological, five adopted and one child they have guardianship of. After having two biological children and adopting two; the Whitley’s were in the process of becoming licensed to adopt more when Gail’s good friend became very ill with a brain tumor and asked Gail if she would care for her son. After receiving legal guardianship of her friend’s son, the Whitley’s moved into a larger house and were able to receive their license to adopt more children. “God has plans that we don’t always know about and he has given us the heart to be foster and adoptive parents and it’s a gift to share it,” said Gail.

The Whitley’s home was originally supposed to be a temporary placement for the two boys she and her husband will adopt on National Adoption Day. But, Gail says she always knew the boys would be a part of their family forever because the younger of the two boys called Gail and Randall mommy and daddy from the first day they met. “It has to be a gift from God that these kids can walk through our door and we can love each of them from the first time we see them,” Gail said. The Whitley’s have plans to continue filling all of the bedrooms in their large seven bedroom house. “I always told my dad I would have 10 kids,” said Gail. \*

There are more than 850 children in Kansas awaiting adoption with more than 350 of those children from the Wichita area in Youthville’s care. With so many children in need of permanent loving homes in Kansas, Youthville serves as a resource for families preparing to become adoptive parents. The agency conducts homestudies required for all adoptions and offers the 10-week Partnering for Safety and Permanence - Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (PS-MAPP) training classes throughout the state. Youthville also provides in-home, direct care services to meet the needs of the agency’s families through its Aftercare program.

Youthville’s vision is to provide the best sources of help to children who have been abused, abandoned, or neglected with its mission of **Giving Children Back Their Childhood**. Over 3,000 children are cared for annually by Youthville. To learn more or to get involved with Youthville visit [www.youthville.org](http://www.youthville.org)