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# Zero Kids Waiting

*is a program solely by Minnesota Adoption Resource Network*

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## Welcome!

**Zero Kids Waiting** is the monthly eNewsletter of Minnesota Adoption Resource Network, a 33-year old organization that creates and supports lifelong nurturing families for children needing permanency. As an email subscriber to Zero Kids Waiting, you will receive a monthly update about what our organization and others are doing to promote adoption of Minnesota children and teens.

To opt out of receiving **Zero Kids Waiting** and other announcements from Minnesota Adoption Resource Network including MN ADOPT training emails for parents and professionals, please click [SafeUnsubscribe](#) at the bottom of this newsletter.

Your email is solely used for the distribution of MARN newsletters, trainings and other news and will not be shared or broadcast.

To learn more about Minnesota's waiting children and our goal to reach Zero Kids Waiting visit [State Adoption Exchange](#)

## Waiting Youth

### Demetrius, 12, Does the Math



It has been said that knowing algebra is also like doing push-ups. No one has to convince Demetrius, age 12, the value of math and particularly algebra. There is nothing about push-ups that you are going to need to know later in life or that would increase your job skills. Still push-ups makes your body stronger, just as algebra makes your brain stronger.

Creative and energetic, Demetrius laughs often and enjoys silly banter. People he knows describe him as a young man with a caring heart who is modest when complimented. Action movies, rap, and country music are among his favorites.

For more about Demetrius, contact Lisa Edel at North Homes Adoption Program at 218-322-4123 or [lisa.edel@northhomes.org](mailto:lisa.edel@northhomes.org)

## World / National News

### **American Displays Her "Russian Soul"**

Reporter, Kathy Lally in a February 11, 2013 *Washington Post* story profiled Julia Sasha Custer, who was adopted from Russia at age 5 and is now back in her country of origin teaching English on a Fullbright grant. Lally characterizes Custer's story as mirroring the current dispute between Russia and America as to whether adoptions will continue between the countries. Custer says she has both an American and a Russian side. The latter she is exploring as she returns to Russia to encourage Russian intra-country adoption and for Americans to connect with Russian orphans.

[For more information](#)

### **Adoption Accreditation Law Enacted**

On January 14, 2013, President Barack Obama signed a bill that as of July 14, 2014 will require that adoption agencies doing

international adoption be accredited under federal standards. The Adoption Accreditation Law is designed to safeguard "orphans" as well as adoptive and birth parents through monitoring and oversight of adoption service providers, making them accountable to Hague Adoption Convention compatible standards. Under the law, children may not be obtained for adoption through sale, exploitation, abduction, or trafficking; parents must receive pre-adoptive training and fees must be transparent.

- General Questions at [AskCI@state.gov](mailto:AskCI@state.gov)
- Hague Adoption Convention Questions at [AdoptionUSCA@state.gov](mailto:AdoptionUSCA@state.gov)
- Call 888-407-4747

[For more information](#)

### **Nebraska Backs Broadening Foster Care**

Legislation has been proposed in Nebraska that would allow friends and relatives to foster without getting a foster care license. The legislation may be to remedy a recent law passed that required foster care licensure of all that includes relatives of children in out of home placements. The result was a sharp increase in the number of children entering foster care rather than staying with someone known to them. Those backing the proposed law say it would assure that when a child is removed from their home they can immediately go into the home of someone they know which would help keep siblings together.

[For more information](#)

### **Adoptive Mother's 'Newborn' Photo Shoot with 13-year-old Son Goes Viral**

Latrell Higgins, now 13, finally has "baby photos" of himself in a post made by his adoptive mother on Facebook, saying "Here's my sweet, not so little newborn." Two years ago Latrell and his sister were adopted by the Higgins family. Latrell poses like a newborn in a photo session that his mother saw as an opportunity to broadcast with the message of the need for families for older children.

[For more information](#)

### **Adoption Numbers Fall in America**

The number of children available for adoption by Americans continues to plummet. The State Department reports that inter-country adoptions peaked in 2004 at 23,000 and fell to 9,319 in 2011, which fell another 7 percent in 2012 to 8,668 children. Russian was the third-largest source of children adopted by Americans who in 2011 adopted 9,319 from other countries, compared to an average of nearly 18,000 children adopted annually since 1999. The estimated total of children adopted by Americans since 1999 is 233,934 children.

Domestic infant adoption numbers have also decreased. While the number of children waiting to be adopted from foster care is also declining, families unable to adopt from other countries or

domestically are looking to adopt from the foster system.

[For more information](#)

### **Parents Needed for Research Study**

Adopting a child with disabilities can be both challenging and rewarding. Parents who have adopted children from outside the United States with mental health and intellectual/developmental disabilities sometimes struggle to find appropriate pre-adoption education and/or post-adoption support to help them manage the challenges of parenting a child with a disability. Parents with that experience are sought to participate in a study approved by the University of Minnesota Institutional Review Board to inform adoption practices and improve adoption support for families that adopted children with disabilities. Participation entails a 60 to 90 minute interview with all information protected and kept confidential. To participate in this study, or to find out more information about this study, please contact Jae Ran Kim at [jaeran@gmail.com](mailto:jaeran@gmail.com)

## **Local**

### **Northstar Proposal Would Equalize Support Benefits**

Resurrected from a previous legislative effort, the Northstar Care for Children Act is being considered by the Minnesota legislature and is backed by Governor Mark Dayton. The bill would equalize benefits paid by the state for child foster care, relative custody assistance, and adoption assistance. The plan would create a single program to serve the three classifications of payments. Children already receiving assistance in the various programs would be grandfathered in under current programs.

[For more information](#)

### **Experienced Parents Sought**

Joe Wild Crea, program director at Ampersand Families, makes a case to parents of children with disabilities to consider adoption in "Parents Needed," to be published in an ARC of the Twin Cities newsletter. Wild Crea says, "The qualities we need in adoptive parents for youth from the foster care system are the same qualities you have: Parents that don't fear disabilities, parents that are willing to respond to the needs of their children, and parenting that are strong advocates that utilize resources and expertise in the community."

### **City Pages Profiles Contested Adoption Case**

A recent article in *City Pages* points out the complexities and heartbreak on both sides of a contested adoption being heard by the Minnesota Supreme Court. The outcome could alter future cases in which relatives and race matter. In this case, a biological grandmother, African American and from Mississippi, is pitted against the foster parents of a two- and three-year-old who has lived with the foster parents since birth.

[For more information](#)

### **Black History Month Reminder of Need for Families for African American Youth**

While African American children make up only 15% of the general child population, they are nearly 40% of the foster care population in the United States. During February, Black History Month, MARN is promoting adoptions of African American children who are overrepresented in the child welfare system. The MN ADOPT website is featuring African American youth and sibling groups who are available for adoption. MN ADOPT, an adoption service through the Minnesota Adoption Resource Network (MARN), supports and sustains families who adopt waiting children by providing online resources and referrals. The *Star Tribune* and KSTP-TV also are promoting adoption of children in the foster care system, featuring African American youth.

[For more information](#)

[Listen to WCCO Radio Feature](#)

### **MOFAS to Host March Training**

Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (MOFAS) is slated to host two trainings on Tuesday, March, 5 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Tuesday, March 12 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Children's Home Society & Family Services in Saint Paul, Minnesota. These classes come with opportunities for children affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Registration is required for parents classes. For more information, visit [www.mofas.org](http://www.mofas.org) or contact Barb Clark at 612-636-4042 or Tanya Weinmeyer at 952-836-7182.

## **\*394 Will Move to ZERO in MN if...**

- Each Metro house of worship pledged to find a family for a waiting child or sibling group.
- Corporations promoted adoption "in-house" through bulletin boards, kiosks and newsletters.
- Populations who have been identified as potential parents -- older career women, empty-nesters, communities of color -- were better targeted in recruitment.
- Barriers to adopting were reduced. Call us at 612-861-7115 if you are encountering any obstacles.

\* The number of Minnesota children waiting for families has decreased from 650 to less than 400. While this shows progress our target is ZERO waiting children.

**Donate Today**



The Zero Kids Waiting eNewsletter reaches parents willing to adopt children that are not reached by general recruitment measures. Please consider donation as much as you are able so that we may reach ZERO - Zero Kids Waiting.

To make a secure tax deductible online donation, click [Donate](#).

### **Minnesota Adoption Resource Network**

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