

Lt. Governor Guadagno Celebrates Adoption Day At Ceremonies in Essex and Morris Counties

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Approximately 250 Adoptions Will Be Finalized in New Jersey During Adoption Awareness Month



Over the past 8 years, since the Department of Children and Families (DCF) restructured its Adoption Program, the agency has facilitated more than 9,900 adoptions, with more than 1,000 adoptions finalized in 2013 alone. There have been 689 adoptions finalized statewide through the DCF this year, with 28 in Morris County and 143 in Essex County.

"Our department is proud of our success uniting New Jersey children with their forever families," said DCF Commissioner Allison Blake. "For all of us, and especially the members of our adoption team, seeing children adopted into loving and lasting homes brings great joy and emotional fulfillment. Thanks to our

outstanding team, we have finalized adoptions for about 1,000 children in each of the last three years."

Today's events are two of approximately 30 being held throughout the state for Adoption Awareness Month that will be attended by DCF representatives.

Lt. Governor Guadagno added, "Every child deserves the chance to live a happy, healthy life with a loving family. If birth parents are unable to provide the care their child needs, there are options like the Safe Haven Law, which allows parents to bring newborns 30 days old and younger to any police station or emergency room to be placed for adoption, no questions asked. The chance for happiness is the greatest gift you can give your child."

The federal Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 streamlined the adoption process to ensure that children who cannot be reunited with their birth parents are placed with permanent families as quickly as possible. Financial assistance is often available through the Adoption Subsidy Program, and many children adopted from foster care are eligible for federal or state aid to help offset adoption costs. In New Jersey, the Foster and Adoptive Family Services team, in coordination with the DCF, assists throughout the entire process of becoming an adoptive parent.

More information on New Jersey's Safe Haven Infant Protection Act is available at: <http://www.njsafehaven.org/>.

Individuals interested in more information on becoming a foster or adoptive parent should visit DCF's website at: <http://www.nj.gov/njfofosteradopt/>.

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