

ACT Adoption and Permanent Care Unit

Monthly update for the ACT Adoptive Families Association

November 2009

The ACT Adoption and Permanent Care Unit (A&PCU) has undergone a unit restructure which will be in place as of the 9th of November 2009. The staffing changes are as follows;

ICA Coordinator: Marysia Caesar (Part time)
Local Adoption Coordinator: Leena Pekki (Part time)
Permanent Care Team: Annie Johns
Jodie O'Brien
Jade McCall

As Marysia works part time it is envisaged that she will oversee the general management of Intercountry Adoption, with other members of the unit providing post placement reports and support to families after allocation. Leena, Jodie and Jade will continue working with their current families.

Sue Mickleburgh will return to the role of Manager for Permanency and Placement Planning but will continue to work on the policy and program development of a pilot therapeutic service, in conjunction with the Australian Childhood Foundation 2 days a week. ACF are recognised leaders in therapeutic work with children who have experienced neurobiological impact due to early trauma and attachment difficulties. The partnership with ACF is an exciting one, offering another opportunity for supporting children's healthy growth and development in their permanent family's care. Ann Ponsonby will return to her role as Senior Practitioner of Permanent Care. We welcome back Sue and thank Ann for acting in this role.

Charmaine Millar has also joined the team on a short term secondment from Care and Protection. Josephine O'Hanlon will be taking six months leave from the beginning of December and we are currently recruiting to fill the Team Leader position.

At the end of November we will farewell Bridie McNeill, who is completing her final social work placement with the unit. Bridie has undertaken a research project with families who have secured an Enduring Parental Responsibility Order or Adoption Order for children in Out of Home Care. Everyone at the unit would like to thank Bridie for her hard work, and wish her well for her future career as a social worker!

Adoptive Families Association

The A&PC Unit and the AFA Executive met at the end of September. Issues discussed included the changes in the structure of the A&PCU, the China On Line Special Needs Program and the structure and content of the Seminars for families interested in Adoption and Permanent Care.

Information Sessions and Seminars

The Information Session was held on the 24 September and the Seminar was held on the 22 and 29 October. Over twenty people attended both events and the feedback from participants was positive, particularly regarding our valued guest speakers who share both their own personal experiences as well as professional knowledge regarding adoption and permanent

care. Worth noting was the welcome addition of an AFA Permanent Care Representative, along with the Local Adoption Representatives and Intercountry country program representatives during day one of the Seminar.

Mosaic Event

Mosaic, the Canberra Adoption Support group is celebrating its 10th anniversary by holding a forum that will be held during National Adoption Awareness Week and is for anyone effected by, or interested in adoption. OCYFS is one of the sponsors of this forum and well known guest speakers such as Thomas Frame and Evelyn Robertson will be presenting at this event. The Adoption forum will be held at the Southern Cross Club in Woden on Sunday the 15th of November from 1:45 (for a 2pm start). For further information and a program please contact; Marg: 0407 435 488 or Robbie: randlawrence@ozemail.com.au

Permanent Care

There is no order in which permanent care applicants in the permanent care program are selected due to the linking process of the family best able to meet a specific child's needs.

Family No	Date of Approval	Date placed with Child	Date of Permanent Order
# 1	07/03/08		
# 2	30/05/08		
# 3	26/09/08		
# 4	18/05/09	2/7/09	

Local Adoption

Adoptive parent profiles are provided to birth parents who select the family they think would best meet their child's needs. As a result there is no order in which adoptive applicants in the local program are selected.

Family No	Date of Approval	Date placed with Child	Date of Order
# 1	12/11/07		
# 2	28/03/08	10/05/2009	
# 3	04/06/08	16/02/2009	
# 4	15/10/08	22/12/2008	

Country Updates

Please find below, information on each country program including updates, files sent, files waiting, adoption proposals and travelling dates. Where possible, we have included families who have previously received adoption proposals and travelled to meet their children. This is to allow other applicants to have an understanding of current and previous waiting times. Some of the dates of travel are approximate dates or dates that the family returned home. Please note that previous waiting times are not always indicative of future waiting times.

As you also aware each country sets their own eligibility criteria for people wishing to adopt children through intercountry adoption, which includes ethnicity, age and marital status. Therefore, people interested in intercountry adoption will find that they may be eligible for

several programs but will not be eligible for all programs. Information on country programs is regularly updated on the Attorney General Department's website www.ag.gov.au.

Special needs

From time to time the A&PC Unit is approached by overseas agencies requesting placements for children with significant special needs. Please contact the unit if you would like further information about these children.

Chile

Not active – no files in country.

China

Please note that China requires that files be sent in a batch of applications. All families receive adoption proposals on the same date and generally travel together on the same date. The exception to this is for families who are applying to the special needs program or are eligible to have their file expedited. In these circumstances, the files are sent individually.

The ACT is continuing to liaise with CCAA regarding the China Online Special Needs Program.

CCAA has finished the review of the adoption application documents registered with their office before 31 December, 2007. CCAA has finished the placement of children for the families whose adoption application documents were registered with CCAA before 28 March, 2006.

Batch No	Files Sent	Log In Date	Adoption Proposal	Date Travelled
# 5	10/05/05	31/05/05	28/04/06	17/06/2006
# 6	25/07/05	10/08/05	03/11/06	10/12/06
# 7	25/08/05	13/09/05	12/01/07	22/02/07
# 8	09/02/06	06/03/06	02/03/09	03/04/09
# 9	15/06/06	21/06/06		
# 10	17/11/06	14/12/06		
# Expedited	02/04/07	16/04/07		
# 11	11/04/07	24/04/07		
# 12	28/08/07	06/09/07		
# Special needs	23/04/08	30/04/08		
# 13	11/08/08	20/08/08		
# Special needs	14/10/08	27/10/08		

Colombia

No files in country. The ACT is continuing to prepare the pilot application to the Colombian Central Authority (ICBF), which we are hoping to send this in the coming months.

Ethiopia

Currently, the ACT is not accepting any applications for the Ethiopia program due to the number of families waiting to send their files overseas and the extensive waiting time for any new applications. The ACT currently has 3 files approved and waiting to be sent to Ethiopia.

Ethiopia will no longer be accepting files for single applicants. Ethiopia has stated that they will honour currently approved applicants from Central Authorities and existing files overseas.

Family No	Files Sent	Adoption Proposal	Date Travelled
# 1	29/09/04	13/03/06	29/05/06
# 2	15/09/03	10/07/06	01/09/06

# 3	14/07/05	10/04/07	25/07/07
# 4	09/03/05	08/05/08	06/08/08
# 5	28/06/05	30/06/08	24/08/08
# 6	22/12/05	17/06/08	01/12/08
# 7	24/07/08		
# 8	25/07/08		
# 9	04/08/08		
# 10 Special needs	13/10/08	27/11/08	21/05/09

Fiji

Not active – no files in country.

Hong Kong – International Social Services

Family No	Files Sent	Adoption Proposal	Date Travelled
# 1	05/10/06		
# 2	31/10/06		

Hong Kong - Po Leung Kuk

This is a new program as of 2008. The children placed through these programs are likely to be older children and some younger children with special needs. As very few children in Hong Kong are in need of adoption by overseas families, it is important that families are flexible and open to adopting children from a range of backgrounds and needs. Any family that wishes to express an interest in this program should contact the ACT Adoption and Permanent Care Unit via the avenues listed at the bottom of this update.

India

Family No	Files Sent	Adoption Proposal	Date Travelled
# 1	21/12/05	18/01/06	12/06/07
# 2	07/03/06	28/04/08	12/06/09
# 3	14/11/06	22/11/08	27/7/09

South Korea

The ACT had a quota of 1 file for 2008, which was filled. The ACT then received another quota of 1 and a family is currently in the process of preparing their file to forward to Korea. It is unknown if we will receive another quota. Any family that wishes to express an interest in this program, should another quota be received, should contact the A&PC Unit via the avenues listed at the bottom of this update.

Family No	Files Sent	Adoption Proposal	Date Travelled
# 1	10/12/08	27/02/09	06/06/09
# 2			

Latvia

Not active – no files in country.

Lithuania

Family No	Files Sent	Adoption Proposal	Date Travelled
# 1	27/03/06		

Philippines

Late in October the ICAB notified the Attorney Generals Department that they have implemented new approval criteria for applicants applying to adopt from the Philippines. Further information regarding this can be found on the Attorney General Department's website www.ag.gov.au.

Family No	Files Sent	Adoption Proposal	Date Travelled
# 1	19/07/04	16/02/06	Date Home 30/07/06
# 2	28/04/04	27/03/06	09/06/06
# 3	05/07/06	27/11/07	24/06/08
# 4	07/08/06	24/07/08	11/10/08
# 5	29/06/07	09/02/09	06/06/09
# 6	14/05/08		
# 7	20/05/08		
# 8	05/08/08		
# 9	19/05/09		
#10	30/06/09		
#11	03/07/09		

Poland

No files in country.

Recent advice has been received that Poland is willing to accept files from families who are not of Polish origin. The majority of children in need of intercountry adoption are five years or older. There are a significant number of sibling groups and children with complex developmental and/or medical needs. Any family with an interest in this program should contact the A&PC Unit.

Sri Lanka

No files in country.

Taiwan

Family No	Files Sent	Adoption Proposal	Date Travelled
# 1	05/10/07	23/04/09	24/09/09

Thailand

Family No	Files Sent	Adoption Proposal	Date Travelled	Quota
# 1	14/11/05	19/02/07	03/04/07	2006
# 2	12/02/07			2006
# 3	29/03/07	16/06/09	27/10/09	2007
# 4	11/02/09			2008
# 5	15/02/08			Special Needs
# 6	09/01/09			Special Needs

The ACT Adoption and Permanent Care Unit can be contacted via...

Phone: (02) 6207 1335
Fax: (02) 6207 8888
Email: adoptions@act.gov.au
Post: ACT Adoption and Permanent Care Unit
Office for Children, Youth and Family Support
GPO Box 158
Canberra City ACT 2601

...and is located at: 11 Moore Street
Canberra City

Adoptive Families Association