

Family Life

What To Expect When You're Expecting...A Teenager

(NAPSA)—Here's good news for parents and people who'd like to be parents: You don't have to be perfect.

That's the word from the experts at AdoptUSKids, which maintains a photolisting website to promote adoption from foster care and raises awareness of the 112,000 children and teens waiting to be adopted.

With the help of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Children's Bureau, the Ad Council (a private, nonprofit organization with a rich history of marshaling volunteer talent from the advertising and media industries to deliver critical messages to the American public) and the KBS global advertising agency, the partner organizations created new public service announcements (PSAs) to encourage families to adopt teenagers.

Facts And Figures To Consider

Of the 428,000 youths under the age of 18 in the U.S. foster care system, 112,000 are currently waiting for adoptive families. Forty-three percent of all children actively photolisted on AdoptUSKids.org are ages 15 to 18, yet only 5 percent of all children adopted in 2015 were between the ages of 15 and 18 years old. Unfortunately, teens in foster care have lower adoption rates than younger children, and they often wait longer to be adopted.

Adoption Facts

Although many people believe adoption is always expensive, in fact, most adoptions from U.S. foster care are free. The minimal costs that can be associated with them are often reimbursable. In addition, the vast majority of youths adopted from foster care are also eligible for monthly adoption assistance.

What's more, in most instances, you're eligible to adopt regardless of age, income, marital status or sexual orientation. You don't need to own your own home, be wealthy, be a stay-at-home parent or have a college degree to adopt. You just need to demonstrate that you can support yourself without any additional income, such as adoption assistance.

"All of us—and that includes teens in foster care who are waiting to be adopted—need and want families to support us and to give us the connections, relationships and sense of belonging that are so critical to our well-being," said Jerry Milner, Associate Commissioner

AdoptUSKids Presents

WHAT TO EXPECT[®] WHEN YOU'RE EXPECTING

A TEENAGER

You don't have to be an expert in all-things-teen to be a perfect parent. Thousands of teens are looking for someone just like you.

AdoptUSKids

TV

There's no guidebook for raising a teen but, fortunately, you don't have to be perfect to provide the stability and security that teens in foster care need and deserve.

at the Children's Bureau, and the Acting Commissioner for the Administration on Children, Youth and Families. "The parents and families that adopt older teens from foster care enrich their own lives while providing an incredible impact on the lives of the adopted children and teens at a time when it is needed most."

What's Being Done

To help, KBS collaborated with the authors and illustrator of the iconic "What to Expect When You're Expecting" pregnancy books. The resulting humorous videos feature well-intentioned moms and dads attempting to give new parents of teens step-by-step parenting tutorials on such things as how to wake up your teen, how to teen-proof your home, and what to do about confusing text messages, binge-watching and promposals.

Learn More

To see the PSAs and to learn how you can adopt a teen or help those who do, visit www.AdoptUSKids.org, for both English and Spanish information; call (888) 200-4005 for English-speaking staff or (877) 236-7831 for Spanish-speaking staff; or visit the AdoptUSKids social communities on Facebook and Twitter.