

## CHILDREN GROW BETTER IN FAMILIES

Many of the Virginia children waiting for adoption are between the ages of 13 and 18. Most have been waiting anywhere from three to eight years or more for just the right family. These children have been separated from their original families either by death, abuse and/or neglect.

These children risk reaching adulthood unable to adequately handle requirements of the workplace and the commitments of relationships with family and friends.

They need families who will teach them to spread their wings and make it on their own. They need families who will serve as a safe harbor for them to return whenever needed. An adoptive family is an opportunity for them to receive the love, guidance, and security they need to grow into well-adjusted adults.



## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE MAY BE AVAILABLE

### *Ask the child's adoption worker*

Adoption assistance offers financial aid to families who adopt an older child. These payments may be used for daily living expenses and cost of medical care and treatment, depending on the need(s) of the child.

When the child (youth) has been in the Virginia foster care system and is adopted after turning age 16, the youth may be eligible for the Education Training Voucher (ETV) Program. ETV helps youth with post-secondary education and vocational training expenses. Some of the ETV approved items:

- Tuition and fees
- Room and board
- Allowance for books and transportation

For more information call:

**1-800-DO-ADOPT**

OR

your local department of social services  
[www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/localagency)

Also visit [www.dss.virginia.gov/family/ap](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/ap)  
for the publication "Steps to Adoption."



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## OLDER CHILD ADOPTION



**YOU CAN CHANGE A LIFETIME!**



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
SOCIAL SERVICES

# Consider Adopting An Older Child



## MYTHS OF OLDER CHILD ADOPTION

Have you heard these before?

*"An older child can never love us like a child we raise from a baby."*

*"An older child has too much baggage."*

*"The reason no one has adopted them is that there's something wrong with them!"*

*"Our younger children will pick up the bad habits of the older child!"*

**DON'T LET MYTHS LIKE THESE STOP YOU FROM THOROUGHLY INVESTIGATING THE POSSIBILITIES OF ADOPTING AN OLDER CHILD.**

It is true that children develop personality traits and behavior patterns very early in life. But, all people change over time, even adults. Have you considered that you are not the same person now that you were five, ten, fifteen years ago?

## SOME DO'S AND DON'TS OF PARENTING AN OLDER CHILD

- Do – accept the child as he or she is
- Don't look to make the child over or turn the child into a reflection of your own personality
- Do – be happy for small improvements and success in small daily tasks
- Don't expect to produce the perfect child
- Do – take control and get involved with the child
- Don't let the child withdraw and reject you
- Do – seek help and be willing to receive help from professional counselors and other adoptive parents
- Don't keep discouragement to yourself
- DO – BE PATIENT & FLEXIBLE

## ADOPTING IS NOT AS HARD AS YOU MAY THINK...

- Age requirements are flexible
- Married, divorced and/or single men and women can adopt
- You don't have to be rich
- You don't have to own your home; you can live in an apartment
- You can already have children
- The amount of education and kind of job you have makes no difference
- You can be of any faith

