



Arapahoe • Douglas • Jefferson Counties

## News Release

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### **Arapahoe County hosts portraits of Colorado's 'waiting children' in October** *Public invited to view Colorado Heart Gallery in Littleton through Oct. 29*

**Littleton, Colo.** – Visitors to the Arapahoe County Administration Building in October will find themselves staring into the eyes of a foster child who is hoping to find a "forever family."

The 9<sup>th</sup> annual Colorado Heart Gallery is on display in the lobby of the Administration Building at 5334 S. Prince St. in Littleton through October. The traveling exhibit is produced by Colorado Department of Human Services, the Adoption Exchange and Adopt Colorado Kids, and features professional portraits and profiles of the foster children in Colorado who have been waiting the longest for an adoptive family. These youth are legally-free for adoption and cannot return to their parents or relatives due to unresolved concerns for their safety or wellbeing.

By sharing their stories across the state, CDHS and Colorado counties are hoping to find a loving, permanent family for each child. Of the 16 Arapahoe County children featured in the 2012 Heart Gallery, six have already found a forever family. To see the online profiles of waiting kids featured in the Heart Gallery, please visit [www.heartgalleryco.org](http://www.heartgalleryco.org).

In addition to seeking adoptive families for waiting children, Arapahoe County is also seeking foster families to provide temporary care for youth while their families work to resolve safety concerns. On average, there are approximately 600 youth in out-of-home care and 25 youth awaiting an adoptive family in Arapahoe County at any given time. The majority of children in foster care return home to their families, while only a small percentage become legally free for adoption.

Arapahoe County partners with Douglas and Jefferson Counties in a Collaborative Foster Care Program to recruit, train, certify and support foster and adoptive families throughout the metro-Denver area. Information nights are held monthly to share an overview of the program. To learn more, please visit [www.collaborativefostercare.com](http://www.collaborativefostercare.com) or call 303-636-1KID.

**To download a photo, please click on the following link:**

<ftp://ftp.arapahoegov.com/Pub/Communication%20Services/Photos/Adoption/>

**Heart Gallery 1.jpg:** Casey Rodriguez of Aurora views the portraits of children awaiting adoption in the Colorado Heart Gallery during her visit to the Arapahoe County Administration Building on Oct. 3.