

Our Children Our Community - Capital Campaign

Children's Home Society of West Virginia

Caring for our community's children for 28 years

- Our emergency shelter has provided short-term and emergency residential care for over 1800 youth in crisis.
- 32 local "CHS families" have nurtured 137 children in foster care over the past 6 years.
- Permanent homes for 43 children have been found through the local adoption program.
- WECAN Mentoring is building community and caring relationships for at-risk youth through the use of local volunteers.
- Safe Haven Child Advocacy Center has aided local law enforcement and Child Protective services with investigative interviews for over 300 child victims of abuse.
- Right From the Start offers support, education and community resources for expecting and new moms.
- The Youth Services program engages at-risk children and youth to prevent further involvement with the juvenile justice system.

"Hand picked is better than homemade," and "you're our chosen baby" is what my parents told me as a kid. More years ago than I'm willing to admit, I was adopted on my parents' ninth wedding anniversary, through the Children's Home Society of West Virginia (CHS), as an infant. To this day, my Mother and I mark the occasion as our Family Anniversary. I've always known I was adopted because my parents didn't see any reason to hide it. My adoption story seems like someone else's story because my life, as I know and live it, is my reality - something that I have no memory of couldn't possibly pertain to me. Nonetheless, my adoption is one of many things that adds to my uniqueness, and I'm proud of it as well as my parents. I don't begrudge my birth mother for placing me up for adoption. It was a brave and selfless act on her part because I know I've had a better life as a result. The research for this story has allowed me to learn more about "how I came to be" and how important the Children's Home Society is to many children and families across the Mountain State. I love you, Mom; you have always been my real and only mother.



-Debra Cornwell, Around the Panhandle Magazine, July-August, 2010



The 2009 Angel in Adoption award for West Virginia was given to one of our CHS "Families". Their story is amazing and their compassion has given hope to five children who now make up this happy family. Dawn and David opened their home and their hearts and were willing to care for children with needs that would frighten

veteran foster parents. They accepted their first foster child in April 2005. Adam was a 7 month old with serious medical problems. Adam's condition continued to worsen and he was diagnosed with a serious liver ailment which doctors said would require a liver transplant. Adam was placed on the donor list for a liver in March 2006, by the summer no match had been found. The Heatwole's extended family had embraced their roles as foster parents and Dawn's sister volunteered to be tested. Miraculously, she proved to be a suitable match and in June she donated a section of her liver. The surgery took place in June and the family faced months of recovery and intense medical supervision. With tender loving care he is today a happy four year old and is passing his check ups with flying colors. The Heatwole's motivation to provide a safe loving place for children in need was not interrupted by Adam's illness. In May 2005 they welcomed Ethan, another infant foster child. In February of 2006 they received Ethan's brother Asa. Pasha arrived from Russia in January of 2007 and in May of 2008, Adam's sister came to join the Heatwole family. All of these children have since

Development of property to include

- Renovation of building space for several local programs.
- Child-focused interviewing and investigative team space for the Safe Haven Child Advocacy Center.
- Adequate program space for both clients and staff.
- Enhance community by rehabilitating local landmark property.

The New Facility

- Permanent site will provide essential sustainability for several local programs.
- Increases capacity to provide services to children and families.
- Cost-benefit of permanent site reduces future expenses of short-term locations, relocations costs and program expenses.