

## Adopting from China

The Adoption Department at FCA developed a program with China in 1995. We are accredited with the China Center for Adoption Affairs (CCAA) in Beijing. Over 1.7 million children enter China's orphanages yearly as the result of the country's rigorous "one-child" policy. Children typically enter the orphanage through abandonment. As a result, there is very little or no information about the child's birth family, history or health prior to abandonment. Under the law, children must be in a Child Welfare Institute (China's orphanage system) at least six months before they can be released for international adoption. Family & Children's Agency has conducted a longitudinal study of the children adopted through this program. It indicates, for the most part, these children are resilient and continue to thrive. Family & Children's Agency has a dedicated group of families who have adopted from China. Check out their Web site at:

[http://www.fcachinaparents.org/Program Detail](http://www.fcachinaparents.org/Program%20Detail) Children Available Primarily little girls, although some boys are now available. Infants are generally between 9 and 12 months old. Toddlers, older children, and special needs children are also available. (We have also placed several boys and sets of twins!) Cost Fees are collected as the work is completed during the various stages of your adoption. Please call us for detailed information. Parents' Age 30 to 49 years old. For special needs, 30 to 54 years of age. Length of Marriage Couples must be married at least two years. Divorced either applicant has previous marriages, length of current marriage has to be five years. China will accept only two previous marriages Single Applicants China no longer allows adoption by single parents although they may consider on a case by case basis the placement if a child is deemed special needs. Children in the Family Up to five children aged between one and 18 in the home. Special needs exempt from this requirement Other Requirements China has other requirements related to physical health, mental health, and your body mass index. Please contact Family & Children's Agency for a full list of requirements and to be pre-screened.

Timeframe Currently, referrals are received approximately 36 months after documents are sent to CCAA, but this can vary Travel Requirements One trip to China is required. Your trip will typically be scheduled six to eight weeks after your referral acceptance is sent to China. One or both parents may travel. All travel is with a group of FCA parents who will be accompanied in China by a very experienced facilitator Special Features of Family & Children's Agency Program Experienced, bilingual, professional staff provide translation and personal advocacy on your behalf with CCAA and the orphanage. FCA staff will work closely with you to prepare all documents ("dossier") required by the China Center for Adoption Affairs. Our staff will verify, translate, assemble and submit your dossier to CCAA. We monitor the progress of your dossier and advocate for you throughout the process. This is usually about a three-month process.

Pre-travel seminars and "Baby Chinese" language classes prepare you for your trip and teach you important words and phrases.

Other adoptive parents can provide mentoring for new parents throughout the process.

Our e-list for waiting and post-adoptive parents keeps parents connected and updated.

FCA's China Adoptive Parents Committee is very active in providing cultural and fund raising events.

An annual Spring Picnic provides a way to stay connected to waiting parents and adoptive families. The Process Homestudy Connecticut and New York residents should apply for a homestudy with FCA. We can help couples in other states to identify a home study agency in their area. Immigration Forms Once the home study is completed, parents need to apply to the Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) for permission to bring an orphan into the U.S. This involves obtaining and filing the I-800 A form and arranging for a fingerprinting appointment. Referral After the dossier is completed and submitted, CCAA will review and process it. They will send photos and a health report on the child selected for you once you are matched.

While you await your referral, Family & Children's Agency will: Connect you with the people with whom you'll be traveling to China, plan special events, such as picnics and Chinese culture events, provide informative talks on choosing a pediatrician, parenting children who have been in orphanages, and strategies for surviving the wait. Agency staff will support you and keep you informed while you wait for your referral.

Upon receiving your referral, Family & Children's Agency will: Translate all medical information and recommend that you share this information with a pediatrician specializing in international adoption Obtain, if necessary, updated medical and developmental information about the child referred to you. Travel to Follow-Up When you return home, we'll provide post-adoption support, and information about obtaining your child's social security card and birth certificate. Your child is automatically a U.S. citizen upon arrival in the United States if both parents traveled for the adoption.

CCAA requires three post placement visits following your return from China.

We remain in close contact with our China families and see each other through frequent reunions and post-adoption events. Special Needs: The Waiting Children Program Family & Children's Agency has been approved by CCAA to place children from China with a wide range of physical and developmental conditions, as well as healthy children over the age of five. Special needs referrals have included children with cleft lip, cleft palate, missing digits, heart conditions and club foot. Both boys and girls are available. Consultation

with your social worker and pediatrician can assist you in determining appropriate placements. All the children on the previous list of special needs children waiting to be adopted have now found homes! For more information, contact Lynn Hudler at (203) 299-1532, Ext. 301 or e-mail [lhudler@fcagency.org](mailto:lhudler@fcagency.org)

Special Features of this Program:

- &bull; You will be actively involved in selecting the child you wish to adopt
- &bull; The timeframe to referral and travel may be shortened
- &bull; Fees may be adjusted by Family & Children's Agency and CCAA

For more information about the China program at Family & Children's Agency, contact Lynn Hudler at (203) 299-1532, Ext. 301 or e-mail [lhudler@fcagency.org](mailto:lhudler@fcagency.org) Check out these links to find out more about adopting from China.

China Center of Adoption Affairs (CCAA): <http://www.china-ccaa.org/>

Families with Children from China: <http://www.fwcc.org/>

Our Chinese Daughters Foundation: <http://www.ocdf.org/>

The China Cares Foundation: <http://www.chinacare.org/>