



THE HEART GALLERY
of central texas

A project of the Adoption Coalition of Texas and CASAs across Central Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THE HEART GALLERY HAS A NEW “LOOK” --
NEW PREMIERE AND FORMAT HELPS REACH OUT TO THE PUBLIC
ABOUT GETTING FOSTER KIDS ADOPTED**

New digital format, portraits, collage and short film featuring foster children in Central Texas will kick off with a Premiere event on September 30th

(Austin, Texas - July 16, 2010) - This year the Heart Gallery of Central Texas has a new “look” and location for its portraits featuring foster children in Central Texas. The wildly successful photo exhibit has produced a 70% success rate over the last six years for foster kids from the exhibit being adopted into permanent homes with a forever family. This special premiere and exhibit takes on a new format and look for its sixth year, featuring the children in portraits and in a digital format, along with a special film *Beyond the Lens*, showing the faces, voices and personality of these children. Another new item at this year’s premiere will be unveiling the collage of the foster kids, to be hung in Wendy’s stores in the Austin area this fall, helping promote that these children are available for adoption. **The Heart Gallery Premiere will be held on Thursday, September 30, 2010 at a new location - the Renaissance Austin Hotel - Glass Oaks room, Austin, Texas from 6:30 -9:00 p.m.** The event is open to the public and tickets are \$35 in advance until September 3 and \$50 from September 4 -30th and at the door.

The Heart Gallery of Central Texas is a project of the [Adoption Coalition of Texas](#) and CASA organizations across Central Texas, and acts as both an art exhibit and community education effort. Dr. Tracy Eilers, Chair for the Heart Gallery of Central Texas and the Executive Director for the Adoption Coalition of Texas stated, “We developed a fresh, new look for our 6th year, and added in a short film and digital approach to the actual portraits so that the public can match a voice with the face of a child. These new digital formats can be used in displays across Central Texas so we can reach a larger audience

and help even more people gain exposure to the Heart Gallery so we can find permanent homes for the foster kids in Central Texas.”

This special photo exhibit is comprised of 115 portraits and made possible by the time and talent of more than 60 renowned Central Texas [photographers](#) who volunteered hundreds of hours to photograph more than 140 children. Many of the foster children featured in the photographs are older or special needs children, minorities, or members of a sibling group. All are considered hard-to-place children. The photographs also help show the variety in age and ethnicity of the children, and the sibling groups awaiting adoption, all who need families.

At any given moment, there are 700 children waiting for adoption in the Central Texas foster care system, all removed from their natural family due to abuse or neglect. The Heart Gallery helps educate the public about adoption and children available in their area, and helps break down common misconceptions regarding adoption.

Participating CASA organizations involved with the Heart Gallery are: CASA of Bastrop, Lee and Fayette Counties, CASA of Central Texas, Inc., CASA for the Highland Lakes area, CASA of McLennan and Hill Counties, CASA of Travis County, and Voices for Children, CASA of Brazos Valley. The Adoption Coalition of Texas is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization created in 2003 to focus on finding forever families for children languishing in the foster care system. All funds used to support the Heart Gallery of Central Texas come from individual donors, community funds, direct sponsorships, or from the Adoption Coalition of Texas' general operating budget. No state funds are received for this project, or any other Adoption Coalition of Texas project. www.heartgallerytexas.com www.adoptioncoalitiontx.org

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About the Adoption Coalition of Texas:

The Adoption Coalition of Texas (ACT) is a coalition of Child Protective Services and nonprofit child placing agencies whose mission is to find families for children languishing in the foster care system. This is accomplished through community awareness and education about kids in foster care, recruitment of families, and systemic change with the goal of ultimately increasing the number of kids who get adopted. The Adoption Coalition of Texas partner agencies include: The Arrow Child and Family Ministries, Lutheran Social Services of the South, Marywood Children Family Services, Pathways Youth and Family Services, and Child Protective Services. The Heart Gallery of Central Texas is one of its several recruitment projects. These children are living in foster care, many for extended periods, and are waiting for a permanent family – a life of stability and love. If you would like more information on the Adoption Coalition of Texas, The Heart Gallery of Central Texas, or to find out ways to help, visit www.adoptioncoalitiontx.org, www.heartgallerytexas.com, or call Dr. Tracy Eilers at 512-301-2825. The Adoption Coalition of Texas operates as a special 501(c)3 project of the Austin Community Foundation.