



THE HEART GALLERY
of central texas

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

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is a "Heart Gallery"?

A: "Heart Galleries" are emerging across the United States as photography exhibits that feature the faces of children who are living in foster care and are waiting to be adopted. The first Heart Gallery premiered in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in March 2001, as a project of the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department. More than 1,200 people attended its premiere. 2006 will be the second annual unveiling and showcase for the Central Texas area exhibit.

Q: What is the goal of The Heart Gallery of Central Texas?

A: Ultimately, we are trying to find forever families for these children. Our immediate objective is to increase the number of inquiries about adoption from foster care, with the long term goal of quadrupling the number adoptions from foster care by the middle of 2007 (compared to 2004).

Q: How many people do you expect to see The Heart Gallery of Central Texas?

A: Our goal is to reach more than 50,000 people in six months through the touring exhibit and our Web site, www.heartgallerytexas.com.

Q: How did you select the photographers?

A: Actually, the photographers selected us. Local photographers were so moved by a news story about other Heart Galleries that they decided to try and do the same thing in Central Texas. And that's how this started. As the saying goes, "a picture is worth a thousand words". These beautiful portraits humanize the lives of these "forgotten children," and we believe that their pictures will inspire others to learn about this issue and make a difference in a child's life. After the overwhelming interest in the 2005 Central Texas exhibit, we had several new photographers contact us about being involved in the 2006 showing.

Q: How did you choose which children to photograph?

A: Our goal is to show a wide range of children based on age, ethnicity, and gender/sex, and to show those with disabilities as well as groups of siblings. Also, some children were more amenable to being photographed. Our goal is to continue earning support for this initiative and be able to photograph many more children on a regular basis. There are four times as many children waiting to be adopted as photographed in this exhibit.

Q: Is this a state-sponsored program?

A: No.

Q: How is this project funded?

A: The Heart Gallery is supported in part by grants to the Adoption Coalition of Texas, individual donors and business sponsors.

Q: Are all of the children in The Heart Gallery living in Austin or Central Texas?

A: Although their cases originated in Central Texas, the children are in foster homes throughout the state, depending on their needs.

Q: Where will The Heart Gallery go after its Austin premiere?

A: We are currently finding venues to display the Heart Gallery in the Central Texas area. We are open to visiting any community that expresses an interest in helping us find forever families for these children.