

This Month at a Glance

By The Children's Bridge



October 2019 Edition

Stay Connected with The Children's Bridge!

[Facebook](#) | [Website](#)



NOTES FROM KARYN'S DESK

Karyn Arnauld-Bakelaar, Executive Director
(613) 226-2112 ext. 2
karyn.bakelaar@childrensbridge.com

Event Update

For a full list of events, please see our "[Event Section](#)" of our website.

“How to Adopt” Information Session (Ottawa)

Please join us for our “How to Adopt” information session on Wednesday, November 13th and learn about the intercountry adoption process from start to finish. We will present information on steps in the process: the home study, costs, time frames, health and ages of the children, pre- and post-adoption information and support. The admission to the session is free.

Only 6 seats left! Register today: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/how-to-adopt-information-session-tickets-78728056737>

Annual General Meeting – November 30th, 2019

The Children's Bridge Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held in Ottawa, Ontario on November 30, 2019 from 3:00 – 4:30 pm at The Children's Bridge Office, 1400 Clyde Avenue, Suite 221. The AGM is open to all active members of The Children's Bridge (TCB). In order to vote at the meeting or by proxy, you must have an active TCB membership.

If you are interested in joining our Board of Directors please send your cover letter and CV to Andy Thompson, Governance Committee Chair, The Children's Bridge Board of Directors andy.thompson@childrensbridge.com We are currently recruiting potential Board Members with a background in finance, fundraising, and/or legal services.

AdopTALK

We are pleased to announce a date for our Spring AdopTALK session, which will be held in Ottawa on April 18th and 19th, 2020. Please contact Lenore Cork-Lemay at admin@childrensbridge.com for more information or to register.

Connect-A-Kid Ottawa

The Ottawa Connect-A-Kid events are now on the website! Events for the remainder of the year have been posted. Please check our web site at www.childrensbridge.com under events for upcoming events.

Membership

The Children's Bridge strongly recommends that all families maintain an active membership even post-adoption, so families can remain aware of services, events and resources/supports. Adoption is a lifelong process, and adopted children tend to have various needs at various ages and stages of development. Maintaining an active membership with The Children's Bridge means families will stay up-to-date with citizenship news (which can affect our children long after finalization), country changes, homeland trip and local supports.





INDIA ADOPTION PROGRAM

Karyn Arnauld-Bakelaar, Program Manager
 (613) 226-2112 ext. 2
karyn.bakelaar@childrensbridge.com

We are currently accepting applications for this adoption program. We currently have 19 families in process to adopt from India and are able to work with adoptive families across Canada (except for Quebec). This program is open to families of non-Indian descent, as well as those who are Non-Resident Indians (NRI's) or those with Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI). Families who have NRI or OCI status are prioritized by CARA, but all families who meet the requirements are welcome to apply.

Our India program is open to families who wish to adopt a child living with special needs, and also those hoping to adopt via the mainstream program.

Most of the children are 18-months+ at time of child proposal. Special needs of the children in the Waiting Child program vary widely, and can include (but are not limited to): hearing and/or vision issues, HIV, Hepatitis B, developmental delays, Down Syndrome, heart issues such as ASD or VSD, etc.

Adopting a Child with Special Needs

Every month, we will be highlighting a different special medical need that we frequently see in our India (special needs) adoption program. If there is a specific special need you are interested in learning more about, please let us know and we will do our best to include it in our next update.

Disclosure: Although every attempt is made to ensure this information is accurate and is taken from reputable sources, families should consider this as a resource and starting place only, and not as a replacement for medical advice or independent research.

A few things in general when considering adopting child with special needs:

- Although timelines are generally faster in a special need's adoption program, this should not be the primary motivating factor. Adoption is a lifelong commitment, as is parenting any child (born to you or via adoption).
- The costs associated with adopting a child with special needs are not lower than other programs. Adoption fees cover the cost of your process, which does not change when a child has special needs. However, as the program tends to have shorter timelines than



does the mainstream program, the cost of annual administration fees can be a bit lower. As well, some families have been able to access grants to help to partially cover the cost of their adoption (A Child Waits Foundation and ABBA are the two main sources of adoption grants and/or loans).

Down Syndrome – Did You Know?

- Down Syndrome occurs when one chromosome does not separate properly at time of conception, leading to an extra copy of a chromosome 21.
- This chromosome difference is more likely to occur when maternal and/or paternal age surpasses 35 to 40 years.
- There are three variations of Down Syndrome (DS):
 - Trisomy 21 – this is the most common form of DS and occurs when there is an extra copy of the 21st chromosome.
 - Mosaicism - this occurs when a child is born with extra chromosomes in some, but not all of their cells.
 - Translocation – this occurs when a baby is born with only an extra part of chromosome 21.
- It is the most common “disability” in the world and occurs in approximately 1:1000 of live births.
- Most people born with Down Syndrome lead long and relatively healthy lives, while some people develop medical conditions relating to the chromosome difference. It is important to be aware of these possible challenges before deciding to adopt a child with DS (see resource links below).
- There are often children waiting for families in India who have been born with Down Syndrome. There are both boys and girls available, and most are between the ages of 12-months to 5+ years.

Additional Information and Resources

Please Note: Some of the resources listed below are American based organizations, and therefore our agency is not able to work directly with them in order to place children in adoptive families. India is a Hague country, which means adopting a pre-identified child is not allowed. These organizations are listed as resources only, as many contain excellent information on adopting a child living with DS. The Children’s Bridge will not respond to requests for our agency to attempt to place a specific listed on these websites and does not support the use of the public posting of photographs of vulnerable children.

- National Down Syndrome Adoption Network – although this is an American organization, their website has substantial information on adopting and parenting a child living with DS. They also offer a free webinar that provides great information on what it is like to parent a child with DS: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7552355543543398913>
- Rainbow Kids: <https://www.rainbowkids.com/>



- Adoptive Families Association of BC – Down Syndrome: <http://www.bcadoption.com/node/2981>
- Reece's Rainbow – New Family Information Page and things to consider: <https://reecesrainbow.org/new-family/newfamily>
- Down Syndrome – Beyond the Basics: Possible Medical Complications: <https://www.uptodate.com/contents/down-syndrome-beyond-the-basics>

Older Children

Many older children are also available for immediate placement. There are many older children waiting for families in India, and CARA can match families quickly who are open to children over the age of 6 - 8 years old. Sibling groups of 2 to 4 children are also waiting for immediate placement, with the ages of children usually ranging between 3 and 12 years.

If you would like any information about the India adoption program, please contact the India Program Manager at 613-226-2112 ext. 2, or at Karyn.arnauld-bakelaar@childrensbridge.com.

Families' Progress

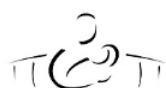
We currently have 4 families matched with children and are in various stages of the court to travel process. As we are entering holiday season in India (Diwali, Puja, Christmas) we do expect things to slow down a bit, and for families to experience some delays in obtaining court dates etc.

OCI Status

CARA's guideline's certainly say that adopted children are eligible to apply for and obtain OCI status. More information can be found on the US State Departments website (How to Adopt): <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/Intercountry-Adoption/Intercountry-Adoption-Country-Information/India.html>

“CARA's Guidelines Governing the Adoption of Children, 2015 state that an adopted Indian child shall be entitled to receive an Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) card, if found eligible. For more information about the procedure for applying for OCI status for your child, please contact the nearest Indian Embassy or consulate.”

Families can apply online for their child's OCI status here: <https://passport.gov.in/oci/welcome> or through the nearest Indian Consulate or High Commission.



Relinquishing Indian Passport and Renouncing Citizenship

Once families are home in Canada with their child, they must complete a formal process renouncing the child's Indian citizenship (dual citizenship is not recognized by India's Immigration laws). This must be done within 3-years of receiving Canadian Citizenship (or Record of Landing if you complete the Permanent Resident Visa route). It is very important to complete this step, as failure to do so may result in penalties when your child travels back to India at any point in their life. It is a punishable offence under the Indian Passport Act, 1967, to "apply for an Indian passport, continue to hold an Indian passport, get an Indian passport re-issued or travel on an Indian passport after acquiring foreign citizenship. Under Indian law, Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) who have acquired foreign citizenship are required to surrender their Indian passports to the nearest Indian Mission/Post immediately after acquisition of foreign citizenship".

Please see this link for more information on relinquishing Indian citizenship and relinquishing your child's Indian passport: http://www.blsindia-canada.com/renunciation_ppt.php

Foreigners Regional Registration Office and NOC

The Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) process can now be completed online from anywhere in India, and no longer requires an in-person visit to the FRRO office in Delhi. All adopted children must obtain an exit visa from the FRRO office before leaving India, as must adoptive parents who hold OCI status and will travel on a Canadian passport. This NOC is essentially an exit permit and families will need to apply for it at the FRRO before departing India.

The process in obtaining an exit visa is contained in the India Adoption Travel Booklet all families will receive upon receipt of a child proposal.

Families have received conflicting information from various sources as to whether completing the FRRO process is necessary. Our agency has confirmed with CARA officials on several occasions that all adoptive parents are required to complete this step before exiting the country. This is not an exit visa for the adopted child, as your child will have already been cleared by CARA and IRCC for travel. The FRRO is calling this a No Objection Certificate for the adoptive parents. This will be shown to officials at the airport, upon request, when you depart India. While some families have not be requested to show this document upon departure, most have, and if you have not completed this step you will not be allowed to board your flight and exit the country.





THAILAND ADOPTION PROGRAM

Darlene Catton, Program Manager
 (905) 836-6776
darlene.catton@childrensbridge.com

Adoption Program News

I am very happy to congratulate Jason and Crystal on the proposal of their daughter! This precious girl is from Udon Thani province and is under two years of age. The family will be leaving Canada at the end of November.

Congratulations also go out to Harley and Kate on the referral of their beautiful daughter! This wee one is also under two and is currently residing at the Thai Red Cross Children's Home. The family will not be travelling for another 6 – 8 months.

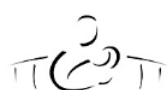
Matching

Please remember that files are not always matched in the order that they are received.

Families Waiting (Files in Thailand)

The chart of family's progress is back in the update!

Family	Log-in-Date	Province	Referral Received	Home
J & C	March 2016 (DCY)	NS	October 1, 2019	
J & K	August 2016 (DCY)	ON		
A & B	December 2016 (DCY)	ON		
P & R	February 2017 (DCY)	ON		
T & P	February 2017 (DCY)	NS		
M & A	March 13, 2017 (DCY)	MB		
G & I	June 30, 2017 (DCY)	ON		
M & C	July 7, 2017 (DCY)	AB		
M & J	July 11, 2017 (DCY)	ON		
W & N	Aug. 28, 2017 (DCY)	AB		
A & K	Dec. 25, 2017 (TRCCH)	ON	May 7, 2019	
M & T	Sept. 8, 2017 (DCY)	NS		



LG	Sept. 11, 2017 (DCY)	ON	October 29, 2019	
KS	Nov. 20, 2017 (DCY)	ON		
JB	Nov. 20, 2017 (DCY)	ON		
J & A	May 3, 2018 (DCY)	AB		
E & K	Sept. 14/18 (TRCCH)	ON		
JK	Oct. 16/18 (DCY)	AB		
H & K	Nov. 19/18 (TRCCH)	ON	October 23, 2019	
M & C	Dec. 24/18 (DCY)	ON		
J & K	Jan. 23/19 (DCY)	AB		
JL	Feb. 22/19 (DCY)	ON		
T & M	March 21/19 (DCY)	ON		
R & J	April 17/19 (DCY)	ON		
M & J	May 27/19 (DCY)	ON		
R & L	June 10/19 (TRCCH)	ON		
C & K	July 8/19 (DCY)	ON		
J & S	Oct. 21/19 (DCY)	AB		

As you can see, 4 families have referrals and are waiting to travel.

Nine families have sent in their retainers and are working on their dossiers.

Finalization

Adoptions are finalized at the Royal Thai Embassy in Ottawa or the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Vancouver.

AdopTALK

You should plan to attend our 2 day AdopTALK workshop about 6 - 8 months before you anticipate receiving your proposal. All details for AdopTALK workshops are on our website.

Attendance at AdopTALK is mandatory no matter where a family live or what other training they take. The next AdopTALK will be in Ottawa on April 18th and 19th, 2020.

Ontario Ministry

The Ministry has indicated that they continue to process home studies and updates in 4 – 6 weeks and proposals in 5 – 10 business days; however, we have seen an increase in this timeline. To process a home study/update the Ministry is currently taking about 10 – 12 weeks.

Alberta Ministry

Families will need to complete an addendum to their home study every 12 months. I have recently been advised by Alberta Human Services that they will send the approval directly to a family's coordinating agency and to the family. Once you receive this letter, kindly scan and email me a copy.

Waiting Children Program

If you are interested in adopting an older child (over 4 years of age) or a child with special medical needs, this type of adoption will not count in the same quota for mainstream adoptions and the requirements for families adopting older children or those with special needs are not as restrictive (for example, the age of the adoptive applicants and/or other children in the home could be amended).

If you are interested in this program, please contact me for more detailed information.

Travelling outside of Canada (before adoption finalization)

When you come home with your child and you want to travel with him/her outside of Canada, you are required to obtain a Statutory Declaration from our office (or your provincial ministry for those outside of Ontario) to travel since the adoption is not finalized. The Children's Bridge (or the provincial ministry) is the guardian of the child until the adoption is finalized. Finalization happens approximately 1 year after you arrive home. Please contact me if you are travelling outside of Canada. Children travelling to the US before finalization need to obtain a US visitor's Visa as they are not Canadian Citizens. Please call your local US consulate for further details.



SOUTH KOREA ADOPTION PROGRAM



Bruno Jung-Millen, Program Manager
(613) 226-2112 ext. 4
bruno.jung-millen@childrensbridge.com

Dear families,

Winter is upon us! It is somewhat discouraging to go outside, but I am sure that all of us are looking forward to the holidays.

There have been some significant staffing changes in both the Intercountry Adoption Unit and the Post-Adoption Unit at SWS. Things are moving along smoothly as usual; however, communications have been slow. Please be advised that it currently takes 5-10 days to get email responses from SWS at this time. I will call SWS to speak directly with the case worker only if the matter is urgent. Thank you for your patience!

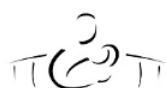
Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TCBSouthKorea/>

This group is **ONLY** open to past and current families in the South Korea Adoption Program with The Children's Bridge.

It is a "closed" group which means only members can see who is in it and what they post. Member requests are only approved by the TCB staff. You will be required to answer three simple questions, so that our staff can verify your identity prior to approval.

This virtual group has been created to foster building a safe and supportive community network for past and current families in the program. Families are welcome to share information regarding the adoption process and support each other throughout their adoption journey. Please do not share any sensitive information pertaining to your child or prospective child.



Any questions or concerns regarding your application status should only be directed to the South Korea Adoption Program Manager.

Timeline Overview (approx.)

As of October 31st, 2019:

- Home study review/processing time: 2 – 4 weeks
- Ontario Ministry *Letter of Approval* (LOA): 6 – 10 weeks
- Dossier review/processing time: 2 – 4 weeks
- Referral: 3 – 14 months (after submitting dossier)
- Court hearing: 7 months (after accepting referral)
- Placement: 1 – 1.5 months (after court hearing)

Progress Chart (for families currently in process)

As of October 31st, 2019:

Family	Intake	LOA	Dossier	Referral	Court hearing	Placement
CB-61039	x *	x	x	x		
CB-60950	x *	x	x	x	x	x
CB-61216	x *	x	x	x		
CB-61186	x *	x	x	x		
CB-61251	x *	x	x	x		
CB-61250	x *	x	x	x		
CB-60287	x *	x	x	x		
CB-60090	x *	x	x	x		
CB-61172	x *	x	x			
CB-61068	x *	x	x			
CB-61125	x *	x	x			
CB-61175	x *	x	x			
CB-61200	x *	x				
CB-61311	x	x	x			
CB-61295	x	x	x			
CB-61339	x					
CB-61337	x					
CB-61357	x					
CB-61292	x					
CB-61341	x					
CB-61328	x					
CB-61326	x					



CB-61022	x					
CB-61029	x					

Korean Language and Cultural Classes

Toronto Area

- Korean Education Centre of Korean Consulate
- Korean Canadian Cultural Association

Ottawa Area

- Korean Cultural Center Canada

Korean Canadian Adoptee's Association (KCAA)

Website: www.kcaa.me

Phone: 647-963-2740

Email: info@kcaa.me

The Korean Canadian Adoptee's Association (KCAA), formerly known as Korean Canadian Children's Association (KCCA), is a non-profit organization dedicated to serving the needs of the Canadian adoptive families with Korean children. John Lim founded this organization after attending a 'Canadopt' summer camp in London, Ontario, 1991.

Our most anticipated event of the year is the heritage summer camps in August. Families come together from all across the country to enjoy a weekend away with other adoptive families. Delicious Korean food is served and various Korean cultural events take place during the three-day camp. Programs include family games, cooking contests, water-gun fights, dancing, movie, campfire, Q&A with youth speakers and more.

Depending on participation, we also hold motherland tours for adoptive parents and their children to visit Korea in May. In addition, we hold our annual Christmas Dinner Get-together in early December and Korean Lunar New Year celebrations in February. All throughout the year, we hold language classes, cooking classes, Korean drum lessons and more. All adoptive families and prospective parents are welcomed to come to our events.



USA ADOPTION PROGRAM

Bruno Jung-Millen, Program Manager
(613) 226-2112 ext. 4
bruno.jung-millen@childrensbridge.com

Dear families,

Winter is upon us! It is somewhat discouraging to go outside, but I am sure that all of us are looking forward to the holidays.

In terms of the program, nothing has changed since the last announcement. For communication matters regarding your adoption case, please direct your inquiries directly to me – not ASC. It is the Ontario Ministry's licensing requirement that adoption facilitating agencies such as The Children's Bridge keep communication records and manage each adoption cases in collaboration with foreign agencies and/or authorities. I thank you for your continuous cooperation in this matter.

Facebook Group

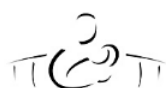
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TCBUSA/>

This group is ONLY open to past and current families in the USA Adoption Program with The Children's Bridge.

It is a "closed" group which means only members can see who is in it and what they post. Member requests are only approved by the TCB staff. You will be required to answer three simple questions, so that our staff can verify your identity prior to approval.

This virtual group has been created to foster building a safe and supportive community network for past and current families in the program. Families are welcome to share information regarding the adoption process and support each other throughout their adoption journey. Please do not share any sensitive information pertaining to your child or prospective child.

Any questions or concerns regarding your application status should only be directed to the USA Adoption Program Manager.



Families with Dossier In Florida

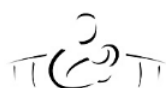
If your dossier was submitted a year ago or getting close to the timeline, please contact me immediately to ensure that you are following the guidelines in Florida. Your home study must be updated (not a formal process with Ontario Ministry) along with supporting documents.

Also, it would be a great idea to review the risk factors information booklet while you are waiting to be chosen by an expectant mother. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Progress Chart (for families currently in process)

As of October 31st, 2019:

Family	Intake	US Consult	LOA	Dossier	Match	Placemen t	Finalizatio n
CB-61214	x	x	x	x	x		
CB-61143	x	x	x	x			
CB-61239	x	x	x	x			
CB-61353	x	x					
CB-61317	x	x					
CB-61364	x						
CB-61350	x						
CB-61277	x	x	x	x	x		
CB-61365	x	x					
CB-61286	x						





HIV+ KIDS ADOPTION PROGRAM

Karyn Arnauld-Bakelaar, Program Manager
(613) 226-2112 ext. 2
karyn.bakelaar@childrensbridge.com

This program is available to families who are considering adopting a child living with HIV. It is not a program on its own but runs in conjunction with whichever country/adoption program the family has chosen to adopt from. The Children's Bridge is able to offer information, education, support and resources to families in process to adopt a child living with HIV.



ZAMBIA ADOPTION PROGRAM

Karyn Arnauld-Bakelaar, Program Manager
(613) 226-2112 ext. 2
karyn.bakelaar@childrensbridge.com

NOT ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

We are not accepting applications for the Zambia Program at this time. This section will be updated once more information becomes available on Zambia's progress in implementing The Hague protocols in its adoption policies.

If you would like any information on the Zambian Program, please contact Karyn for further information.





CHINA HOMELAND VISIT PROGRAM

Darlene Catton, Program Manager
(905) 836-6776
darlene.catton@childrensbridge.com

The March 2020 tour registration package is on the website.

This tour will take place from March 13 – March 27th and will include a visit to Xi'an to see the Terra Cotta Warriors as well as a trip to Guilin!

We have also determined the date of the May 2020 tour and this will take place from May 8 – May 22nd. The itinerary has not yet been finalized but should be on the website within a few weeks.

If you'd like more information, check out the registration package on the website or contact Darlene Catton.