

Family Court Observes National Adoption Day

National Adoption Day was celebrated by children, families and Family Court Judges on Nov. 21, 2015 at The Elizabeth Murphey School in Dover, where two adoptions were finalized and several other adoptions from 2015 were recognized by family and friends.

The Division of Family Services, the Office of the Child Advocate and private adoption agencies in Delaware also participated in the ceremony.

Family Court Judge Robert B. Coonin spoke at the ceremony finalizing the adoption of one of the children who had found his “forever family.”

“The best part of my job as a Judge is the conducting of an adoption ceremony. Everyone is smiling. Everyone is proud of the parents and optimistic and hopeful for the child’s future,” said Judge Coonin.

Kelly Ensslin, from the Office of the Child Advocate and co-chair of the Interagency Committee on Adoption which organized the Nov. 21 event, said it was great to have families and representatives from so many partner agencies participate and share in the day.

“Judge Coonin did an amazing job at the ceremony, making it personalized to the child and family,” she said.

Mary Lou Edgar, Executive Director of A Better Chance for Our Children, is the other co-chair of the Interagency Committee on Adoption along with Ensslin.

Family Court Judges preside over all court matters for children when custody is granted to the Division of Family Services. Finalizing adoptions for children is an event that Family Court Judges welcome and take pride in doing as it means a child will have a loving, permanent place to call home

In addition to Judge Coonin from New Castle County several other Family Court judges from across the state participated in the ceremony including Judge Mardi Pyott from Kent County, who also finalized an adoption that day, along with Judge Barbara D. Crowell from New Castle County, Judge Kenneth M. Millman and Judge Peter B. Jones both from Sussex County.

The Division of Family Services and partner agencies recognize that finding adoptive homes is critical to so many children across the state. There are dozens of children across Delaware waiting to be adopted. The Interagency Committee on Adoption also provides training and support as it relates to post-adoption services. After an adoption occurs, it is often essential to assist children and families with support during this important transition in their lives.

— By Rachel Neff, Family Court Improvement Program



CELEBRATING NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY: From left to right – Judge Mardi Pyott, Judge Robert Coonin, Judge Barbara Crowell, Judge Peter Jones and Judge Kenneth Millman at the Elizabeth Murphey School in Dover.