

International Adoptions

History

Since 1981 Sunny Ridge has served children through our International Adoption program. Over 1,800 children from 46 countries have been placed into loving homes through this program. As a leader among international adoption agencies, our mission is to serve children and build families around the world. For families hoping for a child to love, our mission becomes a family's opportunity.

Trends

Choosing to adopt a foreign-born child has become more and more common in the United States, as an increasing number of families are growing through international adoption.

So many children of all ages, and from many ethnic and cultural backgrounds, are waiting for the warmth and stability a forever family can provide. In 2006, over 20,679 foreign-born children were adopted by US families. Of



these, **the top three countries for International adoption in the United States were China (6,493), Guatemala (4,135), and Russia (3,706).** These three countries accounted for roughly 70 percent of all International adoptions.

Children Available

Children are available around the world—residing in child welfare institutions and orphanages without having the benefit of permanent family life. In some cases children live without proper physical care and nutrition. Adopting internationally can be mutually beneficial for both prospective adoptive applicants and children. Children are available for a great number of reasons, including: poor economic conditions, political turmoil, social stigmas, cultural traditions, abuse and neglect, natural disasters, and war or armed conflicts. The professional social work staff at Sunny Ridge provides families with many insights surrounding the complexities, risks, and rewards of international adoption.

Children with Special Needs

Sunny Ridge is also privileged to help find homes for children with special needs. Currently our agency works with the China Center for Adoption Affairs to find families who will give children with special needs a bright and positive future. Often the adoption of special needs children is expedited due to the physical needs of the children.

Areas Served

Through our International Adoption program, Sunny Ridge primarily works with families residing throughout Illinois and Indiana. We also work with families residing in other states, as well as United States citizens living abroad.

Numbers Served

Sunny Ridge implements anywhere from 100 to 130 International adoptions per year. At Sunny Ridge our China adoption program is by far the most common adoption, with between 60 to 70 China adoptions taking place each year. The China adoption program is one of our agency's "direct placement" programs, meaning Sunny Ridge can provide comprehensive adoption services—from application, document preparation, child referral, travel, child placement, and post-placement requirements.



Partnership Programs In Adoption

Sunny Ridge networks with many partner agencies in order to help families locate a child to love. A partner program is when two agencies work in a cooperative effort to locate and place children into families. This is a popular option with families and offers them a very wide variety of options regarding programs, fees, requirements and countries, as well as children legally available for adoption. The partner program also allows families to work with placing agencies located out-of-state. In this type of adoption, Sunny Ridge completes a home study and post placement visits. The placing agency would assist with dossier guidance, referral of a child, and in-country support and assistance. Sunny Ridge enjoys healthy relationships with many partner agencies throughout the United States.

Costs

The cost of an International adoption varies because there are so many different kinds of adoptions. Fees vary depending upon the country in which the child is born and if that country requires adoptive parents to travel to adopt the child. In 2006 the average cost was about \$21,000, and the range was \$9,000 to \$30,000. Agency costs include orientation sessions, a home study, post-placement visits, required legal reports, and other costs. A majority of the cost is for foreign country fees charged and for travel to bring the child home.

Sunny Ridge and the Community

Sunny Ridge is always willing to present our programs to the community. We offer free Adoption Information Meetings each month. For more information call (630) 754-4540, or in Indiana, call (219) 836-2117. You may also visit our web site at www.sunnyridge.org.