

November 23, 2020

STAFF NOTE:

A Message from  
the Office of  
Equity: LGBTQ+  
Health  
Resources

Supporting the long-term mental and physical health of our LGBTQ+ youth, particularly those aging out of the child welfare system, begins with helping them find inclusive, affirming services.

With the current threat of a twindemic (the convergence of the seasonal flu and coronavirus), this includes helping youth ages 18 to 21 locate free and low-cost flu vaccines.

Within Los Angeles County, LGBTQ+ youth may turn to the following organizations to receive inclusive, affirming care:

[LA County Department of Public Health](#)

# Director's Message

Bobby D. Cagle



Dear DCFS Team,

This weekend our Department joined child welfare jurisdictions across the nation in a very special event that speaks right to the heart of all that we do here at DCFS. Saturday, November 21, 2020 marked the 21st anniversary of National Adoption Day. Founded by former presiding Judge Michael Nash, National Adoption Day in Los Angeles County set aside an entire day to finalize a large number of adoptions. Recognizing the challenge of finding sufficient time on the regular court docket to complete adoption cases, Judge Nash opened a courtroom and brought together all parties on a Saturday to ensure adoptive families did not experience further delays. This model was soon replicated in other cities as they too realized the potential to make dreams come true for many deserving children and families.

Due to the pandemic, the event coordinators planned all the activities around the health restrictions. Rather than gathering together in person, all hearings were conducted via WebEx, with families, judges, attorneys, DCFS social workers and advocates all joining virtual court rooms from their respective remote locations. This made this year's annual celebration markedly different from those of past years. The day kicked off bright and early with a [video](#) that included remarks from Presiding Judge Victor H. Greenberg, Alliance for Children's Rights President and CEO Jennifer L. Braun, Public Counsel President and CEO Margaret Morrow, Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda L. Solis and myself, as well as actors Willie Garson and Dan Bucatinsky, both of whom are adoptive parents.

While I was honored to have the chance to offer a few words of support, ultimately this day about the 149 children and youth who found their forever home and the 92 families who finally became whole thanks to the tireless efforts of everyone who made this event possible. It was touching to see the joy that emanated from the screen, evident in the hugs and tears of the families, as well as the smiles and congratulatory expressions from those watching in the virtual gallery. Although we

[Los Angeles LGBT Center](#)

[Pasadena Public Health Department](#)

[City of Long Beach - Department of Health and Human Services](#)

Please make sure to share the above information with caregivers and youth who identify as LGBTQ+.



Los Angeles County  
Department of Children  
and Family Services

would have preferred to celebrate with families in person, it was a heart-warming way to kick off the Thanksgiving season. In fact, National Adoption Day is observed annually on the Saturday before Thanksgiving precisely because it is a time when families gather with loved ones to show gratitude.

There is something truly special about being able to celebrate so many families becoming whole simultaneously across the country. Events like this are perfect reminders of why we do this work and why it is so important. As an adoptee myself, I know how much it means to the children and youth that officially have a loving family to call their own. I hope you will join me in wishing the adoptive children and families happiness and love as they start this new chapter. I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to all members of the DCFS family and our many external partners who worked together to make this day possible. Given the current circumstances, it was a great accomplishment to spend the day uplifting love and celebrating their commitments.

I hope you all have a restful Thanksgiving holiday, and that you and your loved ones stay safe and healthy during this time. I encourage you to focus on all that you are thankful for. For me, I am grateful for the contributions that each of you make in service to others and the continued dedication you show to this important work, even in the face of challenges. I appreciate all that you do for each other, the department and on behalf of children and families here in Los Angeles County.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bobby D. Cagle'.

Bobby D. Cagle