

## **NACAC's 2009 Advocacy Training**

To raise awareness about the importance of adoption and the need for post-adoption support, NACAC is bringing youth adopted from foster care, adoptive parents, and advocates from about 13 states to Washington, D.C. on May 31 to June 2, 2009. We will hold an advocacy training for participants on May 31 and June 1, after which the attendees will visit their Congressional delegation to promote adoption of older children and youth and additional resources for post-adoption support.

### **Who Should Attend?**

Three participants each from Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, Nevada, Ohio, and Texas (other states to be named later):

- a young person (18 to 24) who was adopted from foster care at age 11 or older
- an adoptive parent who can talk about the critical need for post-adoption support services
- a representative from a local adoption support or child welfare advocacy group

### **What are the Objectives of the Training?**

- maximize the power of stories to promote adoption reform
- learn general advocacy strategies and tips, including using data
- learn valuable ways to promote older child/youth adoption and post-adoption support
- learn more about working with the media
- build capacity and confidence to meet directly with legislators and staff for future adoption advocacy

### **What Will Happen at the Visits?**

On June 2, the three-person teams will meet with members of their Congressional delegation or their staff. Participants will:

- Tell personal stories — The youth will discuss why adoption is important and what difference it has made in their lives. Adoptive parents will discuss their children's special needs and how post-adoption support has been important to their families' success.
- Talk broadly about their state — Participants will discuss adoption programs and policies in their own states
- Thank the Congressional delegation for passage of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 but also to ask for dedicated funds for post-adoption services, and advocate for a balance between supporting youth who age out of care and finding permanent families for older youth