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RaiseAChild.US Partners with Human Rights Campaign to Recruit LGBT Parents to Foster and Adopt

LOS ANGELES, CA— According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, over 107,000 children in the U.S. foster care system are waiting for permanent homes. This week, the non-profit organization *RaiseAChild.US* announced it is partnering with the Human Rights Campaign Foundation to launch a pilot project to produce recruitment events and media campaigns with outdoor, radio and television advertising in major cities across the U.S.

The campaigns will feature gay and lesbian parents and their children. Their goal is to meet the need for homes for waiting children by recruiting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) parents to build families of their own through fostering and adoption.

“*RaiseAChild.US* was born out of a desperate and exigent need to connect children waiting in the foster care system with safe and loving homes,” said Rich Valenza, the organization’s founder and Executive Director. “Across our country, there are just as many LGBT parents and prospective parents able to provide this... the solution is right before our eyes.”

The Human Rights Campaign is America’s largest civil rights organization working to achieve LGBT equality. Its foundation launched the *All Children – All Families* initiative in 2007, which promotes policies and practices that welcome LGBT foster and adoptive parents. The program seeks to enhance LGBT cultural competence among child welfare professionals and educate LGBT people about opportunities to become foster or adoptive parents to waiting children. To date, it has over 50 participating agencies across the country, and has awarded 18 seals of recognition.

“The *RaiseAChild.US* campaign will help motivate many people in our community to take that first step, knowing that we will connect them to an agency that truly welcomes and values them,” said Ellen Kahn, HRC Family Project Director and a professional social worker.

According to 2010 U.S. Census data, children are being raised in over one million LGBT-headed households. *RaiseAChild.US* Media Director John Ireland explained, “Our families blend into every community, leading to the misperception that gay parenting is something new. For this reason, many LGBT people do not realize the fact that multiple private and governmental child welfare agencies are eager to work with us. This campaign helps us to build and strengthen our families.”

In November 2011, the organization launched *www.RaiseAChild.US* and a Southern California media campaign, partnering with the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services and local adoption agencies, recruiting over 200 prospective resource families within one month.

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Photos from the RaiseAChild.US Campaign

CAPTION: *Many private and governmental child welfare agencies are eager to work LGBT families who wish to foster or adopt.*



Photos from the RaiseAChild.US Outdoor Campaign in Los Angeles (November 2011)

CAPTION: Local families are featured on banners displayed across L.A. in November 2011, celebrating National Adoption Month.



Sunset Blvd from Fairfax Ave to Laurel Canyon Blvd



Beverly Blvd at La Cienega Blvd



Cahuenga Ave at Universal Studios Blvd



Highland Ave at The Hollywood Bowl



Los Feliz Blvd at the 5 Freeway



Vermont Ave at Sunset Blvd