

# ADDITION



## Adoption Day

National Adoption Day is a national effort to raise awareness of the more than 100,000 children in foster care waiting to find permanent, loving families. This annual event has made the dreams of thousands of children come true. In

2011, I was personally

involved with almost 50 special needs adoptions resulting in almost 70 foster children finding permanent homes.

Nevada Adoption Day was on November 15, 2012. It was a day filled with tears, hugs, balloons, and plenty of photographs. Anyone interested in fostering a child in Clark County can go to [www.clark-countynv.gov](http://www.clark-countynv.gov) and search for "foster."

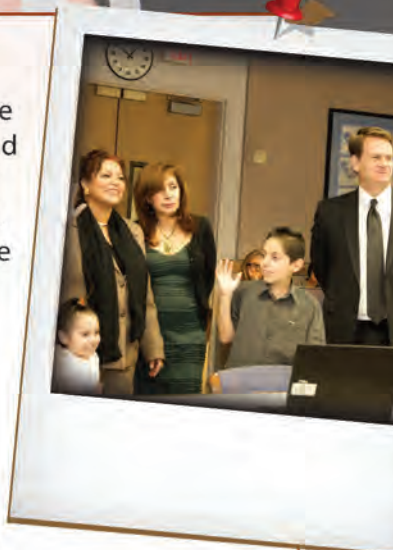
## Adoption Tax Credit

The adoption tax credit has helped thousands of American families offset the high cost of adoption since the credit was established in 1997. Since 2003, families that adopted children with special needs could claim the full credit even if they had

no adoption expenses. Other adoptive families are also eligible for the credit, but must have (and be able to document) "qualified adoption expenses." As a result, adoption has been a more viable option for many parents who otherwise may not have been able to afford adoption.

The tax credit was refundable for 2010 and 2011. Without legislative action, the credit is not refundable in 2012 and will benefit few families who finalize adoptions after December 31, 2012. There are now bills in both the House (HR 4373) and the Senate (S 3616) that would accomplish the goal of an adoption tax credit for special needs adoptions, making it refundable and permanent. I encourage you to ask your Representative to co-sponsor HR 4373 and both Senators to co-sponsor S 3616.

This legislation is likely to be included in a package of other tax credits, which will not be considered by Congress until later this year. For news and up-to-date information on the status of the adoption tax credit, please see [www.nacac.org](http://www.nacac.org).



TODD L. MOODY  
PARTNER

over →

Almost 18 years ago, I was hired by an insurance defense firm. I had no intention of ever practicing family law. However, within an hour after learning that I passed the Nevada bar exam, one of the partners walked into my office with a stack of files and plopped them down on my desk and said, "As our newest attorney, these files are now yours. Good luck figuring it out," and walked away. In that stack were approximately a dozen files we handled pro bono for a local adoption agency. Since that day I have had the pleasure of finalizing thousands of adoptions in Southern Nevada. The Adoption Addition is my opportunity to share with clients, future clients and practitioners some of the things I've learned.

## Stepparent Adoption

The most common form of adoption is by a stepparent who is willing to assume both legal and financial responsibilities for his/her spouse's children. Adopting a stepchild can create permanency and stability and is so strongly favored under Nevada law that the expenses and requirements typical for other types of adoption do not apply. Frequently, we can finalize a stepparent adoption for less than \$2,000.

This is also true for grandparent and other family member adoptions.

## Intercountry Adoption

On April 1, 2008, the Hague Adoption Convention went into force for the United States. It establishes important standards and safeguards to protect intercountry adoptions. These protections apply to you if you choose to adopt from a country that is also party to the Convention. If you are considering an international adoption, it is critical that you determine whether the country you are adopting from is also a party to the Convention and that you find an agency licensed to perform background checks and home studies for international adoptions. ■



**Hutchison & Steffen is an AV-Rated, full-service law firm practicing in the following areas:**

Administrative Law  
Alternative Dispute Resolution  
Appellate Litigation  
Asset Protection & Business Planning  
Banking  
Bankruptcy & Creditor's Rights  
Business Law & Commercial Litigation  
Condemnation Law  
Constitutional Law  
Construction Law  
Corporate & Transactions  
Election Law & Government Ethics  
Employment Law  
Family Law  
Healthcare Professionals Advocacy  
Insurance Defense  
Landlord/Tenant  
Personal Injury  
Professional Liability Defense  
Real Estate Law  
Trust & Probate Litigation

**W**e are pleased to present the premier issue of Adoption Addition, a periodic newsletter covering adoption topics. Hutchison & Steffen Firm Partner Todd L. Moody practices primarily in adoption, providing a full range of adoption services to families throughout Nevada. The American Academy of Adoption Attorneys has named Todd as one of only four Fellows in all of Nevada. Fellows in the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys are selected because they "have met the highest ethical and competency standards" and "are active practitioners with the most knowledge, skill, and experience in the field of adoption."

Todd may be reached at 702.385.2500 or [tmoody@hutchlegal.com](mailto:tmoody@hutchlegal.com), or visit the adoption blog at [hutchlegal.com](http://hutchlegal.com).

702-385-2500

FAX 702-385-2086

[INFO@HUTCHLEGAL.COM](mailto:INFO@HUTCHLEGAL.COM)  
[HUTCHLEGAL.COM](http://HUTCHLEGAL.COM)

©2012 HUTCHISON & STEFFEN