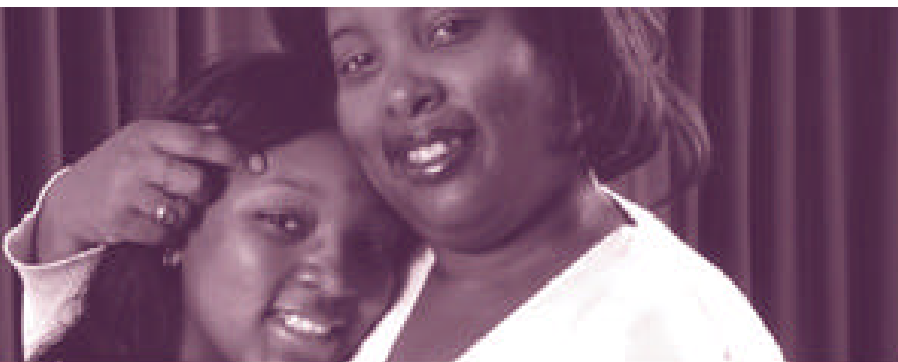


A Desire to  
**LOVE**

A Reason to  
**ADOPT**



## Give An Older African-American Child A Family

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **With a Disproportionate Number of Older African-American Children in Foster Care, Project "If Not Us" Encourages More Families to Adopt An Older Child**

SILVER SPRING, MD (**March 15, 2004**) – Project "If Not Us," an initiative designed to find adoptive homes for older African-American children, says older African-American children represent the largest share of children in the foster care system. Project "If Not Us" is encouraging individuals and families in the District of Columbia to consider adopting an older child.

African-American children are over-represented in foster care when compared to their representation in the total U.S. child population, according to 2000 and 2001 data from the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). While African-American children make up 15 percent of the U.S. child population, they constitute 41 percent of the foster care population. Most of the children are older with 70 percent over the age of six and 45 percent over the age of ten.

"We are making an urgent appeal to individuals and families living in the National Capital region to consider adopting an older African-American child," says Director of Project "If Not Us," Sabrena McAllister.

"Most of the children in the foster care system are there due to no fault of their own. We are especially asking members of the African-American community to consider adopting. African-Americans have a strong heritage of taking care of children in the community, which builds on the "it takes a village" concept. Historically, African-Americans practiced informal adoption, which meant raising relatives, as well as taking care of friends and members of the community. We honor this historical concept and encourage more African-Americans to formally adopt older children currently residing within the foster care system."

Adoptions Together is a private, nonprofit child placement agency licensed by the State of Maryland and District of Columbia. Project "If Not Us" is an initiative of Adoptions Together. To learn more about adopting an older African-American child, call Adoptions Together at 301-439-2900 and ask for an "If Not Us" team member.

# # #



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