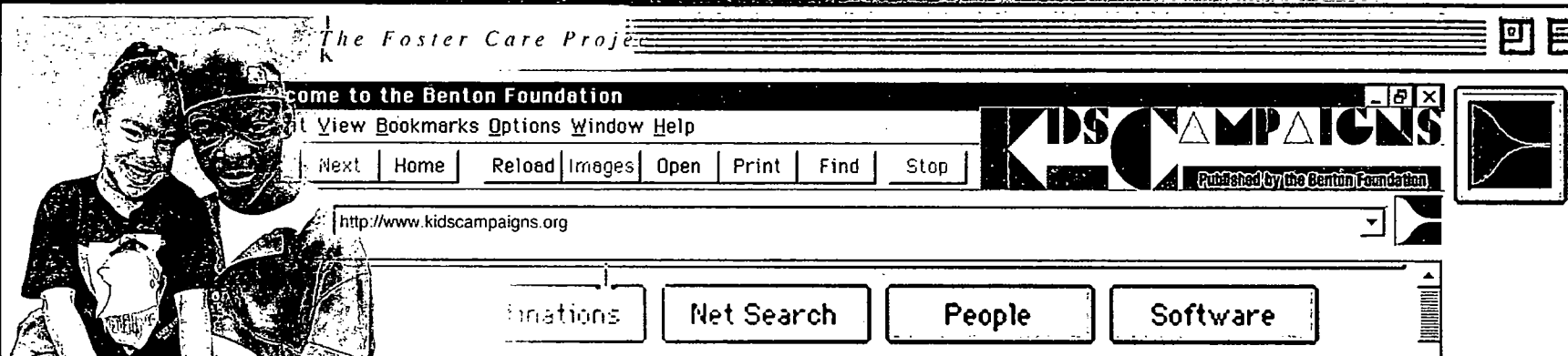


www.kidscampaigns.org

Benton Foundation



KidsCampaigns Fast Map to Foster Care



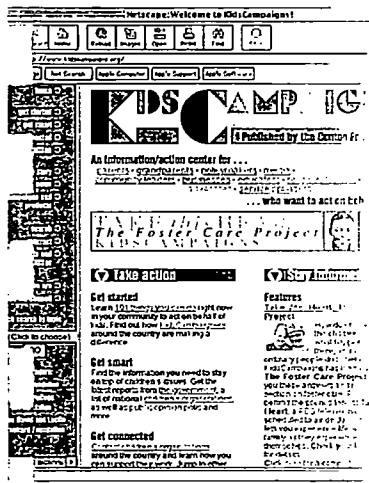
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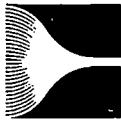


KidsCampaigns Fast Map to Foster Care



Published by the Benton Foundation





About the Benton Foundation

The Benton Foundation works to realize the social benefits made possible by the public interest use of communications. Bridging the worlds of philanthropy, public policy, and community action, Benton seeks to shape the emerging communications environment and to demonstrate the value of communications for solving social problems. Through demonstration projects, media production and publishing, research, conferences, and grantmaking, Benton probes the relationships between public, corporate, and nonprofit sectors to address the critical questions for democracy in the information age.

The Benton Foundation routinely forms media partnerships to support its goals. The "Whose Side Are You On?" campaign is a partnership between the Advertising Council, the Coalition for America's Children and the Benton Foundation that is organized around a series of public service announcements whose aim is to inspire Americans to act on behalf of children. People motivated by the announcements can find meaningful and appropriate ways to act by connecting with the Benton Foundation's KidsCampaigns, a state-of-the-art communications hub that consists of a World Wide Web site (www.kidscampaigns.org), a toll-free telephone hotline (1-888-544-KIDS) and fax-on-demand services. The hub offers how-to information, resources, and volunteer opportunities, and connects hub visitors with the Coalition for America's Children, a nonpartisan alliance of 350 national, state and local nonprofit organizations working for kids nationwide.

Netscape: Welcome to KidsCampaigns!

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Netsite: <http://www.kidscampaigns.org/>

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KIDS CAMPAIGN

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An information/action center for . . .

parents • grandparents • policymakers • media • community leaders • businesses • educators • religious leaders • advocates • service providers

... who want to act on behalf of

The Foster Care Project

Take action

Get started

Learn 101 things you can do right now in your community to act on behalf of kids. Find out how KidsCampaigners around the country are making a difference.

Get smart

Find the information you need to stay on top of children's issues. Get the latest reports from the government, a list of national children's organizations, as well as public opinion polls and more.

Get connected

Contact children's organizations around the country and learn how you can support their work. Jump to other

Stay informed

Features

Take this Heart: The Project



How do children see the world? What happens there, and what ordinary people do to help? KidsCampaigns has teamed up with The Foster Care Project to bring you these answers and more in a new section on foster care. Plus, behind the scenes look at *The Heart*, a PBS television documentary scheduled to air on January 27, 1998. It lets you experience life with a foster family as they experience it themselves. Check your local PBS listings for details. Click here for a complete list.

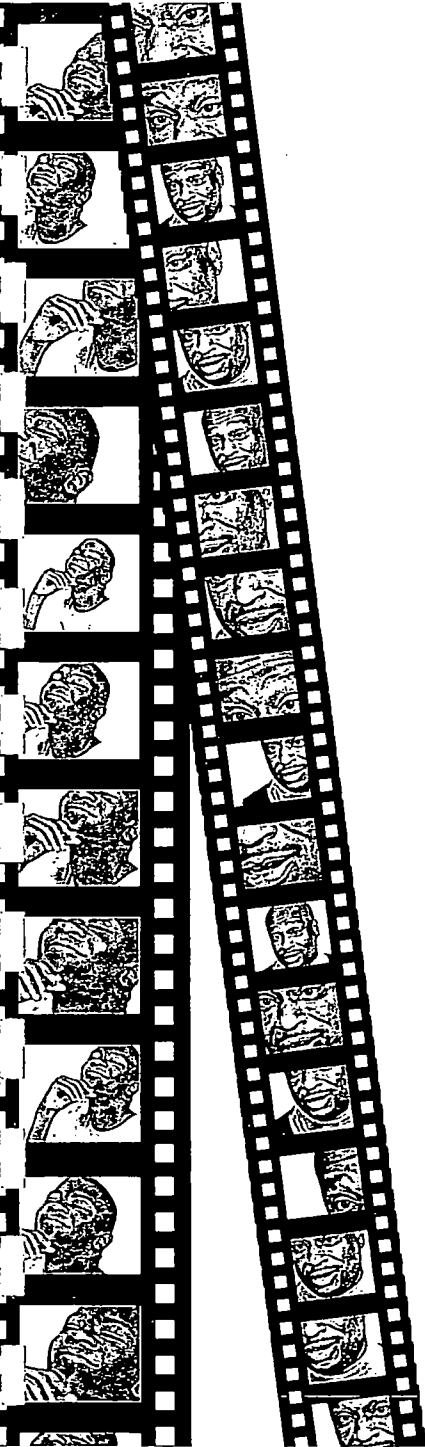




Kids Campaigns Fast Map to Foster Care



KIDS CAMPAIGNS
Published by the Benton Foundation



Foreword

Want to know what issues face parents of today's teenagers? Or today's teenage parents? Looking for a way to get involved with a children's organization, find a volunteer opportunity, or just get smart about children's issues? Then turn to the KidsCampaigns Web site at www.kidscampaigns.org.

KidsCampaigns is a comprehensive online resource for citizens, businesses, and parents who want to make their communities work for kids. As just one example of the potential of KidsCampaigns, the Benton Foundation is pleased to present **Foster Care**, a fully developed magazine section of the KidsCampaigns Web site.

Foster Care on KidsCampaigns is a collaboration between KidsCampaigns and The Foster Care Project in association with the public television documentary **Take this Heart**, produced by KCTS/Seattle.



Beginning in January 1998, public television stations around the country will air **Take this Heart**, a film about one foster family whose experiences bring to life the statistics of many foster families. The Foster Care Project, made possible with generous support from The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, The Casey Family Program and The Annie E. Casey Foundation, uses the emotional impact of the film to build awareness about the issue of foster care. Through an extensive national outreach campaign, the project hopes to mobilize individuals and communities to take action to improve the lives of children in foster care.

Take this Heart introduces the issues of foster care at an individual level, through the voices of three young men and their foster mother. The KidsCampaigns Foster Care section takes interested viewers beyond the individual to the community level, to ask how all community members can make a difference for children in foster care. The Foster Care Web site offers viewers of **Take this Heart** a framework in which to understand

the critical social issues affecting foster care. Using the KidsCampaigns paradigm of "Get Started, Get Smart, Get Connected," the section offers a comprehensive set of resources to understand these issues and to identify community solutions.

By approaching KidsCampaigns to conceptualize, develop and host the Foster Care Web site, The Foster Care Project becomes rooted in a structure larger than a single issue. KidsCampaigns integrates the issues facing children in foster care—who are normally invisible—and the issues facing foster care families with those facing all children and families in our country. It develops links to related children's issues — from after-school programs to college aid and substance abuse. As part of KidsCampaigns, Foster Care reaches a greater audience, draws from other KidsCampaigns resources, and gains a longevity beyond the airing of **Take this Heart**.

We invite you to tour Foster Care on the following pages. As with any snapshot, the viewer must look beyond the flatness of the page. While this hard copy format cannot capture the interactive, fluid, and dynamic nature of the Web, it begins to provide a sense of the dimensions of Foster Care.

Q&A About KidsCampaigns and Foster Care

What is
KidsCampaigns and
why is it different from
other Web sites?

KidsCampaigns
(www.kidscampaigns.org) is a
comprehensive online resource
for citizens, businesses, and parents
who want to make their communities
work for kids. It focuses on the
social issues behind the problems
facing individual children and
creates an online community
to engage and support efforts to act on behalf of kids.

Many people are concerned about the welfare of children but don't know where to start to become involved themselves. KidsCampaigns gives them answers — from the most basic level of identifying what the problems are, to providing resources, to linking them to organizations that need their help or ideas about actions they might take in their own communities.



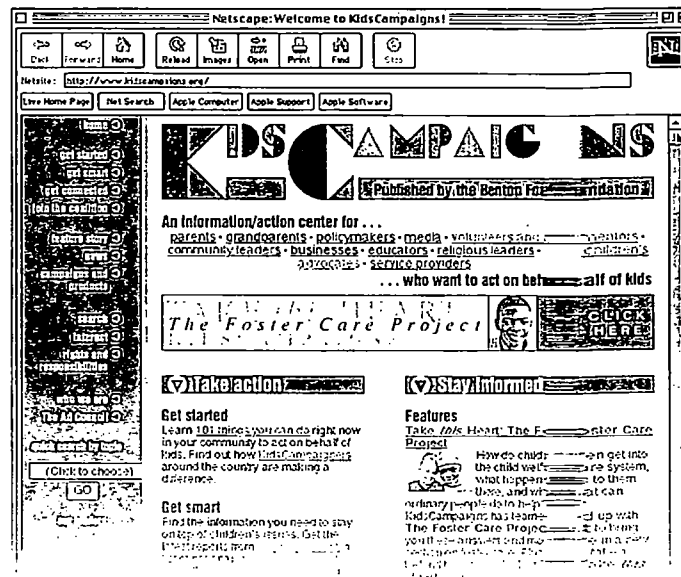
KidsCampaigns provides a context for understanding the problems facing children today and for weighing solutions to these problems. Information is introduced in layers, beginning with the identification of relevant social issues, followed by brief summaries of information organized thematically, then delivers users to more detailed resources. These layers of the site make it easy to move from broad concepts to specific information. This format allows individuals to be introduced to the main points of these resources, whether or not they choose to follow through to the deepest layer. It also lends itself to a variety of users, from the individual just beginning to understand the issues to the professional child advocate.

KidsCampaigns offers its users a variety of entry points to this pyramid of information. Looking for a way to get involved in foster care from the home page, for example, one KidsCampaigner may click on the KidsCampaigns feature, another may search by topic, and a third may choose Get Connected, yet they all may find the same resource.

Another unique feature of KidsCampaigns is that it links to resources from other organizations — linking directly to their site where possible. Rather than capturing individuals within the KidsCampaigns site in a traditional corporate model, these links proactively urge individuals to identify and access other sites which offer additional resources or local connections. Individuals are linked to the exact location within these other sites that relates to the issue addressed on KidsCampaigns, saving the need to navigate another site. In this way, KidsCampaigns serves as a communications hub, a central location that offers one-stop shopping for acting on behalf of kids.

KidsCampaigns also gives organizations without Web sites an opportunity to join this cyber-community. KidsCampaigns posts and cites selected resources unavailable on the Web, thus giving these organizations an Internet presence.

How does KidsCampaigns organize information?



KidsCampaigns is organized by a “Get Started, Get Smart, Get Connected” paradigm. From the home page, individuals can click on one of these icons to find the resources they need to act on behalf of kids. Get Started features Richard Louv’s *101 Things You Can Do For Our Children’s Future* and other introductions to children’s needs. Get Smart links to hundreds of data resources. Get Connected links to organizations and opportunities to act on behalf of children.

In keeping with this conceptual framework, KidsCampaigns has developed many magazine features that address subsets of children’s issues in greater depth. Foster Care is one of these magazine features developed around the airing of the public television documentary *Take this Heart*.



How is the Foster Care feature organized?

The Foster Care home page sets the stage for the section with a brief introduction that identifies the broad social problems facing children in foster care and the avenues for addressing those problems.

From the home page, KidsCampaigners can also link to background information on the *Take this Heart* documentary. Here they can read profiles of each family member featured in the documentary and learn more about The Foster Care Project's mission and supporters.

 Search  Home  Contents

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 email: kidscampaign@benton.org



The content for the section can be accessed in one of two pathways — by the “Get Started, Get Smart, Get Connected” paradigm or by a set of issues specific to the section (e.g., Foster Care, Child Abuse and Neglect, Substance Abuse, Adoption, How Can I Help?, **Take *this* Heart** Communities, **Take *this* Heart: The Documentary**).

Much of the content of the Foster Care section is derived from printed materials produced by The Foster Care Project including a viewer’s guide, discussion guide, and outreach toolbox for public television stations. These materials, adapted for the general public and the Web site, are layered throughout the section and complemented by other resources.

Richard Louv Talks About the Issues links to an essay that sets the context for the section. Louv, journalist and author of *101 Things You Can Do For Our Children’s Future*, introduces KidsCampaigners to five public television stations that are challenging their communities to help children in foster care. In addressing how these stations are reaching out to their communities, Louv offers

everyone ideas for how they can become involved, from supporting foster parents to donating household necessities and volunteer services. Louv continues to point out we don’t need to wait for a television program to get involved — and suggests that communities must do much more to help economically and emotionally troubled families long before the child falls.

Get Started offers an overview of the issues affecting children in foster care and suggests ways for individuals to think about their involvement. Most often these resources are brief and prepared for a lay audience. In Get Started’s “About Foster Care,” KidsCampaigners are directed to resources that identify the basics on foster care — who’s in foster care, what brought them there, and who’s caring for them. “How You Can Help” lets visitors know how to get involved, with concrete suggestions for supporting children in foster care, teens in foster care, foster parents, and birth parents. From each suggestion, KidsCampaigners



GET STARTED



GET SMART



can simply click to link to national organizations that can help them become involved.

Get Smart provides the facts and data to inform actions. Here's the place to link to resources grouped under subsections such as Facts on Foster Care, Adoption, Families for Kids of Color, and Trends in Child Abuse. In addition to the wealth of materials provided by **Take *this* Heart**, these link to a range of relevant resources identified by the KidsCampaigners staff — including foundation reports such as *Families for Kids of Color* from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, government information, and non profit resources. Through Get Smart, KidsCampaigners can easily move through layers of information, clicking from a broad overview to a detailed analysis of a policy issue. In this way, the section can meet the needs of a variety of individuals—from a parent who wants to become more informed, to a business leader who needs resources quickly to make a difference in his or her community, to a child advocate who is looking for a comprehensive resource that links to the facts, figures, and analysis needed for effective

advocacy.

Get Connected identifies the organizations that address issues related to foster care, from foster care parenting to child abuse. A comprehensive database includes hundreds of organizations involved in The Foster Care Project, all of whom are ready to engage citizens who want to make a difference for children in foster care. It also connects KidsCampaigners to the public television stations around the country with ongoing community outreach activities launched in association with the **Take *this* Heart** documentary. From Get Connected, it's easy to find a way to get involved — whether it's supporting a national organization, volunteering at the local level, or finding a chat room to share ideas with others.

Another way to approach this section is through Issues. The issues cut across the sections, drawing from all other areas. For example, clicking on child abuse and neglect brings up a list of resources from how to recognize child abuse, to trends in child abuse reporting and fatalities, to state child abuse and neglect treatment programs.

- ▲ Adoption
- ▲ How Can I Help?
- ▲ Take This Heart Communities
- ▲ Take This Heart: The Documentary

Why is the
focus
on
foster care?



Early in the process for planning community outreach around *Take this Heart*, The Foster Care Project approached the Benton Foundation to create a permanent home for foster care issues on KidsCampaigns. The Foster Care Project recognized the potential of *Take this Heart* to raise interest in helping to improve the lives of children in foster care. However, they understood that while the documentary could be the first step in this process, individuals or community groups would need a resource to understand these complex issues and to learn how to become involved in their own communities.

KidsCampaigns offers The Foster Care Project a number of advantages over creating a stand-alone Web site. KidsCampaigns gives The Foster Care Project a longevity beyond the airing of *Take this Heart*. Not only will viewers of the documentary log onto the site, but KidsCampaigners drawn to the site for other reasons will be directed to this topic and have easy access to these resources.

How to Use KidsCampaigns Fast Map to Foster Care

KidsCampaigns Fast Map to Foster Care captures the look and feel of the KidsCampaigns Web site in a printed format.

While this hard copy format cannot recreate the interactive, fluid, and dynamic nature of the Web, it provides a sense of the content and architecture of the Foster Care section.

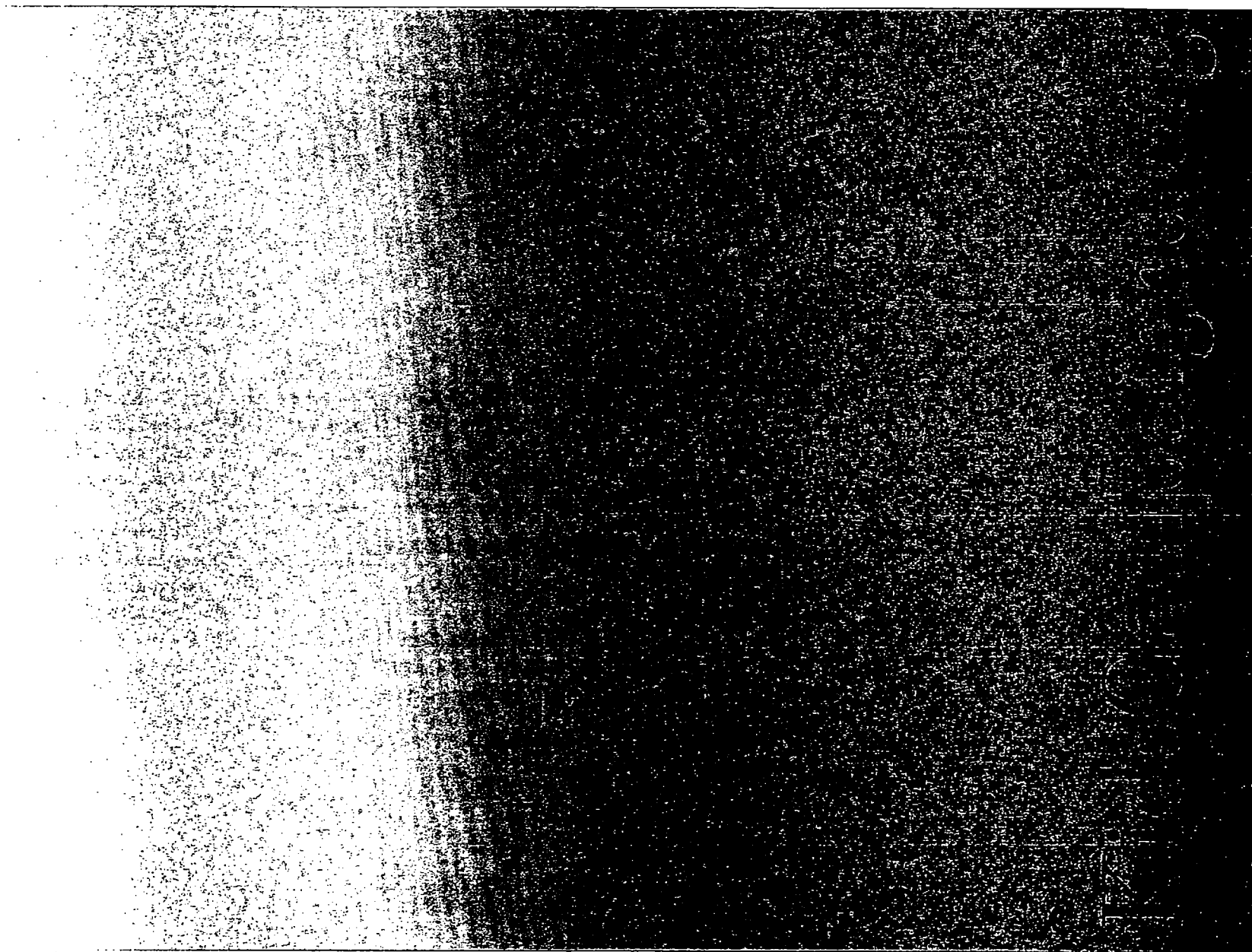
In the centerfold of the Fast Map, you'll find three fold-out maps that offer a visual representation of the design and structure of KidsCampaigns and Foster Care. The first map gives an overview of KidsCampaigns. The central map diagrams links from the home page of Foster Care. The final map details the links from just one of Foster Care's deeper layers, the "How You Can Help" page of Get Started.

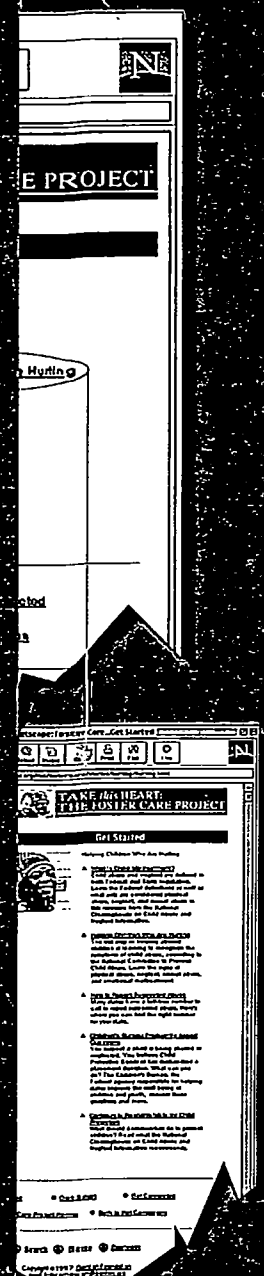
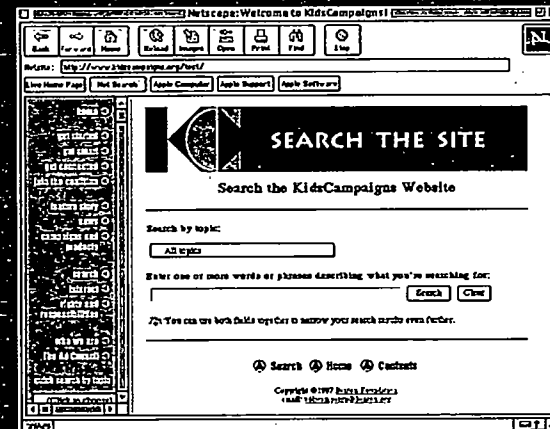
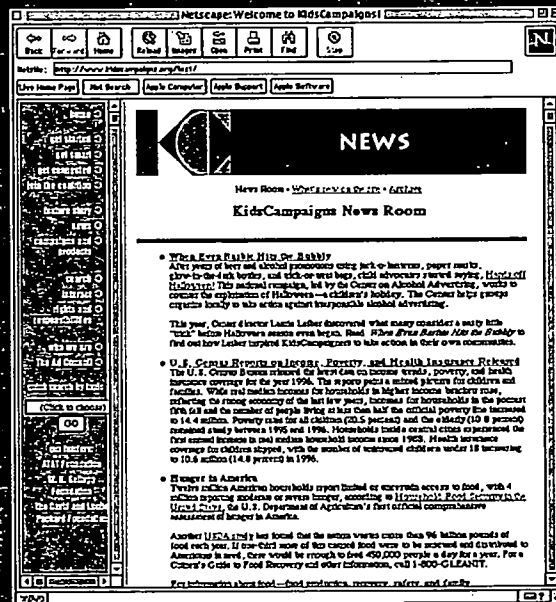
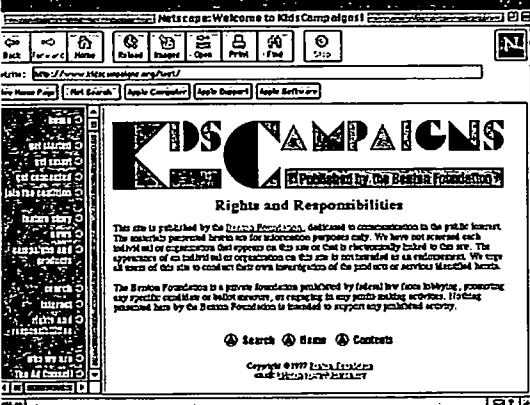
These maps illustrate how easy it is to link from page to page by clicking on any bold and underlined text. The presentation of the maps, however, reflects only one option among many links. When online, an individual can pick and choose among links, creating a personalized path to information.

The latter pages of the Fast Map explore five links in greater detail. Drawn from the major subsections — Richard Louv Talks About the Issues, **Take this Heart**, Get Started, Get Smart, and Get Connected — these pages demonstrate the variety of resources available online. In addition, through their annotations, they provide illustrative examples of the process of Web writing.

KidsCampaigns Fast Map to Foster Care presents only a fraction of the resources available on the site. The actual section links to hundreds of pages of material which contain links to multiple resources themselves. The exponential nature of these links makes it unmanageable to attempt to present them in a printed format. Therefore, we encourage you to continue this tour online at www.kidscampaigns.org/Hot/fostercare.html.







Netscape: Welcome to KidsCampaigns!

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Netsite: <http://www.kidscampaigns.org/>

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our funders
AT&T Foundation
W. K. Kellogg Foundation
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

KIDSCAMPAIGNS

Published by the Benton Foundation

An information/action center for . . .
 parents • grandparents • policymakers • media • volunteers and mentors •
 community leaders • businesses • educators • religious leaders • children's
 advocates • service providers
 . . . who want to act on behalf of kids

TAKE *this* HEART
The Foster Care Project
 KIDSCAMPAIGNS

Take action

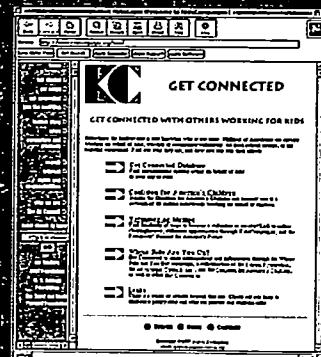
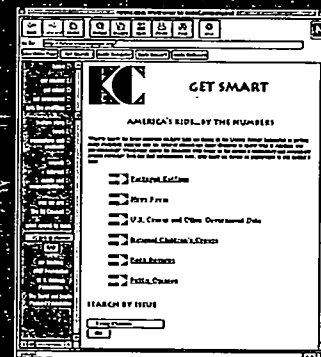
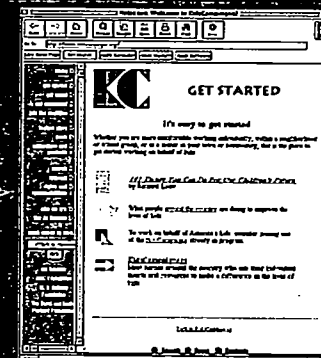
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Internet Explorer - Netscape: Foster Care - Get Started

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address: http://www.benton.org/.../FosterCare/GetStarted.html

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KidCampaigns TAKE THIS HEART: THE FOSTER CARE PROJECT

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Get Started

SUPPORT CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE
Click on the letters that follow to locate a national organization that can help you.

- 1 TUTOR A CHILD**
Volunteer to become a tutor to a child in care, focusing especially on the child's reading skills. B1E1E1E
- 2 GIVE FREE LESSONS**
Offer a child in care free music or art lessons. B1E1E1E
- 3 DONATE SPORTING GOODS**
Offer to purchase and mail a basketball hoop for a child in care or donate a swing set or jungle gym to children in care. B1E1E1E
- 4 DONATE A COMPUTER**
If you upgrade your home computer, donate the older model to a child in care, and offer to spend some time teaching the child how to use it for learning and playing. B1E1E1E
- 5 OFFER RECREATION**
Offer recreation opportunities to children in care. (You could offer a child a space in your dance or gymnastics class or on your soccer or baseball team, and pay for the child's uniform and other needed equipment.) B1E1E1E

FOSTER PAGES
In my 200,000 children's computer and currently living in various forms of foster care.

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Address: http://www.benton.org/.../FosterCare/GetStarted.html

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Get Started

SUPPORT ITEMS IN FOSTER CARE
Click on the letters that follow to locate a national organization that can help you.

- 1 BE A MENTOR**
Become a mentor to a teen in care, offering support and advice as needed. B1E1E1E
- 2 TUTOR A TEEN**
Volunteer to provide tutoring services to teens in care. B1E1E1E
- 3 DONATE YOUR SPECIAL SERVICES**
If you have special training in working with teens who have learning disabilities, offer to donate some of your time to a teen in care. B1E1E1E
- 4 OFFER APPRENTICESHIPS**
Offer a teen in care an apprenticeship in your company. B1E1E1E
- 5 OFFER SCHOLARSHIPS**
Offer your company or organization to provide a scholarship to college or vocational training for a teen in care. B1E1E1E
- 6 PROVIDE ON-THE-JOB TRAINING**
If you have a business or organization, offer to provide on-the-job training for a teen in care. B1E1E1E

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Get Started

SUPPORT FOSTER PARENTS
Click on the letters that follow to locate a national organization that can help you.

- 1 PROVIDE BABY SUPPLIES**
Provide foster parents with diapers, formula, clothing and toys. B1E1E1E
- 2 OFFER DISCOUNTS**
Offer discounts on goods and services to foster parents. B1E1E1E
- 3 OFFER RESpite CARE**
Offer respite care to foster parents who need a break from their responsibilities. B1E1E1E
- 4 SPONSOR APPRECIATION EVENT**
Sponsor a recognition event for foster parents in your community to demonstrate your support and appreciation for the work they are doing. B1E1E1E
- 5 OFFER DENTAL CARE**
Provide free or reduced-cost dental care to foster parents. B1E1E1E
- 6 DONATE YOUR SERVICES**
Offer your services to foster parents in need. B1E1E1E

FOSTER PAGES
In my 200,000 children's computer and currently living in various forms of foster care.

Internet Explorer - Netscape: Foster Care - Get Started

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Get Started

SUPPORT BORN PARENTS
Click on the letters that follow to locate a national organization that can help you.

- 1 BE A MENTOR**
Become a mentor to a birth parent, offering support and advice as needed. (Foster parents, in particular, need strong role models.) B1E1E1E
- 2 HELP WRITE LETTERS**
Volunteer to help a birth parent write letters to her/his child(ren) in care. B1E1E1E
- 3 PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION**
Volunteer to provide transportation for birth parents, bringing them to visit their child(ren) in care, to attend group counseling sessions, to attend parenting classes, to look for employment, or to get to a job. B1E1E1E
- 4 OFFER AFFORDABLE HOUSING**
If you are a landlord or the owner of an apartment building, offer a birth parent a space in your class or provide financial assistance to allow a birth parent to afford a home. B1E1E1E
- 5 PARENTING CLASSES**
If you are a teacher or know someone who does, offer a birth parent a space in your class or provide financial assistance to allow a birth parent to afford a home. B1E1E1E

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Get Started

CONSIDER BECOMING A FOSTER PARENT
Click on the letters that follow to locate a national organization that can help you.

- 1 RESEARCH FOSTERING**
Read up on fostering in your local library. B1E1E1E
- 2 MEET WITH LOCAL FOSTER PARENTS**
Call your state foster parent association to learn how foster parents in your neighborhood, church, or child's school and arrange to visit them, if possible. B1E1E1E
- 3 FIND OUT WHO NEEDS CARE**
Contact your state foster care association to identify the age range and special needs of children in your community who need foster parents. B1E1E1E
- 4 ATTEND FOSTERING SEMINARS**
Check your local newspaper or cable channel, or call your local foster parent association, to learn about seminars on becoming a foster parent. B1E1E1E

FOSTER PAGES
In my 200,000 children's computer and currently living in various forms of foster care.

Internet Explorer - Netscape: How to become a Foster or Adoptive Parent

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Address: http://www.benton.org/.../FosterCare/GetStarted.html

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KidsCam

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KidsCampaigns  **TAKE this HEART: THE FOSTER CARE PROJECT**

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KidsCampaigns  **TAKE *this* HEART: THE FOSTER CARE PROJECT**

The Launching of a National Foster Care Awareness Campaign -- and Where You Fit In

By Richard Louv, KidsCampaigns Senior Editor

How do we help the children -- so often the ones abandoned, neglected or abused who end up in child protective services and eventually the foster care system?

Soon, a national campaign through public television will attempt to answer that question -- not just in the sense of what government can do, but what each of us can do in our families, neighborhoods, businesses and places of worship.

In January, PBS stations across the country will broadcast **Take This Heart**, a sobering profile of three boys growing up in a foster family. **Take This Heart** is produced by KCTS/Seattle Public Television in association with Child Welfare League of America with generous support from The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, The Casey Family Program, and The Annie E. Casey Foundation. Each station will challenge its community to get involved -- and provide the tools to do it.

The model stations include KCET in Los Angeles; KLRU in Austin, Texas; Maryland Public Television in Baltimore; WTVS in Detroit; and KCTS in Seattle. Thirty other stations are also involved, through an incentive grants program. This is non-traditional journalism at its best, suggesting ways for all of us to get involved.

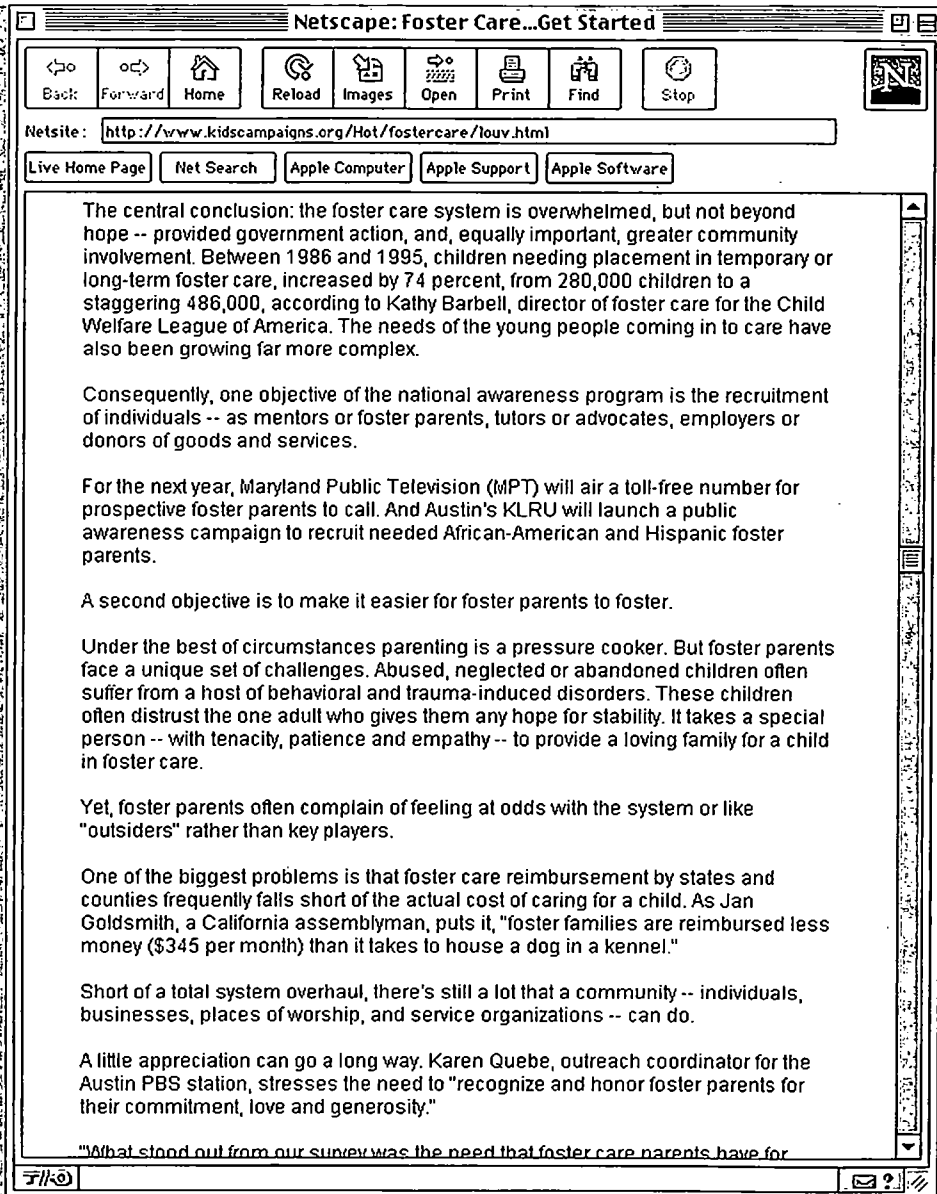
Over the past few months, each of the five key stations has created a community advisory partnership -- including foster parents and kids, foster care and social service agencies, businesses, reporters and judges -- to determine the most pressing local foster care needs.

The central conclusion: the foster care system is overwhelmed, but not beyond hope -- provided government action, and, equally important, greater community involvement. Between 1986 and 1995, children needing placement in temporary or long-term foster care, increased by 74 percent, from 280,000 children to a staggering 486,000, according to Kathy Barbell, director of foster care for the Child Welfare League of America. The needs of the young people coming in to care have

Richard Louv Talks About the Issues

KidsCampaigns magazine sections are introduced with an article created for the site often contributed by KidsCampaigns Senior Editor Richard Louv.

These articles create the context
for the section by personalizing
the underlying social issues



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"What stood out from our survey was the need that foster care parents have for respite care," says Cherrayle Burge, director of community outreach at Maryland Public Television. Maryland's project will focus on organizing a pool of volunteers who can supervise a foster child for a few hours or a few days, so that foster parents can take a break.

Another way to help is to donate household necessities and volunteer services. Austin is sponsoring the Rainbow Room, a community resource bank for foster parents which stocks such helpful items as automobile infant seats, high chairs, cribs -- even home health care equipment for children with fragile medical needs. WTVS in Detroit will sponsor a phone bank for callers who want to donate goods and services to foster families, or volunteer with agencies working with kids in foster care. KCTS in Seattle will provide a phone number, and a clearinghouse of information, to help viewers donate needed goods, provide work opportunities, volunteer time, or become foster parents. Seattle will also sponsor a foster care speakers bureau to raise awareness in the community about prevalent needs.

Another challenge is to help teens make the tough transition from the foster care system and into adult living and adulthood. Becoming self-sufficient entails more than simply finding a job. It means learning how to live on a budget, finding an apartment, paying bills, and learning work etiquette. Nationwide, fewer than 25 percent of foster care agencies provide services that help teens live independently and get jobs, according to the national Child Welfare League of America. Each year approximately 25,000 youths in foster care reach the age at which they're forced to live on their own -- whether prepared or not.

"People who help by tutoring adolescents can ease the families burden and help the young person who is making the transition out of foster care," says Sharon Selico, the outreach specialist for LA's KCET. Her station will also sponsor an on-air job-a-thon on following the broadcast of *Take This Heart*. (This idea grew out of the station's Volunteer-a-thon, held last year, which generated 3,000 callers and 800 volunteers.)

But we don't have to wait for a television program to get involved. Many of us, and the institutions to which we belong, can do something today, this month, this year, to make life better for these children.

And of course, there's a larger objective. All of us can work, in one way or another, to prevent children from ending up in the foster care system. The community must do much more to help economically or emotionally troubled families, weaving a web of support long before the child falls.

Richard Louv is Senior Editor of KidsCampaigns, a columnist for *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, and author of several books on family and community life in America, including *"Childhood's Future"* (Anchor).

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For The Foster Care Project, Louv introduces KidsCampaigners to five public television stations that are challenging their communities to help children in foster care.



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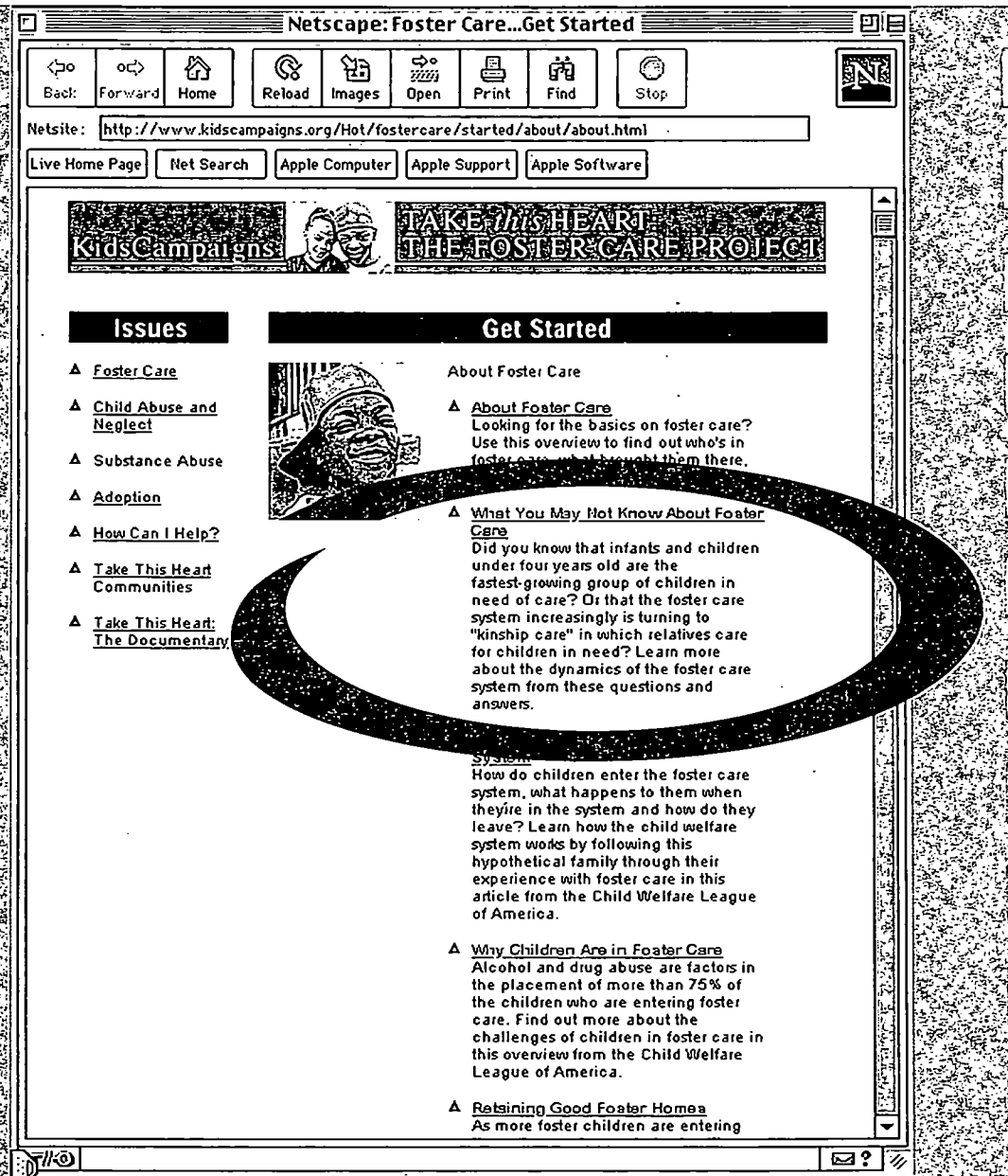


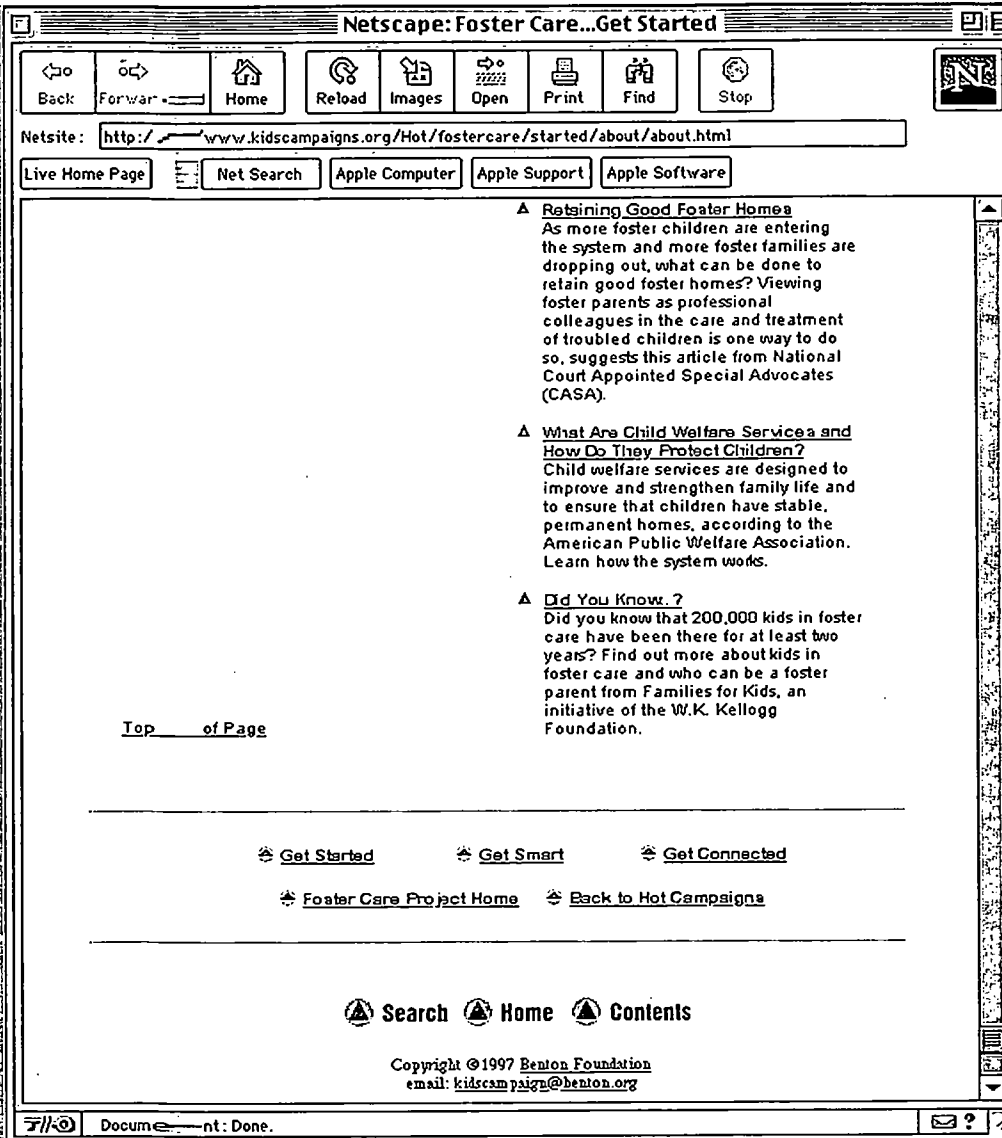
Nearly 500,000 American children are in foster care on any given day in the United States. Many have been cast adrift at an early age.

Take This Heart is the story of three boys who struggle to make sense of their fates, each in his own way. **Robert, Jamil and Joaquin** have been passed from one foster home to the next, eventually landing in the care of **Tess Thomas**, a state-funded foster mother. Thomas sees her work with children as "God's purpose for me," and although she never proselytizes, it is clear that her commitment derives from a serene and fierce spirit. Take This Heart is crafted from the modest and ordinary events of daily life, when small moments become dramatic, illuminating the dark sense of loss and emptiness borne by these children. Their stories reveal the remarkable resiliency and the tough-minded will with which these boys go on with their lives, not utterly consoled, but not broken, either. Unsentimental and restrained, the film is ever watchful for the gestures that signal a child's tentative sense of belonging. Take This Heart explores the experiences of a few children in one

Get Started/ About Foster Care/ What You May Not Know About Foster Care

Get Started sections give
KidsCampaigners simple resources to
help them become familiar with the
social issues affecting children





In *Get Started, About Foster Care* introduces the basics about foster care, from why children are in foster care to why long-term foster care is a reality for many children.

What You May Not Know
About Foster Care uses a
simple question-and-answer
format to explain the issues
involved with foster care.

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Get Started



WHAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT FOSTER CARE:

Who's in Foster Care?

Nearly half a million children nationwide currently are living in some form of out-of-home care. Yet, to most people, they are invisible. To the extent people do describe foster care, they more often than not think that children in foster care are all in elementary school. In fact, infants and children under four years old, particularly those with medical complications and/or physical and mental limitations, comprise the fastest-growing group of children in need of care. In addition, one-third of all children in foster care are between the ages of 13 and 18.

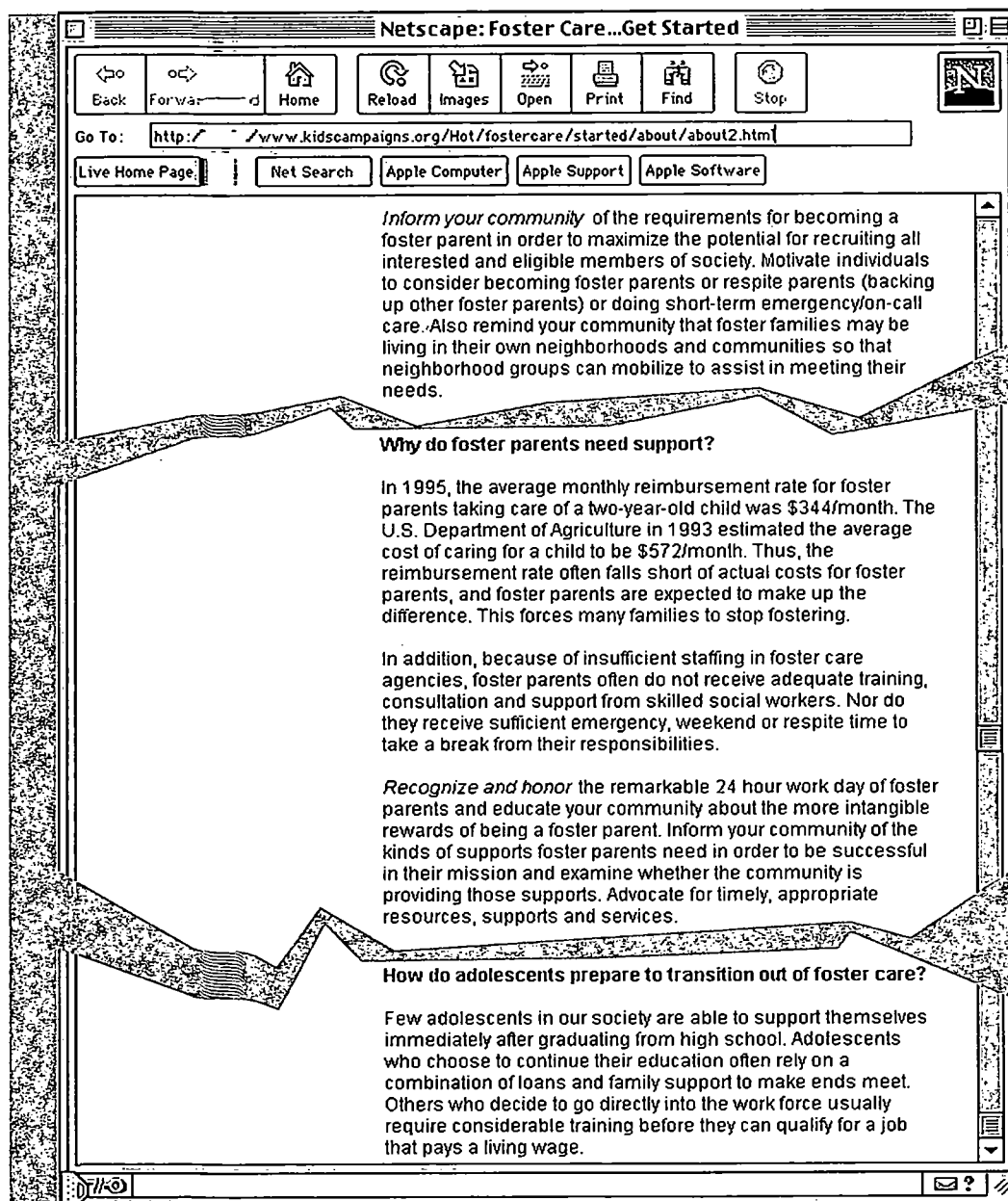
Educate your community about who these children are in your local community (their numbers, demographics and profiles) and the various reasons why they come into care so that your community can better match its resources with current needs.

FOSTER FACTS

Youths between the ages of 13 and 18 comprise roughly one-third of the foster care population. Each year, 25,000 youths in care reach the age at which they are forced to live on their own because they no longer qualify for foster care.

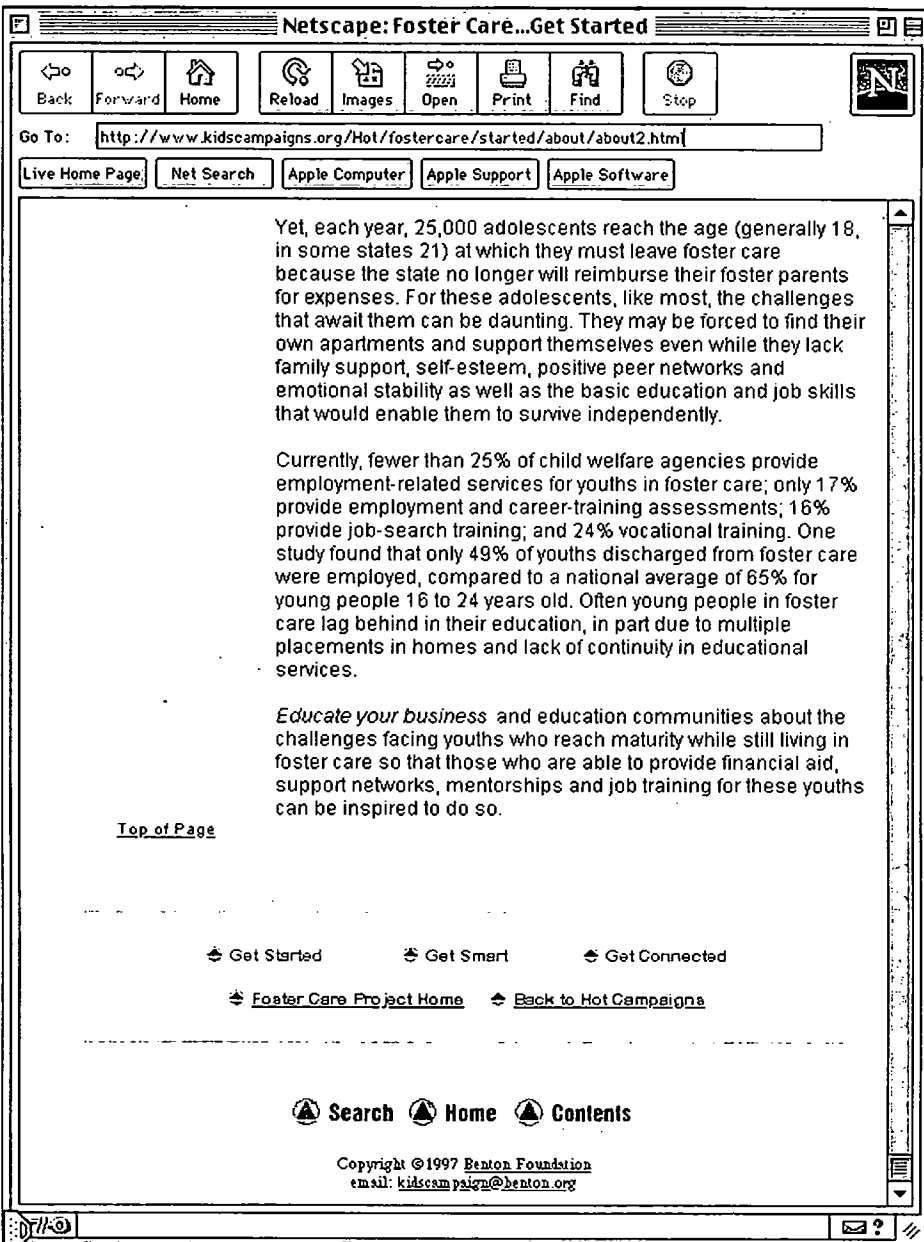
Who are foster parents?

Because most foster families live anonymously in their communities, there is often little knowledge or understanding about what foster care is or what foster parents do. This can hinder opportunities for recruiting new foster parents and mobilizing community resources to assist foster parents in their responsibilities. Many people think that only married couples with homes can become foster parents. In fact, foster parents can be single, married or divorced. They can be homeowners or apartment dwellers. They can have a job outside the home. They can be as young as 21, or they can be retired. To qualify for foster parenting, citizens must first demonstrate the qualities



The Foster Care Project
has created many
resources to promote
community
mobilization around
Take *this* Heart

By posting these resources on KidsCampaigns, thousands of people can learn more about foster care and easily share this information with others through newsletters and informal communications.



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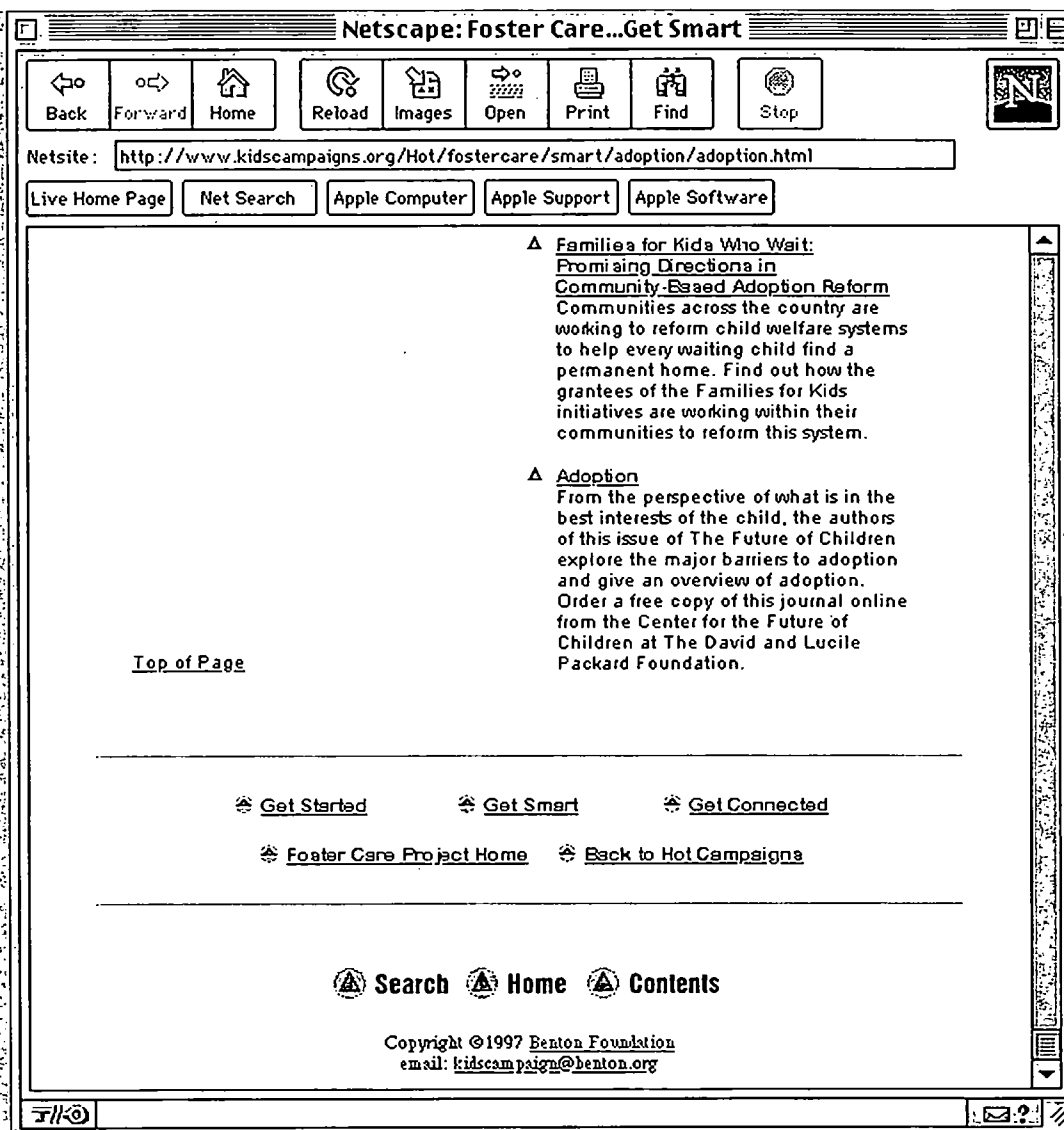
Get Smart

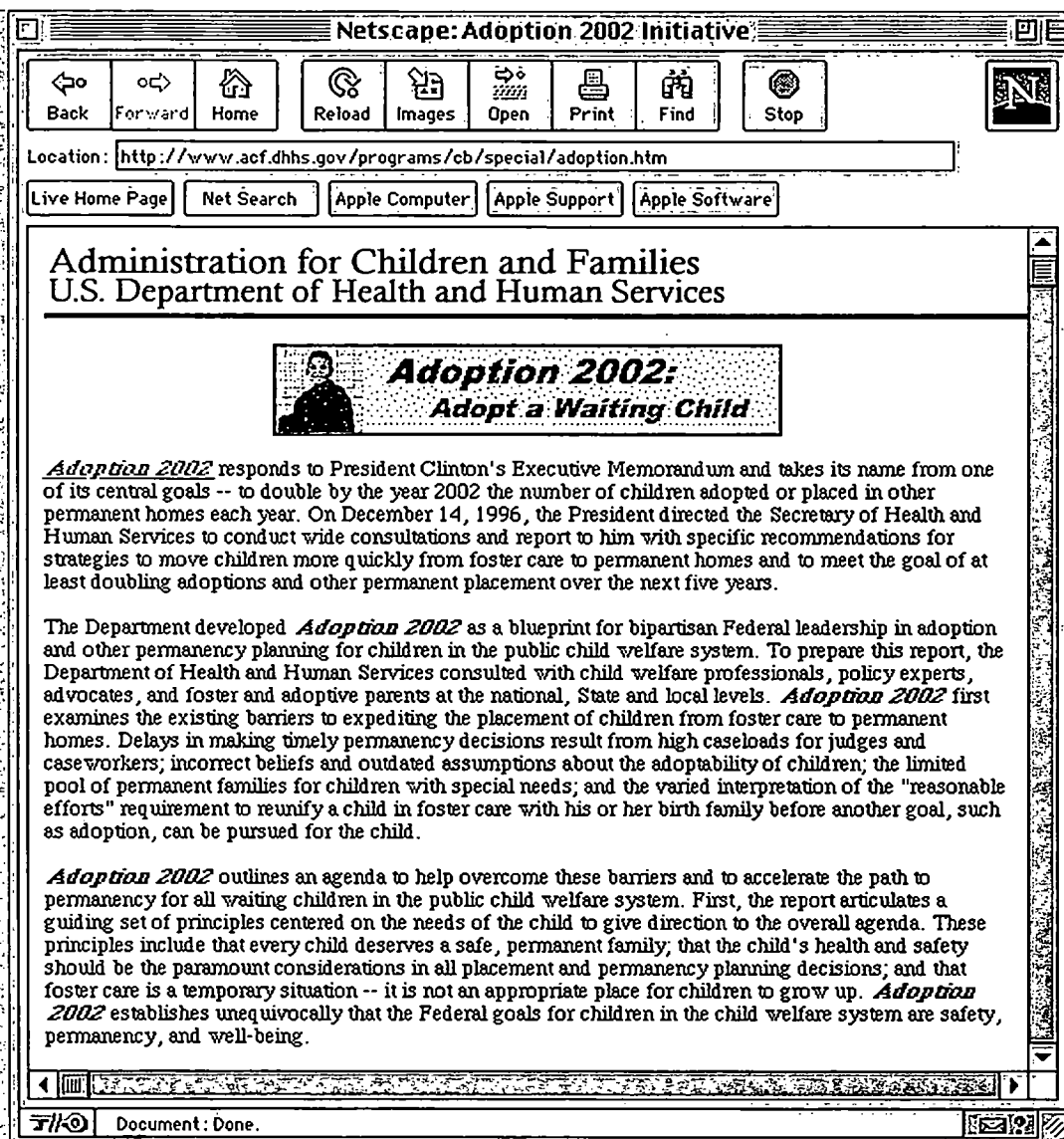
 **Adoption**

- ▲ [Foster Parent Adoption: What Professionals Should Know](#)
The practice of foster parent adoption is growing. Understand the reasons for this trend and find out what can help agencies wanting to encourage foster parent adoption in this article from the National Adoption Clearinghouse for foster care professionals.
- ▲ [The Sibling Bond: Its Importance in Foster Care and Adoptive Placement](#)
From 65 to 85 percent of children entering the foster care system have at least one sibling and 75 percent of sibling groups end up living apart after they enter foster care according to the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse. Find out about the reasons for sibling separation and how to help.
- ▲ [Adoption 2002: Adopt a Waiting Child](#)
Adoption 2002, an initiative of the Department of Health and Human Services, aims to double by the year 2002 the number of children adopted or placed in other permanent homes each year. Learn more about the barriers to expediting the placement of children from foster care to permanent homes and the Administration's agenda to help overcome these barriers and find permanency for all waiting children in the public child welfare system.

Get Smart/ Adoption/ Adoption 2002: Adopt a Waiting Child

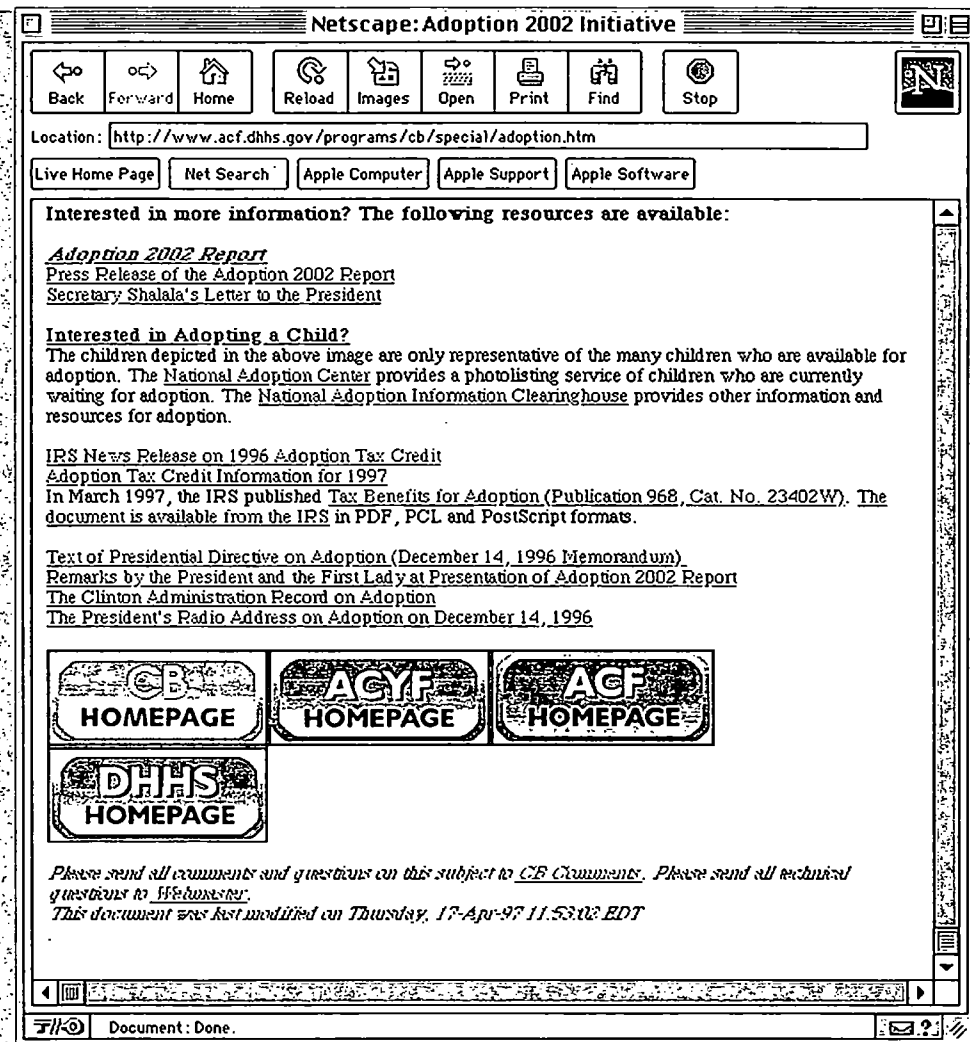
The government has thousands of resources relevant to children's issues, from simple brochures to complex statistical reports.





KidsCampaigns links its users directly to many of these resources, saving them the difficulty of navigating complex government Web sites.

This resource from the U.S.
Department of Health and Human
Services offers easy links to resources on
adoption.



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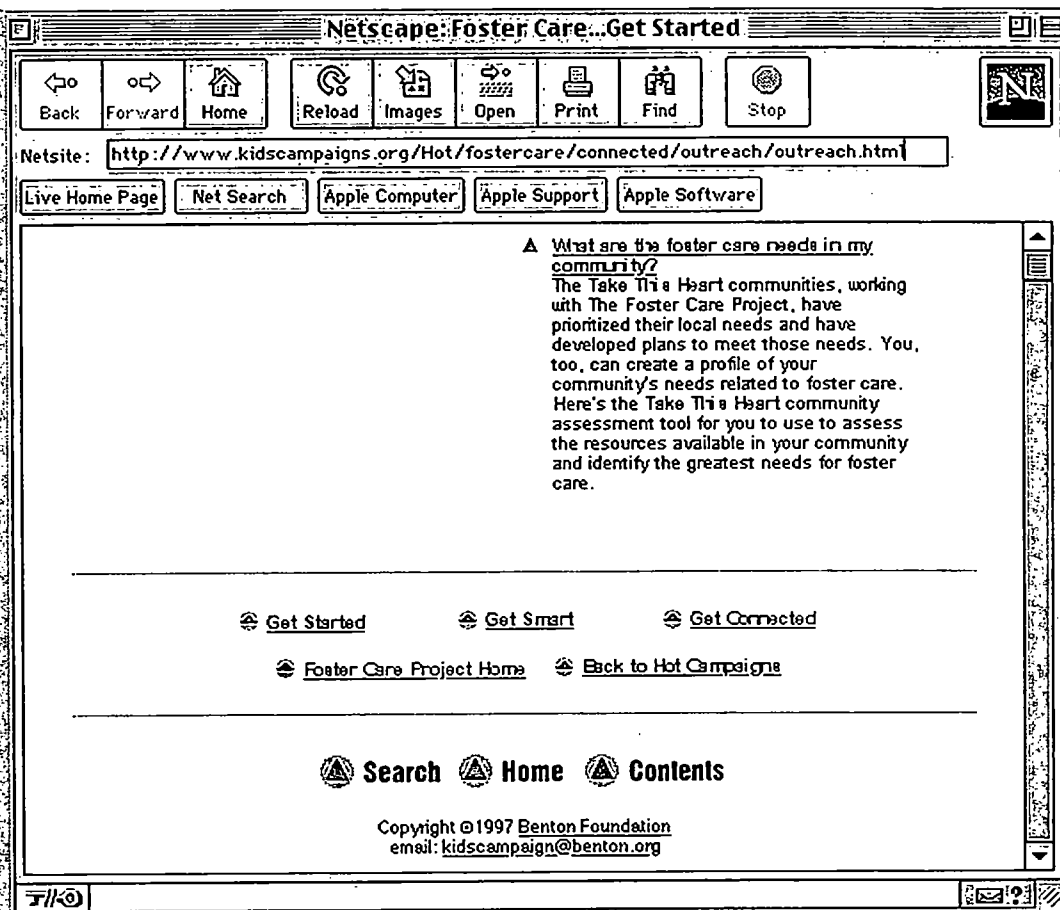
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Community Outreach

- ▲ **Take This Heart Community Outreach**
At the forefront of The Foster Care Project are five intensive community organizing projects pairing local PBS stations and foster care organizations. Find out how these projects are working to improve the foster care situation in their communities.
- [KLRU/Austin \(TX\) and The Casey Family Program-Austin Division](#)
- [KCET/Los Angeles \(CA\) and the Child Welfare League of America, Western Office](#)
- [MPT/Maryland Public Television and the Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth](#)
- [WTVS/Detroit \(MI\) and Evergreen Children's Services](#)
- [KCTS/Seattle \(WA\) and The Casey Family Program-Seattle Division](#)
- ▲ **Foster Care Awareness Campaigns - Incentive Grants**
In addition to the five intensive community organizing projects, thirty public television stations have received Incentive Grants to help them implement foster care awareness campaigns in their local communities. Learn more about the Incentive Grants and find out what's happening in each of these communities.

Get Connected/ Community Outreach/ Foster Care Awareness Campaigns - Incentive Grants

In Get Connected, KidsCampaigns
links its visitors to organizations
where they can get involved —
whether by getting more resources,
becoming an advocate,
volunteering, or providing
financial or in-kind support.



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FOSTER CARE AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS INCENTIVE GRANTS

Thirty public television stations across America have been selected to receive \$3,000 Incentive Grants to help them implement foster care awareness campaigns in their local communities in association with the January 1998 broadcast of the KCTS/Seattle documentary, *Take This Heart*. The selected stations represent a cross-section of large and small markets, urban and rural viewerships, community partnerships and outreach initiatives.

The purpose of the minigrants is to extend the impact of The Foster Care Project into local communities, assisting the national outreach campaign in its overall objective to improve the lives of children in America's foster care system. Local campaigns funded by the grants will help to achieve a number of important objectives: public support for resources children and youth need to achieve positive outcomes; community mobilization and individual action on behalf of children and youth; public understanding and concern for the needs of children and families in the foster care system; recruitment and retention of foster parents; and public education for policy makers regarding the complexities of foster care.

National foundation support for The Foster Care Project's Incentive Grants is provided by The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, The Casey Family Program and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The national outreach campaign is directed by Outreach Extensions, which will provide technical assistance to the thirty stations. The Child Welfare League of America is the national outreach partner.

In Community Outreach,
KidsCampaigns introduces its
readers to the public
television stations that are part of
The Foster Care Project.

KidsCampaigns.org

http://www.kidscampaigns.org

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walks you through a cluster of
related children's issues matched to
the architecture of the Web site.

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future

The First Thirty Years: What We Have Learned.



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