

CCAA DOCUMENT PROCESSING

Review Date completed:
February 28, 2012

NSN Log-In Date
completed: September
19, 2006



International Family Services

Helping families adopt children from China, Ethiopia, India, Ukraine, Russia, and cross-cultural within the U.S.

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New Visa Process

In late July, the Chinese Embassy announced that, effective immediately, additional paperwork must be provided when applying for a visa.

Although there is slight variation from one consulate to another, those applying for visas for adoption must provide a copy of their travel notice (TA) or a copy of their hotel reservation or both.

Previously, a family could apply for visas while waiting for the TA. Then when the TA arrived, they were visa-ready and could leave for China as soon as possible. The new process means that the family will need to wait several more days after TA so appointments can be set and hotel reservations confirmed.

Consulate staff and visa couriers are still working the bugs out of the new process. It would be wise for any traveling family to plan on an extra week of processing time before they can travel.

Always check the nearest Consulate website for the most current visa requirements and instructions.

IFS CHINA STATS

Families home from China in 2012 - 14
Chinese children home -16
Families adopting more than 1 child - 2
Repeat families - 3
Total girls - 14
Total boys -2
Youngest arrival - 14 months old
Oldest arrival - 13 years, 11 months old
Median age at adoption - 1.9 years old

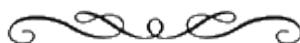
Canton Trade Fair

The biggest Trade Fair in the world is held in Guangzhou (formerly known as Canton.) The fair begins October 15th and runs through November 4th. This semi-annual fair grows exponentially every time it happens. Last year more than 7500 exhibitors struck deals worth \$36.8 billion dollars during the Trade Fair last fall. Almost 250,000 people attended last year. They all jam-packed into Guangzhou, taking every hotel room and taxicab in sight! Hotel owners love it and have no shame in jacking prices up. A hotel room can triple in price during the Trade Fair.

If you are looking forward to traveling to China this fall, just overlook the month of October altogether. We will not make Consulate appointments during that time. Adoption travel is expensive enough without you paying \$450 a night for a coveted hotel room!

Chinese Proverbs

- He who asks is a fool for five minutes, but he who does not ask remains a fool forever.
- To understand your parents' love, you must raise a child.
- To extend your life one year, take one less bite per meal



Then...and Now!

Sites to See

China Little Flower
www.littleflowerprojects.org
 (special care for very sick children)

China Sprout
<http://www.chinasprout.com/tv> (weekly television guide for all shows with a Chinese flavor; new every week!)

All-China Women's Federation
www.womenofchina.cn

Half the Sky Foundation
www.halfthesky.org (Ask for a free newsletter)

CafePress
www.cafepress.com/adoptimage (for adoption gifts, shirts)

China activities for kids
<http://china.mrdonn.org/>

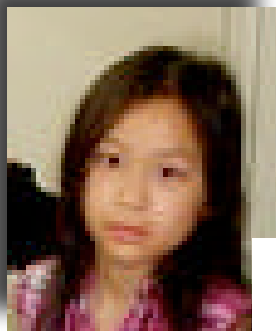
Asia for Kids
www.afk.com
 (Ask for or download a free catalog)



Song Xiao Fei



Eliana Song, after 1 week with Mama and Daddy



Yue Xiao Li on her adoption day



Tamsin, with her little sister Daphne



IF YOU HAVE
 THEN...AND NOW
 PICTURES YOU WOULD
 LIKE TO SHARE, PLEASE
 EMAIL KIM AT
 KIM@IFSERVICES.ORG

It is better to light a single candle than to curse the darkness.

~ Chinese Proverbs

And the answer is...

INTERNATIONAL FAMILY SERVICES



On the Lake

A little child paddles a
small boat,

Drifting about, and picking
white lotuses.

He does not know how to
hide his tracks,

And duckweed's opened
up along his path.

~Bai Juyi

Question: Would you explain the difference between Special Need and Special Focus children? It seems like some Special Focus children don't really have more needs than the Special Needs kids do. So why are they Special Focus?

Answer: You're right. Special Focus children may not have more significant needs than Special Needs children do. But they often do.

Children are given Special Focus (SF) status for several reasons:

1. The child has more significant Special Needs.
2. The child has minor needs but the needs are very visible.
3. The child has been on the Special Needs list for 3 months without being chosen by a family.
4. The child is older and is running out of time to be chosen. On the 14th birthday, the child ages out and cannot be adopted.

The designation *Special Focus (SF)* covers anything from a birthmark to a cleft palate. From a clubbed foot to spina bifida. One of our SF children is completely deaf. (She has been chosen.) Another is missing his right hand. (Chosen.) Another is 11 years old and had heart surgery as a 2-year-old. She waited a long time but no one selected her. (Chosen now!) Another has malformed outer ears. (She's chosen, too!)

If you are thinking that those needs don't sound very serious, you are right. A need that has disastrous consequences in China

may seem like a no-brainer to us. Or something that can be fixed or at the least, managed. We are so blessed to live in a country where SF or SN kids aren't relegated to orphanages but are assisted, educated, and encouraged to be and achieve all they can!

China wants these children to have a real chance at having a family. So the CCCWA offers incentives to any family who selects a Special Focus child.

One incentive is that a family may select a Special Focus child before they have even started a home study!

A second incentive is the option to adopt 2 children at the same time as long as at least 1 of them is a Special Focus child.

A third incentive is that the family's dossier joins a mini 'express lane.' The speed is relative – no adoption is fast. This incentive is fickle: sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't.

I encourage you not to be fearful about looking at SF children. Special Focus kids are not for parents who 'feel sorry for them.' They are real kids who need real parents, a real family, and a real chance. And they are quite wonderful!

~ All best, Kim



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You can never know how much you mean to us here at IFS and how honored we are to be a part of your adoption story.

Do send pictures of your children and we will show them off for you!

Yours for China,
Kim for Bob, Marvin, and all the IFS family.