



4 Love • 4 Hope • 4 Kids • 4 Life

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2008

## THE LITTLE AGENCY THAT **could**

Twelve years ago when Hope 4 Kids was just starting up, who could imagine that it would help SO many babies and children find permanent homes. But in the past two years, Hope 4 Kids has arranged more adoptions than any other agency in California. Talk about a dream come true!

For any newcomers, let me tell you how the "Little Agency That Could" got started. Len and Peggy Carey, founders of Hope 4 Kids, have stories that began with childhood and teenage struggles of their own. Len came from a broken home and hooked up with the wrong crowd as a teen. This led to many problems, including being expelled from school, drugs, crime, and eventually dropping out of high school. Fortunately, after a major paradigm shift at age seventeen, he began to have hope for his future. Len decided to go back to school and turn his life around. Having known what it's like to feel displaced and without hope, but then finding hope and a future, Len developed a heart to help others in need, especially those everyone else had given up on.

Peggy had similar challenges as a teen, just to a lesser degree. But she arrived at the same conclusion regarding her desire to help others.

Len and Peggy were motivated to assist others because of their own transformed lives. They believed they could make a difference! Their journey with Hope 4 Kids began in 1995, the same year they were married on the lawn at the Dana Point Resort. From their sun-drenched perch on the hill above the sparkling Pacific, they



Hope 4 Kids became a licensed Foster Care Agency and 501c3 corporation in 1995, and received its Adoption License in 2001. Over the last 12 years, hundreds of dependency/foster children have found healing from abuse, abandonment, and severe neglect through Hope 4 Kids. About half of these kids are now in permanent adoptive families. Hundreds of newborns and children have homes... because of YOU!

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## what can we continue to do as a team?

California has over 100,000 children that need homes due to physical abuse, abandonment, or severe neglect. Our well-manicured houses and prestigious-looking cars often insulate us from the needs of the hurting children and families in our own neighborhoods. Many are not aware how big the problem is, but most who know something about the situation want to help.

Naturally, not everyone is able to become a foster or adoptive family, but there are lots of other ways to help.

### ■ VOLUNTEERS...

Can help with everything from taking a child to the beach for the day to coordinating a fundraising event.

### ■ EMPLOYEES...

We're always looking for qualified social workers and administrative staff.

### ■ DONORS...

Can make all the difference in the world to a small organization like ours, and determine whether we will be helping hundreds—or thousands—of children and families.

### ■ ADVISORY BOARD...

We welcome competent advisors that can help us help more kids.



# LIVE YOUR dream

We all share a common bond. Many of us have traveled down the road of adoption or foster care. For some of us, this has been an easy road. For most of us, it has been a journey of steep hills, twisty turns, and on occasion, collisions. Some of us have had the dream of having a child, but something always gets in the way of fulfilling that dream.



One fos-adopt mother wrote these words of encouragement:

*“Whatever trials I went through to get here and have this beautiful child in our home to love, cherish and care for is sooo worth it! Only you know all too well how long we waited to have this blessing. I never gave up. It seemed at times that I didn’t know what I wanted, or the timing was wrong with the way things were becoming so challenging and demanding in our business and lives.*

*I never gave up and neither did God. He knew exactly what it was that we wanted and when. I never stopped praying. I want to encourage you to reach for that inner dream you’ve always had of becoming a mother. Don’t give up and be sorry. Life goes by so fast, and we tend to get involved in so many other things that seem so important. “Oh, some day” we say to ourselves, “when the business gets better, when I finish my education, when I finish writing my book, when I get back from this vacation”...I know I fell into that and really felt conflicted in so many ways. Obligation, pressure, guilt, worry, timing, financial stress. Like anything else, we are never ready.*

*Having the three of us at the dinner table now is so special. Having that precious little heart beating in our home and knowing we are responsible for her well-being is such a gift. Just do it! It all really does work out and is the greatest joy you will ever experience!”*

## make a difference!

Wouldn't it be great if you could help some families with this arduous but rewarding journey? Those who are recovering from infertility and discovering for the first time they will not have a biological child need a shoulder to cry on. Families going through the home study process where a person feels they have their "feet in the stirrups" again, who are exposing themselves to yet another vulnerable evaluation process, need encouragement. Other who are simply waiting for their child need to know they aren't alone.

Perhaps you are a foster parent who has experienced the challenges of helping your child to adjust to his or her

new home. Maybe you can share story after story of battles you have fought and victories you have won with the reward of seeing a child regain hope for a life filled with family, love and joy.

I know most of you. Many of our social workers or I have prayed with you, waited with you and encouraged you to continue the course even while crossing the bumpy roads. Imagine if you could encourage a fellow traveler on a route that may help her keep going, even after wading through the paperwork and process, forgetting why she was even doing it in the first place.

*Remember looking up at God and asking, "Why me?"*

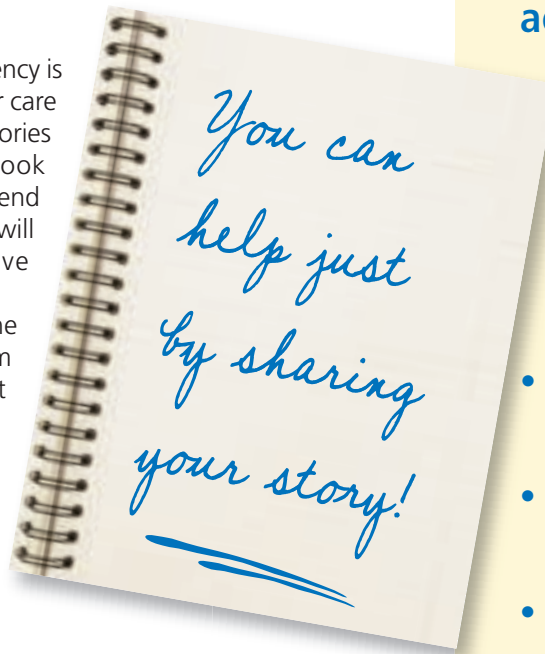


## TELL US YOUR **story**

Hope 4 Kids Adoption and Foster Care Agency is asking you to write your adoption or foster care journey and send it to us. Some of these stories will be considered for an adoption book publication. If you are interested, please send your stories to [peg@hope4kids.com](mailto:peg@hope4kids.com). We will send you updates on families you have encouraged to Take a Step of Faith.

People will have the courage to take the ride because you will have given them a roadmap of your journey—one that eventually brought your dream into a reality when that beautiful child was placed into your arms.

Hop on board with us. Take a ride that could be the beginning of a life of adventure for hundreds of children—children who will have loving families—because you shared.



## adoption awareness activities for families

Try some of the following tips to help your family grow in understanding and awareness of adoption:

- Write your family's adoption story
- Create or update your child's life book about this past year
- Contact the media and let them know how much you appreciate positive adoption stories
- Rent a video or read a book that will lead to discussion about the significance of family
- Contact an elected official to share information about adoption-related policies that affect children
- Write a letter to your child's birth family, even if you are unable to send it... allow your child to contribute a picture, drawing, or artwork

### THE LITTLE AGENCY THAT COULD, *continued from page 1*

exchanged wedding vows and rings and smiled about their dreams of the future. They didn't know that Hope 4 Kids was just around the corner.

After years of working with groups where policies prohibited significant change in children and families, Len and Peggy decided to start an agency with a vision for a better world. They purposed to correct policies that limited their ability to affect real change, and to create programs more consistent with their vision. This vision included treating all clients, children, and staff with respect, better utilization of community resources designed to help children and families, developing programs that would minimize failed placements, and focusing on permanent rather than temporary solutions. With the help of some reputable community leaders, the engines revved and Len and Peggy sped off on a course to develop their foster care and adoption agency. Currently they are implementing the international component of their original vision.

## some important adoption-related websites

[www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb)

US Dept. of Health & Human Services, Administration for children and families.

[www.adoptioninstitute.org](http://www.adoptioninstitute.org)


The Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute provides information about research, policy and practice updates, professional education, and other adoption-related information.

[www.adoptionsupport.org](http://www.adoptionsupport.org)

CASE: Center for Adoption Support and Education - online support resource.





UPCOMING	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
<p><b>EVENTS ORIENTATION TRAINING</b></p>  <p>For more information on any of our classes or events, visit <a href="http://www.hope4kids.com">www.hope4kids.com</a> or call our toll-free number at <b>1.800.921.1818</b></p>	<p><b>26</b> Adoption Training</p> <p><b>28</b> Foster Care &amp; FOS Adoption Orientation and Training</p>	<p><b>25</b> Adoption Training</p> <p><b>27</b> Foster Care &amp; FOS Adoption Orientation and Training</p>	<p><b>22</b> Adoption Training</p> <p><b>24</b> Foster Care &amp; FOS Adoption Orientation and Training</p>



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