

**For Immediate Release – April 2013**Email: [info@adoptuskids.org](mailto:info@adoptuskids.org) | Phone: 888-200-4005

## **AdoptUSKids Names Wendy LaBate Caseworker of the Month**

(Terra Haute, Indiana) – AdoptUSKids named Wendy LaBate, a family case manager for the Indiana Department of Child Services, its April Caseworker of the Month. This award is part of AdoptUSKids’ national initiative to celebrate caseworkers for their dedication to children and families.

Danielle and Jay Riddell of Terra Haute, Indiana, nominated LaBate for the award specifically because of the post-placement attention she provided to their oldest daughter. By developing trust and a rapport with her, LaBate helped their daughter work through some of her anger issues.

“Wendy went as far as going and checking on her at school, walking to the bus stop after school just to chat with her. She went to therapy appointments with us, she came over and spent the afternoon with her, and was even willing to come over after-hours if we needed,” Riddell wrote in her nomination letter. “She has dropped everything she was doing at the spur of the moment to come and sit down with her just to talk. Our oldest has a hard time trusting anyone, especially DCS workers. But there is something about Wendy that she loves and trusts. She can talk with her about anything and everything, whenever.”

Thousands of foster, adoptive, and kinship families across the U.S. rely on their caseworkers every day to connect them to vital services while offering support and guidance. More than 250,000 children in the U.S. enter the foster care system every year. While more than half of these children will return to their parents, the remainder will stay in the system.

Today there are 401,000 children in foster care with approximately 104,000 of them who are available for adoption.

AdoptUsKids’ Project Director Kathy Ledesma said, “Wendy LaBate is a shining example of the excellent work that public and private child welfare agency caseworkers do everyday across the United States.”

LaBate said she was flattered when she learned of the nomination, saying that the recognition was appreciated. Post-placement services, whether connecting families with therapy resources or playground visits from a caseworker, are vital to the success of a placement, LaBate said.

Find out more about LaBate and her work in adoption and foster care at <http://adoptuskids.org>.



*Together we hold their future*

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**About AdoptUSKids**

AdoptUSKids is a service of the U.S. Children’s Bureau and has been in operation since 2002 by the Adoption Exchange Association based out of Baltimore, Md., under a cooperative agreement (grant #90CQ0003). The mission of AdoptUSKids is two-fold: to raise public awareness about the need for foster and adoptive families for children in the public child welfare system; and to assist U.S. States, Territories, and Tribes to recruit and retain foster and adoptive families and connect them with children. Find out more about us at <http://adoptuskids.org>.

**About the Indiana Department of Child Services**

The Indian Department of Child Services protects children who are victims of abuse or neglect and strengthens families through services that focus on family support and preservation. The department also administers child support, child protection, adoption, and foster care throughout Indiana. Find out more on their website at <http://www.in.gov/dcs>.

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