

Senator Chuck Grassley  
Adoptive Family Portrait Project Reception Remarks  
November 15, 2010  
Washington, D.C.

Dave Thomas' work is one of the reasons I was inspired to get involved in adoption and foster care issues.

It's good to see his legacy in action for the benefit of young people and families.

Another key reason I got involved is I had a young woman on my staff who'd been adopted.

She'd had a very good experience and wanted other kids to have the same very good experience.

She helped me realize there's nothing like a personal story to inspire action.

Speaking of personal stories, one of the best adoption stories I've ever heard features the Buckels family of Story City, Iowa.

That's really the name of their town. It's right in the middle of the state, north of Des Moines.

The mother in this story, Ruth, with four birth children, decided to adopt three girls who were "aging out" of foster care.

That alone is very valuable. Thousands of young people age out of the system every year with no family and nowhere to go.

Some people might shy away from adopting teen-agers, but Ruth had the opposite reaction.

Her joke is, quote, "With teens, not only are you told where to go, you are given directions." unquote.

But Ruth clearly gave directions herself -- those three girls all have gone on to college.

Ruth also met a young girl who was placed in foster care with her.

The girl's older brother and sister were placed with a foster parent named Bill.

Ruth and Bill thought it was best for the three siblings to stay together and successfully advocated the state to make that happen.

Ruth adopted all three children last November.

Ruth and Bill fell in love. They married last September.

On National Adoption Day later this month, Ruth is adopting Bill's son who was adopted.

And the couple is adopting a daughter together, also on National Adoption Day.

It might be a little hard to keep track of all of this movement, but all you really need to know is this: Adoption brought together children with a loving parent, and adoption brought two loving parents together.

I'm very glad to have the Buckels family photo and story featured in my office this month for the Adoptive Family Portrait Project for National Adoption Month.

They represent the satisfaction and joy that adoption brings.

And theirs is just one happy story of many across the country, thanks to the effort of adoptive parents and children who create families out of whole cloth and make it work, and of the advocates like all of you in this room who work so hard to bring everyone together.

Thank you again for everything you do.