Since 1993, Holt has placed thousands of children in loving, permanent homes and developed numerous in-country programs to help China’s most vulnerable children grow and thrive.

Through the years, international adoption from China has changed dramatically. China eased the one-child-per-family policy and families now have greater resources to care for their children — causing fewer child abandonments. Domestic adoption has also become increasingly common — enabling children, primarily healthy infants, to join loving families in China.

Still, thousands of children in China who have special medical or developmental needs, or are older, need families. Every year, approximately 200 children from China join Holt families in the U.S.

**Why adopt through Holt’s China program?**

- Holt has nearly 60 years of unparalleled international adoption experience. Since 1993, we have also provided foster care, educational support and other child welfare services in China — a commitment that has helped us maintain a strong, collaborative relationship with the Chinese government.

- We have partnerships with over a dozen child welfare institutions in China — giving us better access to updated information about many of the children we match with families. We are also adept at matching children from the Chinese government’s shared list.

- We have a skilled team of over 25 local Chinese staff who can follow up on child information and support families through travel. We are registered in China to provide child welfare services and facilitate international adoptions.

- Child-centered approach; for each child, Holt seeks a family comfortable and prepared to care for the child’s unique needs.
Who are the children who need families?
Today, most children living in China’s social welfare system have some level of special need, or are older. Many of them are also boys. Although families have the option to specify gender preference, families who are open to boys will likely be matched much faster than those who are only open to adopting a girl! We place children between 2-14 yrs. of age.

Which medical conditions (special needs) are common with children from China?
The vast majority of children Holt places from China have correctable or manageable medical conditions. Holt also seeks families for children with specialized conditions and for those requiring lifelong care.

Families with a dossier in China are eligible to be matched with a child with a medical condition that has resolved, can be corrected with surgery or managed with treatment such as: cleft lip and palate; heart defects (like ASD / VSD); orthopedic issues such as limb or digit differences, Clubfoot; atresias; vision or hearing issues; developmental delays; urogenital abnormalities, albinism.

Families open to a child in the ‘special focus’ category — like those on our waiting child photolisting — can be tentatively matched with a child prior to submitting a dossier to China. These specialized conditions include: complex heart defects; spina bifida; cerebral palsy; infectious conditions, blindness, deafness, dwarfism; and conditions requiring lifelong care like Down syndrome or other genetic syndromes.

What are some of the myths surrounding China adoption?
Myth: It takes many years to adopt from China.
Fact: With Holt, the process to adopt a child with an identified special medical or developmental condition, or an older child, takes between 12-24 months from application to placement. Families matched with a child from the Holt photolisting often complete the process in less than a year. Even if you are only open to a few medical conditions, our China team can match you with a child!

Myth: Special needs = Severely disabled, requiring very involved, lifelong care.
Fact: In truth, nearly half of the children Holt places from China have manageable or correctable conditions, and are under 3 years old when they join their families. These children are matched too quickly to ever require online advocacy efforts through Holt’s photolisting and require a family with a dossier already logged into China.

Myth: When adopting through the special needs process, the adoption agency just “assigns” a child to a family.
Fact: When matching children with families, we learn what needs families are open to, comfortable with, and approved for in the homestudy and we seek a match that fits. After applying and doing some research, families provide us with a checklist marking the conditions they are open to considering. Families may change the form as they learn about different special needs. We are your partner through this process and will provide you with resources and mentors.

Myth: Families will be “judged” or penalized for not being open to very many special needs.
Fact: On the contrary, we truly try to emphasize to couples the importance of knowing yourself, knowing each other and knowing the child you feel comfortable to parent. If a family reviews a child’s file and decides that they cannot proceed, there is no penalty. No going to the end of an imaginary line. We simply try again, this time with greater clarity.

Myth: I don’t qualify to adopt from China (due to parent age, health, finances, marital status, etc.).
Fact: As of January 2015, the Chinese government loosened previous restrictions in all of these areas! While there are still guidelines, many are considered in context of the overall family profile and the profile of child the family is open to adopting. We receive exceptions to stated eligibility requirements for ‘special focus’ children (those featured on our photolisting) all the time. China is actually one of the most flexible international adoption programs so talk with one of our China team members before ruling yourself out.

To learn more about Holt’s China program, attend our free, informational webinar, “Discovering China Adoption: Where Do I Start.” Register online at holtinternational.webex.com. Or to learn more about children waiting for families right now in China, go to holtinternational.org/china/.