Adopt from Korea

Our Legacy Begins in Korea

For almost 60 years, South Korea has partnered with Holt to find loving, stable homes for orphaned and abandoned children. The partnership began in 1955, in the wake of the Korean War, when Harry and Bertha Holt urged Congress to pass a special act allowing them to adopt eight Korean orphans. The following year, the Holts established the first international adoption program in Korea.

www.holtinternational.org
Today, a strong and urgent need for international adoption persists in Korea. The children who do find homes in Korea are often younger and have no known health conditions. As in the U.S., domestic adoptive families in Korea also prefer girls to boys. Consequently, most of the children needing a family are boys. Through international adoption, many of these children are able to find the loving families they deserve.

The Children Who Need Families Today
The vast majority of children Holt places from Korea have at least some medical conditions that are not considered “special needs.” Families who apply to adopt from Korea will be matched with a child who has at least one noted medical condition that has either already resolved by time of match with a family or is under follow up and not considered a major medical concern. Some examples of typically seen medical conditions are:

- Prematurity and related medical issues and delays
- Prenatal exposure to some alcohol, smoking, or use of over-the-counter medication
- Hospitalization shortly after birth for issues that are now resolved
- Minor to moderate developmental delays
- Minor heart murmur or heart conditions not requiring surgery
- Skin conditions

Age: In Korea, birth mothers who choose to place their child for adoption typically relinquish shortly after childbirth. To give children the opportunity to grow up in their birth country, they first become available for adoption exclusively by families in Korea. After home-finding for a domestic family for at least 6 months, they are released for international adoption. Most children placed internationally are 6-12 months at time of match, and about 2 years at time of placement with an adoptive family.

Children With Special Needs
We also see children from Korea who have slightly more involved medical conditions. These children have a range of special needs, often including one or more of the following medical conditions:

- Very low birth weight
- More moderate to major alcohol exposure
- Prematurity 35 weeks or less
- Family medical conditions that might be hereditary, often of a neurological or cognitive nature
- Suspected/possibility of cerebral palsy
- Seizures/possible seizure disorder
- Abnormal neurosonogram
- Heart condition that may or may not require surgery
- Congenital syphilis treated at birth
- Suspected genetic syndrome

Gender: In Korea, families often prefer to adopt girls. As a result, more boys are released for international adoption than girls. When applying to adopt a child from Korea, families must be open to either gender with the expectation of most likely being matched with a boy, as around 80% of the children referred are boys. Families cannot specifically request to adopt a girl, nor can families decline a referral based on a child’s gender. In nearly all cases, the referrals we receive for girls include children with one or more of the special needs listed above, and usually a combination of two or more needs.

Learn More: If you are interested in learning more about Korean children waiting for families through international adoption, please contact Kathie Stocker at kathies@holtinternational.org or by phone at 503.597.2540.