



# Adoption Agency Helps HIV-Positive Orphans Find Homes

January 7, 2010

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Illinois-based Adoption-Link Inc. has found adoptive families for about 60 HIV-positive children through its Chances by Choice program, the [Chicago Tribune](#) reports. The organization works with an orphanage outside Port-au-Prince, Haiti, where many of the children are living with HIV.

Margaret Fleming, 73, founded Chances by Choice after a 2002 visit to a Vietnam hospital's HIV ward, where she witnessed discrimination against HIV-positive babies from caregivers who weren't educated about HIV transmission.

"No one is going to catch HIV from a child, but there are people who would be appalled if they knew a child was positive," said Mary Austin, a nurse and the director of operations at Adoption-Link. "But these kids aren't putting anyone at risk."

Austin uses a time-consuming, one-on-one process to educate prospective adoptive parents about HIV/AIDS, explaining that adopting a child living with HIV doesn't mean you are adopting a child with a death sentence.

A UNICEF report showed about 370,000 children globally younger than 15 were living with HIV in 2007. Most of these infections occurred through birth and breast feeding.

*To read more about HIV and adoption, click [here](#).*

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