



## Event celebrates children reunited with families after foster care

Saturday - 6/16/2012, 7:30pm ET



Children played on a moon bounce and enjoyed a meal with their families at the event. (WTOP/Kathy Stewart)

WASHINGTON - Families celebrated more than just nice weather on Saturday morning.

The second annual Family Celebration Day champions families that have fought hard to win back their children from foster care.

The event was held outside of the Town Hall Education Arts and Recreation Center in Southeast D.C. It recognizes the hard work families have done to overcome many challenges in order to be reunited with their children. For them, it's been a tough road to becoming a family again.

"It's a huge accomplishment," says Diane King, D.C. Superior Court's Family Court director.

250 families were invited to Saturday's event to be recognized for their success.

"It's just our way to give recognition for the hard work the families have done," King says.

The celebration is a joint effort by the family courts and the D.C. Child and Family Service Agency.

"This day is exactly what we've been working for to help families realize their dreams and get their children back," James Campbell, administrator for the agency, says.

Campbell says everyone stumbles. But the event celebrates the efforts families have made to get back up and keep moving forward.

The Hon. Zoe Bush is the presiding judge of D.C. Superior Court's Family Court. She says she first started hearing neglect and abuse cases 18 years ago. For her, this day means they've been successful as public servants.

"I think when you look at these little kids, you see what it's all about," she says. "They have no idea. They just know they're here with folks who care about them and they are having fun. You can't beat that."

She says where it's possible her goal is to help children and families reunite.

"No matter what the families have been through, no matter what their challenge is, no matter what the children have suffered through, they just want to go home."

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