

KAPE Youth Profile Picture Tipsheet

These Photos Matter

For the families exploring adoption, the youth's photo is the very first glimpse they have before deciding whether to inquire about the youth. A warm, clear, and respectful image helps families see the youth's personality and individuality. A strong photo honors youth by presenting them with dignity and authenticity.

What Makes an Effective Profile Picture

- Soft daylight (indoors near a window or outdoors in shade) helps the youth's face look bright and approachable.
- Simple, uncluttered background: Neutral walls, greenery, or playground structures keep the focus on the youth, not the surroundings.
- Face-centered framing: Capture the youth from the shoulders up, with their eyes at the top third of the frame.
- Genuine expression: Encourage a natural smile or relaxed expression that reflects who they are, not a forced pose.
- Age-appropriate clothing and appearance: Clean, well-groomed, comfortable outfits in solid colors photograph well and avoid distractions.
- Create a comfortable environment: Take your time as rushing can make the youth feel tense.
- It is important to engage youth by letting them choose backgrounds, outfits, and creative elements. Keep posing minimal; youth look most authentic when they aren't overly directed.



A headshot isn't just a picture it's a youth's introduction to someone who may become their family. A thoughtful, respectful image can help families connect emotionally and imagine a future together. The goal is not perfection; it's connection.