

# Who are Fresh Air Fund Children - A Snapshot

## Fresh Air Children...

- Want to have a fun summer discovering new things, exploring the world around them, and gaining new perspectives.
- Want to share who they are with your family while celebrating differences.
- Want to be compassionately cared for, accepted, and loved.
- Are between 7 and 13 years old when they visit a new Host Family.
- Are residents of New York City, which is home to nearly 2 million children, 1 out of 3 who are living in poverty.
- Are from households whose income meets the federal guidelines defining poverty.
- Speak English, though some are learning as non-native English speakers.
- Are culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse.

For example, in 2017, Friendly Towns applicants self-identified as:

- 55% African-American/Black
- 31% as Hispanic/ Latino
- 15% as Asian
- 3% as White
- 1% as American Indian/Pacific Islander.

\*\*Note: Due to some applicants self-reporting as multiple racial/ethnic groups, totals are >100%.

In 2017, Friendly Towns applicants reported 27 primary languages spoken in their homes, with the most common languages identified as English, Chinese, Spanish, French, and Korean.

**The most important thing to know is that ALL Fresh Air children are children!**

## Matching Our Fresh Air Children

City Parents ultimately choose the Host Family their child will visit. During the matching process, City Parents consider various pieces of information, including:

- Date of the trip
- Host Family structure
- Location
- Pets
- Activities

The Fresh Air Fund strives to create strong matches. In some cases, a Host Family is not matched their first summer, a child cancels, or the match doesn't work out as hoped. We encourage all families to be patient and flexible throughout the matching and hosting process.



## Some Fresh Air Children may...

- Come from homes with: two parents, one parent, or one or two absent parents.
- Come from homes where parents are unemployed or where parents work multiple jobs.
- Live in foster care or in homeless shelters.
- Be mature or act childish for their age.
- Be responsible for looking after younger siblings.
- Be immigrants, first generation Americans, or have families who have been in the US for several generations.
- Identify as: Christian, Catholic, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, atheist, or other.
- Identify as: straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, fluid, or gender non-conforming.
- Have cool new sneakers.
- Have cool technology (that they are encouraged to either leave at home or abide by host imposed screen time limits).
- Love or hate being active.
- Love broccoli and spinach or hate broccoli and spinach.
- Be big or small for their age.
- Be afraid of dogs, love dogs, or be hesitant around dogs.
- Love to giggle.
- Have never been more than 1 mile from home or have traveled overseas.
- Love pizza or hate pizza.
- Love ice cream or hate ice cream.
- Be required to travel with prescription medication, including asthma inhalers, allergy medicine, and/or EpiPens, etc. If you are matched with a child who requires an EpiPen, your local Volunteer can refer you to some videos and rest assured, most children who travel with EpiPens can self-administer. Please note that the requirement to travel with an EpiPen is **NOT** considered a special need.

**Please be prepared to welcome a child who fits any of these above descriptions.**

## Children with "Special Needs"

Some Fresh Air Children have "Special Needs," which can include mental health needs, social-emotional needs, and/or medical needs. These children are only matched to families who have indicated they are comfortable managing these needs. Please speak with your Volunteer if your home might be suitable to host a child with a special need, and to discuss which needs are most appropriate for your family to manage.