

Good news for Haja Lopez: She gets 40 adoption offers

Six-year-old Haja Lopez, who a week ago had neither a home nor a family, has had more than 40 offers for adoption and foster care since her story appeared in the Sunday Advance.

Miss Karen Myerson, a social worker at Willowbrook State School where Haja is a patient, said it will take time to screen all the applications for adoption and foster care, but she was confident that Haja will be placed.

Haja's affliction, spina bifida, a birth defect causing paralysis of the legs, affected Haja's motor response when she was an infant. Tests given her at that time indicated brain damage. Subsequent tests revealed her as a mentally normal child. Nonetheless she remained at Willowbrook.

Now she is ready for adoption and the response has been overwhelming.

Miss Myerson said families who are interested in caring for spina bifida children shouldn't

be discouraged if Haja is not placed with them.

"We have other children here," Miss Myerson explained, "who need help and love."

Haja, who hasn't been told of all the excitement she has created, is as happy and friendly as ever. She was shown the photograph of her and her teacher that appeared last Sunday in the Advance and liked it, although she never knew why it was there.

In a few years if things work well for her, she will know.