

ILLINOIS

# FAMILIES Now and Forever™

Families by Foster Care, Adoption and Guardianship

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services®

## New Governor sends message of thanks to Illinois foster parents



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
JRTC, 100 WEST RANDOLPH, SUITE 16  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60601

**ROD BLAGOJEVICH**  
GOVERNOR

May 2003

To all Illinois foster parents:

It is my honor to greet the thousands of families who have opened their hearts and homes to children through foster care. Bringing a new child into your home is a blessing beyond words.

Whether you provide a child with a temporary or a permanent home, it is certain that your kindness will leave a lasting impact on that child. Everyday that you take the time to go to a school meeting, or drive to a sibling visit, you give a gift. It is the gift of tenderness, compassion and perseverance. Put simply, you give the gift of love.

Yet, there is nothing simple about this task. That is why the First Lady and I remain committed to doing our part in helping to fulfill this noble mission that you have taken on. The Task Force that I established diligently reviewed the aspects that are working, and the steps that need to be taken in order to reform the child welfare system. In those efforts, we reached out to you as foster parents, and will continue to do so as we move forward.

Illinois' child welfare system is often looked upon as a success story. In many ways that is true. However, I believe there are some pages to that story that need to be revised, and there are more chapters waiting to be written. The hope of a dependable, loving family should not be a fairy tale for any child. As foster parents, you are providing a bridge over the difficult waters of a child's life.

As we in government offer recommendations and make decisions, please know that your work does not go unnoticed or unappreciated. On the best of days, the work of refining the way the State cares for children and families is a difficult task. Without you, it would be an impossible one. Thank you for allowing the good and important work to continue on behalf of the children who mean so much.

Sincerely,

Rod Blagojevich  
Governor

## DCFS says “Good-bye” as Jess McDonald leaves Director position



Late on a Thursday night in March, Director McDonald drafted an e-mail to let the entire DCFS staff know that after months of deliberation, he had decided it was time to leave, effective April 30. In the previous December, he had filed his paperwork for the state’s early retirement plan, but agreed to an extension to allow for a smooth transition with Governor Blagojevich’s new administration.

His concise message, while expressing sadness, was underscored with appreciation for the individuals he worked with in the fight to provide stronger families for children.

“It has been an extraordinary honor and privilege to work with each of you. You have proven time and time again that the staff of DCFS are second to none in child welfare in Illinois and in the nation,” wrote McDonald.

The next day, at a meeting of the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council on March 20, he made his decision public to the stunned council members, each of whom served at his appointment. With teary eyes, council members expressed their appreciation for nine years of listening to and responding to foster and adoptive parent concerns as he conducted an overhaul of Illinois’ child welfare system. Later that morning, at the opening session of the Illinois Foster and Adoptive Parent Association/DCFS Spring Conference, the audience applauded him, and after his remarks offered him several emotional embraces.

Under Director McDonald, Illinois’ national reputation went from an often-cited example of the worst to the nation’s model. The Department gained national accreditation, won numerous awards for extraordinary results in adoption and broke ground with new models for performance monitoring and guardianship programs. While there is arguably more work to be done, McDonald set DCFS on a course for greater success. At the time of his announcement, he said he did plan to spend time working in his garden, but had no intention to retire.

***“There is no easy way to say this. I will miss you all and wish you all the very best.”***

**1994** McDonald joins DCFS for a second tour of duty— this time as Director. His tenure sets a record for time served in the Director’s position.

**1996** McDonald receives the 1996 Award for Excellence from the National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators

**1997** McDonald receives the 1997 Motorola Award for Excellence in Public Service

**1998** DCFS named State agency of the year by the National Foster Parent Association

**1998-99** DCFS receives the Adoption 2002 Excellence Award in Increased Adoptions from the US Department of Health and Human Services.

**2000** DCFS achieves statewide accreditation from the Council on Accreditation for Children and Family Services, making Illinois only the second state and the largest child welfare agency in the nation to achieve full accreditation.

**2001** DCFS receives the national Innovations in American Government Award for its Performance Based Contracting program.

**2002** McDonald receives the national Adoption Excellence award for individual contribution from the US Department of Health and Human Services. That year, five other Illinois initiatives and individuals garner awards as well.

**2003** McDonald announces he is leaving the state government. “There is no easy way to say this. I will miss you all and wish you all the very best.”



## Amendments To Licensing Standards For Foster Family Homes

In 2002, there were several amendments made to licensing standards for foster family homes. You should have received a revised copy of these licensing standards in your mail, dated August 1, 2002. Please check that you have the most up-to-date copy. Below are highlights of the policy changes that affect foster parents. Ask your caseworker or licensing representative if you have questions or check the policy guide for more details.

- 402.8j** The foster homes shall have fire and emergency evacuation plans that are to be discussed and rehearsed quarterly with the children.
- 402.9a** Each foster child shall be provided his own separate bed or crib. Children who have been sharing a bed in compliance with previous versions of this subsection shall be provided his or her own separate bed or crib, by the foster parent, by October 1, 2002.
- 402.9d** Unrelated children under two years of age may share a bedroom with children of the opposite sex who are also under the age of two if each child is provided a separate bed or crib.
- 402.9f** The supervising agency can require that a foster parent occupy sleeping quarters on the same level of the home as a child who has medical or behavioral issues that warrant close supervision.
- 402.13b** All members of the foster family who transport foster children shall submit to annual verification of their driver's license, automobile liability insurance, and driving records.
- 402.26a** Records to be maintained by the foster family shall include:
  - a log of medication prescribed and given
  - a record and/or receipts for distribution of allowances and clothing funds
  - a record of the emergency evacuation plan and quarterly rehearsals.
- 402.26b** The foster family shall maintain records to verify attendance at required pre-licensure and in-service trainings.



## Placing children with older caregivers

The DCFS policy announcement in February to stop placing children with foster parents 65 and older has raised many questions. The policy was designed to improve the permanency options for children by placing them with parents who could meet their needs in the short and long terms. As expected with any blanket policy, several individual circumstances have bubbled to the surface. There is the grandparent who was asked to take his grandchildren back, after their return home disrupted. The caseworker requested a waiver and built the case for an exception since it was a move to a relative who had also been a previous caretaker. When the grandfather identified a backup resource who could step in for him if needed, the placement went ahead.

There have also been waiver requests denied for children placed with caregivers outside the bounds of the new policy. As the field staff realizes it has to balance the child's need for permanency and reliable care along with the potential caregiver's ability, the hope is unadvised placements will diminish. Meanwhile, DCFS executive staff has been tracking the waiver requests to see if there is a need for further explanation or modifications to the policy. Contact your caseworker if you have questions or the Office of Child and Family Policy at 217-524-1983 by phone or send an e-mail to [cfpolicy@idcfs.state.il.us](mailto:cfpolicy@idcfs.state.il.us)



# Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council Bulletin

The Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council works with DCFS to ensure Department policies reflect the interests of foster children and their foster parents.

For details about the meeting schedule or if you have questions about the activities of the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council, please contact Chairperson James Lanes at 773-286-5252 or e-mail him at REDDOG6970@aol.com.

## Statewide welcomes four new members:

### Gladys Boyd, representing Child Welfare Advisory Council

Gladys Boyd, of Chicago, has been a foster parent for 17 years to children of all ages and needs. She has also adopted three children. She stays very active at Ada S. McKinley in foster parent training with the foster parent group. She is also Chair of Recruitment Committee for the Illinois Foster and Adoptive Parent Association and coordinates the group's presence at the Illinois State Fair.



### Claudia Davis, Southern Region

A foster parent for 19 years, Claudia Davis, of Belleville, is active in foster parent support groups. She serves on the Regional Quality Council subcommittee on foster care and on the Spring Conference planning committee. She was also appointed to the Illinois Adoption Advisory Council.

### Linda Stone, Central Region

Linda Stone, of Lincoln, is a Foster Parent Support Specialist and serves on the Central Region Advisory Council. She also serves as a PRIDE Trainer and works with licensing staff to recruit new foster families. She has been a foster parent for 15 years and has also adopted children. In addition, she makes time each year to work at the DCFS tent at the state fair.



### Mary White, Central Region

For 35 years, Mary White, of Reddick, has been a foster parent. She has served families as a Foster Parent Support Specialist for 25 years. She is an active member of the Livingston County Foster Parent Association. She volunteers on several Central Region Advisory Council committees and helped develop the region's implementation plan.

## Statewide helps change clothing voucher process

After foster parents across the state reported many barriers when attempting to use paper vouchers to purchase initial placement clothing and/or infant equipment, Statewide is working with DCFS to simplify the process. The Council advised the DCFS Division of Support Services on ways to make these purchases expediently using agency funds. DCFS recently sent letters to all private agencies outlining the new procedures.

With the new procedures, private agencies and the caregiver must agree on a plan to purchase the necessary items within 72 hours of placement, with the expectation that all items will be purchased within two weeks of placement, unless otherwise agreed to by the caregiver. The agencies will submit requests for reimbursement to DCFS. This new process will alleviate foster parents making undue out-of-pocket expenses, streamline paperwork and forge better relationships with retailers. Next, the group will work on a procedure for DCFS supported families.

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## Statewide Council remembers charter member Donna Munson

Donna Munson's voice rang out loudly on behalf of children and the families who care for them. Even with her passing on February 20, its echo will continue to sound.

Years before there was an officially mandated Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council, Donna Munson spoke up for the rights of foster parents and helped shape the legislation for the Foster Parent Law. In 1995 Director McDonald appointed her as a charter member of the Council. She also served as a Master Pride Trainer, was active in the leadership of the Illinois Foster and Adoptive Parent Association and in many local organizations.



*September 4, 1939 –  
February 20, 2003*

She and her husband David built their life focused on caring for teenaged boys in the Central Region, both in Power Hill and in Champaign. The family moved to the Northern Region in 1996 and Donna continued helping children and families. There she worked as a Lead Foster Parent Support Specialist, sharing her knowledge of the foster care system with the team she supervised and all of the families they oversaw. She also trained countless families with the College of DuPage.

Donna's death occurred shortly after surgery to repair a damaged heart valve and other complications. When the surgery failed, her family was with her until the end. She is survived by her husband David, three children and three grandchildren. Donna is remembered by hundreds of children who were blessed to be part of the Munson home, her colleagues in advocacy for children and families, and the thousands of Illinois families she impacted through her work.

The members of the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council pledge to heed her advice... "If it is hard to do, it takes a while. If it is impossible, it just takes longer."

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### Tie up loose ends before traveling out of state with children

Before packing up and taking off down the highway, make sure you have everything in order. Traveling with kids means foster parents need to be prepared with more than juice boxes, playing cards and wet wipes.

Foster parents planning overnight trips should be sure to let the caseworker know where you will be and when you are leaving and returning. If travel will take your family across state lines, you must notify the caseworker to obtain consent. The casework staff has been given authority to consent for travel within the continental United States for up to 30 days. This requires staff to fill out the form CFS 432, Consent of Parent/Guardian for Out-of-state Travel. Copies of the consents should be filed in the child's case file.

Consent for out-of-country travel or travel for more than 30 days can only be executed by the guardian or authorized agent. This travel must also be agreed to by the court that has jurisdiction for the child's case. In Cook County, the Juvenile Court has generally approved travel on the North American Continent. However, the court should still be notified in writing. If the child will need a passport, start planning early. The application process can take at least 15 business days or longer during peak travel times. Procedures for obtaining a passport have been prepared for casework staff.

Whether traveling out of country or closer to home, don't forget to take the child's medical card and any prescribed medication. With a bit of advance preparation, the only thing left to worry about is what to do if you get rained out.

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# DCFS INVITES YOU TO THE ILLINOIS STATE FAIR

August 8 – August 17, 2003

Corner of Peoria Road and Sangamon Ave., Springfield

***Foster Families, Relative Caregiver Families, Adoptive Families,  
& Guardianship Families - Choose Your Own Discount Day!***

***This is Your ONLY Invitation to the State Fair. Please Act NOW if You Wish to Attend.***

Please complete the coupon below if you would like to attend the Illinois State Fair and get the discounts available for foster, adoptive, and guardianship families. **Please mail or fax the coupon to DCFS TODAY, and no later than June 16, 2003.** Nothing will be sent to you unless you return this coupon, and no reminders will be sent.

If you return the coupon now, in July you will be sent:

- A ticket that will get your vehicle and everyone in it into the Fair and parked for one fee of \$2.
- 1 food ticket for each family member, worth \$3 in food or drink.
- One ride ticket for each family member that provides unlimited rides for \$7 during certain times **ONLY on Monday, August 11 – Friday, August 15.**
- A special map of the fairgrounds made just for you.

*Please Complete the Form Below & Mail or Fax to DCFS **Today***

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**COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS COUPON NO LATER THAN JUNE 16, 2003**

Office of Communications, Department of Children and Family Services  
406 East Monroe Street, Station 65  
Springfield, IL 62701-1498  
Fax - 217/524-0014

***Tickets may not be requested by telephone.***

We are a licensed foster family, relative caregiver, a guardianship family or have adopted a child through DCFS, and we would like to attend the 2003 Illinois State Fair. We understand that only our foster, adopted and guardianship children and family members who live in our home consistent with DCFS licensing regulations are eligible for these special offers at the Fair.

There will be \_\_\_\_\_ family members in our party. Number of vehicles \_\_\_\_\_ (*limit 2*)

If requesting more than 10 tickets, please print the name and phone number of your licensing or subsidy worker.

Worker's name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. No. \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**For foster families only:**

We are supervised by DCFS \_\_\_\_\_

We are supervised by a private agency \_\_\_\_\_ Agency Name \_\_\_\_\_

***Note - Please bring a copy of this invitation or a copy of a recent board or subsidy invoice with you when you attend the Fair. You may be asked to show this invitation or invoice in order to use the tickets. It is illegal to sell these tickets or transfer them to any person who is not a family member living in your home.***

## Adoption News Exchange



### More parents with own birth kids set adoption trend

Years ago, adoption was seen as a "last resort" for childless couples. But *Child* magazine (November 2002) reported that "of the 120,000 children adopted in 2001, a growing number were by parents with their own birth children." That trend is supported by The Center for Twin and Family Research at University of Minnesota finding that 30% of the adoptive families they studied also had birth children.

The article quoted Dr. Paula Kaplan-Reiss who said, "When people with biological kids adopt, it makes a positive statement about adoption because it is seen as a choice."

### Adoption announcements

Prospective adoptive families can announce their family news with creative cards produced by an adoptive mother.

Announcements 4 Adoption offers several selections of announcement cards with personalized inside messages. The graphics are cute and colorful cartoons, and well suited for younger children. Contact Announcements 4 Adoption at (888) 242-6050 by phone or write to PO Box 525, Pewaukee, WI 43072. The design samples and order form are also on the web site at [www.announcements4adoption.com](http://www.announcements4adoption.com).

## MAP Unit is the "SWAT Team" to move problem cases to permanency



The Matching for Adoption and Permanency (MAP) Unit was created to address the pressing need to match waiting children with waiting families. The Unit works with child and family teams to identify and resolve the barriers that keep children from achieving permanency. The 10 person staff looks at the cases that have not achieved permanency within the acceptable guidelines. MAP also keeps a list of families who want to adopt to match with children in need of permanent families.

A typical case calling for MAP involvement would be one where a child had been placed in a home for several years, but had not yet achieved permanency. For example, if a child's case has a permanency goal of adoption that has not been met within the prescribed time frame, MAP is notified. Once it is on the radar, MAP will call a meeting to staff the case and develop an action plan with the child and family team to move the case along. At that point MAP can really do what it does best.

"Our strength is in the follow-up. If the team agrees that a task should be done in two weeks, MAP will be there in two weeks to make sure it was done. We don't give up and we don't let things slide," said Jennie Perkins, MAP Director.

MAP bridges the gaps between recruitment efforts by working collaboratively with staff and programs such as Wednesday's Child, One Church One Child, Legacy Project and the Adoption Information Center of Illinois (AICI). MAP will also pool resources with private agencies and divisions within DCFS. At the end of 2002 the Unit had trained 400 private agency and DCFS staff, formulated 200 action plans and created 50 matches of children with families.

Potential adoptive families can contact the MAP unit and place their home on the list of families seeking children. Families can be specific about characteristics of the type of child they think will work best with their family. As MAP cases come up, the MAP team will look to those families first to make the match. Also, families can call the MAP Unit if a child's case has stalled or if they need help clearing an obstacle that would otherwise prevent permanency. MAP's extra degree of scrutiny and accountability may be the necessary ingredient to bring the case to a successful conclusion. Interested families can call Jennie Perkins, MAP Director at 312-793-8170.



## Meet the Illinois Adoption Advisory Council

*A conversation with Co-chair James Jones, President and CEO of ChildServ*



### **Families N&F:** *How did you get started in child welfare?*

**Jones:** I was working as a counselor at Essex County Youth Home in New Jersey for three years. It is similar to the Audy Home here in Chicago. When I met my future wife who was living in Chicago, we decided that the first person to find a job in the other's city would move there. I was hired to be a caseworker for Central Baptist and relocated to Chicago. I moved up the ranks as a supervisor, to program director and executive vice president. Then I was asked to become the President/CEO of ChildServ.

### **Families N&F:** *How has adoption touched you personally?*

**Jones:** I come from two large families and was raised with extended family around me. I believe in families stepping in when there is a need. ChildServ has nearly 300 children in our Home of Relative program. I can relate my experience to the kinship caregivers that we support.

### **Families N&F:** *What do you see as the most pressing need in child welfare?*

**Jones:** We need more resources to do our jobs. Especially since 9/11, it is difficult to understand what is going to happen in the future and resources are decreasing. The job doesn't change, but you have to be more creative and flexible. I go after help from volunteers and other like-minded people who know there is more to life than just the material rewards at the end of the day.

### **Families N&F:** *What are your goals for the Illinois Adoption Advisory Council?*

**Jones:** I believe the council can raise awareness to what is at stake. There are good kids out there who need to be matched with good families who want to take care of them. We can help the public understand that it is important to support the good work of the child welfare professionals and parents and partners. I want to see the Council grow to be recognized as a leading organization in the state and nationally.

### **Families N&F:** *How will you contribute to meet the Illinois Adoption Advisory Council goals?*

**Jones:** I believe in planning, coordination and follow through. You have to develop a good plan by getting input from the stakeholders. Then you carry your plan out. The Council is in the development stage. We are becoming more organized and there is unity of effort.

### **Families N&F:** *How has your work on the Illinois Adoption Advisory Council made a difference in your professional work?*

**Jones:** I have learned a lot from serving on the Council. It helps when I am working with my staff, because I have heard different opinions from parents and DCFS staff from across the state.

### **Families N&F:** *What would you want people to remember about Jim Jones?*

**Jones:** I want people to know that I believed in what I was doing. I hope they will know that I was committed and that I wanted to help another individual.

## Make plans for a child's future, in case you can't be there



Even after finalizing the adoption or taking guardianship of a child, permanent relationships are still subject to fate. Adoptive and guardianship parents should think through the options of providing care for their children, if they become unable or unavailable to parent. Short-term guardianship and standby adoption or guardianship are ways to develop a legally sound plan for circumstances that may arise. For example, a parent could develop a terminal illness, get called into military service, or simply need to be away from the home for an extended period. Careful planning and thoughtful discussion with future caregivers and the children involved can make the transitions smooth, should they become necessary.

### Short-term guardianship

If, for example, a parent needed to be in the hospital for an extended medical treatment or make a trip out of the country, he or she could appoint a short-term guardian for a child. A short-term guardianship appointment is a private arrangement made by a parent or guardian without court involvement. The parent or guardian can revoke the short-term guardianship at any time. The guardianship arrangement is done by filling in a simple legal form (755 ILCS 5/11 - 5.4) with formal witnesses. The appointment enables the short-term guardian to act as guardian of a child for up to sixty days. Short-term guardian appointments are renewable, but only one appointment can be in force at a time. Families with questions about this should consult an attorney.

### Standby guardianship

Illinois law establishes standby guardianship to allow parents to designate someone of their choosing as standby guardian/s for their children. This is usually done to prepare for a future event, such as the death or disability of the parent.

Standby guardianship takes effect on the occurrence of a future event, usually the death of the parent or the parent's inability to make and carry out day-to-day childcare decisions. Once the standby guardian's duties are activated, the standby guardian has sixty days to file a petition for full guardianship with the Court. If a standby guardian is unable to fulfill his/her duties, the Court will appoint a new guardian for the child, or return the child to the child welfare system. Families considering standby guardianship should first contact the DCFS Post Adoption/Guardianship Unit so that the Department can assist in the process.

### Standby adoption for a terminally ill parent

Standby adoption allows a terminally ill parent to choose who will adopt the child after the parent's death. Standby adoption is initiated while the parent is still living, and can be finalized either after the parent dies, or prior to the parent's death, if that is what the parent wishes and consents to. Initiating the process while the parent is still living allows the parent to testify in court concerning his or her wishes. These adoptions are subject to the approval of the Court, and must be shown to be in the child's best interest.

#### Short-term guardianship:

Parent can name another adult as temporary guardian for up to 60 days.

#### Standby guardianship:

Parent names a guardian to take effect upon an event such as death of parent.

#### Standby adoption:

Parent with a terminal illness can name standby adoptive parent while still living.

Standby adoption ensures that the child will be adopted by a person chosen by the terminally ill parent. It also ensures that the child will not enter the Illinois child welfare system during the search for an adoptive family. Standby adoption also ensures permanency for the child through adoption without requiring the adoptive parent to consent to termination of parental rights.

Families considering standby adoption should first contact the Post Adoption/Guardianship Unit so that the Department can assist in the process. Legal questions should be directed to the family's attorney.

## Parents may be called for the national Services Review

The national Child and Family Services Review is coming to Illinois soon. Foster and adoptive parents may be called upon for their comments and involvement as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHSS) evaluates how DCFS delivers services to the state's children and families. The federal review will scrutinize the operation of child protection services and child welfare programs in all 50 states.

In Illinois, foster and adoptive parents may be selected randomly to:

- participate in interviews about children placed in their home be part of a group interview about their experiences as a foster or adoptive parent
- make a child available for a home interview
- take part in a focus group to give input to the state's self-assessment
- participate in an interview for the state's Program Improvement Plan

This review is critically important to the future of Illinois programs and services. The federal review will focus on outcomes for children, how services are delivered and improvements that may be needed if Illinois does not pass the review initially. Any foster or adoptive parents that are contacted are encouraged to participate. Questions can be directed to Joan Nelson Phillips at DCFS Division of Quality Assurance at 312-814-5527.

## Tell It Like It Is

Families, Now and Forever wants to hear the "real deal" on caring for children from those who know best – you!

Here is what you had to say to the question in the last issue: **What would you want Illinois' new Governor to know about foster care?**

I think it is important to realize that the media only covers maybe 2% of those families that blemish the 98% of families doing wonderful things that get ignored. There are a lot of good foster and adoptive parents out there who the Governor needs to get to know. I am one helluva cook and would love to have him over for dinner so he could see our family in action.

*Diane Dominguez, Burbank*

I would like our new Governor to know that the system can work but it has a ways to go. If the natural parents aren't meeting the standards that have been set for the return of their children, then please, by all means, let these children be adopted by capable and financially stable people.

*Sandra Posedas, via e-mail*

I want the new Governor to know that Illinois' push to rush its foster children into permanent homes is not the huge success it is made out to be by the media. Ask any parent who has adopted a troubled child in Illinois and you will learn of the pathetic lack of services available to families once a child is adopted.

*C. Bridges, via e-mail*

The Governor should know that foster parents are willing to work with him to solve the problems, but we also should share in celebrating the many successes. It can't be us against them. It has to be us all together for the children.

*Maripat Oliver, West Suburban Foster Parent Association*

*Editor's Note:* Many of the responses received included confidential details about specific cases that families were working through. Those that were not appropriate for the public were forwarded to executive level staff for review.

The question for this issue is:

**If you could tell school educators one thing about foster care or adoption that would help them better understand your child, what would it be?**

You can contact me with your responses by e-mail at [foster@chicagonet.net](mailto:foster@chicagonet.net) or by phone at 773-548-3888 or by mail at Fostering Illinois, James R. Thompson Center, 6<sup>th</sup> fl, Chicago, IL 60601. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Vanessa James, Editor



**Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor**

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**Address Changes:** Families must notify their licensing representative, who will notify DCFS. Agencies should change addresses of office locations or request staff copies through the Editor.

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## A family for me

**DaShawn [6802]** He's a sports enthusiast and a leader! DaShawn, 13, plays on his school's basketball team and is an all-around athlete. He also enjoys singing and listening to music. Going to church interests him, too. His favorite subjects in school are math and English. He would like to go to college and become a professional ballplayer.

DaShawn's worker said he likes to please adults. His teacher said he is very personable and has good leadership skills. DaShawn's foster parent said he communicates well, follows directions, likes attention, and is "a smart kid."

**Dion [6145]** This engaging young man is passionate about computers and someday would like to have a career working with computers. Dion, 13, also loves to read, especially mystery stories. He has many other interests, including singing and listening to music. His favorite outdoor activity is playing basketball, although he enjoys softball and football, too. His teacher said Dion has excellent verbal skills and works well when motivated. His foster parent said he is very obedient and enjoys helping out at home.

**Dustin [4831]** He loves the outdoors and is always ready for a fishing trip! When the weather isn't very good, you can find Dustin, 12, reading or listening to music. His worker said Dustin is very articulate. He's especially happy when an adult takes the time to pay attention to him. His teacher and foster parent said he can be very likable and kind to others.

**Kennedy [5081]** He's a champion basketball player! Kennedy, 14, is very proud of his sixth-grade team's recent championship. He also loves to skate. Kennedy's worker said he has "a good personality," and his teacher said he does well when he applies himself.

**Patrick & Shannon [7159-60]** They're friendly and talkative and hoping to join a loving family! Patrick, 12, is a budding artist with a special interest in drawing. He loves sports, especially basketball. He also likes playing on the computer and reading. His sister Shannon's favorite activity is playing with her dolls or the family cat. This engaging nine-year-old enjoys listening to stories and coloring pictures, too, and she's always ready for a game of cards.

Patrick's teacher said he has good manners and is very honest, and his foster parent said he is affectionate. Shannon's foster parent and teacher described her as friendly and fun-loving. They said she is helpful at home and at school.

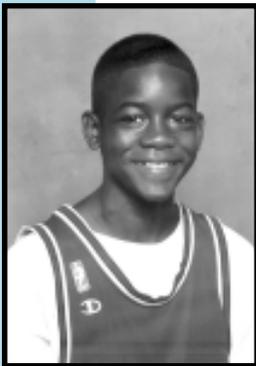
**Kevin [4983]** Kevin, 12, is very creative and expresses himself best through art. For fun, he plays chess or goes skateboarding. He is interested in spiritual matters and enjoys reading the Bible. His workers said Kevin is resilient, often pleasant, and enjoys interacting with adults. His teachers said that he works well on his own. Kevin is bright and capable of doing well academically.

If you are interested in adopting one of these children or learning about other children waiting to be adopted, please call the Adoption Information Center of Illinois at 1-800-572-2390 (within Illinois) or 1-312-346-1516 (outside Illinois), or see the AICI web site – [www.adoptinfo-il.org](http://www.adoptinfo-il.org).

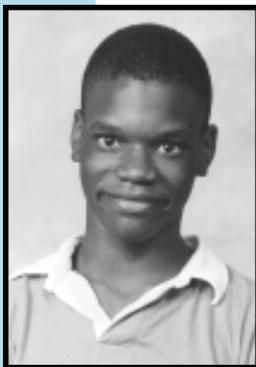
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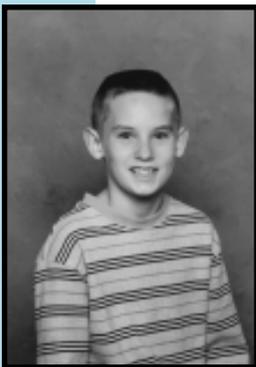
# DO YOU KNOW A FAMILY FOR ME?



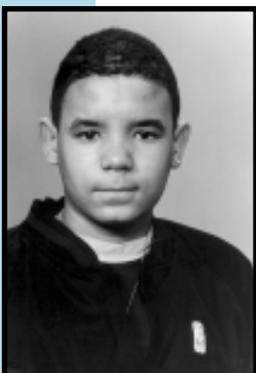
Dashawn (6802)



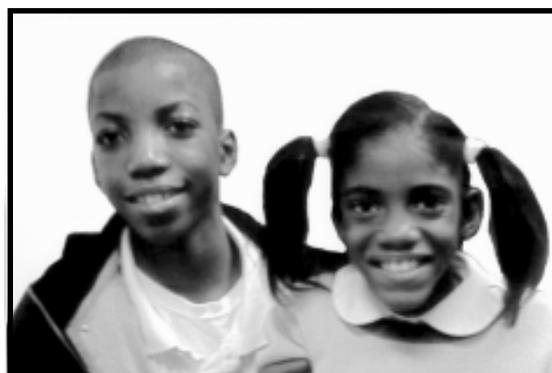
Dion (6145)



Dustin (4831)



Kennedy (5081)



Patrick & Shannon (7159-60)



Kevin (4983)

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Call the Adoption Information Center of Illinois 800-572-2390.