

Illinois Families Now and Forever

Families by Foster Care, Adoption and Guardianship®

**May is
Foster Parent
Appreciation
Month**



**DCFS honors foster
families and relatives
who care for Illinois
children.**

**Check the DCFS Web
site for a calendar of
events at DCFS offices**



www.state.il.us/dcf



WHEREAS, more than 15,951 children are under the care of the Department of Children and Family Services due to abuse, neglect or abandonment; and

WHEREAS, thousands of caring foster families have opened their hearts and homes to provide for the physical, health and educational needs of those children; and

WHEREAS, foster parents meet a very special need in our society by ensuring children receive attention, respect, love, compassion, and guidance; and

WHEREAS, foster parents are called upon to support both children and their parents during efforts to safely reunite families of origin, when possible, and contribute to alternative permanency options; and

WHEREAS, specialized training and support services are now being provided to foster parents serving older youth, who now constitute the majority of children in DCFS care, as well as youth with intensive special needs; and

WHEREAS, there remains a significant demand for additional caring adults in Illinois to consider opening their homes to children in need of foster care; and

WHEREAS, Illinois foster parents deserve our gratitude and respect for the work they do everyday to ensure that our children can move beyond the trauma that brought them into the child welfare system and prepare them for fulfilling, productive lives in the future:

THEREFORE, I, Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim May 2008 as **FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION MONTH** in Illinois.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.



*Done at the Capitol, in the City of Springfield,
this TWENTY-SIX day of MARCH, in
the Year of Our Lord two thousand and
EIGHT, and of the State of Illinois
the one hundred and NINETIETH*

Debra White

SECRETARY OF STATE

Rod Blagojevich

GOVERNOR



From the DCFS Director

Erwin McEwen

Every year at this time, I have the opportunity to pay special attention to the work of our foster caregivers. Although, I must admit that you are never far from my thoughts outside the month of May.

So much of what you do drives what I must do to keep this agency moving in a direction that is right for children, parents, caregivers, caseworkers, the court and the network of service providers. Of course, there is never one right path that works for everyone. So I make it my job to first listen, then I make the most informed decision with the best chance to have a far-reaching and positive outcome.

I listened to the calls from caregivers who pressed for DCFS to again sponsor weekend conferences. You wanted more in-depth training opportunities and a chance to meet other caregivers. I asked a committee to put together a workable plan, and in February and March nearly 400 people participated in the 2008 Caregiver Conferences, themed "Together we learn, Together we grow."

We are in this together. I will keep listening, and together we will clear a path to better outcomes for the children who mean so much to all of us. During Foster Parent Appreciation Month in Illinois, please accept my sincere thanks for your countless acts of service.

Teamwork gets caregivers into the game

To be part of the "child welfare professional team" is more than an assigned title. Team members take part. Two avenues where caregivers can and should be active team members in making decisions for children are the Administrative Case Reviews (ACR) and Child and Youth Investment Team meetings (CAYIT, pronounced "say-it"). At the child's ACR, the team will review progress toward achieving the objectives of the service plan and decide what needs to happen before the next six-month review. DCFS began CAYIT meetings in 2005 to decide on changes to the child's level of care, the type of placement or the type of services needed to maintain a placement. In both the ACR and CAYIT, caregivers should know they are vital team members both in theory and in action. However, they come to the decision-making table by different ways.

Caregivers attend the ACR

The Administrative Case Review is required by federal law. The ACR determines if the Client Service Plan addresses the child's needs and is moving the case toward the permanency goal, following all laws and rules. In this instance, the client is the child's parent, so his mother and father will be invited to the meeting.

"We also encourage all caregivers to have input to the planning for children in their home. We want foster caregivers to come to the ACR. They should be at the table because they are with the child

every day," said Marilyn Arnold, associate deputy director for Administrative Case Review.

Foster caregivers must be notified at least two weeks in advance of the ACR. An automated system sends the invitation letters. The reviews have to occur every six months on a set schedule. Caregivers can plan ahead if they ask the caseworker what the child's review cycle is, for example, January and July. It is the caseworker's responsibility to be certain the caregiver is listed on the Case Review Monthly Roster, with the correct address information. The caseworker should also note what dates and times work best so the foster caregiver can attend. These meetings are scheduled during the week from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Caregivers can ask that their preferences be considered when making the appointment.

"Even if foster caregivers can't be there in person, we can accommodate them via phone conference. Caregivers have the right to participate and we want you there," said Arnold.

Before the review, the caseworker should have talked with the caregiver about the service plan. The reviews do go over the parent's service plan, so the caregiver does not sit in on the parts that don't pertain to the children placed in their home. The reviewer will segment those portions and may ask the caregiver to wait outside of the room to preserve confidentiality. At the review, the reviewer will ask the caregiver about the child's

Teamwork, con't.

needs and the effectiveness of services in place or other services that may be required. Foster caregivers should offer their perspective on the child's time in placement. After the ACR, the caregivers can also complete the exit survey to give further input to the ACR process.

CAYIT expands the team

Caregivers are also invited to attend CAYIT staffings. This meeting is different from the ACR in that it does not occur on a regularly scheduled cycle. Instead, CAYITs are triggered for youth still under DCFS guardianship when a case calls for decisions about:

- a change in the level of care such as a move to treatment level/specialized care, transitional living program (TLP), independent living option (ILO), group home or residential placement
- a change in placement when it would be the third move within 18 months
- services that aren't currently provided, but are needed to stabilize the placement, for example, increased counseling or mentoring

The CAYIT process uses a facilitator to bring the all of the parties together to determine the best course of action. This includes the caregiver, caseworkers, the child (depending on age), teachers, therapists and family members that support the child. CAYIT staff will err on the side of inclusion.

"The facilitator makes sure that everyone has a voice in what is go-

ing to happen and how it is going to happen," said Lee Annes, co-statewide coordinator for CAYIT.

Caseworkers initiate the CAYIT process when they see that a case is moving toward one of the CAYIT objectives. A caregiver can also request the caseworker to make a referral to CAYIT. The CAYIT intake staff accepts referrals and starts the scheduling process. The CAYIT coordinators invite those individuals who are key to the child's present placement and who have a stake in decisions about what should occur. Caregivers can select a time and location to address their scheduling needs. The coordinators can also make a phone number available so the caregiver can participate by conference call.

"Our goal is to make sure that when we reach a decision, everyone feels they have been heard. Even if it is not the exact outcome you wanted, you should feel that you can support the team's decision," said Teddy Savas, co-statewide coordinator, explaining how CAYIT builds consensus in decision making.

Each CAYIT meeting includes an Implementation Coordinator who will follow up with the case staff to make sure that the decisions reached in the staffing are put into place. Caregivers can direct questions about a CAYIT to the caseworker or contact the CAYIT statewide program office at 312-793-0110 for Teddy Savas or 312-793-6052 for Lee Annes.

Homeward Bound

When return home is the goal

Licensing workers have started having discussions with caregivers about opting to work closely with parents when early reunification is the goal. Reunification entails many specific activities that require time and involvement with the parents of the children placed in a foster home. Caregivers can decide if they are willing and prepared to give their best effort to support families in their work to reunify.

So children can be placed accordingly, reunification support will be a factor for the Case Assignment and Placement Unit to consider, similar to "Spanish-speaking home." Those households that are identified as prepared to offer reunification support will be given priority placement of children new to foster care. The vast majority of placements will not be affected.

Working with parents in support of reunification may not be right for every caregiver or it may not be the right time for a particular household. There is no penalty for declining. However, it is important to have the discussion with the licensing worker during regular monitoring visits or whenever a caregiver wants to initiate the conversation. Caregivers who decide they are open to a reunification placement will complete and sign the self-assessment form and will be listed in the Foster Home Availability Database for future placements.

Be sure to have this discussion with your licensing worker to decide if reunification support is right for you as a caregiver.

Midwest Adoption Center finds info to help your child

Knowing as much as possible about your child's history before he or she joined your family, can help you help your child. Caregivers may have received quite a lot of information before the child came into the home. However, many parents find that there is a lot they don't know – and wish they did. Your child may be asking questions to which you have no answers. Or perhaps your son or daughter is beginning to talk about memories of things that happened. Sometimes it's hard to know how to respond, or if these things really happened. Even your child might be confused about what really took place.

Midwest Adoption Center (MAC) is under contract with the Department to help adoptive and guardianship parents obtain information from DCFS closed files. Youth who received DCFS services may also request closed file information after they reach 18. Adults request information through this program for a number of different reasons. They may need information from files to respond to a child's questions or to assist in treatment planning by a health care provider. Caregivers may no longer have information from when the child was first placed or they may not have received information in writing. Some information may not have been complete.

At the request of the adoptive parent, guardian, or adult child, MAC will attempt to locate all of the files in the DCFS system that pertain to the child and prepare

a written report. Caregivers will receive all information found in the available files that is specified by law to be provided. Information about events in the child's family history and more detailed health history may be found in Department files – including the child's own file, birth parent files and even sibling files.

If available, the following types of information are included in the written report:

- Placement summaries
- Family background information about birthparents and grandparents
- A description of the circumstances at the time he came into care
- General medical information as required by law (This includes the child's own medical information as well as birth relatives' conditions that could have a genetic component such as alcoholism, mental health diagnosis, and other health problems such as cardiac disease.)
- Child's birth history
- Educational history

In addition, reports, medical records, and other material that may be found in the files that contain significant information will be redacted (with certain parts blacked out for confidentiality) then copied and attached to the standard format. For example:

- All evaluations pertaining to the child
- All medical and psychological reports, tests, etc. pertaining to

the child, including the child's Health Passport (often found in files closed after 1990).

- All records from health care facilities, including hospitalization, pertaining to the child
- Immunization records
- School reports and evaluations pertaining to the child
- In general, any reports which could reasonably be assumed to be helpful to the parents, a therapist or other health care provider will be copied and included.

Families have said that learning about the child's past has helped them to understand current behaviors. Knowing more about the child's background can also help parents understand certain individual mannerisms or characteristics. Expanded health data allows for early diagnosis, and possibly treatment and interventions for developmental problems and conditions. Having this information aids the individual, as a child and later as an adult, to develop an accurate picture of the parts of himself that came from his birth family and those that were developed and nurtured in the present family.

For more information about the DCFS Closed File Information and Search Program, contact Midwest Adoption Center at 847-298-9096. There is no fee to receive file information or search service through this program.

DCFS INVITES YOU TO THE ILLINOIS STATE FAIR

August 8 - August 17, 2008

Corner of Peoria Road and Sangamon Ave., Springfield

*Foster Families, Relative Caregiver Families, Adoptive Families,
and 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 20, 2008.** *Nothing will be sent to you unless you return this coupon. Reminders will NOT 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 \$3.
- 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 \$10 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

COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS COUPON NO LATER THAN JUNE 20, 2008

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 2008 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.

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

If requesting more than 8 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.

Groups and associations offer advice and assistance statewide

DCFS, private agencies and community organizations sponsor many support groups and associations to assist foster and adoptive parents. The following list can help identify a group that may suit your family. This list will be updated annually. Please contact the Editor at 312-814-6824 with any corrections or information on other groups that should be listed.

COOK REGIONS

CHILDREN OF EASTERN EUROPEAN REGIONS (CHEER)

www.cheerchicago.org

CIRCLE OF PARENTS

Contact: Stacey Saffold at 773-419-4660
Meets third Saturday of the month from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Includes Boy and Girl Scout programs
Sherman Park Library, 5440 South Racine, Chicago

COOK CENTRAL DCFS REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Contact: Jerry Welenc at 773-582-8354
Meets fourth Tuesday of the month at 9:30 a.m.
DCFS Office, 3518 W. Division, Chicago
No December meeting

COOK NORTH DCFS REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Contact: Iris Cuevas at 773-866-5680
Meets second Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m.
DCFS Office, 1911 S. Indiana, Chicago

COOK SOUTH DCFS REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Contacts: Chair Angela Barber at 312-867-5551
Gloria Orange-Long of DCFS at 773-371-6115
Meets third Wednesday at 10 a.m.
DCFS Office, 6201 S. Emerald, Chicago

DCFS CHI CITY FOSTER PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Contact: Elisse Worrell at 773-371-6114
Info line at 773-371-6113
Meets second Tuesday from 10 a.m. to Noon
DCFS Office, 6201 S. Emerald, Chicago
For DCFS and private agency families. Training credits offered.

DCFS COOK SOUTH SUBURBAN SUPPORT GROUP

Contact: Adrienne Taylor at 708-210-3578
or Info line at 773-371-6113
Meets 4th Thursday 10 a.m. to Noon
DCFS Office, 15115 Dixie Highway, Harvey
For DCFS and private agency families. Training credits offered.

GRANDFAMILIES PROGRAM OF CHICAGO

Abbott Park Support Group
Contact: Vivian Price at 773-651-8800
Abbott Park Satellite Senior Center
49 East 95th Street
Meets third Monday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.



The caregivers who attended the March meeting of the Cook Central Foster Parent Advisory Council could select information on numerous summer programs offered through the Chicago Park District.

Englewood Support Group

Teamwork Englewood
Contact Vivian Price at 773-651-8800
Park National Bank
815 West 63rd Street, 2nd floor (Halsted)
Meets third Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Far South Support Group

Prayer & Faith Outreach Ministries
Contact Vivian Price at 773-651-8800
944 West 103rd Street (Morgan)
Meets second Thursday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

West Englewood Support Group

Contact Vivian Price at 773-651-8800
Liberation Christian Center
6810 S. Ashland
Meets second Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

GRANDPARENTS RAISING CHILDREN TRAINING AND SUPPORT GROUP

Contact: Jeanne Weare at 773-884-2211
Meets first Thursday 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. (September to June)
Metropolitan Family Services - Midway Site
3843 W. 63rd Street, Chicago
Open to any grandparent or older caregiver raising a child.

HISPANIC ASSOCIATION (COMBINES WITH NORTH EAST FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION)

Contact: Edith Cruz at 773-425-4634

HULL HOUSE ASSOC. FOSTER PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Contact: Julia Johnson at 773-374-9451, ext 136
Call for meeting schedule.
8753 S. Greenwood, Chicago

ILLINOIS PARENTS FOR BLACK ADOPTION

Contact: Drucilla Fair at 773-734-2305
7930 S. Colfax Avenue, Chicago
Offers pre-and post-adoption support.

JEWISH CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

Contact: Regina Johnson at 312-673-2765
Meets every other month on the 4th Thursday at Noon
Alternating locations: 216 West Jackson or the Avalon Library, Chicago

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF ILLINOIS-ADOPTIVE FAMILIES CONNECTED

Contact: Tessa Schneider at 312-949-4852 or tessa.schneider@lssi.org
Meets second Tuesday from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
611 Randolph Street, Oak Park
Focuses primarily on international and private adoptions.
Street Parking Available. Snacks and childcare provided. Call to reserve childcare.

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF ILLINOIS FOSTER PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Contact: Shawanda Dixon at 312-949-4340
Meets first Monday every other month from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.
(Call to confirm.)
11740 South Western Avenue, Chicago

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF IL SOUTH OPEN ARMS

Contact: Beth Novotney at 773-371-2700
Meets third Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m.
11740 S. Western, Chicago
Child care provided with reservations.
Open to adoptive families and pre-adoptive families.

METROPOLITAN FAMILY SERVICES PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Contact: Yvonne Perkins at 773-343-4280 or Hedy Carreras at 773-520-7003 (bilingual)
Meets every other Wednesday at 6 p.m.
3843 W. 63rd. Street, Chicago
Refreshments served. RSVP required.

NEW BEGINNINGS FOSTER/ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION

Contact: Regina & Gladys Boyd at 708-385-6263
Meets first Monday from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Fernwood Park, 10436 S. Wallace, Chicago
Children are welcome with adult. Bring a dish.

NORTHEAST AREA FOSTER AND ADOPT PARENT ASSOCIATION

Contact: Donsetta Blakely at 773-778-7445 or cell phone 773-984-7108
Meets third Thursday at 10 a.m.
Sherman Park Library
5440 S. Racine Avenue, Chicago

NORTH WEST SUBURBAN FOSTER/ADOPT NETWORK

Contact: Sandra Reinhard at 847-255-8783
Meets second Wednesday at 9:30 a.m.
Cross and Crown Church
1122 W. Rand Road, Arlington Heights

YOUTH CAMPUS ADVISORY COUNCIL

Contact: Johnna Adams at 312-243-0533
Meets the third Wednesday
Woodson Regional Library
9525 South Halsted, Chicago

NORTHERN REGION

ADOPTED KIDS WORLD

Contact: Deb Rosengren at 630-530-7917
Debbie@adoptedkidsworld.com
Meets monthly. Call for schedule.
Focuses on families who adopted children age five and older.

ADOPTION NETWORK

Contact: Michelle Mattes at 847-515-3921
5070 Highwood Ln., Lake in the Hills

ADOPTIVE FAMILIES TODAY

Contact: Kathy Casey at 847-382-0858
P.O. Box 1726, Barrington
www.adoptivefamiliestoday.org
Serves families in Cook, DuPage, Lake, McHenry and Kane counties.

ADOPTIVE FAMILIES TOGETHER

Contact: Stacy Rapach at 815-969-8836, ext. 4115 or stacy.rapach@lssi.org
Meets first Monday from 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
321 W. State St, 4th Floor, Rockford
Open to all types of adoption and pre-adoptive families.
Call to request child care. Snacks provided.

CHILDREN'S HOME + AID SPECIALIZED FOSTER PARENTS EDUCATIONAL/SUPPORT GROUP

Contact: Barb Buchavekas at 815-962-1043
Meets third Tuesday from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Children's Home + Aid Northern Region
910 2nd Ave., Rockford

CHILDREN'S HOME + AID SUPPORT GROUP FOR ADOPTIVE AND GUARDIANSHIP PARENTS

Contact: Carma Blackburn at 815-962-1043
Meets second Tuesday from 5:45 p.m. - 7:45 p.m.
Children's Home + Aid Northern Region
910 2nd Ave., Rockford
Child care is provided.

DEKALB AREA ADOPTIVE FAMILIES

Contact: Diane DeMers at 815-756-3874
Email: Ballantine@aol.com
246 Rolfe Rd., DeKalb
Serves families in DeKalb and neighboring counties.

FOX VALLEY ADOPTION GROUP

Contact: Maureen Van Scoit at 630-844-9385
968 Wellington Circle, Aurora
Serves families in DuPage, Kane, and Kendall counties.

ILLINOIS VALLEY FAMILIES

On-line community and support group
www.ivfamilies.com
Serves licensed families living in Bureau, Marshall, Putnam, LaSalle, Stark and surrounding counties.

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF ILLINOIS FOSTER PARENT GROUP

Contact: Sharon Franklin at 815-284-7796 ext. 2108
Meets the fourth Monday from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
1261 Illinois Route 38, Nachusa

NORTHERN REGION DCFS FOSTER CARE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Contact: Robyn Harvey at 888-533-2874
Meets second Wednesday from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Meetings rotate among DCFS offices. Call for schedule.
A light dinner is served at 6 p.m.

NORTHWEST FOSTER ADOPT NETWORK (NW-FAN)

Contact: Karen CAallahan at 847-358-5295
Meets second Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. (September - May)
Cross and Crown Church
1122 West Rand Rd., Arlington Heights

REACHOUT OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS

Contact: Debbie Perez at 847-566-4316
Meets first Monday at 6:15 p.m.
Warren Township Library
224 N. O'Plain Road, Gurnee
Serves families in Lake and McHenry counties. No meetings in August or December.

CENTRAL REGION

ALL-DOPT

Contact: Susan Koniak at 618-667-2493
654 Bauer Road, Troy
Includes all types of adoptions. Serve Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair Counties.

CENTRAL ILLINOIS ADOPTIVE FAMILIES

Contact: Candy Ogden at 309-662-3349
2206 Oakwood Ave., Bloomington
Serves families in Dewitt, Fulton, Ford, Logan, Mason, McLean and Woodford counties.

CIRCLE OF SUPPORT

Contact: Elizabeth Richmond at 309-671-7919
Meets monthly (September to April) from 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Glen Oak Christian Church
1115 E. Republic, Peoria
Serves Peoria-area families. Registration required.

DCFS CENTRAL REGION FOSTER CARE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meets quarterly in various offices throughout the region. Call the Central Region Foster Parent Information Line for details at 866-368-5204

H.A.P.P.Y. FF HANCOCK-ADAMS-PIKE PARENT AND YOUTH FOSTER FAMILIES

Meets on Tuesdays. Call for schedule.
Contact: Ron Eitel at (217) 885-3224 or by e-mail to Rontammy@Earthlink.com

KEEPING THE PROMISE - THE BABY FOLD - ADOPTION PRESERVATION PROGRAM

Contact: Maggie Gould at 309-454-1770
Serves McLean, Champaign, Livingston, DeWitt, Macon, Piatt, Ford, Douglas, and Logan Counties.

LAND OF LINCOLN FAPA

Contact: Cindy Backstein at 217-498-8774 or backstein@mchsi.com
Meets third Tuesday at 6 p.m.
Carol Jo Vecchie Center, 9th and Carpenter, Springfield
E-mail newsletter available.

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF ILLINOIS - ADOPTIVE FAMILIES TOGETHER

Contact: Susan Goble at 309-786-6400
Meets third Thursday from 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
4709 44th St. Suite 1, Rock Island
Childcare is available with reservations. Snacks provided.

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF IL- ADOPTIVE FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

Contact: Alisa Hilliard or Jill Harris at 309-671-0300
Meets fourth Wednesday from 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
3000 W. Rohmann Ave., West Peoria
For adoptive families, those waiting to adopt, or those with pre-adoptive placements.
Snacks and Childcare are provided. Call to reserve Childcare.

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF IL- ADOPTIVE PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Contact: Judie Watson at 217-398-3011
Meets third Thursday 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

103 S. Country Fair Dr., Champaign
Childcare available with reservation.
Open to all types of adoptions and waiting adoptive parents.

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF IL- PARENT TO PARENT

Contact: Bea Voris at 217-348-3333
Meets third Thursday at 7 p.m.
Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 9th and Cleveland, Charleston
Serves families in Cumberland, Clark, Coles, Edgar, Moultrie
and Shelby counties.

RECRUITMENT DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT (RDS)

Contact: Joyce Loy at 309-794-3575
Meets third Tuesday at 9 a.m. starting in June.
DCFS Office, 500 42nd Street, Rock Island

SOUTH CENTRAL ILLINOIS ADOPTIVE PARENTS ASSOCIATION (SCIAPA)

Contact: Karen deCastro at 217-793-9646, www.sciapa.org
5004 Manhattan Dr., Springfield
Serves families in Sangamon, Christian, Macon, Montgomery,
Morgan and Menard counties.

SOUTHERN REGION

**ADOPTION AND SUBSIDIZED GUARDIANSHIP PRESERVATION
PROGRAM SUPPORT GROUP**

Contact: Julie Fritzler at 618-988-1330, x. 103
Meets twice a month in different locations:
First Tuesday at 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
DCFS Olney Office, 1408 Martin St., Olney AND
Third Thursday at 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Meetings alternate between DCFS Mount Vernon at 321A
Withers Dr and Matthews and Associates, 109 Lou Anne Dr.,
Herrin
Open to all adoptive parents and immediate family members.
RSVP Required.

DCFS SOUTHERN REGION FOSTER CARE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Contact: Michael Bollman at 618-394-2100
Meetings held quarterly in various DCFS offices and connected
via teleconference. Call for a schedule.
Open to all DCFS-supervised foster and adoptive families.

HOME ADVANTAGE SOUTH

Contact: Kim Hutchcraft at 618-435-8293, Please leave mes-
sage with Tiny Tots Day Care
Meets second Monday at 6:30 p.m.
800 Joplin, Benton

**LSSI (LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF ILLINOIS) -
ADOPTION SUPPORT GROUP**

Contact: Beth Richardson at 618-997-9196, ext. 817
beth.richardson@lssi.org
Meets second Thursday from 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Lutheran Social Services of Illinois
1616 West Main, Marion
Training credits and childcare provided.

Digital PRIDE training on CD

Foster PRIDE digital in-service training modules are now available for foster and adoptive caregivers licensed by either DCFS or private agencies. Nine modules are available on CD and are designed for those circumstances when foster and adoptive caregivers have training needs that cannot be met in a traditional classroom format. Caregivers must have a computer, or access to one, to participate.

To request one of the Foster PRIDE Digital in-service modules, caregivers can contact their foster home licensing worker or call the DCFS Registration Unit at **1-877-800-3393**. The CD with instructions will be mailed to the caregiver within two days of processing the request. Caregivers have 30 days to complete the digital in-service training to obtain foster parent training credit hours. The caregiver must call DCFS Training if they need more time to complete the digital training module. Households may only request one CD at a time.

The following Foster PRIDE training modules are available on CD:

- Module One: Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children at Risk - 12 hours
- Module Two: Using Discipline to Protect, Nurture and Meet Developmental Needs - 9 hours
- Module Three: Addressing Developmental Issues Related to Sexuality - 3 hours
- Module Four: Responding to Signs and Symptoms of Child Sexual Abuse - 6 hours
- Module Five: Supporting Relationships Between Children and Their Families - 9 hours
- Module Six: Working as a Professional Team Member - 9 hours
- Module Seven: Promoting Children's Personal and Cultural Identity - 6 hours
- Module Eight: Promoting Permanency Outcomes- 12 hours
- Module Nine: Managing the Fostering Experience- 6 hours

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's what you had to say about the question: *May is designated Foster Parent Appreciation Month. If you could choose your own appreciation event, tribute or honor, what would you do?*

"DCFS could offer a 2-day weekend getaway in Illinois or Wisconsin at a discount for interested parents. It could include a spa, water park and other family friendly activities."

Ardendia Beverly, Crest Hill

The new question is: *What do you do to build a relationship with your child's teachers that helps make sure his or her education needs are met?*

You can contact me with your response by e-mail at Vanessa.James@illinois.gov or by phone at 312-814-6824.

Correction: Booster seats by law until age 8

In Volume 2, we incorrectly stated the law for booster seats. Below are the state guidelines for children of all ages. For more information about the Keep Me Safe in a Seat campaign, visit the Secretary of State's Web site at cyberdriveillinois.gov/department/drivers/. Illinois Now and Forever regrets the error.

"Children under the age of 8 must be secured in an appropriate child restraint system, more commonly called a safety seat. Child safety seats include infant seats, convertible seats (rear-facing for infants and forward-facing for toddlers) and booster seats that are used with the vehicle lap shoulder belt system. The parent or legal guardian of a child under the age of eight years is responsible for providing a child safety seat to anyone who transports his or her child.

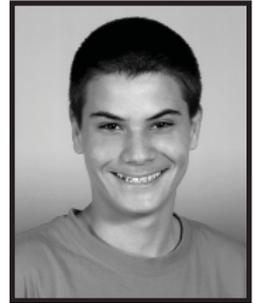
Children weighing more than 40 pounds may be transported in the back seat of a motor vehicle while wearing only a lap belt if the back seat is not equipped with a lap and shoulder belt system.

Children ages 8 years of age or older but under the age of 16 must be secured in a properly adjusted safety belt in any position in the vehicle.

Persons in violation of this law will be subject to a \$50 fine for a first offense. This fine will be waived upon proof of possession of an approved safety seat. Subsequent violations are punishable with a \$100 fine."



Elijah & Destini (7636 & 7637)



Geoffrey (7626)



Joseph (7510)



Nadine (7645)

Please call the Adoption Information Center of Illinois at 1-800-572-2390.

A family for me

Elijah & Destini [7636 & 7637] Elijah, 8, is a caring, personable young man. He has a great sense of humor and enjoys watching funny movies. In school, his favorite subject is math. His sister Destini at 7 is a creative artist who loves to draw and color. When she's finished her latest masterpiece, she often plays with her stuffed animals or goes outside to jump rope with friends.

Their foster parents said Elijah is outgoing and articulate. They said Destini is smart and resourceful. The forever family for these two would be able to provide Elijah and Destini with lots of love and support. A two-parent family is preferred so that the parents have more time to tend to the children's care.

Geoffrey [7626] Geoffrey, 16, is an outgoing, thoughtful young man. He enjoys sports, especially baseball, basketball, and swimming. He is very creative, too, and draws and writes poems in his spare time. In school, Geoffrey works hard and achieves As and Bs. He loves animals and likes to take care of dogs.

His worker and teachers said Geoffrey is a nice young man who is a pleasure to be around. He is caring and considerate towards others. To be a parent to Geoffrey, you should be caring and supportive. Geoffrey said he'd like to join a family that has positive moral values and a good sense of humor.

Joseph [7510] Joseph, 13, is a smart young man who does well in school. He attends advanced classes and receives all A's and B's. He is also talented at sports, especially baseball and basketball. When he's outdoors, Joseph likes to ride bikes and swim. On rainy days, he'll play board games or organize his Yu-Gi-Oh card collection.

His worker said Joseph has a good personality and is very insightful. He responds positively to those he trusts. His foster parents and teachers said Joseph is very intelligent.

The family for Joseph would provide him love and a structured, well-supervised setting. Joseph said his ideal family would live in

the country and would let him earn an allowance. He'd also like to have a brother or sister about his age.

Nadine [7645] Nadine, 6, is a bright young lady with good leadership qualities and a positive attitude. She can be very creative and expresses it by building things with clay and inventing stories with her dolls. She is very loving and caring with her two sisters, who also need a home and should be adopted with Nadine as a group.

Her foster parent said Nadine responds well to positive attention. She has a good personality and expresses herself well when she feels comfortable and safe. At night, she enjoys being read to by her foster parent.

Potential parents would provide lots of love and attention to Nadine and her two sisters. You can give them a sense of security and a regular daily routine.



Please call the Adoption Information Center of Illinois at 1-800-572-2390, or see the AICI Web site – www.adoptinfo-il.org if you are interested in adopting one of these children or learning about other children waiting to be adopted.



*Illinois Families
Now and Forever*

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

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**Illinois State Fair ticket
information inside on page 5!**

Special Foster Parent Appreciation Month Issue:

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