

Illinois Families Now and Forever

Families by DCFS Foster Care, Adoption & Guardianship®

Teens have options as they approach adulthood

Moving toward adulthood can be difficult for a young person without the right tools. The DCFS Office of Service Intervention launched an Internet resource to help youth prepare for successful futures while they are in foster care and after. The Web site, which is at www.youthincare.illinois.gov, brings together information on DCFS programs for:

- Education
- Housing
- Money Smarts
- Healthy Living
- Life Skills
- Teen Parenting
- Legal System

The site is geared to assist youth as young as 8 and up to 21. Using the theme “Get Goal’d,” young people can explore the different paths to adulthood and make informed decisions. The site also is the spot for news on the regional youth boards, past issues of the youth newsletter and updates on recent policy changes.

Be sure to explore all of the resources available at www.youthincare.illinois.gov.

The DCFS Division of Service Intervention is home to many of the resources older youth who are still in DCFS care can utilize as they plan for their futures. That future could entail more schooling or finding a career path. The Office of Education and Transition Services is the hub for education, training and employment programs.

Along with several programs, the Division also has Transition Coordinators assigned to each DCFS region. These individuals can help youth and their families explore different educational and employment resources from DCFS and in the community.

The transition programs described below are open for youth still in DCFS custody. This does not include youth who achieved permanency through adoption or guardianship. However, DCFS does open the Youth in Scholarship program to adopted youth (see page 4) and the Education and Training Voucher (also on page 4) is available to youth adopted after age 16. For clarification of eligibility, contact the Office of Education and Transition Services in Chicago at 312-814-5959.

Youth In College/Vocational Training Program

Students may choose to attend an accredited vocational school, four- year college or community college. They receive a monthly grant in the amount of \$471 provided each month for up to four (4) years. Medical cards are provided to Illinois students until the participant reaches the age of 21. Reimbursement is available for books not covered by financial aid. Benefits are available until the earlier of four (4) years, or the semester of the 23rd birthday.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Be at least 16 years old, and not yet 21
- Be under court-ordered, legal responsibility of DCFS

- Maintain at least a “C” average each semester
- Maintain full time status and submit a class schedule and grades each term

The Employment Incentive Program (EIP)

The Employment Incentive Program is designed to provide financial and supplemental services to help adolescent youth gain marketable skills through on-the-job work experience or through job training programs. Participants receive a monthly stipend in the amount of \$150.00 for a maximum of 12 months and a medical card until age 21.) They may also be eligible for start-up funding of work-related items (e.g., tools, work clothing, etc.). Funding is need-

Continued on page 4



From the DCFS Director

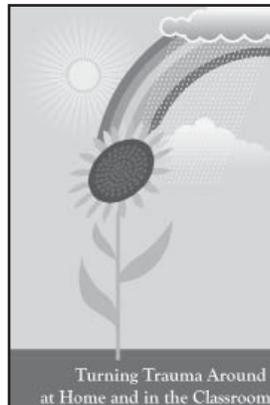
Erwin McEwen

I hope this issue with its focus on teens will be as important to our caregivers as it is to me. Now we may have 15,500 youth in our system, but 42 percent are 13 years or older. I think back to my own teen years and then try to imagine me multiplied by nearly 6,000 times.

I take the future of our youth that personally, just as you do. To make sure that our teenagers have the best possible chance to succeed, at the Department we have focused our resources on them. You will read here about many of the programs that can help them move forward with their education. In addition, we recently revamped the life skills offerings and tailored them to address the real life needs identified by the Statewide Youth Advisory Board.

With a focus on schooling and personal responsibility, young adults can be in a position for work and the prosperous future we all hope our children will achieve. While these children have faced more difficulties than most, what is more important is how we help them recover. We can walk with them, and together we all get to cross through the trauma to make it to the success waiting on the other side.

REGISTER NOW for Caregiver Institutes



Enrollment is now open for the 2011 Caregiver Training Institutes: Turning Trauma Around at Home and in the Classroom. **Call the DCFS Registration Line today at 877-800-3393 to register, as space is limited.**

This year's institutes will help caregivers clear the obstacles that complicate home life and school performance for a child dealing with the effects of trauma.

The agenda will include:

- State of the Region address by the Regional Administrator
- Training in Psychological First Aid to handle "flare-ups" from trauma
- Panel discussion with former youth in care
- Tips for understanding the impact of trauma and working through it at school

The institutes are open to all foster, adoptive and guardianship caregivers. Participants will earn five training credit hours to meet licensing requirements when they sign in on time and participate in the entire session.

Registration opens at 8:30 a.m., with the program beginning at 9 a.m. and finishing by 3 p.m. Morning refreshments will be served, and lunch will be provided for participants. There are no accommodations for childcare at the institutes, and **children must not attend**. Caregivers who bring children must be asked to leave.

There may be limited funds available through the DCFS regions to reimburse DCFS supervised caregivers for child care or mileage (not lodging) expenses to attend this training. Caregivers should follow normal procedures within their own regions to determine if there is reimbursement before attending. Attendees from private agencies should contact their agencies in advance to determine whether they can be reimbursed for those expenses.

The same training content will be presented at each institute, so plan to attend only one institute, choosing the date and location that is most convenient. **Call 877-800-3393 to register today.**

March 5
6201 S. Emerald
Chicago

March 26
Holiday Inn
Mt. Vernon

March 19
Northfield Inn
Springfield

April 2
Holiday Inn
Joliet

Taxpayers have 3 extra days to claim adoption and foster care credits

Caregivers have three extra days to claim tax breaks that could add up to substantial rebates, based on their commitment to foster care and adoption. The last day to file federal taxes this year falls on April 18, rather than the typical April 15. Because Washington DC will recognize the holiday Emancipation Day on Friday, the rest of the nation will gain a few days to wrap up their returns.

As foster, adoptive and guardianship caregivers prepare their federal taxes, there are several areas that they should explore on their own or with a tax professional. For example, the Uniform Definition of Child allows for a child who has lived in the home less than 12 months to be claimed as a dependent. For some foster care placements, this could change the caregivers' tax situation. New for tax year 2010, the Adoption Tax Credit is refundable for the first

time. This means that even families who owe no income tax can get the credit as an increase to their tax refund. The maximum credit is now \$13,170. A family who adopted a child in an earlier tax year and has a carryover adoption credit may get an additional refundable credit on their 2010 return.

The credit amount for someone who adopts a special needs child is the entire \$13,170, regardless of the amount spent on adoption expenses—even those that are covered in the subsidy agreement. The credit received will be reduced for taxpayers with income over \$182,520. Caregivers that want to claim this credit should also know they cannot file electronically and are required to attach documents to the tax return to verify the adoption.

In advance of meeting with a tax professional or before tackling the

return alone, look to these free publications at the Web site for the Internal Revenue Service at www.irs.gov.

Pub 17, Your Federal Income Tax

Pub 501, Exemptions, Standard Deduction and Filing Information

Pub 596, Earned Income Credit

Form 8839, Qualified Adoption Expenses

Topic 607, Adoption Credit

Caregivers who need further assistance can look to the Center for Economic Progress, which offers free tax preparation services in sites across Illinois for families with income less than \$50,000.

For more information, call 312-701-1326 or 888-827-8511 or visit the Web site at centerforeconomicprogress.org.

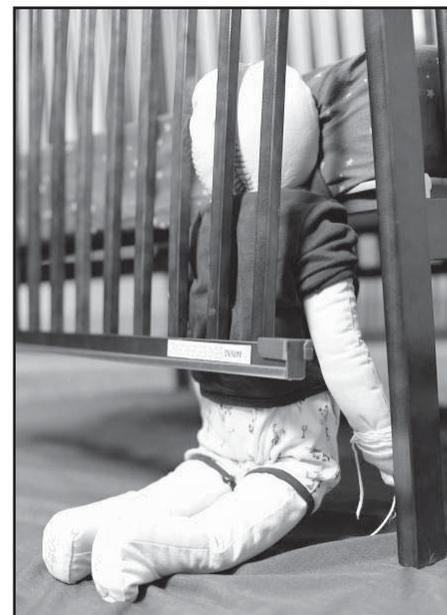
“Drop-side” crib injuries drive new government rules and halt to sales

In December the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission issued new rules for cribs. This came after several reports of injury and some deaths of infants. High among the safety issues were concerns for “drop side” cribs that allow one panel to lower for easier access.

Nine million drop-side cribs have been recalled over the past five years. CPSC staff has determined drop-side cribs generally have a tendency to be less structurally sound than cribs with four fixed

sides. Drop-side crib incidents can also occur due to incorrect assembly or age-related wear and tear. Many major crib manufacturers announced that as of June 2010 that they would voluntarily stop selling drop-side cribs.

For information on the recalls and remedies, go to the CPSC Web site at www.cpsc.gov. There also is posted a video on crib safety and recommendations for putting young children to sleep safely.



Teen Options, con't.

based and limited to a one-time disbursement of up to \$200.00.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Be 17 years of age, and not yet 21
- Have a high school diploma or a General Education Development (GED) certificate
- Be under court-ordered responsibility of DCFS
- Complete Ansell-Casey Living Skills assessment
- Be involved in job training through a certified job skills training program or be employed for at least one month prior to applying for the EIP and working a minimum of 20 hours per week

Community College Payment Program

The Community College Payment Program allows youth under DCFS guardianship who enroll in an Illinois community college to have their in-district tuition, fees, and books paid by DCFS if they are not paid by financial aid grants.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Must be a youth for whom DCFS is legally responsible
- Must be accepted for enrollment by an in-district community college
- Has not used his/her four semesters of payments

- Maintain a "C" average
- Must apply for financial aid through FAFSA, designating community college to receive funds

Education & Training Vouchers

The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program assists youth with post-secondary education related expenses not covered by financial aid grants. Qualifying students can receive payment of up to \$5000 annually for education related expenses such as tuition, fees, books, supplies, uniforms, equipment, and/or transportation not covered by other grants or scholarships. Funding is available until age 21. However, if the student is enrolled in a post-secondary program before age 21 and is making satisfactory progress toward completion of the program, funding is available until age 23.

Eligibility:

- Youth for whom DCFS is legally responsible or who aged out of care at age 18 or older OR
- Achieved permanency at age 16 or older-through either subsidized guardianship or adoption

Questions about eligibility or referrals can go to the youth's caseworker or the Office of Education and Transition Services at 312-814-5959.

DCFS Scholarship application now open. Complete packet due March 31



DCFS annually provides 48 college scholarships to youth who are currently under guardianship of the Department or who left DCFS guardianship through

adoption or private guardianship arrangements.

Scholarship recipients receive up to four consecutive years of tuition and academic fee waivers to be used at participating Illinois state colleges or universities, a

\$471 monthly stipend and a medical card up to age 23. Applicants must have a high school diploma or GED by the end of the current school year. Scholarship Program Student Applications (CFS 438) are available now. Applications must be turned in by March 31. A review committee will evaluate the applications and make selections based on academic accomplishments, community service and a personal statement.

Contact the youth's caseworker or call the DCFS Office of Transition Services at 312-814-5959 for more information.

FAFSA financial aid form starts off all need-based college funding

The first step in qualifying for financial aid is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form (FAFSA). All assistance based on financial need requires filling out the FAFSA. After completing and returning the application, the student will receive the Student Aid Report (SAR) that lists the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The EFC is what the family is expected to pay, based on their family income, on top of any financial aid that is awarded.

For students who have been in the child welfare system, the major factor for financial aid is the student's status as "dependent" or "independent." As an independent student, the parent's (parent by

birth or foster caregiver) income will not be included in the financial need formula. That typically results in eligibility for more financial aid.

Youth in foster care or subsidized guardianship would automatically qualify as independent students. Alternatively, for youth who left DCFS care through adoption, the adoptive parents' income will be included, unless special circumstances apply. However, guidelines that went into effect July 2009 could benefit some adopted youth. Now youth adopted from foster care after age 13 can apply for financial aid under the recently expanded definition of independent student. Students should talk to their guidance counselors and

college financial aid advisors for more specific details on the new criteria.

It is important that each youth complete and mail or e-mail their applications early in the calendar year, in order to secure the maximum benefits. Students can get forms starting in January from their school counselor or via the Internet at the Web site www.fafsa.edu.gov.

The DCFS Education Advisors can also help families make plans for college. The advisors are assigned to each region. For more information contact the DCFS Office of Education and Transition Services at 312-814-5959.

Internet college aid resources can be helpful when used with caution

While there is boundless information on the Internet, families should depend on trusted sites for financial aid information. Parents and students who are anxious to find ways to pay for college can fall prey to scams. Keep the following tips in mind:

- Use the free lists and be wary of programs that require payment.
- Don't give out credit card or bank information in advance.
- Check out any program or contest that says "you have been selected" or "you are a finalist" as these could be scams.

These sites are a good jumping off point for students and families starting research on college funding.

Black Excel College Help Network

www.BlackExcel.org

College Board

collegeboard.com

This same organization that runs the SAT exam helps students prepare and pay for college. Students can use the search engine of more than 2,300 sources for funding.

Education Finance Council

www.efc.org

Offers financial aid resources specific to youth in foster care and other special circumstances.

Fastweb scholarship search

www.fastweb.com

Free Application for Federal Student Aid Commission

www.fafsa.edu.gov

Illinois Student Assistance Commission

www.collegezone.org

Minority Scholarships

www.free-4u.com/minority.htm

Orphan Foundation of America

www.orphan.org

United Negro College Fund

www.uncf.org

Illinois Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council Bulletin



The Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council met in November

in a joint meeting with the Illinois Adoption Advisory Council. This is an annual event, as the councils sometimes address overlapping issues.

Legislative Update

For the first presentation, Dana Yowell, DCFS Deputy Director for Legislation, discussed pending proposals related to the child welfare system. Her staff is responsible for tracking bills and informing the elected members on bills that could affect children, families and caregivers.

Health Services

Next, Vince Champagne of the DCFS Office of Health Services spoke to the groups about federal legislation regarding the Medicaid program. That office is monitoring the federal health care reform changes on behalf youth in care that use the public medical insurance program.

Training Update

The group also heard from Craig Missell for an update on the DCFS Office of Training. He reported that the pilot of co-trainings with caregivers and staff learning the same material would be going forward. Training is also looking at ways to use technology and online training to reach more caregivers.

Director McEwen's Remarks

DCFS Director McEwen said he always makes a point of coming to the November meeting, as it is the anniversary of his initial



After the joint meeting with the Illinois Adoption Council, adoptive families came to the Illinois Adoption Month celebration and worked on new pages for their own life books.

appointment as director in 2006. He brought the councils up to date on initiatives such as differential response, performance-based contracting for residential programs and reunification foster care.

After the speakers finished and both councils had completed their regular business, they adjourned to an afternoon event at the State Library to celebrate Adoption Month In Illinois.

The Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council was founded as part of the Illinois Foster Parent Law. Membership consists of caregivers, agency representatives and other experts in child welfare, who are appointed by the DCFS Director. The mandated positions for caregivers are spread among the DCFS regions.

The council holds open meetings at least 6 times a year, and more as needed, in locations around the state.



Director McEwen (l) chatted with members after the meeting.

The next meeting of the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council will be on February 18, beginning at 9 a.m. in Elgin. Call the Office of Caregiver and Parent Support at 217-524-2422 for details.

2011 Reader Survey

Please help us make sure Illinois Families Now and Forever offers what you want to know. After circling your answers on both sides, simply fold, seal and mail the survey back. Or visit the DCFS Web site at www.state.il.us/dcfs to fill it out on-line. You may also fax both sides to 312-814-4131. Thank you in advance for your input.

CIRCLE: 1=GREAT interest 2=SOME interest 3=NO interest X=NOT applicable

Working Within the Child Welfare System

- | | | | |
|---------|----------------------------------|---------|------------------------------------|
| 1 2 3 X | Foster care rules/procedures | 1 2 3 X | Child and family teams |
| 1 2 3 X | Adoption rules/procedures | 1 2 3 X | Confidentiality |
| 1 2 3 X | Guardianship rules/procedures | 1 2 3 X | System of care service network |
| 1 2 3 X | Governmental rules/legislation | 1 2 3 X | Integrated assessments |
| 1 2 3 X | Licensing policy | 1 2 3 X | Intake/child investigation process |
| 1 2 3 X | Obligations of foster parents | 1 2 3 X | Juvenile Court |
| 1 2 3 X | Recruiting foster/adopt families | 1 2 3 X | Resolving DCFS/agency disputes |
- other topics/comments: _____

Post-Adoption and Guardianship

- | | | | |
|---------|----------------------------------|---------|------------------------------------|
| 1 2 3 X | Financial implications | 1 2 3 X | Rights and responsibilities |
| 1 2 3 X | Advocating for the adopted child | 1 2 3 X | Accessing free post-adopt services |
| 1 2 3 X | Obtaining community resources | | |
- other topics/comments: _____

Medical and Mental Health

- | | | | |
|---------|-----------------------------|---------|------------------------------------|
| 1 2 3 X | Depression | 1 2 3 X | Developmental disabilities |
| 1 2 3 X | Attachment disorders | 1 2 3 X | Medically-fragile children |
| 1 2 3 X | Eating disorders | 1 2 3 X | Sexual abuse |
| 1 2 3 X | Self-esteem | 1 2 3 X | Resources for medical specialties |
| 1 2 3 X | Fetal alcohol/drug exposure | 1 2 3 X | Resources/info for dental services |
| 1 2 3 X | Asthma | 1 2 3 X | Resources for mental health |
| 1 2 3 X | Diabetes | 1 2 3 X | Using the state medical card |
- other topics/comments: _____

Education

- | | | | |
|---------|-------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------|
| 1 2 3 X | Working with schools/teachers | 1 2 3 X | Tutoring |
| 1 2 3 X | Special education services | 1 2 3 X | DCFS Education Advisors |
| 1 2 3 X | Scholarships | 1 2 3 X | Education after high school |
- other topics/comments: _____

Age-related Topics

- | | | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|
| 1 2 3 X | Early childhood intervention | 1 2 3 X | Independent Living |
| 1 2 3 X | Tantrums, biting, aggression | 1 2 3 X | Services for teens |
| 1 2 3 X | Safety (home, playground, school) | 1 2 3 X | Housing for transitioning teens |
| 1 2 3 X | Pre-teen sexuality | 1 2 3 X | Youth Advisory Boards |
| 1 2 3 X | Teen sexuality | 1 2 3 X | Runaways |
- other topics/comments: _____

Family Life

- | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 2 3 X | Behavior management/discipline | 1 2 3 X | Foster/adoptive family networking |
| 1 2 3 X | Sibling rivalry | 1 2 3 X | Family traditions/activities |
| 1 2 3 X | Impact of placement changes | 1 2 3 X | Camps |
| 1 2 3 X | Handling stress | 1 2 3 X | Arts, music, sports activities |
| 1 2 3 X | Family therapy/counseling | 1 2 3 X | Travel |
| 1 2 3 X | Self-care for parents | 1 2 3 X | Free services, products |
- other topics/comments: _____

Tell us how you feel about the regular features currently offered in each issue:

CIRCLE: 1=GREAT interest 2=SOME interest 3=NO interest X=NOT applicable

Regular Features

- 1 2 3 X Director's Message
- 1 2 3 X Foster/adoptive parent profiles
- 1 2 3 X Who do you call when?
- 1 2 3 X Movin' On Up (for transitioning youth)
- 1 2 3 X Family for Me photos of children
- other topics/comments: _____

Fold here _____

Vanessa James, Editor
Editor Families Now and Forever
IL Department of Children and Family Services
James R. Thompson Center
100 W. Randolph, 6th Floor
Chicago, IL 60601

Fold here _____

Please tell us about yourself:

- _____ # foster children currently in your home
- _____ # children you have adopted
- _____ # foster children previously in your home
- _____ # children you have taken guardianship of
- _____ # children by birth
- _____ private agency supervised home
- _____ DCFS office supervised home
- _____ relative caregiver (yes / no)

Circle your DCFS region: Cook Central Cook North Cook South Southern Northern Central

Would you be interested in receiving the newsletter by e-mail? Yes No
Would you be interested in reviewing the newsletter on the DCFS Web site? Yes No

What do you like **best** about the newsletter? _____
What do you like **least** about the newsletter? _____
Other comments: _____

Please offer your name and contact information, if you wish.



Contact the local subsidy worker with questions or updates

Chicago, IL 60601 The adoption or guardianship subsidy agreement includes many benefits for caregivers. When it is time to use one of the services in the subsidy such as counseling or day care, it is important to first contact the adoption/guardianship subsidy worker. In Cook County, one unit takes care of the post-adoption/guardianship cases. In the regions outside of Cook there are subsidy workers assigned to the regional offices.

Call the subsidy worker if you have questions about what is included in the subsidy agreement, if you need to access services or if the agreement needs to be updated.

- Cook County
Pamela Mills
312-808-5250, ext. 339
- Joliet
Norma Napper
815-730-4086
- Aurora
Deirdra Davis
630-844-8966
- Rockford
Jennifer Zaluckyj
815-967-3763
- Peoria
Deborah Hawkins
309-671-7944
- Springfield
Gail Mayer
217-557-2668
- Urbana
Elois Drake
217-278-5417
- East St. Louis
Carol Teague-Douglas
618-583-2189
- Mt. Vernon
Wendy Manna
618-244-8424

Be included in the 2011 directory for caregiver associations and support groups

If you lead a support group or association for foster or adoptive families, you can be included in the directory of support groups, published in May.

Please send the following information by March 30.

Name of group

Meeting schedule (e.g. 2nd Tuesday monthly at 10 a.m.)

Meeting location

Contact name with phone number/e-mail

Any other notes (e.g. potluck dinner, child care provided, RSVP required, etc.)

New listings and updates should be sent in writing by e-mail or post to:

Vanessa.James@illinois.gov

Vanessa James, DCFS

100 W. Randolph, 6th fl.

Chicago, IL 60601



Illinois Adoption Advisory Council

The Illinois Adoption Advisory Council's mission is to advise the DCFS Director on all matters that involve or affect how DCFS provides adoption and guardianship services. The Council also works to preserve and expand funding for post adoption and adoption preservation services. It also develops recommendations to enhance the child welfare system's ability to find permanent homes for teens and other youth.

Adoptive and guardianship parents, adult adopted persons and professionals with adoption expertise comprise the council. The members are appointed by the DCFS Director and come from all regions across the state. The council rotates its meeting location so that guests can have an opportunity to participate and so members can learn about a wide breadth of local issues.

For the first half of 2011, the Illinois Adoption Advisory Council will meet:

February 4 in Bloomington

April 8 in Springfield

June 3 in Lisle

Meetings begin at 10 a.m. and adjourn by 3 p.m. All meetings are open to the public. Call the Office of Caregiver and Parent Support at 217-524-2422 for details on the locations.

Who do you call when...

...A child in your home is having a psychiatric crisis that may require hospitalization? Call the CARES line at 800-345-9049. However, if a child is a danger to himself or others, call 911 first. The CARES line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

...You want information on becoming a foster parent or on adoption? The Adoption Information Center of Illinois (AICI) can answer your questions and connect you to a licensing agency. The toll-free number is 800-572-2390. The AICI also maintains information about the children who are featured on the back page of the newsletter.

...You have questions about your board check? Call DCFS Central Payment Unit at 800-525-0499 if your check comes from DCFS. For other checks, contact your private agency.

...You feel you aren't being treated fairly by DCFS or a private agency? If you've tried to resolve the issue by going up the chain of command with the caseworker and supervisors, then call the Advocacy Office at 800-232-3798.

...You have questions about your child's medical card? Call 800-228-6533.

...You need to report a child missing or have information about a youth who has run away? To report information on missing youth call 866-503-0184. The toll-free number is available 24 hours a day every day of the week.

...You are having a family crisis with your adopted child? Contact the Adoption/Subsidized Guardianship Preservation Program that serves your area. Call Christine Feldman at 312-814-1565 for more information.

...You have an idea for an article in the newsletter? Each region has a regional reporter to help gather local news. The names and contact information are listed in the regional section of each edition. Or you can contact the Editor, Vanessa James, at 312-814-6824 or E-mail vanessa.james@illinois.gov.

...You are having a hard time getting services for your child at school? Most private agencies have an Education Liaison and each DCFS region has Education Advisors who can help. Call your agency or nearest DCFS office to be connected to the right educational resource for your area.

...You want to report suspected abuse or neglect? Call the Hotline at 800-25-ABUSE (800-252-2873). The toll-free number is available 24 hours a day every day of the week. All calls are confidential.

...You want to find or register for foster care training? For the most up-to-date and complete schedule information for classes offered in your area, visit the on-line Virtual Training Center anytime at www.DCFstraining.org or call the DCFS Office of Training at 877-800-3393 during regular business hours.



Pat Quinn, Governor
Erwin McEwen, DCFS Director
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Purpose: To help busy families more effectively parent children currently or formerly in DCFS care. To bring them the best information from the most knowledgeable sources. To promote statewide teamwork in finding permanency for children.

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

Illinois Families Now and Forever is published six times a year, bi-monthly, and mailed to licensed foster parents, unlicensed relative caregivers, adoptive and guardianship families receiving subsidies. An electronic version is sent to all DCFS staff, and private agency staff.

Material may not be reprinted in whole, in part or in any form whatsoever without permission from the Editor or DCFS. Opinions expressed by experts writing articles are no substitute for professional answers or opinions about a family's or child's specific situation. Consult a competent professional for answers to your specific questions.

Department of Children and Family Services©

A family for me: Call 1-800-572-2390 for more information



Deandrea (7660)

Deandrea (7660) This energetic, outgoing young man enjoys spending time outside. Deandrea, 11, can often be found playing football and basketball with his friends, or going on fishing trips with trusted adults. He also loves dogs and does a good job caring for them. When Deandrea does come inside, he likes to play card games and spend time on the computer. Deandrea's worker says he is friendly, talkative, fun-loving, and generally well-behaved. He enjoys helping others and works hard at school.

The forever family for Deandrea will be patient as he adjusts to your home. You can help him calmly process his emotions whenever he becomes upset. You can also work with professionals to make sure Deandrea's medical, educational, and emotional needs are met. Deandrea wants to join a loving home with nice parents, other children (two at the most), and a dog. He would also benefit from continued visits with his siblings and grandparents.

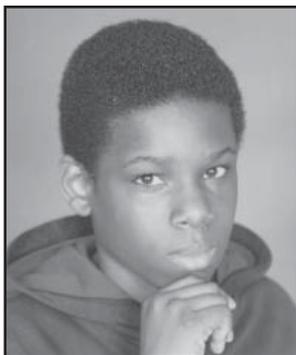


Allen (7724)

Allen (7724) Allen, 8, is an outgoing child who is affectionate with his siblings and caregiver. He enjoys family outings and will jump at any chance to go outside. Allen is an active child who loves playing with action figures, riding his bicycle, playing soccer, and kicking footballs. When he settles down inside the house, he enjoys watching cartoons.

Allen's teacher says he helps maintain order in the classroom. His caregiver says he is respectful, smart, and considerate.

Potential parents for Allen should be able to communicate with him and encourage him to express his feelings appropriately. The ideal family would consist of two parents who are outgoing, enjoy family activities, and would be willing to provide a stable home for Allen's older brother. Allen would also benefit from ongoing visits with his great aunt.



Isaiah (7752)

Isaiah (7752) Isaiah, 14 is a warm and caring

young man who develops strong relationships with those closest to him. He enjoys arts and crafts, and often gives homemade gifts to people as thoughtful tokens of friendship. Although it takes him time to adjust to new surroundings, Isaiah eventually becomes very attached to people with whom he feels secure. He is enthusiastic and creative, and is eager to take on activities ranging from cooking and gardening to basketball and dodge ball.

Isaiah's worker says he is engaging and endearing, especially when he is with people he knows well. He is outgoing and approaches situations with an open mind. Isaiah also has confidence in his skills and abilities, and is eager to take on new challenges.

The forever family for Isaiah can provide a structured and loving home environment for him, assuring him that he is part of a permanent family. You can help him maintain contact with his brothers, who he sees on a regular basis. You can also make sure Isaiah gets the educational, medical, and emotional support he needs. Isaiah says he wants to be part of a family where he can feel safe and secure. He would love to be part of a family with pets, especially a dog that he could take for walks.

Gabrielle (7793) Gabrielle, 3, is a very loveable child. Although she is non-verbal and struggles to express herself at times, she can communicate using sounds. Gabrielle likes spending time with her step-grandmother, with whom she has formed an attachment. She also loves being outside. Gabrielle's worker says she is a happy, loveable child.

To be a family for her, you can provide a loving, welcoming home for Gabrielle. You can work with doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals to make sure she receives the services she needs. You can also work to develop the skills needed to meet Gabrielle's medical needs at home in the absence of these professionals.



Gabrielle (7793)



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.

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REGISTER TODAY: 2011 Caregiver Institutes

“Turning Trauma Around at Home and in the Classroom”

March 5 Cook County Regions in Chicago
March 19 Central Region in Springfield
March 26 Southern Region in Mt. Vernon
April 2 Northern Region in Joliet

Registration details inside on page 2.

Inside this issue: Focus on teens

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