

Orloves find second round of foster care is even sweeter

Twenty years ago, Jeanette and Martin Orlove started on the road toward foster care. At that time, they had only one daughter and decided they had time to devote to children. The couple went on to care for four children. They came close to adopting, but at that time, circumstances did not permit it to go forward. When their second child was born after six years of foster care, they decided to take a detour and dropped their license until their daughters were older. In 2009, they got back on the road again. With their daughters now grown, they reopened their home.

This second time at foster care has taken them down two new paths: caring for a teen parent and later for two boys. The possibility of caring for a pregnant teen came as a bit of a surprise, and at first mention they did not think they could do it. It turned out to be a very positive experience for the Orloves.

“This young lady, with the Orloves’ support and guidance, was able to return home. Later she came back to the house with her mother to thank Martin and Jeanette, to let them know how she was doing and to invite them to her baby shower,” said Kristina Engle, DCFS licensing worker.

Next, the Orloves had to prepare to take care of two boys. After raising two daughters and fostering mostly girls, they are finding this to be a different but enjoyable experience.

Aside from the personal changes, the Orloves also have noticed many changes in child welfare since they were licensed the first time. They believe that their training experience was better after recently completing PRIDE Training. They have discovered more resources for children in foster care. They find the caseworkers are better trained. They appreciate the renewed focus on sibling visitation and that they are encouraged to form a relationship with parents.

If Jeanette could change one thing about the foster care system it would be to provide better training to the children’s parents. Jeanette thinks that parents may not always understand that there will be a transition when their child is leaving a foster home and going back to their home. It is important to manage the expectations about



Jeanette and Martin Orlove first served as foster parents 20 years ago. They took a break to raise their young daughters and re-licensed in 2009.

what life will be like after living apart. Martin admits he enjoys taking care of the children, but often does not understand some of the system’s rules. Sometimes what he as the foster parent feels is in the best interest of the child is different. However, he understands that rules are in place for a reason.

The only advice the Orloves can give to first time foster parents is to relax and enjoy the children. They feel that not only do you need to be their foster parent but also their friend. Often the children need someone they can talk to at anytime.

Northern Region sends 5 to college with DCFS full scholarship

This year, five students whose cases were served by programs in Central Region headed to college with the benefits included in the DCFS Scholarship program. The scholarship includes the waiver of tuition and mandatory fees at one of the nine Illinois state universities or Illinois junior colleges, a monthly maintenance grant of \$471 and a medical card.

Scholarship recipients were chosen statewide on the basis of scholastic aptitude, a written personal statement and demonstrated community involvement. Next year's scholarship application process begins in January and ends in March. Contact the youth's caseworker or the DCFS Office of Education and Transition Services at 312-814-5959.



Thomas Drey

Thomas is a 2010 graduate of Morrison High School where he earned a 3.47 GPA on a four-point scale. In high school, Thomas was a member of the football team, track team and the Madrigals Choir. He was inducted into the National Honor Society and was named

an Illinois State Scholar in his senior year. For three years, he was a volunteer at the Living the Challenge weekend, where his duties included caring for children with special needs so their parents could participate in informational seminars. Now Thomas is studying at Western Illinois University, and he plans to major in studio art.



Colleen Leonard

Colleen graduated from Woodstock High School where she earned a 3.83 GPA on a 4.0 scale. In high school she was a dedicated member of the music program, performing in the Varsity Choir, Madrigal singing group, Jazz Ensemble, and the women's a cappella group

Premium Blend. She was also an active participant in the theatre program and Key Club. She was selected for the National Honor Society and the school's honors music program and Thespian Troop 991. Colleen is an active volunteer with her church and traveled to New Orleans to provide support and service to those in need. Colleen is majoring in special education at Bradley University.

Tevin Marbeth (photo unavailable)

Tevin is a 2009 graduate of Lockport Township High School where he earned a 2.7 out of 4.0 GPA. He completed his freshman year at Northern Illinois University, in the School of Theater and Dance acting program. This competitive program recruits nationally for young theater artists.

Tevin worked hard in high school and was in multiple Advanced Placement (AP) classes each year. He also participated in drama and choir. He has been a contributing member to SOS Children's Village where he lived and in the larger community. Tevin was selected and trained to be a mentor for children when they were first placed at the Village, helping them to adjust. Tevin also tutored at the Village and worked with other youth there to build a Habitat for Humanity House. He was a member of the DCFS Regional Youth Advisory Board, where he advocated for youth in care and advised the Department on issues and concerns of youth. Tevin returned to Northern Illinois University for his second year, studying acting as he works toward a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree.

Northern News

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Anyone can call the regional reporter with foster parent association news and schedules; local training notices; features on foster families and community members working for children; photos; and ideas for news articles or supportive services that would be helpful for caregivers to know.



Mariah Miller

Mariah, of Waterman, is a 2010 graduate of Aurora Christian High School where she earned a 3.6 GPA on a four-point scale. During her freshman year of high school, Mariah received the “Exceptional Effort” award for group sports. She made the Honor Roll during her

sophomore and senior years and earned the “Best Work Ethic” award for her contribution as co-captain of the pom-pom squad. Mariah was inducted as a National Honor Society Member. She enjoyed playing basketball and participating in theater projects at school. She also took part in the Huntley Brown Benefit Concert all four years of high school. Mariah is now studying at Indiana Wesleyan University.



William Zavorski

William, from Monee, is a 2010 graduate of Crete-Monee High School where he had a 3.5 out of 4.0 GPA. William participated in basketball, baseball and boxing. He also enjoys volunteering and community service with non-profit organizations. William loves to cook and his goals

include pursuing experience in the hospitality business industry and to eventually own his own restaurant. He is studying at Eastern Illinois University, majoring in hospitality management.

BEST helps Will and Grundy county students find school success

Building Esteem Support Team, or BEST, is one program that families in Grundy and Will counties can turn to when children face difficulties at school. While many think of an ATM as a solution for cash, at BEST Advocacy-Tutoring-Mentoring can be the solution for a student at risk of truancy, suspension or expulsion. BEST coaches bridge the gap between the home and the school so that students can turn things around.

BEST provides one-on-one case management and uses a comprehensive approach to help students succeed in school. For example, one young man appeared to be completely disinterested in school and in his personal appearance. After working with an ATM Coach, his grades improved so much that he

became one of the keynote speakers for his eighth grade graduation. He also lost almost 50 pounds. As another sign of success, BEST points to a student who had been failing, but now competes with his cousins to see who can earn the highest grades.

BEST bases its approach on studies that confirm that positive and consistent adult interaction with a youth can break barriers and change the student’s life forever. BEST uses ATM Coaches to help young people develop a “life strategy” with a purpose and a plan to overcome barriers. The ATM Coach provides motivation, encouragement, connection to positive activities, advocacy and mentorship.

BEST can take referrals from caregivers, caseworkers or school

personnel. It serves families living in the boundaries of Local Area Network (LAN) 49. For more information call 815-725-8014.

To find other educational programs for families living across Northern region call a DCFS Local Area Network (LAN) Liaison

Phil Biage

630-801-3400

Kane, Kendall, McHenry, and Lake counties

Sidella Hughes

815-967-3731

DeKalb, Lee, Ogle, Whiteside and Winnebago counties

Sharon O’Bryant

815-730-4000

DuPage, Grundy, Kankakee, and Will counties



Northern Region Caregiver Training

Foster PRIDE In-Service Modules

All caregivers are welcome to attend PRIDE In-Service Training. The descriptions below will allow you to decide which classes fit your family's needs or circumstances. Advance registration is required for all classes. In addition to the slate of classroom courses, caregivers can also take advantage of Digital Pride modules on CD and the full offering of Lending Library materials.

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.

Module 1 - Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children at Risk (12 training hours)

This module focuses on building self-esteem in children. It covers how kids act when they need recognition, power, freedom, enjoyment, and a feeling of belonging. Caregivers will learn how to listen to what kids say and not what we think they say.

Module 2 - Using Discipline to Protect, Nurture and Meet Developmental Needs (9 training hours)

This workshop provides practical information to foster parents about how to use effective discipline techniques such as I-messages, natural and logical consequences, time out and how to catch kids being "good" and what to do to encourage positive behavior.

Module 3 & 4 - The Sexual Development of Children and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse (9 training hours)

Participants learn to differentiate normal from problematic sexual behaviors in children and youth, signs and symptoms of sexual abuse and ways to help sexually abused children recover.

Module 5 - Supporting Relationships between Children and Their Families (9 training hours)

This training focuses on helping foster parents learn how to help kids attach to caregivers and at the same time stay loyal to birth families. Caregivers learn about how to prepare and support children for and after visits with the birth family and how to share the parenting role with birth parents.

Module 6 - Working as a Professional Team Member (9 training hours)

Foster parents learn team members' roles, when and how to be an advocate for children, what conflict is and their own

personal style for managing it, and how conflict can be a "win - win" situation for everyone involved.

Module 7 - Promoting Children's Personal and Cultural Identity (6 training hours)

Culture includes traditions, values, customs and history. What "culture" means to a child's self-esteem, how to manage cultural diversity in a foster home, how to discuss sensitive issues with children and how to help a child record his or her history are topics covered in this module.

Module 8 - Promoting Permanency Outcomes (9 training hours)

The focus of this training is on families who have children in care and supporting reunification of the children and parents.

Module 9 - Managing the Impact of Placement on Your Family (6 training hours)

In this training, caregivers learn how fostering children can affect family relationships and how to minimize stresses that can result. They also learn about the supports that are available.

Module 10 - Understanding the Effects of Chemical Dependency on Children and Families (15 training hours)

Foster parents study the risk factors for chemical use, abuse, and dependency and understand relapse and recovery and be able to acquire skills necessary to be an active member of the team to support recovery in birth parents.

Module 12 - Understanding and Promoting Preeteen and Teen Development (6 training hours)

This new course assists caregivers to identify developmentally appropriate ways to best

promote healthy development for preteens and teens who have experienced abuse, neglect and trauma. This six-hour module will help foster/adopt caregivers understand teen brain development and the impact of trauma and loss on preteens and teens. Participants will learn specific strategies that caregivers can use when fostering teenagers in the day to day life of the foster family.

The Teen in Foster Care: Supporting Attachment (6 training hours)

Attachment and the Teen in Family Foster Care will help foster/adopt caregivers to understand how early attachment experiences have impacted the teen's development. The training covers the teen's perspective on how the accumulation of loss, separation and trauma impacts his or her beliefs, feelings, behaviors and relationships. Participants will learn specific tips for helping manage behaviors that develop over time from the teen's adaptive responses to trauma, grief and loss.

Educational Advocacy 6 training hrs.

It is mandatory for one foster parent in each family to attend Educational Advocacy Training in order to be re-licensed. Educational Advocacy Training is offered following each Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE training and many additional times. This six-hour course covers information foster parents need to know so that they can advocate for their foster children's educational rights and needs.