

# Central Connections



2001 Vol. 6

For Heart of Illinois Foster Parents

## Cure the "Gimmies" During the Holidays

If your kids' wish lists just won't quit, here are helpful tips:

**Start small.** We can't simply say, "Okay, only one present this holiday," when they're used to lots more. Trim some each year.

**Talk it up.** Explain that Mom and Dad have done some thinking and have decided that this Christmas there is going to be less emphasis on stuff and more on having fun as a family.

**Play together.** What kids really want, deep down, is your undivided attention. Play cards with them, go sledding or bring out the checkers.

**Top the list.** Often there are one or two things kids have their hearts set on, and when they get those items, they feel satisfied. But if you just can't afford your child's ultimate dream gift, don't be afraid to say so.

**Donate.** Ask your kids to select a new toy for a needy child, maybe even to buy it with their own money. You might also request that generous relatives give a modest gift, plus a contribution to a worthy cause in your child's name.

**Do it yourself.** Encourage kids to create presents for their family. They'll see that time can be more valuable than money.

**Be kind.** Make it a holiday tradition that each person in the family performs one act of kindness a week. Go over your good deeds at dinner.

## Peoria Youth Meets Tiger Woods

Terrance Alhassen, 15, has already had some of his dreams come true. When Adam and Sarah Alhassen brought him into their family, he was reunited with his siblings. The Alhassens adopted him and gave him a permanent home. They encouraged him to spend time reading and writing. His essay on "Why I want to meet Tiger Woods" was the equivalent of a golfer's hole-in-one. He was one of nine youth selected to participate in the Tiger Woods Foundation Golf Clinic in Rockford.

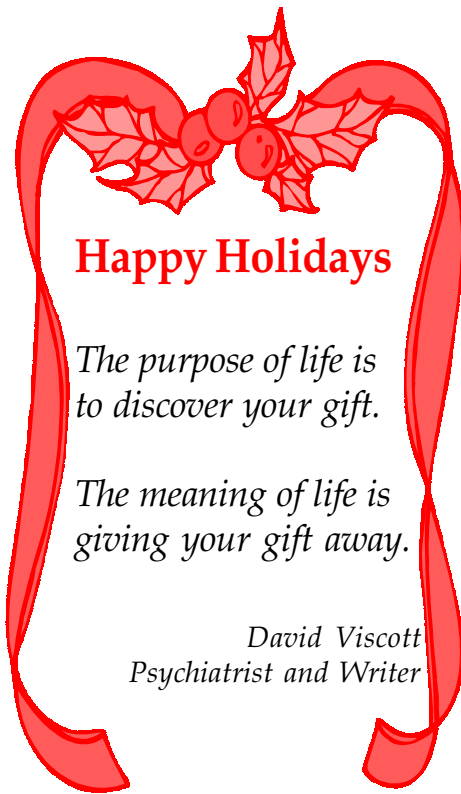
The clinics are designed to introduce inner-city youth to the sport and the business opportunities within the golf industry. In addition to top-notch golf instruction, Terrance met his hero at an exhibition after the workshop.

Last year, after watching a Tiger victory, Terrance remembers thinking, "He's pretty great. I want to be just like him." Terrance looks at Woods as a good example and a role model.

While he enjoyed his golfing experience, Terrance's personal goals are to be an attorney and to play basketball. It sounds like he is on his way with many athletic activities at the Boys and Girls Club and a place earned on the honor roll at school.



*Terrance Alhassen, on right, and his family hope the fun of golfing with Tiger will lead to more opportunities.*



## News from the Regional Foster Parent Advisory Council

### *Concurrent Investigations*

Denny McCue, Supervisor of Agency and Institution Licensing, recently spoke to foster parents about concurrent investigations that occur when an allegation of abuse is made against a foster family.

As a result of a recent DCFS policy change, DCFS Agency and Institution (A&I) licensing staff will complete the licensing investigation for DCFS and private agency foster homes whenever there is a child abuse/neglect report. This licensing investigation will occur at the same time as the investigation by the Division of Child Protection.

"This will shorten the time to investigate and be less intrusive for foster homes, while still ensuring child safety. We can put corrective plans in place and go on," said McCue.

Designated staff from agency and institution licensing will conduct all of these investigations instead of foster home licensing staff from DCFS and private agencies. Foster home licensing staff will have responsibility for developing and monitoring corrective plans. There are six A-I staff in Central Region: Kim Morgan located in Rock Island, Dennis Davis and Jay Brenneman in the Peoria Regional Office; Joyce Liesman in Lincoln; Don Lawson in Savoy; and Judy Roth in Springfield.

In addition, appeals regarding the findings of the licensing complaint investigation will now be handled by the A&I Unit. Furthermore, to make sure the process in place is serving families and the agency, there will be a monitoring schedule set up by the Resource Development Manager in the region.

"We will address system issues as we go along. The key issue is to make sure we don't drag along with back-to-back investigations. Now we can do business a lot quicker and a lot better," said McCue.

Denny McCue works in the Springfield Area Office and can be reached at 217/786-6830.

### *Regional Foster Parent Advisory Meetings*

You are invited to attend the next meetings of the Central Regional Advisory Council. Meetings are from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Please call Pat Kohler at 309/693-5400 for information on the location and to confirm your attendance. Lunch will be served.

Friday, November 30, 2001  
Friday, February 15, 2002  
Friday, April 12, 2002  
Friday, June 14, 2002

### Central Connections



#### Sponsor

Deborah Kennedy, DCFS  
Central Regional Administrator

#### Editor



Joyce Loy,  
Foster Parent  
801 S. High St.  
Port Byron, IL 61275  
Phone: 309-523-3189

Fax: 309-523-3360  
E-mail: [jloy1@gateway.net](mailto:jloy1@gateway.net)

Call with foster parent association news and schedules of local training, features on foster families and community members working for children, photos and news articles and supports all foster families can use.

## Easing the Transition from Home to Foster Care

In July the Peoria Promise Foster Care Program at Catholic Social Service initiated new services as part of their Transitions Project. This project strives to provide children with a smooth transition into a foster home living arrangement. The Transitions Project has three components:

1. Provide debriefing services at the time of placement to help children adjust to their new home environment.
2. Provide crisis counseling to all children over age three within 48 hours of placement.
3. Provide each child with a book bag or diaper bag filled with personal items appropriate to the child's age at the time of placement.

This project has received wonderful support from staff, foster parents and individuals in the community. Grants were received from the Irwin Andrew Porter Foundation, the Peoria Area Community Foundation, and Enterprise Rent-A-Car. In the spring, CSS staff held a spaghetti lunch/bake sale to support this project. A garage sale was held this fall. One family in the community asked for gifts to support the Transitions Project in lieu of birthday presents for their daughter's birthday party. This generous request resulted in over \$700.00 in cash and donated items!

The response from both foster parents and foster children so far has been quite positive. The project will be evaluated on an ongoing basis with input from the children and foster parents. Catholic Social Service hopes to expand the Transitions Project to other branch office sites as funding becomes available.

## Central Region Youth Advisory Council Dates:

Get your foster youth involved in making a difference for children. The Youth Advisory Council welcomes the input of all Central Region teens who want to take positive action and have fun with other youth in care. Monthly meetings are run by the teen council and are held at the Peoria Field Office at 2001 NE Jefferson. Meetings run from 4:00 until 6:00 p.m. Food will be served.

November 21, 2001  
January 16, 2002

December 19, 2001  
February 20, 2002

If you have a teenager, please call your caseworker and let them know the child is interested in attending. If you have any questions about the Youth Advisory Council, please contact Judy Rehder at 309/937-1071. If Judy is not in, please leave a message.

## The Twelve Ways of Christmas

Twelve ideas to enjoy the holiday season with your family.

1. Review the past year and add new pages to the child's life book.
2. Help your foster child bake cookies to deliver to birth parents at a visit.
3. Pick a day to shop for presents for birth families.
4. Get out the crayons and colored paper and create holiday cards.
5. Make personalized Christmas tree ornaments for each child in the house.
6. Collect pinecones, spray paint them gold and hang them around the home.
7. Clean out toy boxes and closets and make donations to other needy families.
8. Keep a gratitude board and post a new thing to be thankful for each day.
9. Visit a food pantry or soup kitchen and spend an afternoon serving others.
10. Gather your family and neighborhood children for caroling.
11. Host a sibling visit and decorate the Christmas tree together.
12. Pose for a new family picture to send to friends and family.

# Central Region Training Calendar

## FosterPRIDE In-Service Training

All licensed foster parents and adoptive parents are welcome to attend any or all of the PRIDE In-Service Trainings to enhance their skills and meet yearly training requirements.

**Module 1 - The Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children**  
(Four 3-hour sessions = 12 training hours)

**Module 2 - Using Discipline to Protect and Nurture**  
(Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

**Module 3 - Addressing Developmental Issues Related to Sexuality** (One 3-hour session = 3 training hours)

**Module 4 - Responding to the Signs and Symptoms of Sexual Abuse** (Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours)

**Module 5 - Supporting Relationships Between Children and Their Families** (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

**Module 6 - Working as a Professional Team Member**  
(Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

**Module 7 - Promoting Children's Personal and Cultural Identity** (Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours)

**Module 8 - Promoting Permanency Outcomes**  
(Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

**Module 9 - Managing the Impact of Placement on Your Family** (Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours)

**Module 10 - Understanding the Effects of Chemical Dependency on Children & Families**  
(Five 3-hour sessions = 15 training hours)

### Champaign Area 888-467-6065

	Module
<b>CHAMPAIGN - Workforce Prep Center</b> December 1, 8 & 15 (Sat) 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	8
<b>DANVILLE - TBA</b> February 2, 9 & 16 (Sat) 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	8
<b>DECATUR - Decatur Civic Center</b> December 1, 8 & 15 (Sat) 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	2

### Other In-Service Trainings

**Reactive Attachment Disorder (6 hrs.)**  
**DANVILLE - Community Church of God**  
December 8 (Sat) 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

**Transracial Parenting Training (9 hrs.)**  
**CHAMPAIGN - TBA**  
February 4, 11 & 13 (Mon) 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### Peoria Area 888-507-7433

	Module
<b>CANTON - Spoon River College</b> November 19, 26 & December 3 (Mon) 6:00-9:00 p.m.	8
February 6, 13 & 20 (Wed) 6:00-9:00 p.m.	5
<b>PEORIA - Professional Park Plaza</b> February 4, 11 & 18 (Mon) 6:00-9:00 p.m.	8
<b>QUAD CITIES - BHC Outreach Center</b> February 7, 14, 21, 28 & March 7 (Thurs) 6:00-9:00 p.m.	10

### Other In-Service Trainings

**Transracial Parenting Training (9 hrs.)**  
**MACOMB - TBA**  
January 28, February 4 & 11 (Mon) 6:00-9:00 p.m.

### Springfield Area 888-817-1825

	Module
<b>QUINCY - Days Inn</b> February 18, 25 & March 4 (Mon) 6:30-9:30 p.m.	8
<b>SPRINGFIELD - Lincoln Land Comm. College</b> December 8 (Sat) 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.	7
January 28, February 4, 11, 18 & 25 (Mon) 6:30-9:30 p.m.	10
February 6, 13, 20 & 27 (Wed) 6:30-9:30 p.m.	1

### Other In-Service Trainings

**Transracial Parenting Training (9 hrs.)**  
**QUINCY - Days Inn**  
January 12, 19 & 26 (Sat) 1:00-4:00 p.m.

## Educational Advocacy

Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours

It is mandatory for one foster parent in each family to attend Educational Advocacy Training in order to be licensed or 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.

### Peoria Area 888-507-7433

<b>CANTON</b> December 11 & 18 (Tues)	<b>Spoon River College</b> 6:00-9:00 p.m.
<b>GALESBURG</b> December 8 & 15 (Sat)	<b>Galesburg Public Library</b> 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
<b>OTTAWA</b> December 4 & 11 (Tues)	<b>First American Title Ins. Co.</b> 6:00-9:00 p.m.
<b>PEORIA</b> February 5 & 12 (Tues)	<b>Catholic Social Services</b> 6:00-9:00 p.m.
December 19 & January 2 (Wed)	<b>Counseling &amp; Family Svcs.</b> 6:00-9:00 p.m.
December 13 & 20 (Thurs)	<b>First English Lutheran Church</b> 6:00-9:00 p.m.
January 7 & 14 (Mon)	<b>Lutheran Social Services</b> 6:00-9:00 p.m.
January 5 & 12 (Sat)	<b>Professional Park Plaza</b> 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
January 8 & 15 (Sat)	9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
<b>QUAD CITIES</b> January 5 & 12 (Sat)	<b>BHC Outreach Center</b> 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

### Champaign Area 888-467-6065

<b>BLOOMINGTON</b> December 8 (Sat)	<b>Northside Church of Christ</b> 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
<b>CHAMPAIGN</b> December 15 (Sat)	<b>Workforce Prep Center</b> 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
<b>DECATUR</b> November 19 & 26 (Mon)	<b>Decatur Civic Center</b> 6:30-9:30 p.m.
December 15 (Sat)	<b>Webster-Cantrell-Hall</b> 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
<b>MATTOON</b> December 1 (Sat)	<b>Broadway Christ. Church</b> 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
<b>NORMAL</b> November 19 & 26 (Mon)	<b>The Baby Fold</b> 6:30-9:30 p.m.

### Springfield Area 888-817-1825

<b>JACKSONVILLE</b> December 8 & 15 (Sat)	<b>DCFS Field Office</b> 1:00-4:00 p.m.
<b>LINCOLN</b> January 5 & 12 (Sat)	<b>A. Lincoln Memorial Hospital</b> 1:00-4:00 p.m.
<b>QUINCY</b> February 2 & 9 (Sat)	<b>Days Inn</b> 1:00-4:00 p.m.
<b>SPRINGFIELD</b> January 8 & 15	<b>Lincoln Land Comm. College</b> 6:30-9:30 p.m.
<b>TAYLORVILLE</b> January 25 & February 1 (Fri)	<b>St. Vincent's Memorial Hospital</b> 6:30-9:30 p.m.

**Pre-registration is required for all classes!**

**Call the number listed for your area.**