

THANK YOU From the Northern Region

All across the Northern Region appreciation events from potlucks to picnics were planned to coincide with "National Foster Family Month." No matter what the event and no matter what the gift...there is just no way we can thank you enough for what you do as Foster Parents.

Everyday you each touch a child's life. You make this simple poem ring true.

*One hundred years from
now it will not matter
What kind of car I drove,
What kind of house
I lived in,
How much money I had
in my bank account.
Nor what my clothes
looked like.
But the world may be
a little better
Because I was important
in the life of a child.*

—Author unknown

Harvey family finds fulfillment fostering teens

Robyn and Robert Harvey of DeKalb have been licensed foster parents since 1997. They started fostering with an interest in young children, but later discovered the joy of parenting teens.

Their introduction to foster care came through a friendship at their church. A fellow member who was caring for her two young grandchildren asked them to be foster parents. The Harveys had a three-year-old at the time, and had hoped to expand their family. They agreed to step into a difficult situation and become licensed foster parents.

Even though things were sometimes difficult having three small children at home, the Harveys managed to weather the storms and still looked forward to caring for other children. Soon after they were licensed, they decided to be foster parents to a teenage boy. Looking back, they again can say that despite the challenges, there have been great rewards for their family.

"We are very proud to see our foster son blossom into an adult who is able to make adult choices and decisions," said Robyn.

The Harveys have become big advocates to fostering teens. They have recruited other families to open their homes to teens. Other families with teens look to the Harveys for support and advice.

They have been successful foster parents because, regardless of the child's permanency goal, the Harvey's treat every child as a permanent part of the family. Currently, there are six children in their home. Yet, children formerly placed with them are still encouraged to visit often. They also maintain relationships with the children's birth parents. The Harvey's believe in doing whatever it takes to help the kids in their home.

"I got into foster care based on the Bible's direction 'to be a father to the fatherless'. That is a great thing to do. It has worked out well for our family," said Bob.

In addition to supporting her own family, Robyn is the Foster Parent Support Specialist in DeKalb and Ogle counties. She is the person families can turn to when they need advice, information or just someone who understands what they are going through. Additionally, she and Bob are active in the DCFS region and the local support group. Together Robyn and Bob Harvey are helping children and making a difference in Northern Region families.



Help nearby for families on the path toward adoption

Some parents find the process of adoption to be complicated and sometimes frustrating. However, there are parents who have successfully navigated the system to achieve a happy and fulfilling adoption.

Adoption Advocacy International and the Parent Resource Center of DuPage are working together to offer mentoring services to adoptive parents of special needs children. No fees are charged for this assistance to families.

Adoptive parent liaisons can provide prospective adoptive information about foster parent licensure, DCFS, the legal system, and resources and services in the community.

Services include:

- Educational materials
- A link to community resources
- Assistance with subsidy agreements
- Educational rights
- Post adoption support
- Advocacy in the community
- Assistance with forms and paperwork
- Someone to talk to about adoption

If your family would benefit from this service or you know a family who would please contact the Parent Resource Center of DuPage by calling the numbers listed below.

The Parent Resource Center of DuPage

799 Roosevelt Road
Building 3, Suite 014
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137
630/942-9860

Adoption Advocacy International

323 Arboretum Circle
Wheaton, Illinois 60187
630/933-0840

Northern News

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107 N. 3rd Street
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Phone: 815-967-3830
Fax: 815-967-3737



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

Foster Parents Open Hearts and Closets to Clothe Kids

Many foster parents have had children come with little more than the clothes on their backs. Sometimes children are removed from their homes with only what they are wearing or what they can carry. Sometimes clothes they had are missing or too small.

Fellow foster parents, Eric and Amy Bachman of Palatine have set out to make a difference by forming an organization called **Kid's Closet, Inc.** "We have collected clothing, shoes, toys, books, and other necessities from our family, friends and community. The idea is to give them away at no cost to foster children," said Amy.

When a child comes into a foster home, the foster parents can simply call and Kid's Closet will try to provide what that child needs. Kid's Closet may not have everything a foster child may need, but it can provide at least the basic clothing items and give a child a better chance at a fresh start.

"There is absolutely no reason that any child in the Chicagoland area should be without clothing, shoes, toys, or the basic necessities. A full closet is only the beginning," the Bachmans firmly believe.

If your foster child needs supplies or to donate supplies please call (847) 776-KID-1 (776-5431).

Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan Committee Needs You!

The Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan Committee (FPLIP), a sub-committee of the Regional Foster Care Enhancement Committee, is comprised of foster parents and staff dedicated to the implementation of the Foster Parent Law. The Foster Parent Law outlines the Rights and Responsibilities of foster parents and the professional staff as they support the children they care for.

This Committee works closely with the Agency Performance Team (APT), Regional Training Committee, Regional Quality Assurance Committee and other units within the Department to incorporate Best Practice and COA accreditation standards into the Region's implementation plan.

The committee invites you to attend these meetings, which are open to staff and DCFS-supervised foster parents. They are fun, positive and productive meetings, focused on making the fostering experience better for families and children.

Throughout the year the FPLIP Committee will meet monthly at various field offices in the Northern Region. The next meeting is May 22, Aurora Region, 8 E. Galena, Aurora at 9:30 a.m. During the months of September and October the Committee will be finalizing the Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan for the upcoming year and will meet weekly.

Foster Parent and Staff Participation is vital to the success of the Northern Region Implementation Plan. Foster parents interested in participating should contact Meta Rowan or Joan Matheny, Co-Chairs.

DCFS Provides Latino Special Services Program to Northern Region Families

The Latino Special Services Program (LSSP) at Lifelink has been retained by DCFS to work with the Northern Region Field Offices and private agencies in the area of Latino foster care. In the first months of the program, much of the effort went toward establishing a presence in the Northern Region, creating partnerships with traditional and non-traditional bilingual/bicultural resources and implementing a strategic work plan. These efforts have included a comprehensive marketing campaign, an aggressive community outreach effort, identifying and gathering qualified bilingual/bicultural resources and creating an Internet web page where resources can be accessed.

Through the remainder of 2002, the program will expand to DuPage, Boone and Will counties where the same system of service will follow.

The initial effort has been met with a spirit of willingness and cooperation from DCFS and private agencies. As a result, Northern Region is optimistic about the future of the Latino Special Services Program and how it will continue to service families this year.



Meta Rowan
(Foster Parent)
630/844-8400



Joan Matheny
(DCFS staff)
815/967-3713



Staff, from left to right: Vince Casillas, Program Supervisor; Amilyn Twedt, Resource Specialist; Martha Oviedo, Receptionist; Raquel Montalvo, Health/Education Advocate; Frank Martinez, Quality Assurance Specialist; and Andres David Santiago, Foster Parent Recruiter.

Northern 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)

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 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.

College of DuPage Area 630-942-2392

AURORA	<i>Comfort Suites City Center</i>
June 8 (Sat)	9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
August 17 (Sat)	9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
CRYSTAL LAKE	<i>Country Inn & Suites</i>
August 17 (Sat)	9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
ELGIN	<i>Crowne Plaza Hotel</i>
June 3 & 5 (Mon/Wed)	6:30-9:30 p.m.
September 23 & 25 (Mon/Wed)	6:30-9:30 p.m.
GLEN ELLYN	<i>College of DuPage</i>
June 8 (Sat)	9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
August 27 & 29 (Tues/Thurs)	6:30-9:30 p.m.
JOLIET/ROMEOVILLE	<i>Country Inn & Suites</i>
August 13 & 15 (Tues/Thurs)	6:30-9:30 p.m.
KANKAKEE/BOURBONNAIS	<i>Lees Inn</i>
June 15 (Sat)	9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
September 7 (Sat)	9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
WAUKEGAN	<i>Ramada Inn Waukegan</i>
June 15 (Sat)	9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
August 5 & 7 (Wed)	6:30-9:30 p.m.
September 17 & 19 (Tues/Thurs)	6:30-9:30 p.m.

Rock Valley Area 815-874-3000

ROCKFORD	<i>The Bell Building</i>
June 15 & 22 (Sat)	1:00-4:00 p.m.
August 10 & 17 (Sat)	1:00-4:00 p.m.
	<i>IETC</i>
June 4 & 11 (Tues)	6:00-9:00 p.m.
June 20 & 27 (Thurs)	6:00-9:00 p.m.
August 20 & 27 (Tues)	6:00-9:00 p.m.
September 26 & October 3 (Thurs)	6:00-9:00 p.m.

College of DuPage Area 630-942-2392

	Module
AURORA - Comfort Suites City Center	
June 3, 5 & 10 (Mon/Wed)	6:30-9:00 p.m. 5
August 19 & 21 (Mon/Wed)	6:30-9:30 p.m. 7
CRYSTAL LAKE - Holiday Inn Crystal Lake	
May 29 & June 1 (Wed/Sat)	6:30-9:00 p.m. 8 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
ELGIN - Crowne Plaza Hotel	
June 3 & 6 (Mon/Thurs)	6:30-9:00 p.m. 7
September 9 & 11 (Mon/Wed)	6:30-9:30 p.m. 9
GLEN ELLYN - 425 Fawell Blvd.	
Aug 19, 20 & 22 (Mon/Tues/Thurs)	6:30-9:00 p.m. 3&4
JOLIET/ROMEOVILLE - Country Inn & Suites	
May 28, 30 & June 4 (Tues/Thurs)	6:30-9:30 p.m. 3&4
September 12 (Thurs) & September 14 (Sat)	6:30-9:30 p.m. 8 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
KANKAKEE/BOURBONNAIS - Lees Inn	
June 6, 11 & 13 (Tues/Thurs)	6:30-9:00 p.m. 5
WAUKEGAN - Ramada Inn	
July 22, 24 & 29 (Mon/Wed)	6:30-9:30 p.m. 2

Rock Valley Area 815-874-3000

	Module
ROCKFORD - The Bell Building	
June 5, 12 & 19 (Wed)	6:00-9:00 p.m. 8
ROCKFORD - TBA	
July 10, 17 & 24 (Wed)	10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. 1
August 8, 15 & 22 (Thurs)	6:00-9:00 p.m. 2
September 12, 19 & 26 (Thurs)	10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. 3&4

Other In-Service Trainings

Transracial Parenting Training
DEKALB - DCFS Office
August 6, 13 & 20 (Tues) 6:00-9:00 p.m.



Pre-registration is required for all classes!

Call the number listed for your area.

Other In-Service Trainings

Understanding the Attachment-Disordered Child in Foster and Adoptive Families

CRYSTAL LAKE - Country Inn & Suites
September 14 (Sat) 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Transracial Parenting Training

KANKAKEE/BOURBONNAIS - Lees Inn
September 10 (Tues) & September 14 (Sat) 6:30-9:30 p.m.
9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.