



FOSTERING

Linking Families Together for

ILLINOIS

Children's Futures

BACK TO SCHOOL – READY, SET, GO!!!!

Now that classes are soon to start, it is time to begin preparing children for the school year. There are several things you can do to make the start of the school year a lot easier for you and your child.

1. *Be sure the child is registered ahead of time.*

If the child did not attend the same school last year, find out when registration is being held, and make certain that all the paperwork is handled so you don't have to stand in line the first day of school. You want your child to know what class he is going to be in, who the teacher is, what the room number is, etc., BEFORE school starts if possible. Turn in transfer papers, copies of the Individualized Education Plan for special education or doctor's reports ahead of time. Your caseworker can help you if necessary.

2. *Get the child's clothes and school supplies ready, organized and ready to go well ahead of time.*

Get a list of required supplies from the school and buy them over the summer when there are good sale prices. If a school uniform is required, be sure you have enough so the child will always be clean and neat. Never let a child go to school without the uniform, so he can always feel like he really belongs.

3. *For older children, find out what after-school activities they will be in and what extra supplies they will need.*

Get those ready, too, so they can participate right from the beginning of school.

4. *Practice walking the route to the school or bus stop, so it is not "scary" on the first day of school.*

Reassure the child that you will be looking forward to being with him after school, and want to know all about his day.

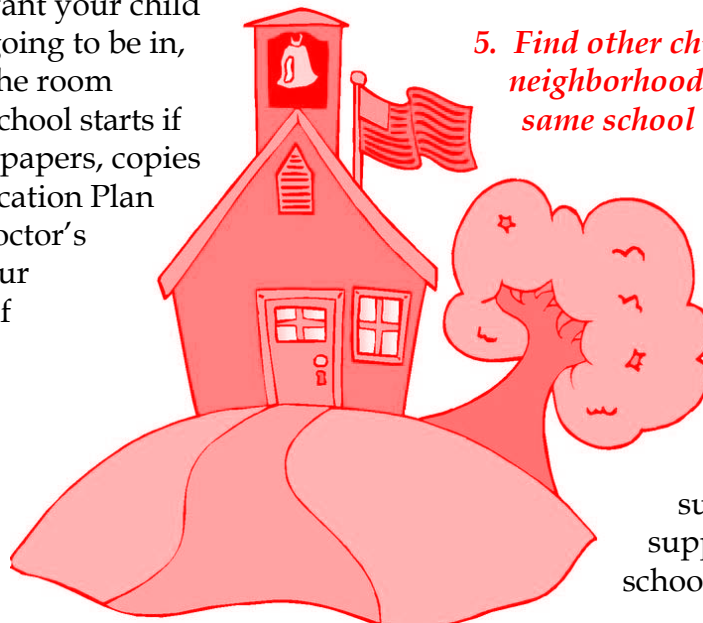
5. *Find other children in your neighborhood who will be going to the same school and make sure your child knows them.*

6. *Talk about what this school year will be like.*

Discuss how, when and where the child will do his homework. Answer any questions. Make sure he knows you are supportive of him and his schooling.

7. *Practice reading, counting, or whatever is appropriate for the child's grade in school, so he has a little "boost" before school starts.*

For a kindergarten child, practice sitting in a circle and taking turns, for a first-grade child, practice reading out loud or adding numbers. Show him or her that they can do the things the teacher will be asking. The child will feel much more comfortable with a bit of preparation.



Continued on page 6.

Preparing Teens for Independent Living, Step by Step

During the tumultuous teen years when all kids want to test their wings, life around the proverbial nest can be tough for everyone. Families fostering adolescents can play a critical role in preparing youth to move to adulthood. The DCFS Independent Living Operations (ILO) team is also there to help. ILO provides the guidelines, as well as guidance, for youth who will establish their own residence, rather than live in a foster home until they come of age and leave DCFS care.

While most teens dream of life on their own, independent living is not the right alternative for every child. For some teens, continuing in foster care with a family willing to help provide “real world” experiences and instruction could be the best option. For younger teens, a transitional program where they share residences with other teens and staff on duty could be a precursor to an independent living arrangement later. An older teen who has completed high school may be ready for his own apartment with a caseworker to check-in periodically and help provide some educational or work-related resources. The professionals on the ILO staff work with adolescents, case workers, service providers and foster parents to make sure teens have the support and resources they need for success as adults.

* * *

There are several steps for gaining approval for a teen to move toward independent living. The process involves planning and could take six to nine months. The story of Kim’s experience illustrates how foster parents can support a teen’s quest for independence.

Kim is a 17-year-old high school junior. She has been with her foster parents, Bill and Renee Anderson for three years. She is close to the family and even considered adoption, but decided to keep the goal of independence. Life with her foster parents was pretty good. But after all her time “in the system” she wanted to start making decisions for herself. Kim had many discussions with her caseworker Sarah about goals after she graduates from high school, and college is a possibility. Kim is looking forward to life after DCFS and wants to start making plans now to set up her own home on her own terms.



STEP 1 Hold child and family team meeting to determine if Independent Living is appropriate plan.

Kim, Sarah, Sarah’s supervisor Jennifer and the Andersons met together in the foster care agency’s conference room. They went over the letter the Anderson’s helped Kim write to express her reasons for wanting to seek an independent living program. Everyone agreed that Kim had shown a lot of growth and maturity. She was respecting the rules at home and had built a good case for moving to the next level of responsibility. However, since she still had a year and a half of high school left, Sarah recommended looking at transitional living homes until she finished school. Then she could be better prepared to establish her own household through an independent living program. Kim decided that the two-step plan made sense and the Andersons also agreed.

STEP 2 Gather information to complete the referral packet

Sarah printed a copy of the referral packet (CFS forms 986-ILO, 986-62C and ILO/TLP Staffing Summary) and went over it with Kim. Then she began to gather the school records and reports that were required. Kim wrote a personal statement about why she was seeking a transitional living setting in preparation for independent living.

STEP 3 Identify suitable Independent Living Program provider

Sarah called Donnella Bishop-Ward the ILO manager for Cook County (all other cases outside of Cook are directed to ILO Coordinator Fred Higgins.) She asked for an updated list of transitional and independent living providers so she and Kim could begin evaluating programs. They identified three programs that seemed to meet Kim's needs and interests and scheduled appointments to visit them. Kim went ready with her own set of questions to ask the staff at each residence.

STEP 4 Submit referral packet to the DCFS Region

Kim selected a program that was fairly close to her current foster home and would not require her to change high schools. Sarah added the provider's information to the referral packet and sent it to the DCFS region for review.

STEP 5 Hold staffing (PRT) with Clinical Manager at Regional level

A few weeks later Kim got the call saying the staffing was set. She and Sarah and a worker from the transitional home met with the clinical manager for the DCFS Regional Office. The DCFS team went over all the paperwork in her file. Kim was a little nervous, but answered all of their questions. When they looked at the results of her last psychological profile they had concerns. Since the test was done five years earlier, the review team asked for another test to be done. Kim was very disappointed. However, Sarah reminded her that she had not been told no. Things just might take longer than she had hoped.

About six weeks later, the team came back together. This time the Andersons went with Kim to offer their perspective based on their time with Kim. The new psychological report offered more information. With input from the Andersons, Kim convinced the team that she was well-prepared to make the transition. The team recommended that her referral be approved.

STEP 6 OPTIONAL. Submit recommendation to ILO at the Division of Education and Transition Services

In most cases the regional approval will be all that is needed. As of June 2002, Central Region and Cook South Region already had final signoff authority. Other regions will soon follow. However, in cases that are more complicated and require special attention, the ILO manager/coordinator will continue to review the referral packets for final approval. They will closely evaluate the psychological and social assessments to find indications that the child will be able to handle the responsibilities that would come with the new, independent setting. After the review, the ILO staff will return their decision to the regional team that can then forward it to the caseworker and the youth.

ONGOING Support the teen and prepare for making the transition to Independence

It is a big leap for kids to come out of care and step into independent living. Foster parents can provide hands-on training in how to make contacts for utilities or creating a savings plan for the expected bills and the emergency bills.

It can be hard for foster parents to hear that a child is going to move on and still be supportive. But, one of the most important messages families can send is about the permanent value of the relationship.

"It is important for these young adults to hear foster parents say 'I am not dropping out of your life just because you're independent,'" said ILO Coordinator Fred Higgins.

Foster parents can drive that point home by setting up visits after the teen's move or making holiday plans. Lifelong relationships that start in foster care can continue through independence and on through adulthood.

For more information contact Donnella Bishop-Ward at 312/814-5959 or Fred Higgins at 309/671-4725.

Following Confidentiality Rules Helps Foster Children and Parents

Children and the adults in their lives need to have their privacy protected. The Department has made provisions to ensure that privacy is respected, given the special circumstances that bring together the kids, birth families, foster parents, child welfare agencies, government and the legal system. When all parties abide by the rules of confidentiality, they build trust and encourage more positive communications, creating a better environment for children.

Protecting Children's Privacy

At school

It is important that teachers (and other service providers) have information about children to better meet the child's needs. However, it is not the foster parent's role to communicate details about the child's case to teachers. DCFS policy states that the caseworker not the foster parent is authorized to communicate case information on a "need to know" basis. The foster parent and caseworker should work closely to determine how to ensure a child's privacy and get needed support at school.

Among family, friends and neighbors

Foster parents are bound by rules of confidentiality that family, friends and neighbors are not. Even an innocently asked question about how a child in your family came into care must be answered by saying it is confidential and cannot be discussed. Not telling case information to people who are close to you (and the children) is difficult, but is a policy that must be followed. However, if that person may be a temporary caretaker for the child during a vacation or emergency, discuss with the caseworker what information should be shared.

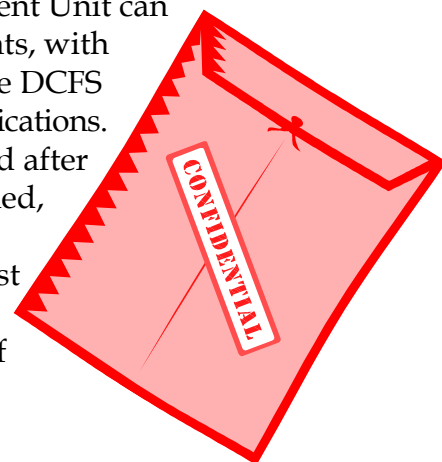
Think about disclosure in terms of possible behaviors the child might demonstrate and what may be needed to care for him or her. For example, a child who was sexually abused by a birth mom's boyfriend might resist taking baths. Instead of giving those details to your mother for an overnight visit, you could just remind her to have the child dress in the morning so she can bathe when she gets back to your house.

With other foster parents

The fact that foster parents have shared experiences that are so helpful and comforting can also make it easy to forget about confidentiality. As long as foster parents don't disclose names and case information, discussing issues with other foster parents can be beneficial, without breaking confidentiality rules.

With the media

Positive news coverage about foster care can be a good thing. However, it must happen within the guidelines of confidentiality. Foster parents who are approached by the media must direct all inquiries to the DCFS Office of Communications 312/814-6847 in Chicago or 217/785-1700 in Springfield. The Office will work with the news outlet on positive media opportunities. It will also ensure that confidentiality requirements are met. The Office of Communications can also explain its policies on interviews with children in DCFS care, photographs and providing consents to release information to the media. Foster parents should note that only the DCFS Guardian or the DCFS Consent Unit can sign media consents, with the approval of the DCFS Office of Communications. After approval and after the consent is signed, the interview or media contact must be coordinated by the DCFS Office of Communications.



Protecting Foster Parents' Privacy

When foster parents open their homes to children in need they often must strike a balance between protecting children from the circumstances with their birth families that brought them into care and supporting that relationship with their family. To allow them to do that, DCFS has established confidentiality rules that protect the foster parents. DCFS will regard identifying information about licensed foster parents and license-exempt relative caregivers as confidential. The name, address or telephone number of a foster parent or relative caregiver will only be given to certain parties according to DCFS Rule 431, Confidentiality of Personal Information of Persons served by the Department of Children and Family Services.

Identifying foster parent or relative caregiver information may be disclosed to the following:

- DCFS and private agency staff responsible for the delivery of services to the child, birth family or foster parents.
- State's Attorneys and Assistant State's Attorneys
- Guardians Ad Litem for children placed in the foster family/relative caregiver home (attorneys representing the child's interests)
- Court personnel
- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs)
- Administrative Case Review staff
- Medical providers for the children in care
- The child's school and educators
- Other service providers for the children in care
- Children seven years of age or older under the guardianship of DCFS who are siblings to children in the foster parent's care, unless a decision has been made to withhold the information (in accordance with DCFS policies on sibling visitation)
- Illinois Department of Public Aid (for processing Medicaid claims)
- Quality assurance staff employed or contracted by the Department to conduct quality assurance reviews
- Social Security Administration
- Researchers whose research has been approved by the Department
- Statewide foster parent associations or other foster parent groups recognized by the Department

When a license is issued to foster parents or upon placement of a child with a relative caregiver, DCFS or the private agency will give foster parents written notice that their name, address and phone will be given to the above parties.

In the first 30 days that a child comes into care, the Department or private agency will assess whether there are circumstances for any specific disclosure of foster parents/relative caregivers' identifying information. For example, when the child's permanency goal is return home, child-birth parent visits, telephone calls and mail may be encouraged according to the service plan. Foster parents will be notified if it is determined that their information will be released. However, DCFS will not release information if a birth parent or other adult living in that home has been convicted of certain crimes or has exhibited violence or made threats of violence against a foster parent/relative caregiver or child welfare worker in the past.

DCFS is aware of the dynamics of the foster parent role and is committed to ensuring that foster parents are supported and respected in their unique and important endeavor.

BACK TO SCHOOL (con't.)

8. If there are older children in the home, encourage them to “play school,” and have the younger children be the students, so they learn what to expect. Walk around their school with them, and show them the main entrance, the playground, etc., so it is not strange to them on the first day of school.

9. Always tell the child where you will be during the day, so he can think about what YOU are doing if he gets lonesome in school. Let your student know you will be thinking about what he is doing, and want to hear about it after school.

10. Meet the child's teacher before school starts if you can, but within the first week for sure. Tell her you are available and interested, and that you want to be kept informed of everything your child is doing. Give her your phone numbers so she can reach you. Teachers really appreciate that, and you can be involved before anything gets out of control. This can help everyone work through problems easier.

11. Get yourself educated about education issues. If you have any questions, call your caseworker or Education Advisor Liaison before school starts or whenever something comes up during the year. Come to Foster Parent training sessions at DCFS and learn how to help your child in school, which makes your life a lot easier, too!



Seeing clearly through the vision plan



A child's vision should be checked at the comprehensive health evaluation upon first entering the foster care system. Periodically at well child check-ups, the vision will also be tested, or schools often test vision.

As a result of these exams, many foster children get new glasses each year with the medical card. But what happens if before a year's time the glasses are lost, broken or become too small? These are all allowable reasons to request replacement pair of glasses within the first year, without prior approval from the Department of Public Aid.

Does the child need two pairs at the same time due to his or her eyesight? Ask the caseworker to submit the request for prior approval by DPA. Contacts, polycarbonate lenses, and artificial eyes are covered only when medically necessary and must be submitted for prior approval to DPA. Vision therapy also requires prior approval and is covered only when provided by an ophthalmologist.

DCFS Appoints New Head of Child Protection Division

John Goad was named Deputy Director of the Division of Child Protection at the end of last year. He replaces Ed Cotton who left the Department in December. Goad's promotion from Associate Deputy Director capped almost three decades of service to Illinois children and families.

Goad holds a degree in Political Science and a minor in Sociology from DePauw University. He began his career in state government as a job counselor at the Bureau of Employment Security. There, he specialized in counseling delinquent and economically disadvantaged youth. After discovering a desire to serve children, in 1975 he transferred to DCFS and became a social worker.



For the next 15 years, Goad would be assigned to the 1026 S. Damen facility, but he would change jobs frequently as his talents and abilities earned him successive promotions through the various levels of the Social Worker, Supervising Social Worker, and Child Welfare Administrator titles. He also was a key player in several programs that included the Service Coordination Unit for Cook County and the implementation of the Sex Abuse Unit.

In the fall of 1984 Goad transferred to the Division of Child Protection. Again, he received several promotions, along with completing graduate work at the University of Chicago. The breadth and depth of John Goad's experiences in his 26-year career with DCFS made him an outstanding and obvious choice for the Deputy Director position.

Speaking the Language of Special Education

When working with special education, it can seem like educators are speaking a different language. In some cases, they are. For example IDEA means Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Here's how parents can translate other terms.

Inclusion usually means placing a child in the neighborhood school with appropriate supports, aides and curriculum adaptations so that he/she can participate in classes with children without disabilities.

Mainstreaming means placing a student in a general education academic classroom. Mainstreamed students are expected to meet the same standards as other students in a class.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) IDEA requires each student with a disability to be provided with an individualized education program (IEP). The IEP is the blueprint for a child's daily school program and is created each year by the foster child's foster parent, teachers and the specialists involved in his/her education.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for Students IDEA states that each student with a disability be placed in the "least restrictive environment" (LRE). This means the student should participate in the general education setting during academic, nonacademic and extra curricular activities with services and supports with their typical peers. The general education setting is preferred and the starting point for discussions on the student's needs for services and supports. Because of individual needs, some students may need a more restrictive environment.

Integration involves taking a child out of a special education environment and placing him/her in a general education classroom *for part of the school day*.

Supplementary aids and services are defined by IDEA as supports a student requires in a general education classroom. They can be as simple as moving a child's desk so he can see the blackboard better or as complex as providing a student with an electronic communication system.



Forever Families

Resources for Adoptive Families

Explaining adoption to strangers, coming to terms about the birth family and creating a positive self-out look on adoption are all tough everyday adoption issues. Fortunately there are resources to help. The following books are available through Tapestry Books. If the following descriptions ring true for your family, contact Tapestry Books by phone at 800-765-2367 or on the web at www.tapestrybooks.com

Adoption Attorney News

DCFS has recently updated and reorganized The Adoption Attorney Panel list of attorneys who can directly bill DCFS for their services in a subsidized adoption. The most current version of the list can be found on the DCFS website at www.state.il.us/dcfs (select the Adoption tab) or by contacting your adoption worker.

This list was compiled as a convenience for potential adoptive parents, who may choose any attorney they wish. However, if an attorney is not on the approved list, the parents will have to pay the fees out-of-pocket and then submit a bill up to \$1,500 to their caseworker for reimbursement.

While inclusion in the list does not serve as an endorsement of the attorney's legal expertise or competence, it does signify that he or she has received training about DCFS rules and procedures.

To make training available to more attorneys in all parts of the state, the DCFS Office of Legal Services is now employing a video version of the training. The video covers DCFS policies that are important in completing the adoption of a child in DCFS care. Copies of the video have been distributed to contacts throughout the state so they may be checked out as needed.

For information on how to find or refer an attorney to provide services related to adoption, contact Shelly Knuppel in the Office of Legal Services at 217/785-2558.

WISE Up Powerbook, Marilyn Schoette

Friends, teachers and even strangers often ask children questions, both personal and general, about adoption. Empower your child. The WISE UP POWERBOOK gives your children (and you) the tools to cope with these sometimes uncomfortable comments from others. They learn to Walk away, say It's private, Share something or Educate (WISE). Whether these questions come from benign curiosity, ignorance or intended insults, this workbook will enable your children to choose the course of action that is right for them.

Oliver by Lois Wickstrom

Today is not a good day for Oliver, an alligator-like animal. Because of this, he is angry with his parents. While being punished in his room, he daydreams about his birthparents. He wonders what life would be like if he were still living with them. Of course, he imagines that it would be much more exciting than his real life and family. This excellent book was a winner of the 1999 annual Read, America collection.

Filling In the Blanks, Susan Gabel

Many teenagers have questions and concerns about adoption that they may be reluctant to express. This workbook is a tool for older children and adolescents to help them learn about being adopted. Filling In the Blanks is divided into four sections: My Birth Family, My Adoption Process, My Adoptive Family and Myself. Each section contains text, definitions, fill-in-the-blanks and places for pictures.



Teacher handout

ADOPTION IN THE CLASSROOM



Preschool

- Simply mention the words “adoption” or “adopted” occasionally as you talk about babies and families or tell stories.
- Enter into, or initiate, role plays about getting ready for the arrival of an adopted child, going to the airport to meet a new child, or going to court to have the adoption finalized.
- Choose stories to read which mention adoption.
- Make sure that the pictures and books in the classroom reflects the world’s diversity.

Later Elementary

- Be sensitive to the fact that children of this age generally want to fit in and be the same as other children. They are unlikely to want to be singled out because they are adopted.
- Present the Family Tree exercise with several alternatives for the whole class, describing how adopted children have chosen to make their trees in the past.
- Mention that many famous people are adoptees: Moses, former President Gerald Ford, Stephen Jobs, Nelson Mandela, John Lennon, even Superman.

Early Elementary

- Read stories that are about adoption, as well as ones that mention adoption in passing.
- As you discuss different kinds of families always mention adoptive families.
- If a student in the class has a baby born into their family, use this as an opportunity to mention that some children join families through adoption.
- Consider a class activity for National Adoption Awareness Month (November), such as having an adoptive parent visit.
- Be aware of potential confusion when the word “adoption” is used in connection with animals or fundraisers.
- Suggest that a different theme be used- instead of Adopt a Book, try Befriend a Book, instead of “adoption” an animal at a shelter, talk of “ finding an owner.”

Middle & High School

- Suggest adoption as one of the themes for essay or journal writing. Allow students to explore their feelings.
- Introduce family history assignments sensitively, mentioning alternatives for everyone and noting that some students may not have access to their birth relatives, due to divorce, death, adoption, or for other reasons.
- Mention adoption in science class in connection with genetic studies, noting those traits, skills, and characteristics which are inherited and those which acquired.
- In family life and sex education classes, discuss families formed by adoption. Explain adoption as a choice for people who face an unplanned pregnancy. Use positive adoption language and encourage students to do so.
- If a student says, “ I don’t see how anyone could place a child for adoption,” talk about adoption as a loving choice.

From the Files

Deadline Extended for Independence Grants

Independence Facilitation Grants were developed to emphasize the importance of securing permanent placements for young people in foster care. The grant is designed to help children who gain permanency through adoption or subsidized guardianship prepare for adult life. Knowing that the child will receive a \$3,000 grant upon reaching their age of majority to ease the transition to adulthood, will hopefully provide an incentive to the child's caregiver to adopt or become guardian.

The original deadline of June 30 was extended to October 31, 2002 for the finalization of the adoption or transfer of guardianship. This was done because of the interest shown by caregivers to adopt or become guardians has been strong. DCFS wards, 14 to 18 who are adopted or under guardianship are eligible for the grant. The time limit is due to the availability of federal funds of the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. Questions can be directed to June Dorn at 312/814-6858.

Stronger Seatbelt Safety Laws

Foster parents should be aware that the law now states that drivers must require all passengers under 16 (formerly age 6) to ride using seatbelts or restraint systems. Additionally the maximum fine for a violation of the Child Passenger Protection Act was raised to \$50. The Governor's office also encourages the use of booster seats for children age four to eight (weighing 40-80 pounds).

Additionally, the National Safety Council announced a program to help parents identify the more than 1,500 locations that perform car seat safety checks. The nationwide, toll-free phone line (1-866-SEATCHECK) is part of a new campaign to promote the need for safety seat inspections.

School Time Fun

On the first day of school a first grader handed his teacher a note from his mother. The note read, "The opinions expressed by this child are not necessarily those of his parents."

NEW Vaccine Requirement Against Chicken Pox

Illinois children entering kindergarten or a licensed day care or a federally funded Head Start center as of July 1 will have to be inoculated against chickenpox or provide proof of having had the disease previously. DCFS also requires that all children in foster care receive the chicken pox vaccination, unless there is a signed statement from the doctor that the child previously had chicken pox.

"Despite the widespread belief that chicken pox is a mild childhood disease, it in fact causes an average of five deaths a year in Illinois and hundreds of hospitalizations," said Dr. John R. Lumpkin, state public health director.

Chicken pox, or varicella, is generally mild; however, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that it kills more children and adolescents than all other diseases combined for which vaccination is routinely recommended. In Illinois, there were 51 deaths from chickenpox in the 1990s, including five in 1999, the most recent year for which statistics are available, and 416 hospitalizations for the disease in 2000.

Chicken pox is highly contagious and is spread from person to person by direct contact with contaminated objects or through the air. The disease, which is caused by varicella zoster virus, starts as an itchy rash that progresses to blisters that dry and become scabs in two to four days. In children, rash may be the first sign of illness, sometimes coupled with fever and general malaise. Chickenpox is contagious one to two days before the rash appears and until all blisters have formed scabs. It develops within 10 to 21 days after contact with an infected person.

A child without the state-mandated vaccinations may not be allowed to attend school or a day care facility. School districts have the option of enforcing the requirements anytime from the opening day of school until October 15. In addition to chickenpox, the other required school immunizations are for: diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (whooping cough) (DTaP), measles, mumps and rubella (MMR), polio and hepatitis B.

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Address Changes: Foster parents must notify their agency, who will notify DCFS. Agencies should change addresses of office locations or request staff copies through the Editor.

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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.

Do You Know A Family For Me?

Anthony and Idella [C4631-32]

They're a sociable pair and great conversationalists! Anthony, 12, is an outgoing, friendly child who treats others with respect and is a hard worker. Anthony enjoys gymnastics and sings in the church choir. Idella, 10, is a well-mannered child who likes to be independent. She enjoys styling her friends' hair and likes swimming, soccer, and basketball.

Anthony's teacher said he is "an engaging student who tries very hard." Their foster parent said that Anthony is always willing to help around the house and that Idella follows instructions well. Idella's teacher said she is an above-average student.

Javon [6758] He likes a colorful world! Javon, 8, loves to color and draw. He's also a basketball player, and he enjoys playing with miniature cars and action figures. Javon's teacher and foster parent said he is affectionate, works hard, and loves to try new things. His foster mom said he likes to be helpful at home.

Joey [C5493] He's a friendly artist who loves company! Joey, 9, enjoys drawing, painting, and playing drums. He likes being with other children his age, especially going to the park and sharing the swings. His teacher and foster parent said that Joey is a joy to be around. His foster mom said he is a good kid.

Dion [C6145] If you need to solve a crime, ask Dion for help! He loves reading mystery stories. His favorite outdoor activity is playing basketball. Dion, 12, gets good grades at school, especially in math and reading. His teacher said Dion has excellent visual skills and works well when motivated. His foster parent said he is very obedient and enjoys helping out at home.

Jessica [C6966] She loves to help out whenever she can. Jessica also enjoys reading, jumping rope, and playing with other children. She is twelve years old and in the fourth grade. Her foster parents and teacher said that Jessica can be very sweet.

Thomas, Kevonna, Deshon

[C7042-44] These kids are full of personality! Thomas, an easygoing, affectionate young man, is a big television fan and loves sports - especially shooting baskets. He is nine years old and in third grade. Kevonna, 8, is a bright child who reads anything she can get her hands on. She is very protective of her brothers and loyal to her foster family. She is in second grade. Deshon, 7, is so good-natured he gets along with almost everyone! He entertains himself creatively and loves to play games and draw.

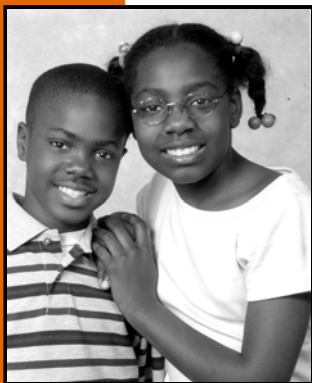
Their foster parent said Thomas is "a good person who needs a little extra love," and his teacher said he does well in school and is a joy to have in class. Their foster mom said Kevonna loves to learn and has the potential to go far in life. Deshon's worker and foster mom said he adapts well, shows affection easily, and follows directions.

If you are interested in adopting or learning about these or other children waiting to be adopted, please call the Adoption Information Center of Illinois at 1-800-572-2390 (within Illinois) or 1-312-346-1516 (outside Illinois), or see the AICI web site - www.adoptinfo-il.org.

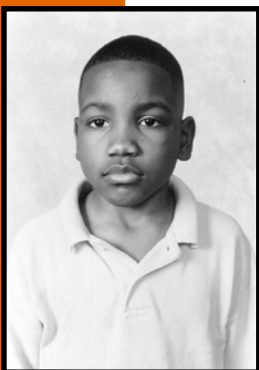
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PERMIT NO. 4588

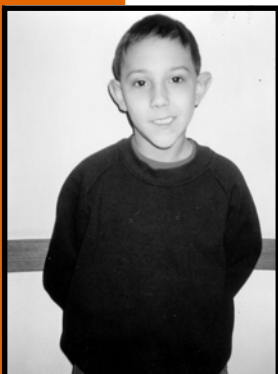
DO YOU KNOW A FAMILY FOR ME?



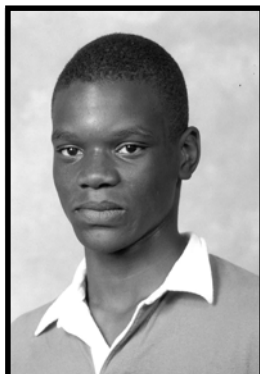
Anthony and Idella
(C4631-32)



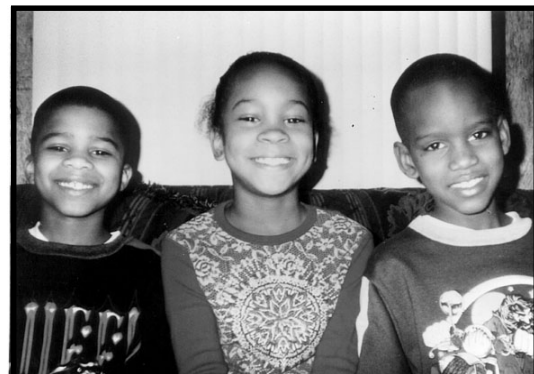
Javon (C6758)



Joey (C5493)



Dion (C6145)



Thomas, Kevonna and Deshon (C7042-44)

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Call the Adoption Information Center of Illinois 800/572-2390.