

Our Kids

For Southern Region Foster Parents

Happiness without End.

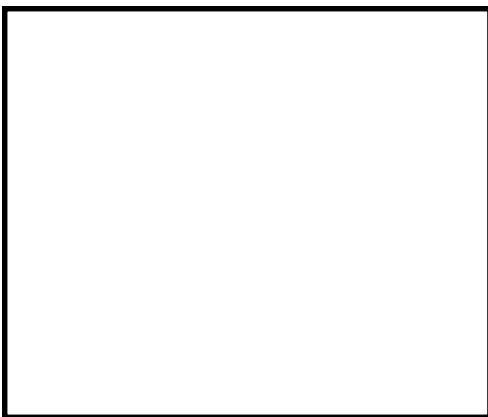
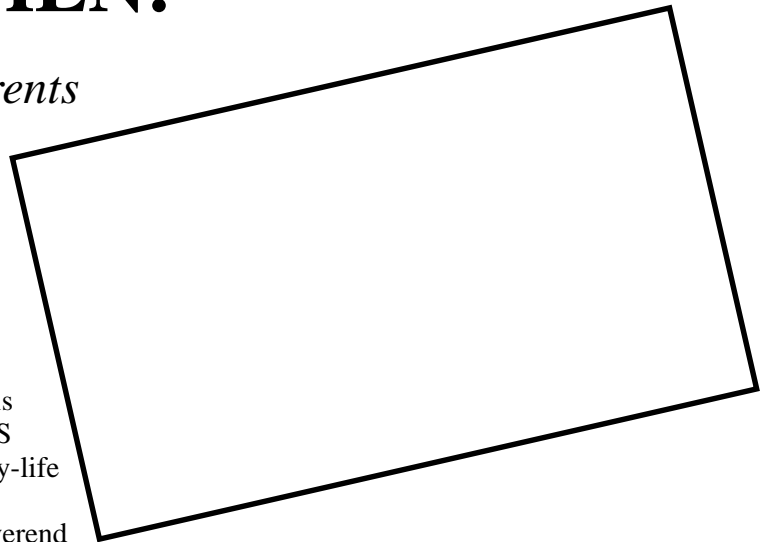
AMEN!

One Church One Child Honors Parents

Waiting children without permanent families depend on special adults to find them loving families. One Church One Child (OCOC) has involved local churches and church members in family recruitment statewide since 1984. Every year, OCOC honors a Southern Region foster and adoptive family for outstanding dedication and service to children.

Recently, Matthew and Gloria Turner of East St. Louis were named Foster Parents of the Year. The Turners, DCFS foster parents since 1981, have given a stable, loving family-life for numerous children. Addie Hudson, OCOC Statewide Coordinator, presented the award to the Turners, while Reverend Crockett of Greater New Hope Missionary Baptist Church of East St. Louis (left) and Reverend Napier (right) of War Memorial Baptist Church of Chicago, added their congratulations.

As the Turners accepted their award, their humility was obvious. They also shared their motivation for doing what it takes to help a child become a member of their family — love of children. After receiving their plaque, the Turners urged others to become involved in recruiting and in the OCOC program. Their touching appeal was obviously from the heart and brought tears to many spectators.



Sherna and Ben Jennings, shown here accepting their award with Reverend Napier looking on, were named Adoptive Parents of the Year. The Jennings were blessed with four birth children, who are now adults. Overpowered with a strong desire to help children, they have adopted three children. After listening to words of praise about their commitment to children during the ceremony, the Jennings stood firm in saying they were blessed and fortunate to be a part of such a rewarding experience.

“There are so many babies who need someone and we want to be there to give them the love and encouragement they need. We want to help as many as we possibly can,” said Mrs. Jennings.

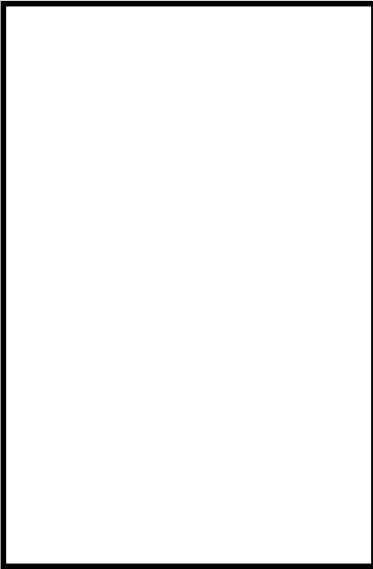
Janet Riley, their Catholic Social Services adoption worker, expressed her excitement in continuing to work with

the Jennings, who intend to adopt another child after they add a room to their house.

“They are fantastic people,” she said. “They really work at making children feel part of the family. One special thing they have done is to make every Thursday night “Family Night” with the entire family doing something together.”

Joyce Spencer, Southern Region’s One Church One Child Recruiter, is anxious to recruit more families like the Turners and the Jennings. If you would like to know more about the One Church One Child program, call her at 618-394-2100 or call toll-free 877-490-8648.

Meet Emmanuel



This honest and easygoing 10 year-old loves literature. He has good verbal skills and gets along well with adults. Emmanuel likes fishing and playing with miniature cars and trucks. His foster parent says he is a joy to have around, is very appreciative and handles discipline well. Emmanuel says, "I would like a whole family — brothers, sisters, mother, father, grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins."

If you, or anyone you know, would like more information about adopting Emmanuel, call Michael Miller at 618-398-5910. For more information about adoption, other waiting Illinois children, or to register as a family wanting to adopt a waiting child not currently placed with you, call the Adoption Information Center of Illinois (AICI) at 800-572-2390.

OUR KIDS

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Foster parents and staff are invited to call with training and meeting notices, news and ideas for stories about interesting people and programs.

Heading Off Problems

Hints for Homework

An important part of your child's school success depends on doing a good job on homework assignments. Are you sending your child the right messages about homework? Does he/she think its important to do the best job possible, finish it completely and turn it in on time? Relax! You can make homework natural and rewarding for your child and easy on you by following some common-sense guidelines.

Respect your child's need to recharge after school before starting homework. Some children want to have a snack, while others prefer to draw, do something physically active, play with a friend, read, listen to music or watch a videotape.

Establish a regular time and place to begin homework.

Make family activities that precede or follow homework, such as playing a game, cooking or crafts, a regular part of the homework routine. Shared activities assure the child that he will have time with parents, making it less likely he will seek their attention while he is doing his homework.

Recognize that an occasional break from steady concentration on homework helps children stay on task.

Be available to interpret assignments and question, explain the meaning of unfamiliar words, review spelling or multiplication tables, discuss topics for "show and tell" and preview talks that your child is preparing. Think of yourself as a coach or consultant.

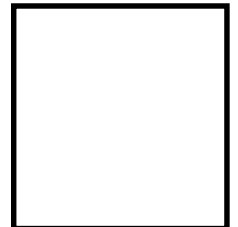
Though you should always be open to questions, **your child should be responsible for doing his own homework by age 8 or 9.** The child who says, "I can't do it. You do it." may push you beyond that role. If you think you are helping your child too much with homework, talk with her teacher about the problem.

Make sure your child develops the habit of placing completed homework in a book bag, ready to be taken to school.

Source: Contemporary Pediatrics. Reprinted for parents with permission.

Foster Care Supporter of the Year Named

The Family Ties Gala is the largest fundraiser of the year for the 61 private agency members of the Foster Care Coalition. Funds raised provide a variety of supports for more than 7,000 children in a 13 county bi-state area. Each year the Coalition honors one special person who is striving to make the child welfare system work better for children, foster parents and everyone involved. On December 1, 1999, DCFS Director Jess McDonald was presented with this very prestigious award. Prior award recipients include Judge Susan Block.



Southern Region Training Calendar

Pre-registration is required!

FOSTERPRIDE TRAINING

Marion Area
618-536-7751

	Module
CAIRO/ULLIN June 3 (Sat)	9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. 7
MARION April 10, 17 & 24 (Mon)	6:30-9:30 p.m. 3 & 4
METROPOLIS May 2, 9 & 16 (Tues)	6:30-9:30 p.m. 8
OLNEY May 6 (Sat)	9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. 7
SALEM April 6, 13 & 20 (Thurs)	6:30-9:30 p.m. 5

EDUCATIONAL ADVOCACY

UPDATE - FOR FOSTER PARENTS WHO HAD COMPLETED THE OLD EDUCATIONAL SURROGATE TRAINING (ONE 3-HOUR SESSION)

SIU - Edwards
Call 618-650-3213 to register.

BELLEVILLE April 8 & 15 (Sat)	9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
FAIRVIEW HTS. April 6 & 13 (Thurs)	6:30-9:30 p.m.
May 8 & 15 (Mon)	6:30-9:30 p.m.
June 7 & 14 (Wed)	6:30-9:30 p.m.
June 10 & 17 (Sat)	9:30 a.m.-12:130 p.m.
WOOD RIVER May 4 & 11 (Thurs)	6:30-9:30 p.m.

SIU - Carbondale
Call 618-536-7751 to register.

EFFINGHAM June 7 & 14 (Wed)	6:30-9:30 p.m.
MARION May 6 (Sat)	9 a.m.-4 p.m.
MT. VERNON April 8 (Sat)	9 a.m.-4 p.m.
SALEM May 3 & 10 (Wed)	6:30-9:30 p.m.

Module	Description
1	Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children
2	Using Discipline to Protect and Nurture
3	Addressing Developmental Issues Related to Sexuality
4	Responding to the Signs and Symptoms of Sexual Abuse
5	Supporting Relationships Between Children and Families
6	Working As A Professional Team Member
7	Promoting Children's Personal and Cultural Identities
8	Promoting Permanency Outcomes
9	Managing the Fostering Experience
10	Understanding the Effects of Chemical Dependency on Children and Families

FOR FOSTER PARENTS WHO HAVE NEVER BEEN PREVIOUSLY TRAINED (TWO 3-HOUR SESSIONS)

SIU - Edwards
Call 618-650-3213 to register.

FAIRVIEW HTS. April 22 (Sat)	9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
June 3 (Sat)	9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

SIU - Carbondale
Call 618-536-7751 to register.

EFFINGHAM June 7 & 14 (Wed)	6:30-9:30 p.m.
MARION May 6 (Sat)	9 a.m.-4 p.m.
MT. VERNON April 8 (Sat)	9a.m.-4 p.m.
SALEM May 3 & 10 (Wed)	6:30-9:30 p.m.

SEXUALLY AGGRESSIVE CHILDREN AND YOUTH (SACY)

SIU - Edwards
Call 618-650-3213 to register.

FAIRVIEW HTS. April 8 & 15 (Sat)	9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
ALTON April 22 & 29 (Sat)	9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
May 1 & 3 (Mon/Wed)	6:30-9:30 p.m.

SIU - Carbondale
Call 618-536-7751 to register.

CAIRO/ULLIN June 5 & 12 (Mon)	6:00-9:30 p.m.
EFFINGHAM May 10 & 17 (Wed)	6:00-9:30 p.m.
MARION April 5 & 12 (Wed)	6:00-9:30 p.m.
MT. VERNON April 18 & 25 (Tues)	6:00-9:30 p.m.

Adoption Training for Foster Parents

Call for training locations near you!

Military Vets Answer Call to Mentor and Recruit

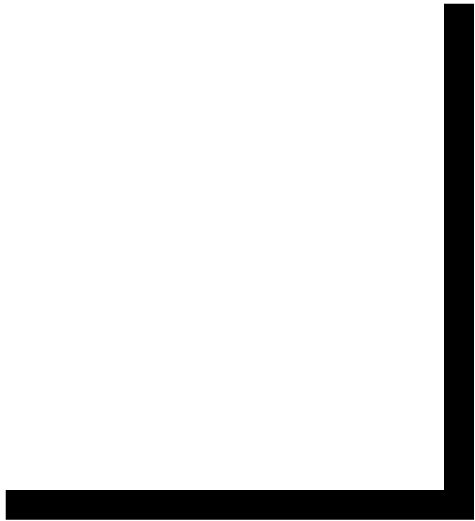
Military veterans are once again answering the call to duty — only this time, from the state of Illinois on behalf of children waiting for adoptive families. The Village Investment Project (VIP), sponsored by DCFS, recruits mentors for waiting children.

“A mentor can have a tremendous impact on any child — especially on a child in limbo who is waiting for a permanent family,” says Coy Jackson, VIP’s Coordinator for St. Clair and Madison Counties and a retired Air Force veteran with 26 years of active duty service.


A study conducted by Big Brothers/Big Sisters found that children with mentors are 46% less likely to start using drugs, 27 % less likely to drink alcohol and 1/3 less likely to hit someone. They skip half as many days of school and get better grades too.

The VIP Mentoring and Adoption Program’s goal is to find families for children who have been waiting the longest and are between the ages of 6 and 17. Other Village Investment Project programs include Adoption Support Services to assist newly adopted children and their parents, and Guidance for Independent Living to provide older youth with mentors to help them adjust to lives as independent adults.

A statewide project, VIP needs every foster parent to help tell others about the need for military veterans and other community members to become VIP mentors and recruiters.



For more information about all of VIPs programs, call Coy Jackson or Ted Baugh at 618-394-2100. We need everyone’s help!




DCFS Millenium Retirees

Murphysboro
Henry Bell, ACR

Mt. Vernon
Susie Chrysler, DCP
Sally Lewis, ACR

Carlyle
Jean Diesen, Clerical

Fairview Heights
Lillian Gee, Family Dev.



Coming events

Foster Parent Advisory Council Meeting

Mt. Vernon
3405 Broadway

Friday May 19

10 A.M.

WE'VE MOVED!

KidStore Makes Jeans Come True

Quality, nearly new, seasonal children’s clothing and accessories at garage sale prices are waiting for foster parents at the KidStore, a project of the Foster Care Coalition.

Where Mar Building
8601 West Main St., Suite 203
Belleville

Who Can Shop Foster parents ONLY
Bring identification, like foster parent license or medical card.

Open Usually, Saturdays from 9 a.m. to Noon, but call 800-FOSTER-3 to verify it’s open before you go. Dates and times are subject to availability of volunteers. Dates and hours of operation are also available on the internet at www.fosteradoptcoalition.org.

Anything Else Volunteers are needed to keep the KidStore operating. If you, or anyone you know, would like more information about volunteering, contact 800-FOSTER-3.