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Foster Care on the Square provides chance to learn more about foster parenting

Cincinnati (May 18, 2009) The Everyday Heroes collaborative will host Foster Care on the Square Tuesday to help generate awareness and spread information about the need for foster parents in the Greater Cincinnati area.

Members of the collaborative will have information booths at the square and will answer questions from prospective foster parents from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Everyone is invited to stop by and learn more.

“This is another chance for the public to take the first step toward changing a child’s life and changing this community,” said Moira Weir, director of Hamilton County’s Job and Family Services. “The downtown venue makes it easy for the tens of thousands who work there. Stop by on your lunch hour. Be the change that our children need.”

The Everyday Heroes collaborative started in early 2008 in an effort to bring together Cincinnati government, businesses, non-profits and others on behalf of Hamilton County foster children. The group launched a recruitment campaign, highlighted by a commercial featuring foster parents dressed like super heroes. The parents were lauded for the every day duties they performed on behalf of foster children.

Foster Care on the Square is one of many local events planned for May, which is national Foster Care Month, in an effort to raise awareness of foster care. Hamilton County has about 850 foster children in its care each day. More than 200 of those children are awaiting adoption. Yet, attracting and retaining quality foster and adoptive parents is more a challenge now than ever before. The number of foster homes in the Hamilton County Job and Family Services network now sits at slightly above 200, down from nearly 400 four years ago.

Among the other activities still available to the public:

- The launch of a new recruitment commercial and Web site to kick off a month’s full of events surrounding national Foster Care Month. The commercial can be viewed at the Web site, www.hckids.org.
- Every Child's Hope Weekend, hosted by by The Greater Cincinnati Coalition of Care, a group of Cincinnati-area churches concerned and committed to positively changing the lives of local foster children, will feature:

- Friday concert by singer/comedian Chonda Pierce, who makes frequent appearances at the Grand Ole Opry
- Saturday speeches by nationally-known speakers affiliated with churches answering the call on foster care and adoption, as well as a local author offering an insider's view on the foster care system
- Saturday workshops to answer your questions about foster care and adoption
- Sunday sermons to more than 11,000 people on responding to the challenge of local foster care and adoption.

The Every Child's Hope events are open to the public and take place at Landmark Church, 1600 Glendale-Milford Road.

About Hamilton County's Department of Job and Family Services

The Department of Job and Family Services administers federal, state and local programs for those in need. The Department helps with local child protection, elderly protection, child care, child support enforcement, workforce development, cash assistance, food stamp disbursement and Medicaid disbursement. Servicing Hamilton County since 1947, the Department helps hundreds of thousands each year and is accredited by the Council on Accreditation, an international, independent, not-for-profit child and family service accrediting organization.