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Rescheduled: MayDay for Foster Children!

Cincinnati Agencies Call Public Attention to Foster Care

Cincinnati (May 18, 2011) Hamilton County residents interested in helping the community's 850 foster children can learn more Monday, May 23, when a MayDay for Foster Children informational rally is held on Fountain Square to raise awareness around foster care.

"This event is a great opportunity to learn how you can change a child's life," said T.D. Hughes, Chairman of the Board of LaRosa's and ProKids' Board President. "As community members, parents, grandparents, neighbors, and corporate citizens, each of us has a role to play to ensure a safe, permanent, and nurturing home for every child."

The MayDay event, scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. will feature speeches by local dignitaries and foster care experts – slated to start at noon – as well as information booths to educate interested parties in the positive aspects of foster parenting, mentoring, helping children through the child protection court process and more. Dan Hurley of Channel 12's Newsmakers will emcee the event.

"We are sending up a collective mayday to the community on behalf of the 850 foster children we have in care on any given day," said Moira Weir, director of Hamilton County's Department of Job and Family Services, which is charged with protecting county children from abuse and neglect. "This is their chance to get involved and play a part in improving the life of a child and making their community a better place to live."

Weir's department is joined by ProKids, Hamilton County's Juvenile Court and the Hamilton County Public Defender's Office in leading this effort. Private foster agencies, mentoring organizations, support groups and other organizations will be on hand to meet the public and provide information about foster children and ways to help them.

Studies show foster children are more likely to drop out of school, become teen parents, have mental health or substance abuse issues, resort to violence and end up in prison. Early intervention by positive role models can reduce those odds, Weir said.

Hamilton County's Department of Job and Family Services and Juvenile Court work together to protect abused and neglected children. When those children can't safely live with their biological families, they are temporarily placed in foster care. The Guardian Ad Litem Division of the Public Defender's Office and ProKids advocate for the children and help represent their needs in the child protection court process.

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.

About Hamilton County Juvenile Court

Hamilton County Juvenile Court has the responsibility to hear and determine all cases and issues concerning children in Hamilton County. Additionally, the Juvenile Court administers programs and facilities providing for the custody, care and rehabilitation of youth within its jurisdiction. The National Council of Juvenile Court and Family Court Judges designated the Hamilton County Juvenile Court as the nation's first model court.

About the Guardian Ad Litem Division of the Public Defender's Office

The Guardian Ad Litem Division of the Public Defender's Office advocates on behalf of abused, neglected and dependent children in Hamilton County.

About ProKids

ProKids is Hamilton County's CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) agency. A private non-profit that recruits, trains and manages volunteers to work with abused and neglected children in Hamilton County. ProKids is a United Way Agency Partner.