

# FAMILY MATTERS

Published for foster and adoptive parents by the Adoption & Foster Care units of the Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services

November 2008



From the  
Desk of Moira Weir,  
HCJFS Director

## Newly Minted Families Highlighted During National Adoption Month

Nothing warms a person's heart more than a child's smile. It is even more gratifying when that smile happens as a judge or magistrate declares their adoption finalized and they officially become part of a new family.

A year ago, eight children officially joined their new parents and families as Hamilton County marked its first "mass adoption day." I still remember that so vividly - and I smile every time I think of those children going to their homes, knowing their parents' hugs and love will be with them forever.

This year, we will celebrate National Adoption Day on November 14 with five families welcoming seven Hamilton County children.

National Adoption Month highlights the many wonderful things about adopting. Children who have lived without a sense of permanency, some of them for a very long time, finally feel they have a real home and a real family.

New adoptive parents, too, find the joy they always believed would be waiting for them in the faces of children they welcome into their lives. It does not matter if the child is an infant, an elementary school student or a young teen in high school.

But National Adoption Month also serves as a reminder that too many children — here in Hamilton County and across Ohio and our country — are waiting to experience that joy we saw a year ago. Right now, more than 114,000 children nationwide are waiting to be adopted. About 175 of those are right here in Hamilton County.

HCJFS is on track for another solid year of adoptions. This year we expect to finalize nearly 50 adoptions of children who are nine years old or older, compared to 39 in 2007. Many other children will also leave our care to become part of a permanent family.

My hope is that eventually every child in our care will find a loving family they can call their own.

You can help by letting people know we still need good parents who are willing and able to step up and help a child or sibling group waiting for a permanent home. There is plenty of good information at our website, [www.hcadopt.org](http://www.hcadopt.org), and they can also call (513) 632-6366 to receive a packet and register for an Orientation or information session.

To all of our adoptive families from years past to now, we celebrate with you the joy of adding to or starting your family through adoption. To our waiting families, we look forward to working with you for the day you do the same.

Warmly,

### We Prize Your Thoughts

You have a world of experience in living. We invite you to suggest ideas for articles in Family Matters. If we use your idea, you will win a photo album.

To submit ideas, please send an e-mail to Linda Tate at [tatel@jfs.hamilton-co.org](mailto:tatel@jfs.hamilton-co.org), or mail it to 222 E. Central Parkway, Cincinnati, Oh 45219.

You may also drop ideas off at the desk in the lobby at the Neighborhood Center at 237 William Howard Taft.

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**ADOPTION & FOSTER**  
*Care*

Hamilton County Job & Family Services

The most remarkable gift children possess is their ability to adapt to a negative crisis with prosperity. When these eyes gaze into the eyes of an unwanted child I can feel the reflections of true innocent love sparkling within my soul. Every child should belong to a family, but sometimes due to tragic occurrences many children are orphaned or neglected. And finally there's the delinquent children whose rebellious behavior is out of control and forces the parent to relinquish custody. Whatever the situation, abandonment isn't the answer. To achieve spiritual and mental growth children need "The Special Four," which consists of attention, comfort, patience and love. Through foster parenthood and adoption services we create a love connection, inviting abandoned children into our village with open arms that provide "The Special Four." ❀



### ABANDONED

By Daryl Jackson

Children cry-out for love to share  
Little red wagons have burdens to bear.  
Tear drops descend feeling stranded  
Water-stained cheek left abandoned.

No fire trucks or cuddly teddy bears  
Only troubled spirits of empty despair.  
No baby dolls in a carriage to pull  
Only hardship tiny souls must endure.

Orphaned and neglected search for reliance  
Lonesome for spiritual parental guidance.  
Nurture precious spirits with foster homes  
Adoption re-captures adorable souls alone.

## Legislative Update: SB304 Expansion of the Safe Haven Law

On May 21, 2008, State Senator Gary Cates introduced a bill which will increase the number of days after birth that a parent has to voluntarily deliver an unharmed infant to a "safe haven," (ex. hospital, fire department or police department) from the current three days to 30 days. In addition, the bill will require public education for at-risk populations about the Safe Havens law. ❖



### Help the Foster Child Enrichment Council! Purchase a 2009 Entertainment Book!

The Entertainment coupon book is your ultimate source of coupons and printable savings for restaurants, travel, hotels, movie tickets, entertainment, attractions, shopping and services in your city. You can also enjoy our coupons at top travel destinations like Las Vegas, Hawaii, Orlando, Orange County, San Diego or New York.

From pizza joints and sushi restaurants, to fast food and carry out, Entertainment coupon book savings are waiting for you. Entertainment will also let you compare room rates for luxury hotels to budget lodging. We'll even show you where to find coupons for the best retail stores and other shopping destinations. And for a night out, Entertainment will lead you to the cheapest movie tickets discounts and more.

Contact the Foster Child Enrichment Council to purchase your Entertainment 2009 coupon book at [helpfosterchildren.org](http://helpfosterchildren.org)



## Resource Phone Numbers & Web Sites

### Southwest Ohio Family Care Association (SWOFCA):

[www.ofcaonline.org/pages/resources-by-region/resources-for-region-10.php](http://www.ofcaonline.org/pages/resources-by-region/resources-for-region-10.php)

### Ohio Family Care Association (OFCA):

[www.ofcaonline.org](http://www.ofcaonline.org)

### Post-Adoption Services:

Call 241-KIDS (241-5437) and request a referral

Have a resource suggestion?

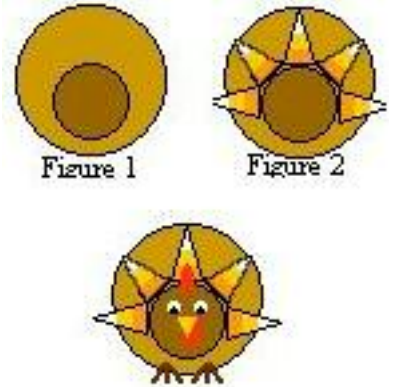
Email us at [familymatters@jfs.hamilton-co.org](mailto:familymatters@jfs.hamilton-co.org)

## Turkey Cookies

Recipe courtesy of [Recipes.com](http://Recipes.com)

### Ingredients:

Chocolate Wafer Cookie  
Chocolate Frosting  
Candy Corn  
Malted Milk Ball or  
Mini Peanut Butter Cup  
Fruit Roll-Up Candy  
Candy Sprinkles



### Preparation:

Spread the chocolate frosting on the cookie. Place the malted milk ball or peanut butter cup on the frosting (figure 1). Place the candy corn around the malted milk ball (figure 2).

Cut shapes out of the Fruit Roll-Up to be the turkeys beak and waddle. Cut out feet too if you like. Stick them on the malted milk ball or peanut butter cup using the frosting as 'glue'. Use candy sprinkles for the eyes.

Prep Time: 20 minutes

# Mark Your Calendars for These Upcoming Events!

**Nov. 3, 2008; 10am - 3pm**

## **Statewide Ohio Adoption Matching Expo Office of Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services**

The Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies (OACCA), Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO), and the Ohio Adoption Planning Group (OAPG), and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) invite you to participate in a Statewide Adoption Matching Expo.

This event is a Public and Private Collaboration of Public Child Welfare Agencies and Private Adoption Service Providing Agencies.

The Office of Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services is located at: The Lazarus Building, 50 w. Town Street, 6th Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

**Nov. 7-9, 2008**

## **Respite Weekend Program at Camp Joy**

Camp Joy and Children's Home "Respite Weekend Program" is designed to provide youth ages 7-16 with a therapeutic program focused on character development.

Who is eligible: Youth with an open case (kinship and foster) ages 7-16 that can live in a group setting for a weekend program. Youth must not require one on one attention.

What: A mix of Children's Home workshops and camp activities including climbing experiences and outdoor fun. Enjoy a campfire, meet new friends, relax, hang out, tackle a ropes course, and enjoy the outdoors. Space is limited.

Questions: Please contact Jack Murphy at Camp Joy 1-800-300-7094 ext 232 or Keisha Wizzart at HCJFS 513-946-1243 or email at: wizzak@jfs.hamilton-co.org

## **SWORTC Pre-Service Trainings 9am - 4pm; SWORTC Campus 420 Wards Corner Rd., Loveland**

Southwest Ohio Regional Training Center has scheduled a "lightning round" of pre-service trainings. People interested in completing foster care and adoption classes can do so over two weekends as follows:

- Friday, Dec. 5 - Classes 1 & 2
- Saturday, Dec. 6 - Classes 3 & 4
- Sunday, Dec. 7 - Classes 5 & 6
- Friday, Dec. 12 - Classes 7 & 8
- Saturday, Dec. 13 - Classes 9 & 10
- Sunday, Dec. 14 - Classes 11 & 12

**June 17-20, 2009**

## **Statewide OFCA Conference Columbus, OH**

Stay tuned for more details.

## **Hamilton County Pre-Service Trainings Taft Building GN009\***

\*unless otherwise noted

### **SESSION 1:**

- Tuesday, Jan. 6; 6-9pm (902)
- Thursday, Jan. 8; 6-9pm (903)
- Tuesday, Jan. 13; 6-9pm (904)
- Thursday, Jan. 15; 6-9pm (905)
- Tuesday, Jan. 20; 6-9pm (906)
- Thursday, Jan. 22; 6-9pm (907)
- Tuesday, Jan. 27; 6-9pm (908)
- Thursday, Jan. 29; 6-9pm (909)
- Tuesday, Feb. 3; 6-9pm (910)
- Thursday, Feb. 5; 6-9pm (911)
- Tuesday, Feb. 10; 6-9pm (912)

### **SESSION 2:**

- Saturday, Jan. 10; 9am-4pm (902 & 903)
- Saturday, Jan. 17; 9am-4pm (904 & 905)
- Saturday, Jan. 24; 9am-4pm (906 & 907)
- Saturday, Jan. 31; 9am-4pm (908 & 909)\*
- Saturday, Feb. 7; 9am-4pm (910 & 911)
- Saturday, Feb. 14; 9am-12pm (912)

\*Loveland, OH

### **901: Orientation & Overview of FAK**

Wednesday, Jan. 7 or 21 OR Feb. 4 or 18

### **SESSION 3:**

- Tuesday, Feb. 17; 6-9pm (902)
- Thursday, Feb. 19; 6-9pm (903)
- Tuesday, Feb. 24; 6-9pm (904)
- Thursday, Feb. 26; 6-9pm (905)
- Tuesday, Mar. 3; 6-9pm (906)
- Thursday, Mar. 5; 6-9pm (907)
- Tuesday, Mar. 10; 6-9pm (908)
- Thursday, Mar. 12; 6-9pm (909)
- Tuesday, Mar. 17; 6-9pm (910)
- Thursday, Mar. 19; 6-9pm (911)
- Tuesday, Mar. 24; 6-9pm (912)

### **SESSION 4:**

- Saturday, Feb. 21; 9am-4pm (902 & 903)
- Saturday, Feb. 28; 9am-4pm (904 & 905)
- Saturday, Mar. 7; 9am-4pm (906 & 907)
- Saturday, Mar. 14; 9am-4pm (908 & 909)
- Saturday, Mar. 21; 9am-12pm (910)
- Saturday, Mar. 21; 1-4pm (911)
- Saturday, Mar. 28; 9am-12pm\*

\*Loveland, OH

### **SESSION 5:**

- Tuesday, Mar. 31; 6-9pm (902)
- Thursday, Apr. 2; 6-9pm (903)
- Tuesday, Apr. 7; 6-9pm (904)
- Thursday, Apr. 9; 6-9pm (905)
- Tuesday, Apr. 14; 6-9pm (906)
- Thursday, Apr. 16; 6-9pm (907)
- Tuesday, Apr. 21; 6-9pm (908)
- Thursday, Apr. 23; 6-9pm (909)
- Tuesday, Apr. 28; 6-9pm (910)
- Thursday, Apr. 30; 6-9pm (911)
- Tuesday, May 5; 6-9pm (912)

### **901: Orientation & Overview of FAK**

Wednesday, Apr. 1, 15 or 29

### **SESSION 6:**

- Saturday, Apr. 4; 9am-4pm (902 & 903)
- Saturday, Apr. 11; 9am-4pm (904 & 905)
- Saturday, Apr. 18; 9am-4pm (906 & 907)
- Saturday, Apr. 25; 9am-12pm (908 & 909)\*
- Saturday, May 2; 9am-4pm (910 & 911)
- Saturday, May 9; 9am-12pm (912)

\*Loveland, OH

### **SESSION 7:**

- Saturday, May 16; 9am-4pm (902 & 903)
- Saturday, May 30; 9am-4pm (904 & 905)\*
- Saturday, June 6; 9am-4pm (906 & 907)
- Saturday, June 13; 9am-12pm (908)
- Saturday, June 13; 1-4pm (909)
- Saturday, June 20; 9am-4pm (910 & 911)
- Saturday, June 27; 9am-4pm (912)

\*Loveland, OH

### **901: Orientation & Overview of FAK**

Wednesday, May 6 or 13

### **SESSION 8:**

- Tuesday, May 12; 6-9pm (902)
- Thursday, May 14; 6-9pm (903)
- Tuesday, May 19; 6-9pm (904)
- Thursday, May 21; 6-9pm (905)
- Tuesday, May 26; 6-9pm (906)
- Thursday, May 28; 6-9pm (907)
- Tuesday, June 2; 6-9pm (908)
- Thursday, June 4; 6-9pm (909)
- Tuesday, June 9; 6-9pm (910)
- Thursday, June 11; 6-9pm (911)
- Tuesday, June 16; 6-9pm (912)

### **901: Orientation & Overview of FAK**

Wednesday, June 17 or June 24

### **SESSION 9:**

- Saturday, Aug. 1; 9am-4pm (902 & 903)
- Saturday, Aug. 8; 9am-4pm (904 & 905)
- Saturday, Aug. 15; 9am-4pm (906 & 907)
- Saturday, Aug. 22; 9am-12pm (908)
- Saturday, Aug. 22; 1-4pm (909)
- Saturday, Aug. 29; 9am-4pm (910 & 911)\*
- Saturday, Sept. 12; 9am-12pm (912)

\*Loveland, OH

### **SESSION 10:**

- Tuesday, Aug. 4; 6-9pm (902)
- Thursday, Aug. 6; 6-9pm (903)
- Tuesday, Aug. 1; 6-9pm (904)
- Thursday, Aug. 13; 6-9pm (905)
- Tuesday, Aug. 18; 6-9pm (906)
- Thursday, Aug. 20; 6-9pm (907)
- Tuesday, Aug. 25; 6-9pm (908)
- Thursday, Aug. 27; 6-9pm (909)
- Tuesday, Sept. 1; 6-9pm (910)
- Thursday, Sept. 3; 6-9pm (911)
- Tuesday, Sept. 8; 6-9pm (912)

### **901: Orientation & Overview of FAK**

Wednesday, Aug. 5 or 19

# Congress Passes Major Federal Child Welfare Reform Bill

Last month, Congress passed important legislation that will encourage more adoptions, support kinship caregivers and make more children eligible for adoption assistance.

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 reauthorizes the Adoption Incentives Program through 2013. This program, which was set to expire on September 30, awards payments to states that increase the number of children adopted out of their foster care system.

Also included in the bill are significant changes to current child welfare law under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. Among the major provisions:

- Creation of a relative guardianship subsidy to provide assistance to some relatives who are caring for a family member's child. Supporting these kinship caregivers is a key way to promote permanency for children that cannot return home or be adopted and will provide a path out of foster care for many children.
- De-linking of adoption assistance from 1996 AFDC income standards. By gradually untying eligibility from these dated poverty guidelines, the bill ensures that by 2018 all abused and neglected children will qualify for aid.
- Extension of foster care maintenance payments for youth up to age 21 so foster children continue to be supported as they move towards independence after age 18.

Additionally, the bill includes language that provides added supports to kinship caregivers, encourages siblings be placed together and improves health and educational services for foster children.

This legislation makes the most significant reform to the child welfare system in over a decade and corrects problems that have plagued the system for many years. Its passage is a major achievement for child welfare professionals and advocates nationwide who have been lobbying for these changes.

There was broad bipartisan support for the bill in both chambers of Congress and it appears likely that President Bush will sign the legislation into law.✿

## SESSION 11:

Tuesday, Sept. 15; 6-9pm (902)  
 Thursday, Sept. 17; 6-9pm (903)  
 Tuesday, Sept. 22; 6-9pm (904)  
 Thursday, Sept. 24; 6-9pm (905)  
 Tuesday, Sept. 29; 6-9pm (906)  
 Thursday, Oct. 1; 6-9pm (907)  
 Tuesday, Oct. 6; 6-9pm (908)  
 Thursday, Oct. 8; 6-9pm (909)

Trainer: Bev Morris

Tuesday, Oct. 13; 6-9pm (910)  
 Thursday, Oct. 15; 6-9pm (911)  
 Tuesday, Oct. 20; 6-9pm (912)

## 901: Orientation & Overview of FAK

Trainer: Debra McMullen  
 Wednesday, Sept. 2, 9 or 30

## SESSION 12:

Saturday, Sept. 19; 9am-4pm (902 & 903)  
 Saturday, Sept. 26; 9am-4pm (904 & 905)\*  
 Saturday, Oct. 3; 9am-4pm (906 & 907)  
 Saturday, Oct. 10; 9am-4pm (908 & 909)  
 Saturday, Oct. 17; 9am-4pm (910 & 911)  
 Saturday, Oct. 24; 9am-12pm (912)  
 \*Loveland, OH

## 901: Orientation & Overview of FAK

Wednesday, Oct. 7, 14 or 21

## SESSION 13:

Saturday, Nov. 7; 9am-4pm (902 & 903)  
 Saturday, Nov. 14; 9am-4pm (904 & 905)  
 Saturday, Nov. 21; 9am-4pm (906 & 907)  
 Saturday, Dec. 5; 9am-4pm (908 & 909)  
 Saturday, Dec. 12; 9am-4pm (910 & 911)  
 Saturday, Dec. 19; 9am-12pm (912)

## SESSION 14:

Tuesday, Oct. 27; 6-9pm (902)  
 Thursday, Oct. 29; 6-9pm (903)  
 Tuesday, Nov. 3; 6-9pm (904)  
 Thursday, Nov. 5; 6-9pm (905)  
 Thursday, Nov. 10; 6-9pm (906)  
 Tuesday, Nov. 12; 6-9pm (907)  
 Thursday, Nov. 17; 6-9pm (908)  
 Tuesday, Nov. 19; 6-9pm (909)  
 Thursday, Nov. 24; 6-9pm (910)  
 Tuesday, Dec. 1; 6-9pm (911)  
 Thursday, Dec. 3; 6-9pm (912)

## 901: Orientation & Overview of FAK

Wednesday, Nov. 4 or 18 OR Dec. 9 or 16

# NEEDED!

Supportive, loving families for these young people (and others!)



## Deja

*born Jan., 1995*

Deja is a delightful young lady! She is fun to be around, smart and responsible. She likes working with animals and her goal is to be a veterinarian. She would also like to see the ocean or visit an aquarium where she could see dolphins. They are her favorite animal!

Given her love of animals, it's not surprising she likes to watch Animal Planet. She also likes playing board games, girl talk with friends and reading fiction books. Outdoors, she likes jumping double-dutch or more adventurous activities like camping, kayaking and canoeing. In addition, she enjoys going to Bible study and to her local community center.



## Michael

*born June, 1994*

This creative and energetic teenager loves being active and busy. Michael loves his individualized and special education classes at school. He works hard to complete his assignments, although he does sometimes have a little difficulty staying on task. Reading is his favorite subject; fantasy books are his favorites.

Michael enjoys being active and would do well with a family that likes participating in lots of different activities, but that will also provide a lot of supervision. Being outdoors is this lovable young man's favorite way to pass time, especially with trips to the park. He has a great sense of humor and likes most types of music.

*To learn more about these children or others available for adoption, call (513)632-6366 or visit [www.hcadopt.org](http://www.hcadopt.org)*



## SWOFCA NEWS

*Submitted by Debra McMullen, Program Director*

In the October issue of Family Matters, I introduced SWOFCA. SWOFCA is the Southwest Ohio Family Care Affiliates of the Ohio Family Care Association. The mission of SWOFCA is to unite and support Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship families in Southwest Ohio. Beginning this month, there will be an article published for each Family Matters that will update you on the activities of SWOFCA.

At the September's Board meeting, new officers were selected. Our new SWOFCA officers are:

President: Patricia McCollum  
Vice President: Johnnie Barmore  
Secretary: Dave Willis  
Assistant Secretary: Candace McMullen  
Treasurer: Sherrie Mathis

Members of SWOFCA, as well as other representatives of various counties, were invited to attend the Foster/Adoptive Parent stakeholder interview for the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) in late August. Interviews offered feedback to our federal review partners who will in turn, share the findings and recommendations with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

SWOFCA is working to re-establish a food co-op program for families. Ms. Anita Weaver of the Freestore/Foodbank was instrumental in communicating various ways a program could be formed. An update will be in the next issue of Family Matters.

SWOFCA still needs you! If you are dedicated to serving our community in a great way by supporting foster, adoptive, and kinship families, please come and join us. We are still seeking new board members. Meetings are held the second Monday of the month at Zion Hill Community Church, 6834 Parrish Avenue in North College Hill from 6:00 pm till 8:00 pm.

For more information please call (513) 946-1842 or (513) 344-3626.