

It's National Foster Care Month!!

Community Recruitment Activities for May & June:

- May 2 Greater Cincinnati Adoption Fair,
Good Shepherd Church,
Montgomery, 10 AM - 4 PM
- May 5 Tri-Health Employee Resources Fair
(with Tri-State Adoption Coalition)
Bethesda North, Montgomery (7 AM - 4 PM)
- May 13 Butterflies & Blue Ribbons with SWOFCA
Krohn Conservatory (*see page 3 for details*)
- May 19 Foster Care on the Square with
Everyday Heroes Collaborative,
Fountain Square (*see page 6 for details*)
- May 29 & 30 Every Child's Hope events, with Coalition of
Care, Landmark Church (*see page 2 for details*)

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Foster/Adoptive Parent Spotlight on...

Name: Nicolle Tate
Foster parent since: October 2007
Foster support worker: Brigitte Parks-Montgomery

What's the best advice you received during your preparation to become a foster and/or adoptive parent?

Know when to say no – it's hard but sometimes you just can't take a child into your home. Also, accept that sometimes placements may not be right, and that's OK.

What advice do you have for people considering whether to become foster and/or adoptive parents?

Fostering takes patience, not just with the children but also with the system.

Also, you have to be doing this because you love children. You won't make money being a foster parent, so you need to be doing this because you are in it for the children. People tell me we're a blessing to the kids, but I don't see it that way. I say the kids are a blessing to me.



News Briefs

New web site set to launch



Beginning in May, www.hcfoster.org and www.hcadopt.org will be combined into one single source. The new web site – www.hckids.org – will offer all of the information available on the other two sites in one single location.

Upcoming recruitment events, meetings and Orientation meeting information will also be listed. It will also be easier to view children available for adoption, with boys, girls and siblings on one page each (instead of five or six).

We hope you will let others know who may be interested in becoming foster and adoptive parents!

Family Matters goes electronic soon

Sign up begins soon to receive future issues of the *Family Matters* newsletter in the comfort of your email inbox!

Each issue will still provide helpful information for new and experienced foster and adoptive parents, but it will now come to your email inbox rather than your postal mailbox. Past issues will still be available in the archives section of hckids.org.

To register, visit hckids.org beginning in May and look for the registration box. Enter your email address and you'll be set to go! You can unsubscribe at any time, too.

HCJFS Community Recruitment partners with church coalition to recruit foster parents

As part of National Foster Care Month in May, HCJFS Community Recruitment has partnered with the Coalition of Care – a group of several churches across Hamilton County – to develop a recruitment event for people interested in learning about becoming foster parents.

The event, scheduled for the weekend of May 29 and 30, will feature a Friday night concert with noted singer and comedian Chonda Pierce. On Saturday, May 30, attendees will hear from two nationally-known speakers, Chris Padbury and W.C. Martin, and local author Holly Schlaak. Attendees will then attend breakout sessions to learn more about training, the homestudy process, what it's like to be a foster parent, and more. See the flyer on www.hcfoster.org or visit www.coalitionofcare.org for more information.

Lightning Round training set for June

If you know of people interested in training to become a foster and/or adoptive parent, let them know about the next “lightning round” of classes!

Dates are set for June 19-21 and June 26-28. Call (513) 632-6366 for more details.



SWOFCA News

Submitted by: Debra McMullen, Program Director

In the February issue of Family Matters, the question of the month, what procedures should caregivers follow when their foster child is arrested or involved with the Juvenile court system?

Answer: If you have a foster child who is involved in any criminal activity, you should report the activity to HCJFS within 24 hours. If at all possible, report the incident as soon as possible. If the issue is not reported within the allotted time, you could be cited for a rules violation and/or lose your license.

As we all know, state rules and procedures are constantly evolving. Just to give you an update, if you did not know, all children 18 and older must now have an FBI check. Many revisions to the states rules and regulations are coming soon. As new developments are available, we will share them with you.



Debra McMullen

Join Us for “Butterflies & Blue Ribbons” on May 13

The month of May is Foster Parent Month. SWOFCA would like to invite you to “Butterflies and Blue Ribbons” a celebration of Southwest Ohio foster parents which will be held Wednesday, May 13 from 3-5 p.m. at Krohn Conservatory. The celebration will include information booths from various foster care agencies, good food, and good fun for the entire family. At 5 p.m., families will be able to see the beautiful Butterfly Show featuring butterflies from Japan! So please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

Next SWOFCA Meeting coming up!

SWOFCA is always looking for dedicated people to help execute the mission of the program. Please come join us! Meetings are held the second Monday of the month at Zion Hill Community Church, 6834 Parrish Avenue in North College Hill from 6-8 p.m. For more details please call (513)946-1842 or (513) 344-3626.

Do you have story ideas for Family Matters?

If you have a story suggestion for upcoming issues of Family Matters, we'd love to know about them!

E-mail us at familymatters@jfs.hamilton-co.org. We'd love to help you with issues and concerns you may have, whether you are new to classes and the homestudy process, or you have been fostering or adoptive parents with HCJFS for several years.

Thank you for ALL you do for the children placed in your home. We are lucky and thrilled to have you as part of our team!

In memory: LaVenia Moore

In February 2009, HCJFS Children's Services staff lost a beloved colleague and friend. LaVenia Moore worked for several years as an adoption worker in the Children's Permanency section, giving her heart to children waiting to be adopted. Her greatest passion was children, her own and the children she served.

LaVenia showed us strength, love and hope – especially when we needed it most. We miss our friend greatly, and we know the children, foster and adoptive families she cared for do as well.



May's featured child available for adoption

Dylan Born July, 1997

Black history is a fascinating topic to quiet, respectful Dylan. Reading about black history or spending time on the computer are the things this young man most enjoys about school. Dylan has a strong sense of camaraderie and loves being with his friends, whether it is riding bikes and scooters around the neighborhood, or going to Jackie Chan movies. Dylan also enjoys playing football, basketball, and soccer.

Dylan aspires to be a police officer one day, a real-life hero to people. It's no surprise, then, that some of his favorite toys are of the superhero variety: Spiderman, Iron Man and the Incredible Hulk.

More than anything, this shy pre-teen would like to be adopted by a fun-loving family where other siblings will share his sense of humor and support him in his many sports pursuits.



Upcoming Pre-service Training classes

Orientation - Class 901

May 6

May 13

June 17

June 24

Pre-service Session 7: Saturdays, 9 AM - 4 PM

May 16 - Classes 902 & 903

May 30 - Classes 904 & 905

June 6 - Classes 906 & 907

June 13 - Classes 908 & 909

June 20 - Classes 910 & 911

June 27 - Class 12



Session 8: Tuesdays- Thursdays, 6 - 9 PM

May 12 - Class 902

May 14 - Class 903

May 19 - Class 904

May 21 - Class 905

May 26 - Class 906

May 28 - Class 907

June 2 - Class 908

June 4 - Class 909

June 9 - Class 910

June 11 - Class 911

June 16 - Class 912

To register for Orientation, call (513) 632-6366

For information about post-service trainings, visit www.ocwtp.com/swortc.htm

From the Foster Care Support team

contributed by Jill Brinker & Val Brinker, Foster Care Support Managers

Happy National Foster Care Month! Thank you, foster parents, for all of your efforts to care for Hamilton County children placed in your care!

As a courtesy to our foster and adoptive parents, we would like to offer a few reminders for you as you continue your work with HCJFS:

1. **All foster parents must notify your support worker of ANY changes in the household, any contact with law enforcement and/or injuries to foster children in your care. ANY charges incurred by a foster or juvenile child residing in your home must also be reported.**

It doesn't happen every day, but any time a licensed foster homes change something at home (place of employment, phone numbers, people living in the home, etc.), your support worker must be notified. Please keep your support worker's contact information handy and let them know about any changes as soon as possible.

2. **When renewing your foster license, please remember to meet all post-service training requirements at least 30 days before your license expires.** This allows time to process your training hours and ensure that they are reported accurately to the state for licensure updates. Make sure you provide all necessary information to your support worker, and contact them with any questions promptly.

3. **Any time foster parents transport children, please remember to use car seats or booster seats as required.** The HCJFS Children's Services Manual (Section 15.01-B) and the Ohio Administration Code (5101:2-7-5) state that car seats or booster seats must be used for transporting children:

- If the child weighs under 20 pounds, the child must be in a rear-facing car seat in the back seat.
- If the child is under one (1) year of age, the child must be in a rear-facing car seat in the back seat.
- If the child is between 20 and 40 pounds and is between one and four years of age, the child must be restrained in a forward-facing position in a car seat in the back seat of the car.
- If the child is more than four years old and between 40 and 80 pounds, or shorter than four feet, 9 inches tall, the child must be restrained in a booster seat in the forward facing position in the back seat of the car

4. **FBI and Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCII) background checks are required not only when you become a foster and adoptive parent, but also at certain renewal times.**

- You will have to undergo a background check during every other recertification period (every four years).
- Adoptive families will have to go through background checks every four years at the time they update their homestudies.
- State rules require the agency to conduct out of state central registry checks on all foster/adoptive parents and adults in the home who lived outside Ohio five years prior to the BCII criminal background check. Otherwise central registry review is completed for the state of Ohio.
- FBI and BCII checks are required for all household members within 10 days of turning age 18, this includes foster children.

5. **The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services is authorized to revoke certification of foster parents who do not care for foster children for twelve consecutive months. HCJFS can ask to maintain certification, but we must provide ODJFS with good cause to do so.**

If you have any questions about this information, contact your foster support worker or managers Jill Brinker (946-1818) or Valerie Moffett (946-2343).