

**From:** Caitlin Baird [christy@afamilyforeverychild.ccsend.com] on behalf of Caitlin Baird [caitlin@afamilyforeverychild.org]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 13, 2012 2:03 AM  
**To:** jennifer.dunn@afamilyforeverychild.org  
**Subject:** AFFEC Family Finding June 2012



## Family Finding Program

A Family For Every Child

June 2012

View our profile on [LinkedIn](#)

Follow us on [twitter](#)

Like us on [Facebook](#)

[Visit our blog](#)

[Text Me!](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

### Donate to AFFEC

Would you like to contribute to A Family For Every Child's cause for helping children?

Any amount can have a lasting impact on a child. Click below!

[Click here to DONATE NOW](#)

### A Child Needs Your Help

Are you a genealogy whiz who has a desire to help foster children? If so, apply to become a Family Finding and/or Extensive Team Recruitment volunteer.

We're looking for dedicated, detail-oriented individuals who are interested in constructing family trees for youth in foster care using GenoPro (or another comparable) software. Experience with ancestry.com or other genealogical websites is also a plus.

This role requires about 3 hours per case, proficient computer skills, and the

### Family Finding Success Story

Toby had been in foster care for six years before being adopted, and then re-entered the system six years later. He stayed in foster care until he was eighteen. Unlike most children who age out of the foster care system, Toby was doing well living on his own: he had a job, support from a former foster parent, and was a part of a faith community in his neighborhood. While Toby was happy and healthy, he knew nothing about his biological family except for information he had heard secondhand. Toby's caseworker, whom he was still in close touch with, referred Toby's case to Family Finding so that the young man could have some information regarding his family.

After mining Toby's files, the Family Finding team was able to connect with a few biological family members who were able to connect them with Toby's mother. After nearly eighteen years, Toby's mother had changed. She was fully employed, spends her free time hiking, and is part of a loving family. When speaking with Toby's mother, the team discovered that she still loved him, and wanted to speak with him. After the caseworker learned this information, he and Toby visited the mother and a close friend of hers. The two were able to discuss the past and present, and agreed to keep in touch. While the initial meeting was tender and many questions still remained, the two were able to create the foundation for a relationship.

Now, in addition to his faith family, his former foster parent, and his caseworker, Toby has his mother, and probably many more biological family members, as a support system.

### Family Finders Connect Kids, Family

Mary Canrobert  
Correspondent  
Posted: Friday, May 25, 2012

Family Finding Specialist Sid Daniels. CATAWBA COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES

Ever heard of Family Finders? One might assume it's an organization that finds families interested in adopting kids. That's partially correct.

The goal is connecting foster children and youths with families, but the fascinating, and widely unknown, objective of Family Finders is to reunite foster kids with their own families. Sounds simple until divorce, abuse, estrangement, or a variety of other circumstances are considered, and then one can see how there can be children whose whereabouts or even whose existence is completely unknown to aunts,

computer, money, and the drive to help foster children!

To apply to be a volunteer, visit our [website](#) or email the Family Finding Director: [caitlin@afamilyforeverchild.org](mailto:caitlin@afamilyforeverchild.org)

## Family Finding Training

Our monthly Family Finding training is just around the corner! Come to A Family For Every Child on Saturday, June 16th, and learn about the Family Finding process!

Family Finding is an independent program that searches for lost loved ones for foster children, and is also an important aspect of Extensive Team Recruitment and 30 Days to Family!

Family Finding involves mining a child's files, research on the internet, and calling and engaging relatives in order to cast the widest net possible and find as many positive family members as we can!

Email the Family Finding Director to reserve your space!  
[caitlin@afamilyforeverchild.org](mailto:caitlin@afamilyforeverchild.org)

## 30 Days to Family

In addition to our new Extensive Team Recruitment Program, A Family For Every Child will be launching another new program called 30 Days to Family. The goal of this new program is to place children entering care with a kinship caregiver within the first thirty days of entering care.

The Foster and Adoptive Coalition in Missouri, the same great organization that started Extreme Recruitment from which our Extensive Team Recruitment Program is based, have exercised this practice. By placing children with a relative or other adult that they know well, they are more likely to feel loved, less likely to have behavioral issues, and are far less likely to grow up in foster care.

This program is also related to the Family Finding process, giving A Family For

uncles, grandparents, cousins, siblings - maybe even a parent. Wouldn't it be grand to make some long overdue introductions and offer a foster child the chance to know his own story, and possibly live with someone who's biologically related to him? That's what Family Finders does, and since January of this year, it's been doing it all over North Carolina.

Sid Daniels is a Family Finding Specialist for the Children's Home Society of North Carolina. He works in partnership with Catawba County Social Services to make those connections that foster children so desperately need.

Without Daniels and people like him, a foster child could become a statistic. Consider the following national data from CHSNC:

49 percent of youth who age out of foster care (usually age 18) are homeless within three years.

43 percent of aged out youth are high school dropouts.

56 percent become unemployed within two years of aging out.

42 percent, of which 60 percent are women, become parents within 2.5 years of exiting foster care.

Former foster youth are found to suffer from post traumatic stress disorder at twice the rate of U.S. war veterans.

38 percent of these youth are labeled "emotionally disturbed."

50 percent of these youth have used illegal drugs.

1 in 4 will be incarcerated within 2.5 years of leaving foster care.

"We don't want a kid feeling lonely, where the only people in their life are the ones that get paid to be there," Daniel said. Daniels is unrelenting in his search for a child's family members and other adults who may have been in a child's life. To do his job, Daniels follows a six-step approach developed by internationally recognized permanency expert Kevin Campbell.

Campbell's plan, according to CHSNC, has proven successful placing foster children in the homes of relatives or establishing emotional connections, so children receive birthday cards, attend family gatherings, and always know there are people who care about them.

Daniels described Campbell's six steps as discovery, engagement, planning, decision making, evaluations, and follow up. Staying on a case 3-6 months, Daniels begins by, as he said, "mining the case file."

He looks for names. He interviews the child, listening for names, addresses, dates, events, any piece of information that may lead to a family member.

"I gather the child's story," said Daniels, who said he's known kids who've had 30 or more placements in foster care, so their stories are long. He uses Facebook, telephone books, Internet searches, and word of mouth to find people.

In the engagement phase, he sends letters, makes phone calls, and tries to friend people on Facebook. If he receives no response, Daniels goes to last known addresses. He talks to neighbors and employers. He's even visited prisons to talk to relatives.

Once he tracks down family members, he talks to them face to face. If they appear reluctant, he shows them a video of the child talking about himself and sharing what he wants in life.

"There really are relatives who've never seen the child," Daniels said. "You can imagine the reactions: anger, sadness, crying. It puts reality right in their face."

In the planning stage, Daniels assembles everyone he's found, everyone the county has determined through background checks to be "safe."

Daniels's goal is to find 40 or more relatives or adults important to the child, such as coaches, teachers, and step-parents. They meet with Daniels to talk about the child and his future and how the relatives can play a role in the child's life. Such meetings always lead to decisions.

Maybe a family member will become the child's legal guardian. Maybe the child will remain in foster care but will have a long list of people who want to maintain contact with the child.

"I've never had a situation in which no one wanted at least to have emotional connections to the child," Daniels said.

Every Child the perfect foundation for taking this initiative. By looking for family members within the first thirty days of a child entering care, we are more likely to find more family members, and supportive connections who can provide a home for the child immediately.

## Community Symposium

A Family For Every Child will be hosting a community symposium to introduce our new Extensive Team Recruitment program! The symposium will go over the general program process as well as how it will benefit the community. As the saying goes "it takes a village to raise a child" and we need the "village" to be behind this program.

The symposium will be held on July 25th from 9am until 11am At United Way of Lane County and we welcome all Lane County caseworkers, foster families, CASAs, educators, and child advocates to come!

So what are a few ways in which Extensive Team Recruitment benefits the community? Well, this program would involve each child's specific community (teachers, case staff, foster parents, family members, etc.) to assist in graduating that child from care.

Reducing the number of children in foster care not only helps the Department of Human Services, but it helps families, educators, neighbors, faith based communities and more. More youth with their families and less youth in the foster care system strengthens our community and reduces dependence on agencies to raise our children.

So mark your calendars for July 25th to learn about this great new program! There is limited space, so email the Family Finding Director to reserve your spot!

[caitin@familyforeverychild.org](mailto:caitin@familyforeverychild.org)

"What I'm learning is that these relatives who love these children know the stories these children need to know, the job their grandfather did, where the child got his brown eyes." Daniels has been a Family Finder since Sept. 2011. Before that, he was a foster and adoptive social worker for Mecklenburg County Youth and Family Services. Explaining why he decided to become a Family Finder, he answered that he'd witnessed the joy when a co-worker "brought family members back into a child's life."

"Every child wants, needs, and deserves to know who their families are," said Daniels.

## Extended Family Trees Support More Oregon Children

PORTLAND, Ore. - About 22,000 children in Oregon live with relatives other than their parents, and these extended family tree "branches" present challenges as well as benefits. They are the topics of a new [Annie E. Casey Foundation report](#) released today, with recommendations for making such family arrangements more positive for kids and caregivers. Oregon encourages kinship caregivers to become foster parents, which gives them more legal clout and financial benefits. However, Pamela Butler, child welfare policy manager at Children First for Oregon, says the rules are strict - and not many go through with it.

"I think you see that a lot with grandparents, across the country and in Oregon. Grandparents just take in the kids and they don't get that extra support, and they don't get any extra financing, because they think that becoming involved in the system would be too much for them. And maybe it might even be, sometimes." Butler says everything from home size to past arrests can interfere with someone's ability to become a foster parent, even for a relative's child. She thinks there ought to be some exceptions made to keep children with family members when possible. One casualty of the state budget crisis, she adds, is that Oregon makes little effort to locate family members of children placed in foster care. Some pilot projects have been successful, but she says they inevitably run out of money.

"You might be in care for a year, and we may have stopped looking for any family for you. And you could have an aunt in California or an uncle in Utah that is never contacted, who has the means and would love to take in the child."

Nationwide, the report says, the number of children being raised by extended family is up 18 percent in the past decade. It says kinship placements may be the result of health or mental-health issues, substance abuse or military deployment.

Many kinship caregivers are lower-income or retired, making it a financial strain to add young ones to their households. The report recommends that state and federal programs do more to support these caregivers, and to let them know about the help that is available. Check it out online [here](#).

## It Takes a Village and We Need You!

**We want and need your help to spread the word!  
Here are ways you can help us recruit for kids:**

- Email us any supports, training's, activities, blogs, anything that could help. Contact: [Christy@familyforeverychild.org](mailto:Christy@familyforeverychild.org)
- Become a [volunteer](#)
- Donate, attend, or become a sponsor at our [event](#)
- Host a Heart Gallery. Contact: [Heather@familyforeverychild.org](mailto:Heather@familyforeverychild.org)
- Become a mentor. [Heather@familyforeverychild.org](mailto:Heather@familyforeverychild.org)
- Questions? Ideas? [Christy@familyforeverychild.org](mailto:Christy@familyforeverychild.org)

## How can you contact A Family For Every Child?

Call, email, or visit us online or in person!

880 Beltline Rd.  
Springfield Oregon 97477

office - 541-343-2856  
toll free - 877-343-2856  
fax - 541-343-2866



Executive Director--Christy Obie-Barrett  
[info@afamilyforeverychild.org](mailto:info@afamilyforeverychild.org)

[Forward email](#)



This email was sent to [jennifer.dunn@afamilyforeverychild.org](mailto:jennifer.dunn@afamilyforeverychild.org) by [caitlin@afamilyforeverychild.org](mailto:caitlin@afamilyforeverychild.org) |  
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).  
A Family For Every Child | 880 Beltline Rd. | Springfield | OR | 97477