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Sent: Thursday, October 18, 2012 2:03 AM
To: scott.corcoran@afamilyforeverychild.org
Subject: AFFEC Family Finding October 2012



Family Finding Program

A Family For Every Child

October 2012

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Extensive Team Recruitment - Looking for Legal Permanency

There are a myriad of things that family members and connections can do to establish emotional permanency for a youth - simply being a reliable resource - having someone who cares deeply goes a long, long way. However, emotional and blood connections do not always equate to legal connections.

Many youth languish in foster care without ever

Family Finding: What Role Can Family Members Play?

For each and every Family Finding case, our team works to identify permanent resources for the child, and hopes to make sure that children do not have to grow up in foster care. However, even if a relative cannot adopt a child, we assess what they can commit to and what role they can play in a child's life. There are many ways that relatives can be involved in a child's life, and upon such they can build strong, lifelong relationships.

There are distinct roles that relatives can play, such as respite care provider, visitation resource, or someone who can provide a family history. However, there are many other parts that are often overlooked where relatives can step in. For example, when December arises and the holidays are upon us, a relative's home can be a warm place to spend Christmas or Chanukah. If a teen needs rides to school events, college visits, or potential job interviews, a cousin or grandparent (or even a team of revolving kin members) can make themselves available.

When a youth is approaching a monumental life marker, such as graduation, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and more should be found in the crowd. For those children who have been separated from their siblings while in foster care, family members can be an excellent resource for sibling visitation. In essence, extended family and kin connections can provide stability, love, and support even if they are unable to house a youth.

Life long connections provide emotional permanency and offer former foster youth a better chance at success.

Learn more about our [Family Finding](#) program!

Become a Family Finding Volunteer

Do you want to help a foster child reconnect with family and lost loved ones?

Do you have some time to volunteer?

Are you free the morning of Saturday, October 20th?

Then you should attend A Family For Every Child's upcoming Family Finding volunteer training! Our Family Finding program

finding legal permanency. Often times these youth have higher needs, behavioral issues, and have lived in multiple different foster homes. Said children are often labeled "unadoptable" and are largely ignored. Many of these children end up feeling forgotten, which leads to them acting out and fulfilling a false legacy that has been written for them.

Rather than "forgetting" these children, we need to find ways to better serve them. Extensive Team Recruitment strives to do just that. Through Extensive Team Recruitment, youth and their caseworkers receive not just one specified service, but a plethora of services offered by A Family For Every Child.

These services include Family Finding, mentorship, recruitment services, and child preparation. By combining all of these efforts and identifying as many resources for the child as possible, we increase their likelihood of legal permanency and overall success. This intensified service requires a dramatic shift in thought; a shift that leans towards the idea that all children are adoptable, and that all children deserve to feel loved.

Show your support for such programs by writing your local Department of Human Service, Child Welfare Office and inquiring about what they do to ensure that all foster kids find a forever family.

Volunteer Brainstorming

Calling all Family Finding volunteers! A Family for Every Child's "Family Finding Volunteer Brainstorming" for October will be held on October 22nd from 5:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m.

To reserve your space, please email the Permanency Director at caitlin@afamilyforeverychild.org

has a number of roles available:

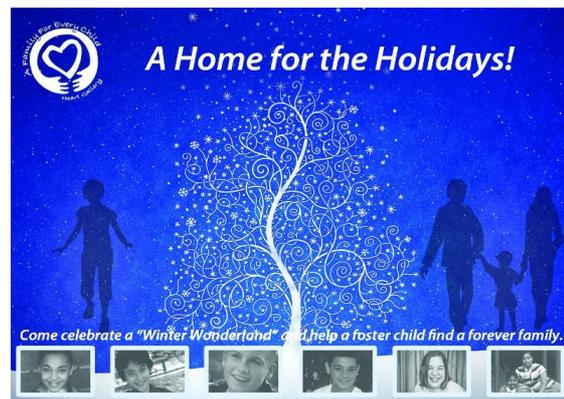
File mining: Search through child welfare case files and gather information to discover loving relatives and friends! Must be detail-oriented, excellent notetaker, and be able to dedicate 2-6 hours (during normal business hours) at a DHS office.

Internet Research: Search the web for updated contact information, social media profiles, family trees and more! Must be detail-oriented and an excellent notetaker. Must be able to dedicate 5-10 hours per case (can be done at home on your schedule).

Calling and Engagement: Call and speak with family members and connections to determine who would be a positive influence and is committed to the youth. Must have excellent communication skills and be able to listen to individuals. Must dedicate 6-12 hours per case (can be done at home on your schedule).

The training begins promptly at 9 a.m. and run until 12 p.m. the training takes place at the A Family For Every Child offices at 1675 West 11th, Eugene, OR 97401. Please Email the Permanency Director at caitlin@afamilyforeverychild.org to reserve your space.

All Family Finding volunteers must be able to pass a criminal background check, fill out a volunteer form, and attend a Family Finding training.



**November 1st, 2012
5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.**

**Come celebrate a "Winter Wonderland" and help a foster child find a forever family
Tickets are \$75.00**

On behalf of A Family for Every Child and our Home for the Holidays auction, we would like to take this opportunity to invite you to partner with us to support this worthwhile event benefiting foster children in search of their forever families. The event will be held on November 1, 2012 at the Valley River Inn.

A Family for Every Child began with the vision of founder, and now Executive Director, Christy Obie-Barrett. Christy drew on her own passion created through her personal experience with 9 adoptive and 3 biological children. Along with dozens of dedicated volunteers, Christy formed A Family for Every Child in 2006. It has grown into an organization focused on finding permanent and loving adoptive families for Oregon's waiting foster children, and also, on identifying and connecting lost family members with older foster children who might otherwise end up homeless with little hope for a bright future. Since inception, A Family for Every Child has served over 10,000 children and families.

Along with dozens of dedicated event volunteers, we are asking you to support us by donating to our silent auction, oral auction and/or purchasing a table or individual tickets. Things

Volunteer of the Month: Amy Kappeler



"I have been a teacher in public schools for 8 years. I have had many students who were in foster care and struggling with difficult transitions, and I always wished that I could help them beyond what I could do in the classroom. I was excited to learn about the Family Finding program, and I have greatly enjoyed the opportunity to do something great for kids that might not happen for them otherwise."

Amy has performed detailed, diligent work on each case she has been assigned. Her refined communication skills and warm demeanor allow her to effectively engage family members and connections. Amy works tirelessly to find as many supportive folks as possible for our kids.

We are lucky to have Amy as a Family Finding volunteer!

Kinship Parenting' on the Rise in V.T., Nationally

NECN: Jack Thurston, Essex, Vt.) - On a recent morning in Essex, Vt., it was still dark; just after 6:00. But the Hamlin household was already wide awake. With five kids, there was a lot of hair to style, teeth to brush, backpacks to stuff, and even cats to chase. But as New England Cable News learned on a visit with the family, none of the children are biologically Brenda Hamlin's.

"Who'd have thought we'd have adopted three grandchildren and be raising

we are looking for are gift certificates or cards to restaurants, spas, salons, nail places, clothing stores, golf courses, hotels etc. Anything you can think of that you might want to purchase in a silent auction. No gift is too small as we can always combine them in baskets. AFFEC is a 501C3 non-profit with a Tax ID number. Any donation is tax deductible. We have a donation form for your convenience. A letter of acknowledgement will be mailed to serve as a receipt. Or consider supporting us by attending our event. We would be nothing without the support of our national community.

We understand that you have many opportunities to support worthwhile programs in our community and appreciate your consideration. If you have questions, please feel free to contact A Family for Every Child at 541-343-2856, info@afamilyforeverychild.org or www.afamilyforeverychild.org

REGISTER NOW

Sincerely,
A Family For Every Child
Heart Gallery
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Springfield, OR 97477
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Choosing What Works: When the Foster Care System was Failing, Local Agencies Found a Better Way

Southern Oregon Media Group: Mail Tribune.com. Ashland Daily Tidings. Medford Nickel.

September 18th, 2012

Critics of government can find plenty of examples of programs that fail to achieve their stated goals and waste public money in the process. So it's worth taking note when government officials see an approach that's not working and switch to one that does.

Today's case in point is Oregon's foster care system, or more specifically a new approach pioneered in Jackson County that is now expanding statewide and may become a national model.

For years, the state system presumed that separating children from their parents was the best way to protect them from dysfunctional homes plagued by drug addiction and neglect. The result was a state with one of the highest numbers of foster children in the country.

Most of those children never were adopted. Instead, they were shuttled through a succession of temporary foster homes until they turned 18, then cut loose, many to fall into the same self-destructive patterns of substance abuse and crime that plagued their parents.

OnTrack Director Rita Sullivan, together with other local agencies, secured federal grants and tried a different approach. Rather than emphasize removing children from their homes, the new approach gives families the support they need to stay together.

Children who are removed from their homes are placed with another relative whenever possible, and reunited with their parents when it's safe for them to go home. Struggling parents are provided temporary stable housing, drug and alcohol counseling and parenting education.

The result: In five years, the number of Jackson County children

nieces?" Brenda Hamlin asked. She already raised five kids of her own, but then took in three step-grandchildren, a niece, and a great-niece when their parents couldn't care for them. "I really appreciated it," said niece Brianna Caron, a high school junior. "It's really nice."

Hamlin said some of the children now in her care were born addicted to drugs. "If she didn't adopt me, I don't know what I'd be doing right now," grandson Dyllan Hamlin, a seventh grader, said. Folks like Brenda Hamlin are often called "kinship parents," bringing up relatives' children after they thought they'd be empty-nesters. "Family's family," Brenda Hamlin said. "You have to keep family together."

At least 4,000 Vermont children are believed to have a primary caregiver who's a relative but not a biological parent. The number is estimated to be 7.8-million nationwide, up from 4.67-million in 1990, explained Lynn Granger of the non-profit Vermont Kin as Parents.

"Some of these arrangements are temporary but many are permanent," Granger said. Vermont Kin as Parents held its annual conference last week in South Burlington, offering legal workshops, tips on raising teens, and sessions on understanding bio-parents' substance abuse.

That is a common reason for these households, Granger said. "If all of the children in kinship care were dumped into the child welfare agency, the taxes would not even begin to pay for what supports are needed," she added.

With two waves of kids to get on the school bus, and another to bring to day care, busy grandmother Brenda Hamlin told NECN she does get some public money to help cover household costs, but she said it's not enough. She

in foster care has dropped by nearly half, from about 450 to 240.

Sullivan is quick to point out that in some cases - 20 percent to 30 percent - children must be removed from their homes for their own safety and cannot be returned because their parents are physically or sexually abusive. But the remaining 70 to 80 percent of parents, struggling with addiction and other problems, can benefit from help that strengthens their families and works to keep them intact.

Local social service providers say children who manage to stay with their parents have a better shot at breaking the cycle of drug abuse and crime. But the federal funding that made this result possible is running out.

A bill passed by the 2011 Legislature requires the state Department of Human Services and county agencies to implement programs that strengthen, preserve and reunify families by Oct. 1.

Local advocates hope the money saved by reducing the number of foster family placements can be redirected to continue the work that has succeeded in Jackson County. State budget writers should see that it happens.

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Welcome Books/ Lifebooks Available Nationally

LifeBooks are created for foster children to tell their story much like a scrapbook.

Welcome Books are created by adoptive parents as a way to introduce a child to his or her new family.

Our LifeBook Team puts together pre-made scrapbook pages for caseworkers, foster parents and adoptive parents to use in their scrapbook creations.

We have heard it is the best gift in the world for a foster child or adoptee.

Check it out and order a book for your children [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@afamilyforeverychild.org
- Become a [volunteer](#)
- Donate, attend, or become a sponsor at our [event](#)
- Host a Heart Gallery. joanne@afamilyforeverychild.org
- Become a mentor. christina.parra@afamilyforeverychild.org
- Questions? Ideas? christy@afamilyforeverychild.org

How can you contact A Family For Every Child?
Call, email, or visit us online or in person!

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was quick to point out she is not complaining:
"Absolutely not; absolutely not," Hamlin said. "We chose this, my husband and I."

It also meant losing retirement years and even some changed relationships with friends, Hamlin noted. "You just end up being secluded; they think you're crazy."

She said she took on the responsibility for the same reason most every kinship parent does: for the simple knowledge she's giving children with stormy pasts a chance at a brighter future. "That would be wonderful," Hamlin beamed.

Executive Director--Christy Obie-Barrett
info@afamilyforeverychild.org

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