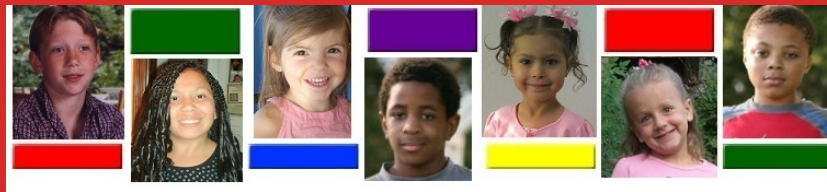


From: Caitlin Baird [christy@afamilyforeverychild.ccsend.com] on behalf of Caitlin Baird [caitlin@afamilyforeverychild.org]
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2013 2:02 AM
To: scott.corcoran@afamilyforeverychild.org
Subject: AFFEC Family Finding February 2013



Family Finding Program

[A Family For Every Child](#)

February 2013

[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](#)

Volunteer of the Month: Jacque Branford



I recently retired from Peacehealth Hospital after 23 years of service. I feel very fortunate for the

Using Facebook to Help Foster Care Children Connect with Relatives

Dara Newson
KHAS News

January 20th, 2013

Facebook has opened up a new world of experiments for the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

The state is using the social networking site as a tool in finding the relatives of children in foster care.

News 5's Dara Newson shows us how it's had an impact on lives.

"When it's your own relatives the chances that you say I'm sorry can't do this anymore seem to go down," said Debi Schriener. Foster children are often moved from one unfamiliar home to another.

"Often times if they have to go into stranger care they get moved into a different community," Schriener explained. Schriener is the resource developer with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. Her mission is to reconnect wards of the state with their families.

"Aunts, Uncles, Cousins, Second Cousins, whatever it takes," Schriener said.

Schriener began working with Facebook, identifying families in photos.

"Sometimes it's a case manager actually getting a hold of me and saying, she says she has an Aunt Sara, but I don't have much information," Schriener added.

Since establishing this site on Facebook, relatives of about 80 families have been searched.

"Sometimes I'm sending messages to Dads that the case manager doesn't have an address for and saying, hey please call this case manager. Sometimes I'm doing a whole search between our narratives and what I can find on Facebook and connecting the dots of okay this is Aunt Martha or this is Uncle Bill," Schriener said.

Currently there are 5,539 wards of the state and nearly 3,800 are

opportunities I was given and learned many valuable skills while I was there. I want to continue to give back to our community and have a passion for youth and the elderly.

I am honored to have the time now to spend with my 6-year-old granddaughter, 13-year-old grandson and my 92-year-old friend that I met 23 years ago at Sacred Heart Hospital when he was a volunteer and he is STILL volunteering!

When I researched organizations to volunteer with, my heartstrings were pulled towards A Family for Every Child. I often stop to show my grandchildren the Heart Gallery pictures at the mall. We read about some of the children and discuss how fortunate they are to have a loving, stable family.

When I saw the job description for Family Finding I was really excited to be part of such an organization and do research to find family and/or connections. I truly feel that there IS someone out there for each child and that often they just need that ONE connection that will feed their self esteem and give them hope for the future.

My brother and his wife have been foster parents for years and ended up adopting 5 children as their forever family! I am proud to be associated with such a great organization and hope it continues to grow and have many successes! Our children are our future!

Caseworkers: Do you have a case that could use Family Finding?

A Family For Every Child's "Family Finding" program has been in operation for 5 years, and we have connected over 100 children with safe, supportive family members. Many child welfare caseworkers have

living with non-relatives.

"If we can get relatives, at least it's a familiar face and people that already know them and know their needs," Schriener added.

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services says there is a great need for foster parents willing to take in teenagers.

Time is running out! Register for the Princess for a Day 2013 [HERE!](#)



Become a Family Finding Volunteer

Our Family Finding program has a number of volunteer opportunities available! If you are passionate about helping foster youth and are interested in a great volunteer opportunity, "Family Finding" could be for you! Here are the opportunities we have available:

File Mining: Spend 2 - 5 hours going through child welfare case files. Collect as many names of relatives and connections as possible, along with their contact information. The goal of this role is to find as many relatives and connections as possible, as well as to establish the facts of the case. Good file miners create a strong foundation from which we begin relative engagement.

Internet Research: Spend 2 - 4 hours searching for updated contact information for relatives and connections. Often times, the numbers found in the files are outdated, and we need to look up current contact information. This role also involves proficiency in social media, family tree builder websites, etc.

Calling and Engagement: Spend 3 - 7 hours calling and speaking with relatives and connections. Gather more family information (names and numbers of people who would be a part of a support network for the child) and talk with connections about whether or not they would be open to being a part of a child's support network. Be available to attend two mandatory meetings, including a Family Meeting, which relatives and connections will attend in order to construct a plan on how to support the child.

All Family Finding volunteers must pass a criminal background check and attend a Family Finding training. Our next Family Finding training will be held on March 16th from 9AM until 12PM at AFFEC's offices: 1675 W. 11th Ave. Eugene, OR 97401.

To apply to be a volunteer, please visit our website: www.afamilyforeverychild.org. If you have questions, please contact our Permanency Director at caitlin@familyforeverychild.org.

used Family Finding in order to identify relatives who are able to adopt, and our volunteers often find more relatives than were originally known.

Family Finding is also a great resource for finding permanent connections, support for a placement source, case planning, LifeBook materials, and updating or maintaining a family tree. Studies show that children who have a connection with their biological family often are less depressed, more likely to have lifelong resources, and more likely to succeed academically and professionally due to having safe adult resources.

If you have more questions about Family Finding, please contact AFFEC's Permanency Director, Caitlin Baird, at caitlin@afamilyforeverychild.com

If you are a caseworker and would like to refer a case to Lane County's Family Finding program, please contact the Department of Human Services Resource Developer, Sheri VanRysselberghe, at sheri.vanrysselberghe@state.or.us

Success Stories

William was one year old when his case was referred to the Family Finding program. Although he has been placed in a good foster home that hopes to adopt him, William's caseworker wanted him to have connections to his biological family.

When the staff at A Family for Every Child began their search, William's mother had not seen him since before her incarceration just a few months after his birth.

She was extremely reluctant to give any information to his caseworker that might create ties to William's family, and there was no documentation of William's father.

Through intense research techniques, the Family

Arizona Drops U.S. Foster Care Grant

Mary K. Reinhart
The Republic - azcentral.com

February 3rd, 2013

Blaming requirements they agreed to in the first place, state officials are canceling an \$11.5 million federal grant program intended to help find homes for older, hard-to-place foster children.

The Department of Economic Security, less than halfway through the five-year program, said it couldn't comply with rigorous federal requirements to receive the grant money and adequately serve the growing number of Arizona children in foster care.

The Fostering Readiness and Permanency grant was intended to get kids out of foster care more quickly, particularly children who have spent years there and are at risk of aging out of the system. And it held the promise of providing critical research data to improve the prospects for children who spend their formative years in foster care.

But DES officials said stringent research tied to the grant was preventing reintroduction of a program in Maricopa and Pinal counties to address the foster-care crisis and delaying deployment of new Child Protective Services caseworkers. Child-welfare experts, however, said ending the grant is a counterproductive, desperate move indicative of an overwhelmed agency.

"They're shedding everything they can that's not absolutely mandatory," said Tim Schmaltz, a former CPS administrator who runs the advocacy group Protecting Arizona's Family Coalition. Foster care isn't supposed to be a place to grow up, but thousands of Arizona children spend years there, often bouncing from foster home to group home. Finding permanent homes for these kids is one of the toughest jobs in child welfare. The more time children spend in state custody, the less likely it becomes that they will fit into a new foster or adoptive home or form meaningful, lasting relationships in adulthood.

Arizona's participation in the six-state, \$100 million grant was aimed at changing the future for these kids and providing research that could lead to additional federal funding nationwide for strategies to help find permanent homes and supportive adults for older foster children.

More than 30,000 U.S. teens each year reach adulthood and leave state custody without a permanent home, including about 700 in Arizona. Research shows that kids who age out of foster care are more likely than their peers to be unemployed, homeless or convicted of a crime or become teen parents, and they are less likely to graduate from high school or attend college.

Under the federal grant, which was a year in the planning stages, social-work teams were to target 1,000 children in Maricopa and Pinal counties at risk of long-term foster-care placement.

The grant funded two programs, the 3-5-7 Model and Family Finding, that have had success in other states. The 3-5-7 Model prepares children for life with a new family, and is aimed at reducing the chance that they'll be returned to CPS, with frequent therapy sessions to help them work through the grief and loss surrounding their biological family.

Family Finding uses search tools to find extended family, a task Arizona officials acknowledged in their grant application that

Finding program was able to find 40 family connections for William! This search gave a list of grandparents, cousins, and also a name for his suspected father. With this information, a family meeting was held and a maternal aunt and close friend of William's biological mother attended.

William's half brother and sister were contacted, and although they did not attend the meeting, they are very excited to stay a part of his life. This gives him strong ties to his biological family, which has shown to reduce the chances of depression and increase success rates for children in the foster care system later in life.

Through the dedicated efforts of the Family Finding staff, he will have contact with his brother and sister, and has access to an updated family tree.

LifeBooks, Welcome Books & Scrapbooking

Now National!

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.

We are looking for more members to join our Life Book Team; are you interested?

We need you, your creativity (we can lend you some if you think you don't have any), and your time in order to create these gifts for local foster children.

CPS workers don't have much time for.

Arizona Children's Association, a non-profit child-welfare agency, won the contract to hire and supervise staff to work with foster kids. Ten staff members were working with about 60 children in the program, which began selecting kids in August and was still in its pilot phase.

Veronica Bossack, assistant DES director for the Division of Children, Youth and Families, said in an e-mail to providers and other stakeholders that due to the grant's research requirements, the state has "been unable to implement new child welfare process improvement or initiatives" in Maricopa and Pinal counties.

The research requirements bar new programs in the two counties if the programs would undermine the goal of gathering consistent data. According to the department, that was blocking revival of a program, called team decision making, aimed at finding permanent placements for foster kids.

"The primary reasoning for requesting to end our participation in this grant is to allow the state to move forward, consistently statewide, with necessary reforms and innovative planning to achieve better outcomes for children, families and our staff who must perform this work," Bossack's e-mail said.

Agency officials said the grant requirements also have stalled deployment of new CPS workers. Kids in the program are separated into treatment and control groups, and the grant requires caseworkers to be randomly assigned to one or the other. According to DES, some new workers have been waiting months for a vacancy.

Anne Ronan, an attorney with the Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest, said the programs accomplished precisely what CPS has said is needed - finding permanent homes for foster children. She said the state's discontinuation of the grant is "shocking."

"Their explanation is 'We're not going to do the right thing so we can keep on doing the wrong thing,'" Ronan said. "It's like they only have one mode they can handle, and that's taking kids out of their homes."

Reach the reporter at maryk.reinhart@arizonarepublic.com

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. caitlin@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!**

1675 West 11th.
Eugene Oregon 97402

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



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

Adoption Life Books resemble scrapbooks and, like scrapbooks, there are a lot of ways to be involved.

[Request help](#) with a LifeBook or LifeBook supplies

[Click here](#) to help make Life Books

Curious? Interested? If so, please contact any of the following:

Sandra Estep
LifeBook Coordinator
541-687-9641
lifebook@afamilyforeverychild.org

Gail Van Gundy
LifeBook Coordinator
541-688-1488
lifebook@afamilyforeverychild.org

[Forward email](#)



Try it FREE today.

This email was sent to scott.corcoran@afamilyforeverychild.org by caitlin@afamilyforeverychild.org | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).
A Family For Every Child | 1675 West 11th | Eugene | OR | 97402