



Geauga County Job & Family Services Permanency Planning May 2008 Newsletter

May is National Foster Care Month

National Foster Care Month started 20 years ago after the National Foster Parent Association persuaded then Senator Strom Thurmond to introduce a resolution to proclaim May as National Foster Care Month. From Presidential Proclamations to state, county and city proclamations, this is the time to appreciate all those who make a difference in the lives of children in the foster care system. Thanks to foster families that open their homes, many of the abused and neglected children that arrive on the doorstep of local children's services agencies in our country are either able to reunite with their parents, are cared for by relatives or are adopted by adoptive families.

As of last year there were 26,882 children in foster care in the state of Ohio alone. As more children enter the custody of public and private agencies in Ohio, and all over the United States, agencies are desperately looking for more everyday people that can step forward to take on the challenge of becoming a foster parent. We understand that not everyone chooses to become a foster parent, but there are many other ways that those individuals can have a positive impact in the life of a child. Helping children reach their potential by being a supportive presence has unlimited benefits.

When we look at the overwhelming number of children who are in foster care, we see behind those numbers children who have gotten what they needed from the foster families or other supportive adults in their lives. They have been able to become thriving members of society. We cannot discount the possibilities of children just because they happen to be in foster care. There are many adults, that as children, were in foster care and have done great things with their lives. There are also those children that we all know have difficult times and may just need support, guidance or someone to share important events with that can make the difference between them thriving or failing. To those families that have stepped up to the challenge of becoming a foster or adoptive parent, *We Salute You*. For those that that may want to make a difference in the life of a child, call and find out what programs are available in your community.

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Foster Care Alumni Story

Triumph of the spirit is the only way to describe Regina Louise's trials as orphan. She was discarded by most - if not all - the adults in her life and prevailed against all odds with a resilience that shined through each attempt to break her. Her sheer will to survive and thrive is a beacon to all.

Author of the bestselling memoir *Somebody's Someone* (Warner Books), Regina's poignant story has been featured on NPR's All Things Considered, The CBS Early Show and in several newspapers and magazines. This moving chronicle of her life in the foster care system is the basis for a film in development and a one-woman show that premiered in 2007 at the Sacramento Theatre Company and is scheduled to open in Los Angeles this May. Regina remembers: "My whole life, I wanted to hear that I was a wanted and special child. So, I set about imagining what my beginnings would have been like."

Regina was placed in foster care as a toddler when her biological mother abandoned her. At the age of 11, this self-determined child crossed the country on a Greyhound bus to meet a mother she barely knew and found a woman who had long since moved past wanting to be a parent. Regina would end up living in over 30 different foster homes, group homes and psychiatric facilities in California.

Along the way, she met Jeanne, a young counselor at the Contra Costa children's shelter where Regina returned after each failed foster home placement. The two developed a strong relationship and Jeanne attempted to adopt the teenager. Unfortunately, their petition was refused. At the time, it was uncommon for a black child to be placed with a white parent, especially a single woman like Jeanne. Regina was never adopted and remained in foster care until the age of 18.

As an adult, Regina took charge of her life. She became a successful hair stylist and opened salons in the San Francisco Bay Area. It was then she decided to write her life story. In an incredible twist of fate, Jeanne read a local newspaper article about Regina's published book. Although she had lost touch with Regina for many years, Jeanne tracked down an email address and sent her a congratulatory message. The two women reconnected and ultimately fulfilled a wish from long ago. On November 20, 2003, in the same courthouse where a judge had denied their request decades before, Jeanne officially adopted Regina. Regina says:

"I waited for 40 years for somebody to claim me, and I decided it was never going to happen. There I was, with a 17-year-old son of my own, and it finally did. I had someone to call Mom."

Now, as a motivational speaker, Regina's optimism and perseverance leaves her audiences filled with the hope of possibility. Her goal is to share with people in every state in the nation a powerful message about the significance of all children finding lifelong connections to caring adults.

This profile was taken from the National Foster Care website. For more stories and information, please go to <http://www.fostercaremonth.org>.

CALL TO ACTION

We are asking families that have a story to tell about how they have touched the life of a child in foster care to write the story and send it in to us. We want to be able to share the stories with others that are interested in fostering or adopting. You do not have to be currently certified or approved with us. You do not have to have fostered a children from our Agency. If you have a story to tell we want to know.

We are also asking the children that were in foster care to write their story and send it in to us. Names do not need to be included, but please have the child include their age in their story.

The stories can include the following:

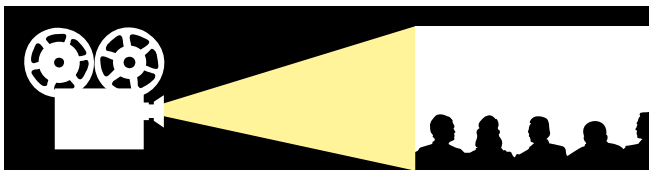
Families:

- *What were your fears about becoming a foster or adoptive parent?
- *What impact did you have on the life of a child?
- *What are the rewards of opening your home to children?
- *What do you wish you would have known then that you know now?
- *What impact did the children who were “placed” in your home have on you?

Children (current or former)

- *What were your fears about being placed into a Foster home?
- *What was it really like for you being a foster child?
- *What do you wish you would have known before you were “placed”?
- *What do you want other people to know about children who are in foster care?

Our Foster Parent Recognition Dinner is scheduled for May 14, 2008. This will be our chance to show our appreciation for the Foster Families of Gauga County on behalf of the children & families that we serve every year. The training topic will be “Team Building” and the trainer will be Beth Cardina. Hope you can find time to join us this year for an evening of fun and fellowship.



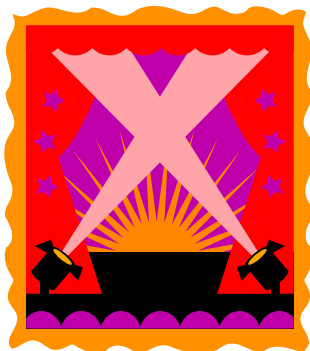
“Child Spotlight of the Month”

CAITLYN

Enclosed with this month’s newsletter is a flyer for a child that is looking for an adoptive family. Could that family be you? Or do you know someone who might be able to provide the forever family that Caitlyn is looking for? Take a look and let us know if you or someone you know might be interested in adopting Caitlyn.

Did you know May . .

- *1 is Mother Goose Day
- *4 is Be Kind to Animals Week
- *4 is National Family Week
- *5 is Cinco de Mayo
- *10 is Birth Mother’s Day
- *11 is Mother’s Day
- *15 is National Chocolate Chip Day
- *17 is Armed Force Day
- *24 is Brother’s Day
- *25 is National Missing Children’s Day
- *26 is Memorial Day
- *is Family Wellness Month
- *is National Barbeque Month
- *is National Foster Parent Month
- *is National Hamburger Month
- *is National Mental Health Month
- *is National Military Appreciation Month
- *is National Smile Month
- *is Teen Self Esteem Month



This month we are introducing another important staff of the Agency that you may have contact with.

Now Presenting: Barbara Rakes & Meredith Meyers

Barbara Rakes: Barb Rakes is the current Director of Social Services. She has been with this agency for over 26 years. Barb has had the opportunity to work on every team in Social Services. She began as an Adult Protective Worker and moved through out the teams both as a worker and a supervisor. Barb loves working with the families and

watching the growth that occurs in both the families and her staff.



Meredith Meyers: Meredith has a Bachelor's degree in Individual and Family Studies with a psychology minor from Kent State University. She has worked in Geauga county for the past 12 1/2 years in a variety of roles serving children and families. She began straight out of college working for GCJFS as a social worker. This then led her to move across the street to Ravenwood Mental Health Center in the STOP Program, serving families that have been affected by sexual abuse. She then had the pleasure of working in the early intervention program of Geauga County called Help Me Grow. All of her experiences have given her a wide variety of insight into how to better serve families and a broad knowledge base of what is available in the county. She is excited to be back at GCJFS as the assessment supervisor and hopes to continue to keep kids in our community safe and assist families.



TRAINING REMINDERS:

- ❖ Remember training sessions are for adults only. Unfortunately there is no child care available to families at training sessions, please make child care arrangements for your children prior to coming to training.
- ❖ Please set all cell phones and pagers to vibrate before the training begins. If you are going to take a call during the training sessions, please excuse yourself and answer it in the lobby.
- ❖ Please be on time for all trainings. If you are more than **15 minutes** late, the front door will be locked and you will not be allowed to participate in the training.
- ❖ If you are interested in signing up for trainings @ Geauga County JFS please call to register at least a week in advance so that we can accurately count the number of people attending. For most training we need a minimum of 6 people attending or else we have to cancel the training. So your timely registering will be greatly appreciated.
- ❖ Want to know what other trainings are being held by other counties? Visit the Northeast Regional Training Center website at www.ocwtp.com.
- ❖ Even if you are not currently a certified foster or adoptive family with us, you are still welcome to attend our trainings. All we ask is that you call to register.



As we all try to preserve the environment, if you would rather have the monthly newsletter sent to you via email please let either your permanency planning worker know or contact Kathi Griffin, LSW at 440-285-9141 or griffk@odjfs.state.oh.us. We will then take you off the mailing list and add you to the email list for the newsletter.

Geauga County Job & Family Services On-Going Training Schedule

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE - 912	
Date: Thursday, May 1, 2008	Time: 6:00 - 9:00 PM
Trainer: Karla McDay	Location: Geauga County JFS
Objectives:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster parents will be able to define domestic violence. • Foster parents will gain an understanding of the effects of domestic violence on children. • Foster parents will gain an understanding of the abuse cycle. 	

HELPING YOUTH FEEL BETTER ABOUT THEMSELVES: EASY STEPS TO RAISE A CHILD'S SELF-ESTEEM - 914	
Date: Saturday, May 10, 2008	Time: 9:00 AM- 4:00 PM
Trainer: Tyronne White	Location: Geauga County JFS
Objectives:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster parents will learn the meaning of self-esteem. • Foster parents will learn the origin of low self-esteem and the 11 types of negative thoughts. • Foster parents will learn how to build positive self-esteem in children. 	

PERMANENCY ISSUES FOR CHILDREN – P11*	
Date: Saturday, June 7, 2008	Time: 9:00-12:00 PM
Trainer: Ann Bagley	Location: Geauga County JFS
Objectives:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster parents will understand the three common parental responses to the difference between adoption parenting and birth parenting, and know the potential outcomes of each response. • Foster parents will recognize common post adoption issues for both the parent and the child, including loss, identity, control and divided loyalties. • Foster parents will understand the values of supportive services from the placing agency, or a post placement service provider, during the childhood and early adulthood of the adoptive child. 	

PERMANENCY ISSUES FOR FAMILIES – P12*	
Date: Saturday, June 7, 2008	Time: 1:00-4:00 PM
Trainer: Ann Bagley	Location: Geauga County JFS
Objectives:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster parents will become aware of post adoption issues for both parent and child, including loss, identity, control and divided loyalties. • Foster parents will learn the importance of talking to the child about adoption in a developmentally appropriate way, and handling difficult information regarding the birth family in a positive manner. • Foster parents will become aware of resources such as adoption subsidies, and/or SSI, that provide material to the child in the adoptive family. 	

SEXUAL ABUSE - PO9 ***Date:** Thursday, June 12, 2008**Time:** 6:00-9:00pm**Trainer:** Ann Bagley**Location:** Geauga County JFS**Objectives:**

- Foster parents will be prepared to care for children who have been sexually abused and to become familiar with the effects of sexual abuse on children.
- Foster parents will learn appropriate sexual behavior.
- Foster parents will learn how to construct their family system to incorporate the placement of a sexually abused child to ensure the child's safety and success.

DEPRESSION IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS - 921**Date:** Saturday, June 21, 2008**Time:** 9:00 AM-4:00 PM**Trainer:** Tyronne White**Location:** Geauga County JFS**Objectives:**

- Foster parents will become aware of signs and symptoms of childhood and adolescent depression, and the relationship of depression to loss for foster children.
- Foster parents will learn the characteristics and types of depression.
- Foster parents will learn how to intervene with a depressed child and where to go to seek help.
- Foster parents will be able to recognize when depression worsens and how to seek help, including signs of suicide potential.

BOUNDARIES FOR FOSTER PARENTS - 914**Date:** Tuesday, June 24, 2008**Time:** 6:00-9:00pm**Trainer:** David Zidar**Location:** Geauga County JFS**Objectives:**

- Foster parents will learn how to set limits on themselves and others to prevent boundary violations.
- Foster parents will be able to identify common boundary violations.
- Foster parents will learn what to do to set limits on birth parents.
- Foster parents will learn how to manage common "awkward" situations, e.g. how to introduce their foster children to inquisitive individuals.

***The above three trainings (Sexual Abuse, Permanency Issues for Children, and Permanency Issues for Families) are required for pre-approved adoptive homes. Some counties require these trainings in pre-service. Please check with your county agency to see if you have already completed this training, and can earn hours toward your re-certification.**

**Geauga County Job & Family Services
Pre-Service Training Schedule
Trainer: Ann Bagley**

DATE	TIME	PRE-SERVICE TOPIC	COURSE NO.
Wednesday, May 7, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Orientation and Overview	PS1
Tuesday, May 13, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Teambuilding	PS2
Tuesday, May 20, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Abuse and Neglect and Impact on Child Development	PS3
Thursday, May 22, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Attachment and Separation	PS4
Thursday, May 29, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Discipline	PS5
Tuesday, June 3, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Cultural Issues in Placement	PS6
Thursday, June 5, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Working with Primary Families	PS7
Tuesday, June 10, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Effects of Caregiving on the Family	PS8

Lake County Job & Family Services
On-Going Training Schedule
 177 Main Street
 Painesville, Ohio 44077-3402
 440-350-4218 or 440-918-4218

BOUNDARIES FOR FOSTER PARENTS - 914	
Date: Tuesday, May 6, 2008	Time: 6:00-9:00pm
Trainer: David Zidar	Location: Lake County DJFS
Objectives:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster parents will learn how to set limits on themselves and others to prevent boundary violations. • Foster parents will be able to identify common boundary violations. • Foster parents will learn what to do to set limits on birth parents. • Foster parents will learn how to manage common “awkward” situations, e.g. how to introduce their foster children to inquisitive individuals. 	

PEEK-A-BOO AND THE TERRIBLE TWOS: MANAGING BEHAVIOR OF MALTREATED INFANTS AND TODDLERS - 924	
Date: Tuesday, June 24, 2008	Time: 6:00 - 9:00 PM
Trainer: Brian Lowery	Location: Lake County DJFS
Objectives:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster parents will learn the physical, cognitive and psychological development of infants and toddlers. • Foster parents will learn the effects of maltreatment during this stage of development. • Foster parents will learn positive parenting strategies for this stage of development. 	

Ashtabula County Children’s Services Board
On-Going Training Schedule
 3814 C Court
 Ashtabula, Ohio 44005-1175
 440-998-1811

WHY DO ELEPHANTS AND CHILDREN NEED VISITS? - 963	
Date: Saturday, May 3, 2008	Time: 9:00AM-4:00 PM
Trainer: Linda Davis	Location: Ashtabula County CSB
Objectives:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster parents will understand the importance of parent/child visitation to families and children. • Foster parents will explore visitation issues from the perspective of the child, the parent, the foster parent, social worker and court. • Foster parents will learn how diversity may play out in visitation. 	

**BEFORE YOU TAKE THE FIRST DRINK: PREVENTING SUBSTANCE ABUSE
PROBLEMS IN CHILDREN – 939**

Date: Monday, May 5, 2008

Time: 6:00-9:00 PM

Trainer: Katie Terry

Location: Ashtabula County CSB

Objectives:

- Foster parents will understand some of the basic models of prevention and treatment of substance abuse.
- Foster parents will have a basic understanding of how to set up a home environment to prevent problems with drugs or alcohol.
- Foster parents will understand some basic steps to teach children how to refuse alcohol or drugs when offered.

PERMANENCY ISSUES FOR FAMILIES – P12*

Date: Tuesday, May 6, 2008

Time: 6:00-9:00 PM

Trainer: Ann Bagley

Location: Ashtabula County CSB

Objectives:

- Foster parents will become aware of post adoption issues for both parent and child, including loss, identity, control and divided loyalties.
- Foster parents will learn the importance of talking to the child about adoption in a developmentally appropriate way, and handling difficult information regarding the birth family in a positive manner.
- Foster parents will become aware of resources such as adoption subsidies, and/or SSI, that provide material to the child in the adoptive family.

THIRD PARTY INVESTIGATIONS – 920

Date: Thursday, May 22, 2008

Time: 6:00 - 9:00 PM

Trainer: Janice Lilac-Powell

Location: Ashtabula Co CSB

Objectives:

- Foster parents will learn about the increased potential for allegations.
- Foster parents will become familiar with the investigation process.
- Foster parents will explore the difference between a rule violation and a third party investigation.

RUNNING AWAY FROM FOSTER CARE - 920

Date: Monday, June 2, 2008

Time: 6:00 - 9:00 PM

Trainer: Katie Terry

Location: Ashtabula County CSB

Objectives:

- Foster parents will learn how to respond when a child runs away from their home.
- Foster parents will understand the importance of studying running away behavior and the five types of running behaviors.
- Foster parents will understand positive approaches in dealing with children's running behaviors.

**PEEK-A-BOO AND THE TERRIBLE TWOS: MANAGING BEHAVIOR
OF MALTREATED INFANTS AND TODDLERS - 924**

Date: Monday, June 9, 2008

Time: 6:00 - 9:00 PM

Trainer: Brian Lowery

Location: Ashtabula County CSB

Objectives:

- Foster parents will learn the physical, cognitive and psychological development of infants and toddlers.
- Foster parents will learn the effects of maltreatment during this stage of development.
- Foster parents will learn positive parenting strategies for this stage of development.

Ashtabula County Children's Services Board Pre Service Training Schedule

DATE	TIME	PRE-SERVICE TOPIC	COURSE NO.
Tuesday, February 26, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Orientation and Overview of Foster Care, Adoption and Kinship Care	PS1
Tuesday, March 4, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Teambuilding	PS2
Tuesday, March 11, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Abuse and Neglect and Impact on Child Development	PS3
Tuesday, March 18, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Attachment, Separation and Placement	PS4
Tuesday, March 25, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Discipline	PS5
Tuesday, April 1, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Cultural Issues in Placement	PS6
Tuesday, April 8, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Primary Families	PS7
Tuesday, April 15, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Effects of Caregiving on the Family	PS8
Tuesday, April 22, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Sexual Abuse	PS9
Tuesday, April 29, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Permanency Issues for Children	PS 10
Tuesday, May 6, 2008	6 - 9 PM	Permanency Issues for Families	PS 11

**C
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Date of Birth: 5-11-93

Caitlyn is a typical teen girl. She enjoys talking on the phone, surfing the internet, chatting with her friends, hanging out with boys, and listening to music. Caitlyn does not always receive the best grades in school, but she continues to work on this. Caitlyn does have an IEP so that she can get the extra guidance she needs at school. Caitlyn has also been trying to learn new ways to deal with the many events that life presents, and she seems to be making some progress in this area. Caitlyn is looking forward to having a family of her own and appears to understand the meaning of adoption. Caitlyn would be best matched with a family who is able to provide her with clear boundaries, consistent structure, and the ability to work as a "family team".

Agency: Geauga County JFS
Contact: Danette Richards
Phone: (440) 285-9141