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Sent: Sunday, January 06, 2013 2:04 AM
To: scott.corcoran@afamilyforeverychild.org
Subject: AFFEC Family Finding January 2013



Family Finding Program

A Family For Every Child

January 2013

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Upcoming Events

Volunteer training on January 19

Join us for our upcoming "Family Finding" volunteer training on Saturday, January 19th from 9AM until 12PM! Volunteers will be trained on the following:

File Mining:

Be a sleuth! Read through case files and find the names and important contact information for relatives and other lost loved ones. If you are an exceptional note-taker, pay attention to detail, and want to help a child in need this role is perfect for you!

Family Finding Program

It's the holiday season, and a perfect time to give back to a child in need! There are many children in foster care who feel that the holidays are a lonely time; they may not share a deep connection with their foster family, and they may not have contact with relatives or other loved ones.

For these children, a visit, phone call, or letter from a relative or connection can make the holiday season bright. If you want to help a child find a loving support network and possibly a home for the holidays, then do not hesitate to become a Family Finding volunteer!

Become a Family Finding Volunteer

Private Investigator

"Family Finding" is a program that involves intensive searches for family members and other connections for children who are in foster care. Our Family Finding team currently uses a number of search methods, but we have more to learn! We are looking for a pro-bono private investigator to help us search for more relatives and lost loved ones for Oregon foster kids!

Qualifications:

- Experience with public record databases
- Refined research skills
- Knowledge of exceptional "people finder" sites and other resources for discovering individuals
- 10 - 20 hours a month to work on 3 - 10 cases at a time

Child Prep Role

Our new "Extensive Team Recruitment" program, which provides a litany of services to local foster children, is in need of a Child Preparation volunteer. This role would include researching best practice methods for speaking with youth, making time to meet with children, and a big heart!

Qualifications:

- Experience in working with children (preferably professional experience, or working on a degree towards such)
- 10 - 20 hours a month dedicated to research and time spent with children
- Development of a "child preparation plan" that outlines best practice policies, methods, etc.

Follow Up Coordinator

"Family Finding" involves many different steps in an integrated

Internet Research:

Search the web for current contact information, more relative connections, family history, and more!

Calling and Engagement:

Call and speak one on one with relatives and lost loved ones in order to identify individuals who are committed to the youth and would make a good support network. Also speak with people who would know of more family connections.

In order to reserve your space for our upcoming training, email the Permanency Director, Caitlin Baird, at caitlin@afamilyforeverychild.org

Partnership

A Family For Every Child has now been providing Family Finding services to foster youth in Lane County for 5 years, and has served over 100 kids. We have done this with hard work, dedicated volunteers, and a good relationship with our community.

"Family Finding" is a program we believe has the ability to remove children from foster care, and create lifelong connections for children in foster care.

If you are interested in bringing Family Finding to your area and learn more about our partnership opportunities, please email the Permanency Director at caitlin@afamilyforeverychild.com

Success Stories

Jason

Jason was seventeen years old when his case was referred to Family Finding. He had been in foster care for six years and had moved many times. Jason was considered an angry kid who found himself reacting violently when pestered by others. Jason's caseworker believed that he was a bright kid who just needed support and love around him. Jason was living in a group home, and had no connection with his biological family.

process, and one of the most vital steps is follow-up! By following up with case staff and family members, we ensure that family meeting plans are followed, and that relatives, connections, and other loved ones are able to adequately support the youth! Follow up for a case begins within 3 weeks after a first family meeting, and continues for up to a year.

Qualifications:

- Ability to keep detailed notes and adequately update them in our database
- Refined communication skills
- Ability to meet strict deadlines and do timely reports
- 2 - 5 hours a month working on 4 - 10 cases

Community Engagement Coordinator

One of the most important and accessible tools we have to help our organization help foster youth is right here in our community...our people! By reaching out to volunteer organizations, local schools, government members, and other influential groups we can educate the public about life for youth in foster care and how "Family Finding" has the potential to remove and keep children out of foster care, as well as create lifelong, loving relationships for foster youth.

Qualifications:

- Ability to research and present information in an effective manner
- Good public speaker
- Ability to reach out to and engage community groups
- Availability to present to community groups
- 5 - 10 hours a month creating presentations and bringing such to groups and organizations

All Family Finding volunteers must be able to pass a criminal background check, fill out a volunteer form, and attend a Family Finding training. For details, please contact the Permanency Director, Caitlin Baird, at caitlin@afamilyforeverychild.org.



Learn about the Princess for a Day 2013 [HERE!](#)

Donation Timeline

We have created a timeline for each month, up until the event, for all the donations. This is so we can collect specific items for different months and anyone who would like to donate will have ideas of what we are in need of. However, we will still be accepting any donations during each month.

Feel free to visit our online Wish List for the list of items we need!

December

This month is all about the DRESSES!

If there are any dresses sitting in your closet and collecting dust, donate them to us! We will gladly accept princess dresses of all sizes!

biological family.

The Family Finding volunteer mined Jason's files and found many relatives whom Jason had had no contact with for a very long time. Some relatives were experiencing personal problems when Jason was taken into foster care, and were unable to provide for him at that time. There were some relatives that Jason said he was not interested in speaking to, particularly his father. Jason was worried that some of his relatives were still engaging in inappropriate behavior. When the volunteer began calling relatives, she found that there were many people who loved Jason and were capable of being a part of a stable support system. Not only were there family members who case staff were unaware of, but many family members has also changed for the better, especially Jason's dad.

The family meeting involved both of Jason's grandmothers, his aunts, an uncle, and his father. The meeting was very emotional. Jason's father shared that he was distraught about Jason's young life before he was removed from his care. He recognized that he had changed - he was employed, in a committed relationship, and ready to be a father to his son. All of the family members present expressed that they loved Jason very much, and wanted to be there for him however they could be.

Jason's caseworker was pleased to see so many relatives who cared so deeply for Jason. He invited Jason's father to lunch the next day so that Jason could meet him. Jason, his dad, and Jason's caseworker dined together and Jason and his dad began a budding relationship.

Jason now visits with his father regularly. He also sees his half siblings and his aunt on a regular basis. He even went on a family trip with his aunt and cousins! Even better, Jason is no longer considered an

January

This month will focus on WANDS and TIARAS! It will be the start of a new year, and the event will be just right around the corner! We will be in need of all the finishing touches to all the dresses that we will collect the month before.

February

One more month to go! This month will be all about the BLING! Anything pink and sparkly that the princesses can wear will be greatly appreciated! Necklaces, bracelets, rings...you name it!

Family Unknowingly Adopts Distant Cousin

Kayla Gahagan
Journal Correspondent

December 16th, 2012

Steve and Janine Hamilton have always felt deeply connected to their adopted daughter, but that connection was felt even more deeply this year when the family discovered that she is, in fact, a blood relative.

The Hamiltons adopted Sarah, who recently married and took McBride as her last name, nine years ago when they lived in Kansas City.

Sarah, now 19, was born in Texas and was being raised in Kansas City before she went into the foster care system at the age of 8 with her siblings.

In the meantime, the Hamiltons had checked into adoption but weren't counting on anything happening because they were beginning a move to Rapid City. Instead, just a couple months before the move, they got a call about Sarah, an 11-year-old who needed a home. She joined them in August of 2003, and the family moved to South Dakota that October.

It was good timing, Janine said, because it gave Sarah a fresh start in a new home that also was new to the rest of the family. Steve and Janine had three biological children at home.

At that time, Steve said, "We had no clue," that their new daughter could be related to them. It wasn't until 1940 United States Census data was released that a relative started doing some research and discovered that Sarah is Steve's fourth cousin once removed. That means Sarah's brothers and sisters in the Hamilton family are her fifth cousins.

The news was unbelievable, Steve said.

"Years ago, we joked that we might be related," Steve said. "Everybody's been having fun with it. The whole family's kind of excited."

Sarah, who still keeps in touch with some of her biological siblings, was also surprised by the news.

"I thought it was very cool," she said. "I love history."

The chances, she added, of their paths crossing like they did are very small. "It all happened for a reason," she said.

Janine said Sarah faced many of the emotional challenges that kids in foster care face. Because she was older when she entered the system, it was difficult to leave one family and live with another.

"The kids always long for a connection," Steve said, and oftentimes that connection has to be made in the way of

"angry kid" and no longer reacts violently when he is upset. Jason has people in his life who love him, and will likely be there for him permanently.

support, love and time. That's how it was done with Sarah, and this is just icing on the cake, Steve said.

It is nice news to hear, Sarah said, but it doesn't really change the way she sees her parents.

"I've already grown to be close to them," she said. "I've always belonged to them."

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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