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Sent: Tuesday, April 09, 2013 2:02 AM
To: scott.corcoran@afamilyforeverychild.org
Subject: AFFEC Family Finding April 2013



Family Finding Program

A Family For Every Child

April 2013

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

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Family Finding Training

Our next Family Finding training is scheduled for April 20th from 9AM until 12PM. The training will take place at A Family For Every Child's offices, 1675 W. 11th Ave., Eugene OR, 97402.

Please RSVP to our Training Coordinator, Sandra Anderson, at sreneanderson@gmail.com.

Come join us to learn more about how Family Finding helps children in foster care!

**What We Think:
Seeking Better**

New Permanency Programs!

30 Days to Family:

"30 Days to Family" is an innovative new program which would seek to find a relative placement for a child within 30 days of entering foster care. This program was first started by the Foster and Adoptive Coalition in St. Louis, MO, and has seen enormous success. A Family For Every Child is starting a similar program in order to help keep children with their families who love them and prevent youth from growing up in foster care.

Children who live with family members are more likely to live with their siblings, more likely to report feeling loved, more likely to remain in the home, and typically have less behavioral problems.

Under this program, A Family For Every Child (AFFEC) would use specialized search strategies to discover and engage family members within twenty four hours of the child being removed from his or her home. AFFEC would speak with known relatives and kith connections in order to learn about more kith and kin connections and begin contacting individuals who may be able to provide a home or other resources for the child.

Should a relative be unable to provide a placement source for the child, then the child would be placed with a specialized foster home. These foster homes would receive additional training from AFFEC, and would share the goal of reunification between the child and the family.

"30 Days to Family" will be an instrumental tool in keeping children out of foster care, and ensuring that those children will be connected to safe family members and feel loved.

Extensive Team Recruitment:

"Extensive Team Recruitment" is an intensive Permanency Program based upon the Family Finding model. This program will combine Family Finding search efforts with mentorship, child preparation methods, and child recruitment strategies. By utilizing all of these efforts, AFFEC hopes to assist in finding a "forever family" for each Extensive Team Recruitment child within 12 to 20 weeks.

Once a child's case is referred to the "Extensive Team Recruitment" program, an AFFEC Family Finder will begin exercising diligent search strategies in order to find as many

Outcomes for Children in Foster Care

[Read Original Article](#)

The Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services has launched a new initiative that could hold a great deal of promise for the thousands of Louisiana children who might otherwise spend their entire childhood in foster care.

The Faith in Families program seeks to limit a child's time in foster care either through adoption or reunification with their families within two years of being removed from their homes. The goal is to reduce the number of children in foster care by 84 percent by 2016.

This is an ambitious and admirable goal. The only reservation we have is that great care should be taken that children are not returned to lives of abuse or neglect.

The plan was born, at least in part, out of the agency's concern for kids who "age out" of the program.

These young people, who may have lived in more than one foster home, turn 18 and are suddenly on their own. No parents to turn to for guidance. No home to go back to if they can't find a job that will support them right away. No safety net at all.

This program, which seeks to give these kids the kind of young adulthood most people take for granted, is long overdue.

Children who age out of foster care are more likely to experience difficulty finding a job or to continue their education than individuals with an established support system, said Trey Williams, a spokesman for DCFS, on Thursday. They are also more likely to rely on government assistance.

For those who are not

relatives and connections as possible. In the meantime, AFFEC will work to find the child a mentor. Should a relative not be able to provide a permanent home for the child, then child recruitment strategies will be used in order to locate an adoptive family.

AFFEC hopes to identify "forever families" for 70% of cases and permanent connections for 90% of cases.

Oregon Foster Children Seek Bill of Rights

Yuxing Zheng
The Oregonian

March 22nd, 2013

SALEM -- Foster children should be informed of their rights and be able to attend court hearings, establish bank accounts and file complaints about deficient care, lawmakers heard Thursday.

Senate Bill 123 would require the Department of Human Services to establish the Oregon Foster Children's Bill of Rights. Many foster children are not made aware of their rights, making it harder for them to file complaints or seek improvements, foster children told the Senate Health Care and Human Services Committee.

"When I was growing up in the system, I always felt like there was no one who cared about me, nobody who had my interests or well-being" in mind," said Patrick Kindred, now a junior at the University of Oregon. "The only thing I was ever told was what I could not do."

Kindred said he didn't know his foster parents were supposed to help provide transportation to his court hearings and meetings, help him buy clothes and other basic tasks.

Similar stories at an Oregon Foster Youth Connection summit last summer prompted Sen. Chip Shields, D-Portland, to introduce the legislation.

"It was clear that most foster youth don't know what their rights are in the system, and too often, their rights are not upheld," he said. Shields and his wife were foster parents and continue to serve as foster parents in emergency situations.

The Bill of Rights would ensure foster children could:

- file complaints about care, placement or services
- be notified of and provided with transportation to attend court hearings and reviews
- establish bank accounts under the foster child's name as allowed under state law
- acquire a driver's license as allowed under state law
- learn how to remain in foster care after reaching 18 years of age

The bill would also establish a hotline number that foster children could call at any time to file complaints regarding care.

"In particular, cases where children are mistreated, they shouldn't be on their own, and their only recourse is to complain to the agency that may be complicit in the problem or may have overlooked the problem," said Mark McKechnie, executive director of Youth, Rights & Justice, a nonprofit Portland law firm where 80 percent of clients are foster children.

reunited with their parents, the best options are adoption or a permanent connection to a caring adult, such as a neighbor, teacher or coach, Williams said.

Children in foster care range in age from toddlers to older teens.

Thirty-three percent are 2 years of age and younger, Williams said, and 19 percent of them are younger than 5.

The most easily adoptable kids are younger than 9, he added.

The difficulties of the traditional adoption process are generally well known, as well as the cost. But this program is an exception to the rule.

Prospective adoptive parents - and that includes prospective single parents - are screened carefully, but the high cost of adoption is eliminated. In fact, some families may qualify for a small stipend if they adopt a child.

DCFS is working with faith-based groups, like Our Savior's Church in this area, to recruit people interested in adoption. If such groups are involved, Williams said, some of the church members volunteer to act as a support system for the newly formed family.

An effort is made to reunite children with their families during the first 12 months. If that proves to be impossible, then efforts are geared toward adoption. But great care is taken, Williams said, to make sure it's safe for the children to return to their parents. "If it's a situation where it's not safe to reunite a child, we're not going to do that," he said.

We hope not.

While it is important to accomplish the goal of reducing the number of children in foster care, it's far more important to keep in mind that there is a reason those children were taken from their parents to begin with.

Eight people, including two lawmakers, testified in support of the bill at a Thursday public hearing. No opponents testified.

More than 8,000 Oregon children are in foster care, according to the Department of Human Services.

Bi-Mart Willamette Country Music Festival 2013



Watch for more information soon! In the next month, we will open up registration for adoptive and foster families. We'll announce it on Facebook and Twitter first, so like our page and sign up to follow us on Twitter. We will also be giving 24 hour notice on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and tickets will be limited. Sign up now!

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.

Pro-bono Private Investigator:

Our Family Finding program is in search for a volunteer private investigator for particularly difficult cases. This volunteer would work on 2 to 3 cases at a time depending on our Family Finding case load, and would only work on cases where volunteers are facing extreme difficulty in discovering and

Too often, stories come to our attention, either through our own reporting or through other media reports, of children who were returned to homes where abuse continued and escalated, sometimes to the point of tragedy.

It is with that one caveat that we applaud this effort to help children find the stability of a loving home or a mentor to help them begin their lives as young adults.

It is a worthy goal: To reduce the number of young people who turn 18 without a place to truly call home.

engaging family members. This individual could work from home and should be available 5-10 hours a month.

All Family Finding volunteers must pass a criminal background check and attend a Family Finding training.

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

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. info@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



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