

# The Foster Caregiver Connection

Connecting Foster Caregivers in Central and Downstate

## March 1, 2012—Birthday of CYFS



### Special points of interest:

- [Birthday of The Center of Youth and Family Solutions, March 1, 2012](#)
- [600+ licensed foster homes](#)
- [Our licensing staff, and our commitment to you](#)
- [Foster Care Connections Newsletter is going green! In order to save trees this will be the last newsletter to be printed and mailed to your home. Future newsletters will be available on our website. If you still would like a paper copy, you will need to let contact your worker. Paper copies will be available at each branch office](#)

We are here, and excited to be together as The Center for Youth and Family Solutions. CYFS offers services across the same area previously served by Catholic Charities the Diocese of Peoria Foster Care—Danville, Champaign, Bloomington, Lincoln, Peoria, LaSalle, Galesburg, Macomb, and Rock Island. As of April 1, we will also expand into the geographical area north of Springfield, making a total of 10 offices within our organization.

We are so grateful that you are a member of our foster caregiver team, more than 600 foster homes across the mid-section of the state, stretching from Iowa to Indiana. Together we serve about 900 children and their families. Together we will continue to make a difference for children in care and their families, all ages, and from many cultures,

Our licensing staff is a very experienced group in every location, ready to find the answer to your questions in regards to your foster care license, or about being a foster caregiver. We are operating within a new structure—Mary Kay Collins is our new Foster Care Licensing Coordinator and Infant Adoption Coordinator, and two new Licensing Supervisors, Lee Anning and Harriet Kersh, will provide direct supervision for the region.

Denise Ledbetter and Bob Stone are the licensing workers in the Rock Island, Galesburg, and Macomb offices at this time. Erin Pocivasek works in the LaSalle area. Dave Coleman, Lori Falcon, and Joyce Lawson are licensing workers from the Peoria office, and Lisa DeRight covers Lincoln. Betsy Hartung and Paula Toft are the licensing workers in Bloomington, and Harriet Kersh and Carol Groskreutz cover

Champaign as their licensing workers. Susan West and Jan Brown are the licensing workers from Danville, and Becky Caldwell is joining with us from Springfield—we will do the very best we can to support you, our foster caregivers, to care for the children placed in your homes, to



provide for all their needs, as the

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## Our Mission Statement

*The Center for Youth and Family Solutions will engage and serve children and families in need with dignity, compassion, and respect by building upon individual and community strengths to resolve life challenges together.*

These core values—collaboration, partnership, sharing a common goal, belief in the strength of the

human spirit, treating all with dignity, compassion, and respect, achieving excellence, achieving SOLUTIONS—guided us during the creation of The Center for Youth and Family Solutions, and will continue to be benchmarks to guide us in our journey in meeting and solving the challenges of the family life cycle in today's world.

Our agency was incorporated in the fall of 2011. We are the response to an ongoing complex public policy challenge in Illinois, to assure stability for children in the child welfare system, and continuity of care for thousands of families in the social service system across central Illinois. And we are grateful to all who made it possible for us to seek SOLUTIONS for those we serve.

## Above and Beyond—our amazing foster caregivers



*Many thanks for all you do, every day,  
for the children and their families!*

*Kianna Adkisson*

*Jim Allen*

*Dawn & Randall Barnwell*

*Lillian (Darlene) & Laundry  
Beach*

*Sheri & James Deweerdt*

*Cathy & Thomas Maas*

*Tammy & Dale Peterson*

*Deloris Walker*

*Kelly Warner*

*Heidi & Brad Zimmerman*

## AWC (Adopt Waiting Child) Parent Training

### AWC Training Dates

**Danville Office—4/25 and  
5/2 (office)**

**Bloomington Office—5/10  
and 5/17 at Trinity**

**Catholic Parish Center**

**Peoria Office—5/22 and  
5/29, location to be  
announced**

AWC Adoption Training will soon be available to all our foster caregivers who have expressed an interest in adoption. As The Center for Youth and Family Solutions, we believe it is important to train adoptive parents on issues specific to the life long process of adoption. Therefore, we are offering AWC Parent Training to any of our current licensed foster caregivers, free of charge. This is a one-time event, and a way for us to say

“thank you!” for being a part of our foster caregiver team. Families will receive two full days of training and follow-up with the Adoptions Specialist in their area.

These families will continue to provide foster care services for the children served by the Center, but the AWC Parent Training will also prepare them to be a resource for children who’s forever family will be created by adoption.

If you need more information about this training, please contact your local office Adoptions Specialist, or Allison Sparrow, Adoption Supervisor, at 309.820.7616.



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## Upcoming Parenting Skills Training

Dates are being set for several of the offices of The Center for Youth and Family Solutions to hold their next groups of the Updated Parenting Skills Training. This training was begun using the Updated Parenting Skills Training three years ago, when fourteen staff members of Catholic Charities achieved the status of certified trainer by completing the Training of Trainers provided by PeoplePlaces.org on the new curriculum.

The original Parenting Skills Training was released in 1983, and had been successfully

implemented in the old Treatment Foster Care Program with Catholic Charities. Catholic Charities then became the first private agency in the state of IL to offer the updated version in 2009, and we will continue to offer this through The Center for Youth and Family Solutions, seeing this information as critical in supporting foster caregivers who care for children under the specialized foster care contract, and significantly beneficial for all foster caregivers with all children in care.

Bloomington, Danville, Lincoln, Peoria, and Rock Island all plan to begin Parenting Skills Training within the next few months. The training, a requirement for all foster homes with children placed under the specialized contract, is provided in 9 3-hr. sessions, and both foster caregivers need to complete the training in a two-parent household.

Please contact your local licensing worker if you have any questions about this training, or call Carol Bennett-Barker, Foster Caregiver Recruiter/Trainer at 309.671-5700.



## Mary Kay's Corner

By now, most of you know that on March 1, 2012 Catholic Charities successor agency for foster care and adoption services, The Center for Youth and Family Solutions, opened its doors. As a valued client, past, present or future of the foster care program, we want to acquaint you with The Center, its staff and the foster care program.

The Center for Youth and Family Solutions is a comprehensive child welfare and family service nonprofit organization, licensed by the State of Illinois. With offices in Rock Island,

Galesburg, Peoria, Macomb, Lincoln, Springfield, Danville, Champaign, Bloomington and LaSalle, its services are available throughout all of central and downstate Illinois.

My name is Mary Kay Collins and I am the new Assistant Director of Licensing and Adoption at The Center. I have worked in child welfare and adoption for over 16 years and I am very excited about working with our staff to provide our foster caregivers with the support needed to ensure the children in our care are safe, nurtured and loved.

To begin sharing information with each other, we will be re-establishing local foster caregivers advisory boards. Similar to the one that was held in Peoria, these groups will now be right in your backyard—at the local office! We hope bringing these closer to where you live will allow for more participation. Your feedback is very important to myself and our staff.

I am looking forward to meeting each of you and learning more about how we can work together to help the children. If you need to reach me in the meantime, please feel free to email me at [mkcollins@cyfsolutions.org](mailto:mkcollins@cyfsolutions.org)

### Important Phone Numbers

#### Child Abuse Hotline

800.252.2873

#### Missing Child Helpline

866.503.0184

#### Advocacy Office

800.232.3798/217.524.2029

#### Foster Parent Hotline

800.624.KIDS/800.624.5437

#### Adoption Hotline

800.572.2390

#### Inspector General

800.722.9124

#### Daycare Information

877.746.0829/312.328.2779

#### Youth Hotline

800.232.3798

“Our journey together as The Center for Youth and Family Solutions began—officially—March 1.”

## More of the team at The Center for Youth and Family Solutions

Our journey together as The Center for Youth and Family Solutions began—officially—March 1. Who else is part of the journey? The Board of The Center for Youth and Family Solutions appointed Patricia C. Fox, MA, as Chief Executive Office, and Anthony T. Riordan, MS Ed, LMFT, as Chief Operating Officer. Also appointed are Aundrea Kinas, MBA, Chief Financial Officer, Shane White, BS, Chief Logistics Officer, Rosemary Haynes, Human

Resources Director, Celeste Matheson, MS, Director of Development and Communications, Scott Hassett, MA, Continuous Quality Improvement Director, Greg Westbrook, JD, Director, Child Welfare Services, Chris Kelly, MA, Assistant Director, Child Welfare Services, Jeff Heckman, MA, Assistant Director, Child Welfare Services, Leonora Anning, Licensing Supervisor, Harriet Kersh, Licensing Supervisor, Patrick Carlson,

MSW, LCSW, Clinical Director, Tim Glancy, BS, Youth, Family, and Community Outreach Coordinator, Bruce Mayer, BS, Youth, Family, and Community Outreach Coordinator, Doug Braun, BA, Youth, Family, and Community Outreach Coordinator, James Kleine, MS, Residential Services Coordinator, and Ruth Urbanc, MA, Senior Services Program Coordinator.

375 full and part time professional staff are employed by CYFS—and together we look

## I Might Need to Know This About School...

CYFS Educational Liaison Ms. Adrian Mann shared information about public school education at the February Foster Caregiver Support Group in Peoria. This included the following:

1. There are 3 tiers of services that need to be attempted prior to the IEP process; regular classroom setting, then work in small groups, then work one-on-one. If none of these educational settings benefit the child's learning, then the IEP

process begins, including a comprehensive case study.

2. A 504 Plan identifies accommodations to aid learning, and is especially helpful when a child's behavior interferes with his or her ability to learn. This may include the reasonable request that a child should have the opportunity to make up work even if dismissed from the classroom setting for behavior issues. It is

important for the foster caregiver to request a 504 Plan when the child frequently exhibits inappropriate behaviors. The social worker, teacher, psychologist, case manager, foster caregiver, biological parent (when possible and/or appropriate), therapist, and/or psychologist should be at this meeting.

Ms. Mann, who is located in the Peoria CYFS Office, can be reached at 309.671-5700, for



# The Center for Youth and Family Solutions

2900 W. Heading Ave.  
West Peoria, IL 61604

Branch offices in Bloomington, Danville, Galesburg, LaSalle,  
Lincoln, Macomb, Rock Island, and Springfield

Phone: 309.671-5700  
Website: [www.cyfsolutions.org](http://www.cyfsolutions.org)

## Branch Offices

<b>Bloomington—Morris</b>	<b>309.820.7616</b>
<b>Champaign</b>	<b>217.352.5179</b>
<b>Danville</b>	<b>217.443.1772</b>
<b>Galesburg</b>	<b>309.342.1136</b>
<b>LaSalle</b>	<b>815.223.4007</b>
<b>Lincoln</b>	<b>217.732.3771</b>
<b>Macomb</b>	<b>309.883.1791</b>
<b>Peoria</b>	<b>309.671.5700</b>
<b>Rock Island</b>	<b>309.786.0770</b>
<b>Springfield</b>	<b>217.528.3694</b>

Achieving Solutions.  
Together.



CYFS Licensing Workers Betsy Hartung and Paula Toft at ISU in Bloomington on March 3, recruiting new foster caregivers in their area.

## Foster Caregiver Training Resources on the Web

The following websites offer online training—some are free, some are not. However, they are easily accessed, and upon completion, you, the foster caregiver, just need to complete the DCFS credit approval forms and give them to your licensing worker.

[www.isafe.org](http://www.isafe.org) <<<http://www.isafe.org>>>[www.booster.fosterclub.com](http://www.booster.fosterclub.com) It costs \$20 to register.

<<<http://www.booster.fosterclub.com>>>

[www.fosterparenttraining.com](http://www.fosterparenttraining.com) <<<http://www.fosterparenttraining.com>>> This costs \$15 per individual and \$30 per couple for annual membership.

[www.fosterparentcollege.com](http://www.fosterparentcollege.com) <<<http://www.fosterparentcollege.com>>> Provides a variety of trainings for a cost of \$8 to \$16 each.

[www.fosterparentnet.org](http://www.fosterparentnet.org) <<http://www.fosterparentnet.org>>



**APRIL—PREVENT CHILD ABUSE MONTH**

