

News You Can Use

From the Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition

Eastern Missouri Foster and Adoptive Care Resource Center **September/October 2007**



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Wendy's Wonderful Kids



Jasmine's smile lights up the darkest room! This **11-year old** is an outgoing, social butterfly who loves to sing and dance. An **enthusiastic student**, Jasmine loves to **read and write**, and excels in vocabulary. She has a great sense of humor and gets along well with other children. Jasmine is also a patient and nurturing big sister. Her **nine-year old** sister, **Johnetta**, is an active, affectionate child and, like her older sister, loves to sing and dance and play with dolls. Johnetta is a whiz at video games and prides herself on completing her school homework. One wish the girls share is to **live with a loving family... together.**

For more information, please contact Liz Johnson, Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter at (314) 367-8373 x31, or lizjohnson@foster-adopt.org.

Project Teen Plus

14-year-old Jessica is waiting for an adoptive family of her own. Jessica has a clear understanding of adoption and longs to be a part of a forever family. She would like a family "who is always there for each other no matter what – through thick and thin." Jessica says that her expectations of a forever family are that they will "always be there and not judge you by the way you look." She believes that someone would want to adopt her because she is "smart, talented and knows right from wrong."

Jessica is described by others as a **funny, talented teen** who speaks her mind and is very caring toward others. She says, "I would never hurt somebody" and "if I could change one thing about the world, it would be all the guns, drugs and violence."

This **young aspiring actress** is not afraid to step on stage and perform; she can play a serious role or a comedic one. In addition to drama, Jessica enjoys activities such as going to the mall, dancing and playing sports like bowling or basketball. Jessica, who just started the ninth grade, **enjoys math and art classes** the most.

For more information please contact Sheila Suderwalla, Director of Project Teen Plus at (314) 367-8373 x30, or sheilasuderwalla@foster-adopt.org.



A Place to Call Home

This section includes children featured on **KSDK News Channel 5's "A Place to Call Home."** The segment airs on **Tuesdays** during the **6:00p.m.** news, **Thursdays** in the **5:00a.m.** hour, and the **Saturdays 9:00a.m.** broadcast.



Brittany aired September 18, 2007



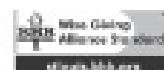
Brittany, a sweet 13-year-old girl, possesses a warm smile and **sunny personality**. This "girly" girl enjoys jewelry, purses and clothes. Brittany actively participates in swimming, basketball and loves going to camp. She describes herself as "**friendly**", does well in school and aspires to become an actress when she grows up.

Brittany needs a family that is nurturing, structured and supportive. Having sibs in the new family would be great. Brittany is legally free for adoption.

For more information, please contact Deva Blackman; Good Shepherd Services at 314-792-7427, or dblackman@ccstl.org



314-FOSTER-3 or 1-800-FOSTER-3
www.foster-adopt.org



Parent Support Groups are Back Thanks to NFPA!

We're talking to *real* foster/adoptive parents about *real* situations! Join us **October 9th from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.** "Reality Check: The Truth about Foster/Adoptive Parenting."

A panel of seasoned foster/adoptive parents and professionals will address questions concerning your fears, challenges and misconceptions. **You must be registered to attend. Childcare and dinner is provided.**

To register, please contact Kimberly Like at 314-367-8373, or kimberlylike@foster-adopt.org

Thanks to the National Foster Parenting Association for making this possible.

REAL TALK: Support Group for Older Youth

In October, FACC will begin a new support group for adopted and those preparing to be adopted tweens and teens. The program is called, "Real Talk." The youth will gain a better understanding of adoption and also have an opportunity to discuss their unique concerns.

The first youth support group meeting, "Adoption: Keeping it Real," will be **October 9th from 6:00 - 8:00p.m.** Dinner will be provided. The next youth support group "Mommas and Poppas; the Perception of Parenting" will take place during FACC's October's Training Extravaganza.

To register, please contact Aaron Layton at 314-367-8373, or aaronlayton@foster-adopt.org.

Introducing: Ask the Educational Expert

Do you need help finding **tutoring** for your child? Would you like expert help **developing an IEP**? Do you need to find out how to get your child an **educational evaluation**?

Help is on the way! **Leslie Lewis**, a foster/adoptive parent and former Executive Director of the St. Louis Special School District, is joining the FACC staff on **October 1st**, and she is looking forward to helping you!

For more information, please contact Leslie at 314-367-8373 x39, or leslielewis@foster-adopt.org.

Thanks to the Missouri Children's Division for making this service possible.

A Place to Call Home celebrates 5 years on-air!

FACC & KSDK NewsChannel 5 is proud to mark its 5th year milestone! This award winning program has helped **more than 120 kids** find wonderful forever families. "A Place to Call Home" (APTCH) sensitively features children in need of adoptive families with KSDK personalities doing activities that children and youth enjoy, such as cooking at a culinary school or zipping around in a go-cart. APTCH airs **Tuesdays at 6:00p.m., Thursdays at 5:30a.m. and Saturdays during the 9:00a.m. show.**

To celebrate our fifth year, KSDK will air a 30-minute, primetime special featuring "success stories" of children and families coming together; myth-busting or informational stories, such as understanding adoption options; and uplifting stories of hope and togetherness. There are even a few surprises! Look for our special to air in **mid December** during FACC's "Holiday Wishes" campaign on KSDK NewsChannel 5. **APTCH is looking for new children to feature!** If you know of a child that would enjoy and benefit from a KSDK story, let us know. It's easy and free!

For more information, please contact Sheila Suderwalla at 314-367-8373 x30, or sheilasuderwalla@foster-adopt.org.



LAST CHANCE TO OBTAIN 7.5 TRAINING HOURS ONE DAY

Thanks to a grant from the **Daughters of Charity Healthcare Foundation**, the Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition (FACC) is hosting the *last* Training Extravaganza for 2007. Foster/adoptive/relative caregivers will receive 7.5 in-service training hours in one day. The event takes place on **Saturday, October 27th, from 8:30a.m.-4:00p.m.**, and children are welcome! During that time, participants enjoy beneficial workshops (*details below*), lunch, and community resource information. The grant by **Citigroup Financial** has been a huge success, so of course we are offering it again for children ages 6-18. The kids learn about budgeting, brand names vs. generic items, and... the cost of being cool. In addition, teenagers will also participate in their very own support group, led by Aaron Layton (see "Real Talk" in left column). The younger children will participate in creative Fall arts and crafts projects, a festive fall party, and other fun activities to keep them busy.

In order for you and your children to participate in this huge opportunity, **you must agree to attend all workshops, complete the registration form (See Page 3), and return.** Unfortunately, space is limited to 200 adults and 100 children. We will process registration forms using the lottery method (See Page 3).

If childcare is full, adults are still welcome to register to attend the workshops and receive the 7.5 training hours.

October 27, 2007 Training Extravaganza Agenda Theme: Being on Our Best Behavior

8:30–10:30a.m. - Early Warning Signs of Learning Disabilities: If and when children have behavior problems in school, parents are not only given the responsibility to find out why but also the task of "fixing it." During this workshop, Anna Rich, M.Ed., St. Louis Learning Disabilities Association, will discuss some observable characteristics and behaviors, which may indicate potential learning problems. Various methods and strategies will be presented for parenting children with learning disabilities. Also included will be referral information and processes.

10:30–12:30p.m. - Discipline and Effective Behavior Management: Back by popular demand, Keith Neuber, M.S., founder and lead presenter of I K.A.N. PRESENTATIONS will focus on understanding children's behavior from a Systems perspective. Systems Theory provides a common sense framework that helps parents recognize patterns associated with challenging behavior. Presented strategies will improve participants' ability to positively alter behavior such as temper tantrums, resistance to authority, defiance, underachievement and other challenging behavior. The techniques will also help develop children's confidence, self esteem and desire to achieve.

12:30–1:30p.m. - Lunch/Resource Table: The resource area will: 1) give caregivers useful community information; and 2) create an opportunity for parents to network with each other. Lunch will be provided. **If you have special dietary needs please feel free to bring a sack lunch.**

1:30–4:00p.m. - Getting on the Road to Success...Independent Living: Sally Gaines, Children's Division's Program Development Specialist, will cover: 1) the philosophy of youth permanency and positive youth development; 2) the responsibilities of case managers/foster parents of older youth; and 3) helpful resources to engage youth in their permanency and education planning.

1:30–4:00p.m. - Mommas and Poppas: Perception of Parenting (Support Group): You've heard the saying "perception is reality." Well, what exactly does it mean to be a parent!!? *Friend or Foe...Advocate or Adversary...Provider or Playmate?* Discuss your position on parenting and hear from youth what their view of parenting is. Don't miss this opportunity to have an honest dialogue on the characteristics and expectations of parenting.

St. Louis Aging Out Initiative has immediate openings!

The goal of the program is to assist youth leaving foster care, into becoming strong, self-sufficient adults through self-advocacy, education, and skills attainment. The Aging Out Initiative established a single-source hub where foster care youth can learn about resources available to them after they leave state custody. Referrals are being accepted for youth in foster care who are/were 16-years-old at any point during 2007 and living in residential, transitional living, or career/behavioral foster placements in the St. Louis area.

For more information, or to refer a youth to the program, please contact Terri Fox at 314-222-4877, or tfox@epworth.org.

Dear Denise,

I have a new placement and I don't think he is getting the right mental health services. Is there somewhere I can go to get more information about what is the "norm" before talking to his case manager?
psych Seeker

Dear Seeker,

Determining the mental health needs of children in foster care can be complicated. The Children's Division recognized the need for child welfare professionals and caregivers to better understand the various aspects of child mental health. A partnership between the Center for Mental Health Services Research at Washington University was created, and resulted in a user friendly educational guide.

The on-line guide, "Working with Psychiatrists and Psychotropic Medications for Children in the Child Welfare System: A Guide for Child Welfare Professionals, Judges, Lawyers, Foster Parents, and Family Members" can be found on-line at <http://gweb.wustl.edu/cmhsr/psychotropic/index.htm>. It provides answers to questions such as, "When should I seek a psychiatric consultation for a child in the child welfare system?" and "It seems to me that the medications were prescribed too quickly, without thought to the child's history, situation or other kinds of interventions. What should I do?"

This on-line guide is a great place to start in determining the appropriate course of action to take for your new placement. For questions or concerns, please contact me at 800-FOSTER-3 x25, or denisekelley@foster-adopt.org.

Denise



Seeks Girls In Foster Care

Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) is looking for girls in the foster care system, aged 12 and under, who are interested in being taken to the **movies, the park, or on other fun outings** with an adult mentor every other week.

The BBBS program matches adult mentors with children who would benefit from one-on-one attention from a positive adult role model. Studies indicate that young people matched with a Big Brother or Big Sister are 46% less likely to start using drugs, 52% less likely to skip school, 55% were better able to express their feelings and 64% had higher levels of confidence.

If you feel your foster daughter would benefit, please contact Linda Maynard at BBBS at (314) 361-5900. Be sure to mention that your "Little" is in foster care, to help speed up the match process.



Donate While You Search

What if the Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition earned a penny every time you searched the Internet? Now you can! Go to **GoodSearch.com** and choose Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition as your cause. Search the Internet just like you normally would — the site is powered by Yahoo!, so you'll get high-quality search results. GoodSearch.com donates 50-percent of its revenue to charities and schools.

Shop Till You Drop!

Here is an easy and no-cost way for you to support the work of the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition - just by shopping for groceries! Please visit the Customer Service Desk of your **Schnuck's** store and ask for an **eScrip Community Card**. After you receive your card, activate it by calling 800-931-6258 or visit www.escrip.com. Our group ID # is **500004839**.



Tell them you are supporting the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition. Then, every time you shop, present your card. Up to 3% of your total monthly purchases will be donated to the FACC. If you already have an eScrip card please consider adding FACC.

For more information on Supporting FACC, please call 800-FOSTER-3.

It's a Lottery . . .

Spaces for the Training Extravaganza are limited to 200 adults and 100 children. We try to accommodate adults, but our childcare **ALWAYS** fills up in the first couple of days. So to "level the playing field", we are going to try something new and... play the lottery!



Here's how it works. Registration forms must be received at FACC by October 12th to be included in the childcare lottery. It does not matter if we receive your form by mail or fax, on September 27th or October 12th—**ALL** requests for childcare received by October 12th will be put into the same lottery pool. Registrations forms will be drawn at random until the 100 childcare slots are filled. All families who register will be notified by mail.

So, are you feeling lucky? To register for the Training Extravaganza, complete the below form and send it to Attn: Training Extravaganza, 111 N. 7th Street, Suite 402, St. Louis, MO 63101 or fax it to 314-241-0715. Remember, if you are requesting childcare, registration forms **must** be received by FACC on or before October 12th. **To register, complete and return form below.**

October 27th Training Extravaganza Registration Form

PLEASE PRINT	Child's First Name	Age
Date: _____	_____	_____
Name: _____	_____	_____
Name: _____	_____	_____
Address: _____ _____	_____	_____
Zip code: _____	_____	_____
Day Phone #: _____	_____	_____
Home #: _____	_____	_____

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Eastern Missouri Foster and Adoptive Care Resource Center



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MISSION STATEMENT

The Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition is a not-for-profit agency which strives to create permanency in every foster child's life by recruiting and supporting foster/adoptive homes in the St. Louis metropolitan community.

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KidStore

The KidStore, a resale shop open exclusively to foster/adopt, relative/kin caregivers, caseworkers and GALs/CASAs, announces that fall/winter items will be on the racks starting September 29th. The KidStore is **in need of good, quality gently used shoes**, all sizes. And boys clothing sizes 6-12.

**Hours: 1st & 3rd Wed. & Saturdays
9AM—12PM**

Only 5 minutes from the Poplar Street Bridge!



KidStore
Located in Tyler Place Presbyterian Church, 2109 S. Spring, St. Louis, MO 63110

Holiday Wishes Deadline is October 22nd!

Yes, it's still 80 degrees outside, but it's time to plan for the big Holiday Wishes program! Thanks to **KSDK-TV** and thousands of generous donors, children in foster care will receive special Holiday gifts. Children are eligible if they live in Metro St. Louis and are currently in the foster care system, or were in foster care, and now live with their adoptive or guardianship family.

The fastest, easiest, and most fun way to request gifts for your children is to log onto:
www.foster-adopt.org/littlewishes/holiday

Before you log on, make sure that you have your **FACC Caregiver ID**, which can be found above your address on the outside of this newsletter. The deadline is Oct. 22nd. Don't have access to a computer? No problem! Fill out the enclosed forms and return it to our office by Oct. 22nd.

A couple of things to know:

- 1) gifts will be shipped to your home and **cannot be shipped to a PO Box**
- 2) name of **current case manager** or subsidy worker must be provided, and **WILL be verified**

How many gifts can your child request? Each child that qualifies for Holiday Wishes may choose a **total of two (2) gifts from the white pages** of the enclosed catalog. Please indicate which is the child's first choice, and second choice. Children ages five and older who are **CURRENTLY IN FOSTER CARE** may also choose one (1) wish from the blue pages.

How many gifts will your child receive? That depends upon how many donors grant the wishes. **All efforts will be made to fulfill at least one (1) request per child.** One last thing to know: **children currently in foster care always receive priority.** We will contact you by mail when your children's gifts have been fulfilled. For more information, please contact Barbara Kane at 314-FOSTER-3 x26, or email littlewishes@foster-adopt.org.

Save the Date: 8th Annual Family Ties!

Each year, FACC celebrates Adoption Awareness Month by offering foster/adopt/relative families a night at the theatre. The **8th Annual Family Ties** event will take place **November 24th, 2007** at 6:30p.m. This year's production is a children's favorite, the "**Max and Ruby Show**," based on the Fox TV series and books. **Look for registration information in the next edition of News You Can Use!**