

Coalition Newsletter

News You Can Use | Little Wishes 2023



Request Holiday Wishes by October 15!

It's time to register for the Little Wishes holiday program! Thanks to KSDK 5 On Your Side, Vantage Credit Union, and thousands of generous donors, children impacted by foster care can receive special holiday gifts.

Children are eligible if they live in **St. Louis City**, or the Missouri counties of **St. Louis, Jefferson, St. Charles, Lincoln, Franklin, Warren**, and are currently in the foster care system, or were in foster care and now live in one of these counties with their adoptive and guardianship family.

Step 1:

Look at your Coalition Caregiver ID, which can be found above your address on the outside of this newsletter.

Step 2:

Find a safe address to provide for holiday wishes. Some shippers leave boxes at the front door! We receive calls every year from caregivers who didn't receive gifts that were shipped to them. Unfortunately, we can't replace gifts that were delivered.

Note: Please do not use a P.O. Box number - some shippers require an actual address.

Step 3:

To submit a request, you'll need to provide the name and phone number for each child's current foster care case manager or adoption/guardianship subsidy worker. We **WILL** verify this information.

Step 4:

Choose gifts! Each child who qualifies for the Little Wishes holiday program may choose one (1) gift from the white sheets of the enclosed catalog. Children ages eight (8) and older who are **currently in foster care** should also choose one (1) gift from the blue sheet.

Step 5:

Submit your wish requests. Submitting your own wish requests online is preferred! It is easy and helps avoid errors! Go to:

www.foster-adopt.org/wish

What if I can't submit my gift requests online?

If you do not have access to the internet, you can register by calling 314-367-8373 on Friday, October 6th or Thursday October 12th from 9:00am-5:00pm. If neither online or phone registration are possible, you can fill out the enclosed form and send it back to us. If you mail in your referral form and it is filled out incorrectly or if inappropriate gifts are chosen, we will select age-appropriate gifts for the child.

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; children currently in foster care will receive priority.

For any questions, please call 314-367-8373 or email littlewishes@foster-adopt.org.

Important Upcoming Dates!

October 6 (Friday)	October 10 (Tuesday)	October 11 & 12 (Wednesday & Thursday)	October 12 (Thursday)	October 15 (Sunday)	November 9 (Thursday)	December 2 (Saturday)	December 22 (Friday)
Phone registration for holiday Little Wishes	Phone registration for Motion for Kids	Phone registration for Motion for Kids (until all spots are filled)	Phone registration for holiday Little Wishes	Deadline to register for holiday Little Wishes	First day holiday Little Wishes could start getting delivered	Motion for Kids Party	Last day holiday Little Wishes gifts should arrive at your address

Registration for Motion for Kids Party

For years, our families have enjoyed the Motion for Kids party every December. Each child registered for the event gets to request a gift (\$35 or under). Motion for Kids donors purchase these gifts for you to pick-up at the party. The party has activities, entertainment, and food for families to enjoy as well!

Motion for Kids will be hosting the party on **Saturday, December 2nd**, but we do not have additional details at this time.

Who can register?

You must be a family with foster/adopted/guardianship children who are 17 years old or younger living in your home. Only people living in your household may attend.

When can I register?

Registration starts on **Tuesday, October 10th** and is by phone only. Registration will continue until all spots are filled, but no later than **Thursday, October 12th**. We cannot take registrations by voicemail or email; you must speak to a volunteer or Coalition staff to register.

Tip: For the first few hours on the first day, we are always flooded with calls! It can be difficult to get through. If you experience this on **Tuesday, October 10th** please try calling again later Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday morning.



How do I register?

Between **9:00am-5:00pm** from **October 10th - 12th**, call **314-367-8373**. Space is limited and taken on a first come, first served basis!

What do I need to register?

When you call, you must have a specific gift request priced around \$35 for each child. You will need to be specific about sizes, titles, colors, brands, etc. (i.e. "Lego Minecraft set" or "Boys tee shirt, red or black, Nike or Adidas, size 10-12"). Gift card or cash requests are NOT accepted. You must be able to pick up the gifts on the day and time of the giveaway (picking up gifts later is not an option!).

Victims of Crime May Be Eligible for Monetary Support Through Crime Victims' Compensation Program

Purpose

The Crime Victims' Compensation program provides monetary support to eligible individuals and their family members who are victims of certain violent crimes.

Eligibility

Basic criteria required to determine eligibility include:

1. Crime must have occurred in Missouri
2. Crime must be reported to the proper authorities
3. Victim/claimant must cooperate with law enforcement
4. Victim must not have contributed to their injury
5. Victim must not have been in the commission of a crime
6. Application must be received within two (2) years of the date of the crime or discovery of the crime
7. An arrest or conviction of a suspect is not required

Allowable costs

Allowable benefits may include medical, funeral and counseling expenses, lost wages or loss of support for eligible victims and their family members. Professional service providers are paid directly for eligible crime service. If victim/claimant has paid out-of-pocket they may be reimbursed, if eligible. The maximum benefit levels are \$5,000 for funeral expenses and up to \$400/per week for lost wages. The total maximum benefit is \$25,000.

More information

Learn more about the Crime Victims' Compensation program by scanning the QR code:



Program Spotlight

Regional Family Support

The Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition is excited to spotlight our Regional Family Support program. Regional Family Support is a comprehensive program offered exclusively to foster, adoptive, and guardianship families residing in Jefferson, Franklin, Warren, and Lincoln counties. With a compassionate and evidence-informed approach, we provide a wide range of resources and tools to guide families through the complexities of the foster care system. Our trauma-informed behavioral and mental health services, educational advocacy, licensing assistance, kinship support, and tailored resources are designed to meet the unique needs of our families.



Contact Regional Family Support

Tonya Campbell, Director of Regional Family Support
tonyacampbell@foster-adopt.org
314-367-8373

Free & Discounted Activities for Foster Families

Magic House (516 S. Kirkwood Rd in Kirkwood) is often recognized as one of the best children's museums in the country, and it gives free admission to foster families! You just need to show your placement letter, court order, or most recent maintenance check stub/statement.

MADE for Kids (5127 Delmar Blvd. in St. Louis City) is the Magic House's makerspace and art studio for creative kids 6-13 to tinker with pottery, 3D printing, stop motion animation, and more! Foster families get free admission with documentation of their foster parent status. Adoptive/guardianship families can get free admission through the St. Louis Public Library. All you need to do is check out a pass, just as you would check out a book!

Healthworks Kids' Museum (St. Louis City) offers free admission to foster families on **Thursdays and Saturdays**. They have lots of pretend play spaces set up so you can keep an eye on several kids at once. You'll need to show documentation of your foster parent status for free entry.

We Rock the Spectrum - Fenton offers **\$5 admission for kids in foster care with proof of licensure**. We Rock the Spectrum is an interactive play space for kids of ALL abilities and ages committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and fun environment for kids to learn and play together. Their indoor playground provides the chance for kiddos to explore through safe sensory experiences. Activities include a zipline, tunnel, trampoline, swings, and so much more!

Waiting Children



These sisters really are two peas in a pod. Little sister, **Shemiah (11)**, looks up to her big sister, **Monaye (15)**, in every way! And Monaye is happy to show her little sister the ropes. Monaye is ambitious, funny and has an infectious, bright smile! She is the more outgoing sister, always ready to talk and joke around. Shemiah is a very kind people person who enjoys swimming and

reading! At first glance, she may appear quiet and timid, but once she gets to know you, she opens up quickly.

Chris (13) and **Mikail (10)** are brothers searching for their forever family. Ask these brothers which superhero is best, and they can talk endlessly about Black Panther, Superman, The Flash, and other Marvel/DC heroes! Building new and inventive Lego structures show just how creative these boys are! Pour out a box of Legos for Chris and Mikail, and they will be busy for hours. Chris is outgoing, silly, and makes others smile easily. He really enjoys science, but math is his strong suit. Mikail may be more reserved than his big brother, but you would never know it in the school setting! He is always eager to ask questions and learn.



Chance (15) is a sweet and charming young man. He is very intelligent, honest and communicative - however, he loves to be sarcastic and crack jokes just like any teenage boy would! Chance's smile lights up the room and brings joy out anyone he is around. Chance loves video games and attending sports events. He also enjoys gaming with others and would love to play video games with his future family. Chance is also a fan of

anime, and has watched every episode of his favorite shows. Chance also loves going to sports events. If Chance has a goal in mind, he is very motivated to achieve it.

For more information about Chance, Shemiah and Monaye, Chris and Mikail, and more waiting children, please call **314-367-8373** or scan the QR code:





Licensed Foster Parents: **Register Now for Therapeutic Foster Care Training**

Interested in becoming a Therapeutic Foster Parent? Sign up for classes starting in January! Therapeutic Foster Care is the highest level of service, caring for our children most in need. This patented and individualized training will equip the foster parents with techniques that will encourage and propel growth and healthy development of children! The participant will receive a certificate upon completion of the TFC training.

Therapeutic Foster Care programs will ensure that each home is set up for success. Extensive supports include:

- Therapeutic Foster Care reimbursement rate
- A licensed therapist who only serves children in the TFC program
- 24/7 support from a real person who can help; not just take a message
- Preferred access to services offered by the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition, including Educational Advocacy and Comprehensive Systems Navigation

The next TFC class will be held on January 22nd. If you are ready to make a difference in a child's life, please contact Angela Chewes at angelachewe@foster-adopt.org

Missouri Senate Bill Update

Senate Bill 683

The provisions outlined in Senate Bill 683 from 2022 are now being put into action. Under this new implementation, the process of locating suitable relatives will begin even before the 72-hour protective custody hearing. As the child's caregiver, you'll be pleased to know that this approach is designed to enhance the support system for the child's well-being.

When the time comes for the child to transition from your home to the care of a relative, we understand the importance of ensuring a smooth shift. To aid you in this process, we've curated a range of thoughtful ideas to provide assistance and support to the new relative provider. If you're seeking guidance on how to navigate this transition effectively, we encourage you to reach out to the Coalition CareLine at (314) 367-8373.

Interested in WIC?

You could be eligible for:

- Healthy Foods
- Nutrition Counseling
- Health Care Referrals
- Breastfeeding Support

Foster children ages five and under automatically qualify for WIC! To complete your Online Interest Form, scan the QR code below! After you submit, a WIC local agency will contact you with next steps.



Senate Bill 186

Starting from August 28, 2023, changes are being made to the Adoption Tax Credit to make things easier for families. The maximum credit per child will be adjusted to keep up with rising prices. This credit will also become refundable, which means you could get money back even if you don't owe taxes.

Before, there used to be a limit of \$6 million, but that's going away, so more families can benefit. For the tax years that end on or before December 31, 2023, families applying for the tax credit will get priority if they're adopting children with special needs who live in Missouri or are under the care of someone in this state. These changes are meant to help families who are adopting, especially those who are bringing children with special needs into their homes.



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