

Special Thanks to all the Sponsors of our 2008 Foster Family Appreciation Picnic

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Walmart
Waukesha County Park System
Waukesha Skateland
Waukesha State Bank
Weissgerber's Seven Seas
Wisconsin Hospitality Group – Applebee's/Pizza Hut

Contact Numbers:	June '08 Placements
Waukesha H & HS 262-548-7212	Regular Foster Care: 51 Children
Children's Mental Health Outreach 262-548-7666	Treatment Foster Care: 22 Children
Medical Emergency: 911 Family Emergency: 211	Group Homes: 5 Children
Foster Parent Mentors Nikki Mertens (12 and under) 262-246-6180	Residential Care Facilities: 24 Children
Bette Winkler (over 12) 262-679-9634	Relative Placements: 31 Children
Lisa Roberts, Supervisor 262-548-7271	
Shari Rather, Foster Care Coordinator 262-548-7267	
Michelle Cornwell, Visitation Coordinator 262-548-7370	

Social Workers:	
Steve Handrich	262-548-7262
Peggy Beisser	262-548-7261
Kathe Blum	262-548-7275
Margaret Johnson	262-548-7265
Suzanne Arnold	262-548-7348
Elizabeth Russo	262-548-7349
Kim Sampson	262-548-7273
Linda Senger	262-548-7698
Ted Wuerslin	262-548-7269
Jennifer Wygle	262-548-7260

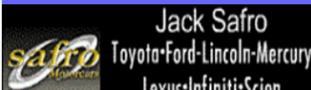
We Need You

For more information about becoming a foster parent in Waukesha County, please contact Shari Rather at:

srather@waukeshacounty.gov

262-548-7267

Or visit our website at www.waukeshacounty.gov
And follow the links to foster care.




Foster Care Forum

Waukesha County
Health & Human Services
August 2008

How to Help a Foster Child Start School Right

Introduction

A foster child's first day and first few weeks in school will always be difficult, particularly if they are new to the town and your home. Just like any other child, the idea of school will frighten them. Here are some ways to help ease this process.

Enrolling and Preparing Steps

1. Make sure that enrollments are done before school starts when at all possible. Enrollment can sometimes take as long as a week to complete. Before you leave to enroll, make sure you have all required documents. Check with your school for additional requirements and dates.
2. Arrive first thing in the morning when enrolling for school. If the child does not need to be present, you may want to get a babysitter. Be sure to take snacks or plan to eat out as it may take the whole day.
3. If at all possible, introduce the child to other children who will attend their school, preferably in their class or at least their grade level. This will help alleviate that "I don't belong" feeling some foster kids get on the first day of school.
4. Discuss with the child how they feel about starting school. Help them understand the purpose for school and what they can expect.
5. Take the child to get new clothes, a backpack and school supplies for school. Ask the worker if there are any funds for this. Usually, they will have clothing vouchers once a year around the beginning of school. There may also be funding or programs to obtain backpacks and other school items.
6. About a week before the first day of school, start waking the child up around the time they will need to get up for school and getting them to bed when they will need to be in bed. This will get them used to waking up and going to sleep earlier.
7. Before the first day, usually the night before, place the outfit for the first day as well as all school supplies on a chair, table or doorknob in the child's room. This will help in the rush of the first day. Make sure they get a good night of sleep the night before school starts.

The First Day Steps

1. Make sure the child is up in plenty of time to get ready for school.
2. Take the child to school on the first day. If you cannot do this, arrange for someone else they know to take them. The first day is scary, and they will need you there to reassure them.
3. Introduce them to their teacher and explain that they are staying. This may be easier if they are used to day care.
4. Let them know that they can get in contact with you if they are scared or if something bad happens. Make sure

- the teacher understands this. Usually the teacher deals with this for the first week or two.
5. After school, pick them up or arrange for someone else they know to pick them up.
 6. Ask them how their day was, have an after school snack planned and help them with any homework they may get.
 7. Make sure they get to bed early during the school week.

After School Starts Steps

1. Encourage and help with learning difficulties. Get a tutor if needed.
2. Talk to the child about social problems. Perhaps they feel left out or embarrassed about being a foster child.
3. Set chores, allowance and other house rules. Chores teach responsibility, allowance teaches money management and house rules help pave the way for the child to be a law-abiding citizen.
4. Get the child a journal with a lock. Let this be private so they can let out feelings in a healthy way without fear.
5. Let the child continue to help you record their activities, growth, birthdays and other events by keeping a scrapbook for them. Letters from you, friends and family would make the scrapbook even more special. Remember to add poems the child wrote or pictures they colored, as well as photos.
6. Add good grades to the child's life book. Remember to add report cards, test grades, letters from the teachers or anything else that may be wanted. Take pictures of projects that are too big to keep, and add those.

Overall Tips & Warnings

- Keep in close contact with teachers, principals and other school personnel who have contact with the child. With more people involved and communicating, it is less likely the child will be lost in the system.
- Nip problems in the bud. Discuss solutions to problems with the child. You may find there is a very simple answer!

Overall Things You'll Need

- Compassion
- Patience
- Camera
- Scrapbook
- Life books





Jesse's Corner

Jesus Mireles
Manager of the Children and
Family Division

As most of you know, "matching" a child with a foster home is very important and challenging process. With that in mind, the purpose of this "Jesse Corner" article is about that process. During the foster home licensing process and training, our Foster Care Coordinator, Shari Rather, tries to get an understanding of the strength and abilities of each foster family. As many of you may know, she reviews each foster home application with her supervisor, Lisa Roberts. It is during the process that Shari and Lisa discuss the type of child or children that the foster parent feels would be a good match for them based on their family strengths and abilities. Shari and Lisa are consulted when a child needs a foster care placement. They will identify a foster home or homes, who they feel could meet the need of the child. If they have choices, they will prioritize each home and will contact the foster family. From there, they will review the case and share the background information about the child and family while answering any questions they may have. Since most of these are emergency placements, we will put a time limit on whether the foster parent will take the placement or not. In some situations, a foster parent may want to consult with their spouse or significant other before making a final decision. That is fine with us as long as we have an answer right away. If the foster parent chooses not to take the child we will select the next foster home and go through the same process until a foster home is identified and placement made. We will monitor the placement and offer whatever support is needed to maintain the child safely in foster care. We would prefer you contact us if you have any concerns about the placement so we can intervene and get you the support you need. This is a very challenging time, especially for new foster homes, so we want to be as supportive as possible. The major concern I have is when the foster parent notifies us that the child needs to be removed from their home. Some of the reasons given include: family vacation, not enough information and challenging parents. Although I understand some of the reasons a foster parent may request a removal, I am very concerned about the impact this has on the foster child. I would prefer that you give us time to assist you in addressing the issues before you decide to ask for a removal. If things do not work after we intervene, then I can accept your request. Just a reminder that when you give "notice" for a child to be moved, be aware that it can take up to thirty days. We will do our best to move the child earlier, but we will need time to locate a new home and coordinate the transfer of the child. The bottom line is that children are negatively affected by frequent moves and we need to do everything possible to prevent this from occurring. I ask for your help in minimizing the number of placements by working with us and giving us time to intervene. If you have suggestions on how we can improve this process, please share your thoughts with Shari. As always, I thank you for your commitment to fostering and look forward to your ongoing support for children in our community.

Jesse

Love & Logic Series (7-week)

Tuesdays, August 12 – September 30

6-8pm

Goodwill Community Center
1400 Nike Dr., Waukesha

This seven-week training course teaches parents strategies that work for most parents, most of the time. Parents are working too hard; learn techniques to give more responsibility to your child. Learn inventive ways of giving consequences and what it means to "pay back time." Techniques and practices are introduced through the use of videotapes, worksheets and discussion.

Please note: There will be NO CLASS on Sept. 2nd

Cost: \$40 per person/\$50 per twosome

**CALLING ALL CREATIVE KIDS!!
DO YOU WANT TO BE FAMOUS?
IT'S YOUR CHANCE TO PUT YOUR
ARTWORK ON DISPLAY**



The ROKs committee is having its third annual non-competitive Art Show on **November 13th in the Brookfield Room of the Human Services Center**. Every year we display art done by the talented kids who are clients of WCDHHS. Some of the artwork has included drawings, paintings, sculptures, jewelry, poems and "Sculpey" figures. This year we intend to also include decorated suitcases and canvas shopping bags, as well as decorated furniture. There has also been a flautist and a drum circle that have come to play at the Show. From young children to older teenagers, all art efforts are included in the Show. The committee also has some funds that can be used to purchase supplies for those young artists who need them. Please contact your social worker if you need supplies. If you have already created some art, we would love to have you display that in the Show too.

We will also have a Create Day, August 7, where kids can use supplies, and come to the Department to create their artwork. Please contact social worker Janis Ramos at 896-8069 if you will be attending Create Day. We are also asking kids if they would be interested in lending their artwork to the ROKs committee, so that it can be displayed for a period of time around the WCDHHS buildings and in the Juvenile Court building.

Please think about being a part of this year's Show and the other activities. We'd love to have you join us. The young people who have participated in the past have enjoyed having the chance to show others their artistic efforts. We look forward to your involvement. If any young people, parents or caregivers have any questions, please contact your worker. Thank you.

Pre-Placement Training for Prospective Foster Parents

August 7, 2008
August 21, 2008

6 PM to 9 PM
6 PM to 9 PM

September 4, 2008
September 18, 2008

6 PM to 9 PM
6 PM to 9 PM

All classes are held in the Brookfield Room G137 in the Human Services Center located at 500 Riverview Avenue.

**Please enter the building at Door 6.
Call Shari Rather at (262)548-7267 to register.**

Team Building with Teachers & Schools

Wednesday, August 20, 2008, 6—8 PM

Cost: This is a Free Event

This workshop will discuss how to work and talk with teachers and other school personnel so your children can be the best that they can be.

For more information or to register, call 414-475-1246

ARW Bookfair

Saturday, August 23, 2008, 9 AM to 11 PM

Barnes & Noble Brookfield Square

Join us for a fantastic day of shopping, books and fun at Barnes and Noble Brookfield Square. Enjoy fun events for the whole family. When checking out, be sure to mention you are there for the ARW book fair and a portion of the sale will be donated to the Adoption Resources of Wisconsin Library.

For more information, call 414-475-1246.

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