OUR MISSION:

As a visible expression of God's loving community and consistent with the example of Jesus Christ, Christian Social Services of Illinois provides direct services to persons of all backgrounds with social and emotional needs across the continuum of life.

Inside this issue:

Message from the Executive Director	1
Who Do You Call When…?	2
Rules Reminder	2
Upcoming Trainings & Announcements	3
New Crib Standard	3
Christmas Parties	4

December 2012

Volume 1, Issue 3

CSS Foster Parent News

Christian Social Services of Illinois

A Christmas Message from the Executive Director

When I think about the first Christmas – the birth of Jesus - I imagine how simple yet how difficult life was then. There was no holiday rush, no traffic, no stress of last minute gift buying and family photos, and yet all the challenges of life without modern conveniences – cars, phones, utilities, modern medicine. Just imagine, Joseph and Mary bringing baby Jesus into the world in an animal stall!

In particular, my thoughts turn to St. Joseph serving as a foster father to a child that he did not conceive.

God knew that Jesus would need a foster father to raise him and teach him. Of all the men in the world throughout history, a simple village carpenter named Joseph was the one chosen by God to be Jesus's father on earth. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him not to worry, that the child was the Messiah, conceived by the Holy Spirit. Joseph was to be Mary's husband and protect the child as He grew. Joseph decided to trust the angel and God.

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the angel appeared to Joseph again, warning him that the Child was in danger. Joseph obeyed the angel's message again, and took his family to Egypt to escape from Herod's soldiers. When Jesus went missing for three days and finally Joseph and Mary found Him in the Temple teaching the scribes and elders, imagine how worried they must have been! God had told them to look after the Child, and they lost him in a crowd. St. Joseph must have felt that he hadn't done a very good job.

A model for fathers, Saint Joseph is invoked as a protector of the family. A carpenter by trade, he has been declared the patron saint of all working people, of craftsmen and of the poor. In purity of heart, in chastity of life, in humility, patience, fortitude, gentleness and manliness of character, he shows us the perfect model of the true Christian.

Because Saint Joseph was the representative of our Heavenly Father on earth, because he acted as Christ's father in His life on earth, he is the divinely appointed head of the Holy Family. The Holy Family; of Saint Joseph, The Blessed Mother and the Son of God is the beginning and the model for the great Family of God, His Church here on earth. In this way, Saint Joseph is father to all of us.

Adapted from http://www.domestic-church.com/CONTENT.DCC/19980301/SAINTS/STJOE.HTM

Like Joseph, you may often feel unsure or discouraged. So this Christmas, I encourage you to look to St. Joseph for support .

Saints are ordinary people doing extraordinary things. In my book, you are all saints for opening your homes as foster parents/families. You give the gift of yourselves, every day. This is the very essence of Christianity, unselfish giving to others. All of us at CSS are so thankful to our foster parents who serve as partners in improving the quality of life for so many children.

This Christmas will be the first without my own father, who passed away in May. Please join me in praying to St. Joseph to protect all of our families and communities this Christmas.

Blessings this Christmas,
Gary Huelsmann, MSW, Executive Director

CSS Foster Parent News

Christian Social Services of Illinois

Who Do You Call When…?

…A child in your home is having a psychiatric crisis that may require hospitalization?

Call the CARES line at 800-345-9049. However, if a child is a danger to himself or others, call 911 first. The CARES line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

…You need to report a child missing or have information about a youth who has run away?

To report information on missing youth call 866-503-0184. The toll-free number is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you feel the child is in danger call 911 first.

…You feel you aren't being treated fairly by DCFS or a private agency?

If you have already tried to resolve the issue by going up the chain of command with the caseworker and supervisors, then call the Advocacy Office at 800-232-3798.

…You have questions about your child's medical card?

Call 800-228-6533

…You are having family problems with your adopted child?

Contact the Adoption/Subsidized Guardianship Preservation Program that serves your area. Call the subsidy worker in the nearest regional office or the toll free number to the subsidy unit at 855-548-5505.

…You are having a hard time getting services for your child at school?

Most private agencies have an Education Liasion, and each DCFS region has Education Advisors who can help. Call your agency or nearest DCFS office to be connected to the right educational resource for your area.

…You need to find a phone number for a caseworker?

Call the main switchboard in Chicago at 312-814-6800, the State of Illinois Operator at 312-793-3500, or your designated DCFS or private agency.

Reprinted from DCFS Illinois Families - Now and Forever, Volume 5, 2012

Rules Reminder

Please remember that all members of the household 17 and older must be fingerprinted , and any member of the household who is 13 and older must complete an Authorization for Background Check form. As licensing specialists have a lot of homes to monitor, please remind your licensing specialist if you have a member of your household who is turning 17 or 13 then we can get what we need for them to be in compliance. If your home is not in compliance it may result in a licensing investigation as this is a current licensing standard. Also, the State of Illinois can take away foster care payments as this is a very important requirement. Please contact your licensing specialist with any questions you may have.

Section 402.4 (c)

"...Each foster family home applicant and adult member *(17 years or older)* of the household shall authorize background checks...and shall submit to fingerprinting to determine if the individual has ever been charged with a crime.."

Section 402.12 (e)

"All members of the household age 13 and older (except for foster children) shall have pass the background check required …"

CSS Foster Parent News

Christian Social Services of Illinois

Upcoming Foster Parent Trainings

BELLEVILLE:

Educational Advocacy (6 credit hours)
Wednesday 3/13/13 and 3/20/13
6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
OR
Saturday, 4/6/13
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Call 1-877-800-3393 to register

Adoption Certification (9 credit hours)
Saturday, 12/15/12, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.– 4:30 p.m., and Saturday, 12/12/12, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
OR
Saturday, 2/16/13, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., and 2/23/13, 9:30 a.m.– 12:30 p.m.
OR
Saturday, 4/13/13, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., and 4/20/13, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Contact your Licensing Specialist to register.

Belleville Foster Parent Support Group/Training
Every 3rd Tuesday of the month beginning January 2013
Please contact Cyndi Thomas at 618-258-8718 or Cyndi.Thomas@cssil.org to RSVP

EAST ST. LOUIS

Educational Advocacy (6 credit hours)
Saturday, 6/8/13
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Call 1-877-800-3393 to register

ALTON:

Educational Advocacy (6 credit hours)
Saturday, 3/9/13
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Call 1-877-800-3393 to register

East Alton Foster Parent Support Group/Training
Every 2nd Thursday of the month beginning January 2013
Please contact Cyndi Thomas at 618-258-8718 or Cyndi.Thomas@cssil.org to RSVP

Additional training hours may be obtained through the 4th Edition of the Lending Library Catalog. This catalog can be viewed at www.state.il.us/dcfs/index/shtml under "Training". You may also contact your Licensing Specialist for a list of trainings offered by DCFS in the form of CD-ROMs. The CD-ROM trainings require access to a computer with a CD/DVD drive, built in or external speaker, and printer.

New Infant Crib Standards

Christian Social Services has been notified that there is a new standard for cribs. This is a federal safety standard that we have to adhere to.

The standard states that all cribs in foster homes must meet or exceed the federal safety standards in 16 CFR 1219, Safety Standards for Full Size Cribs or 16 CFR 1220, Safety Standards for Non-full Size Baby Cribs.

The Federal Safety standards can be found here: **http://www.cpsc.gov/businfo/frnotices/fr11/cribfinal.pdf**. The cribs should carry a manufacturer's certificate indicating that the crib meets the new federal standard. We have been told that there is a date of manufacture on the bottom of the crib and a number to call to obtain certification. If the manufacture date on the crib is prior to June 28, 2011, the crib will **not** meet the federal standards.

After acquiring the certificate a copy should be given to the licensing specialist for the file**. These certificates need to be given to the licensing worker by December 1, 2012, or shortly thereafter, for the licensing files. The Department of Children and Family Services will be doing a check for the certificates in our files in December and these will need to be in the file.** Children cannot sleep in uncertified cribs after December 1, 2012. In homes that have cribs and there is not a certificate, then these homes will be considered out of compliance and the children in those cribs at risk. Contact your Licensing Specialist with any questions.

CSS Foster Parent News

Christian Social Services of Illinois

Strengthening Families and Building Community

8601 West Main Street
Belleville, IL 62223
618-394-5900

645 Berkshire Boulevard
East Alton, IL 62024
618-258-8750

www.cssil.org

Celebrate With Us! - Foster Care Christmas Parties

It's hard to believe Christmas is already coming soon and it's time to celebrate! Please come join us for some fun!

BELLEVILLE

The Belleville office will be celebrating with the annual Christmas party at Fun Spot on December 13, 2012. Pizza and drinks will be provided as well as lots of cookies! Skate time is from 6:00-9:00. Don't miss Santa and Mrs. Claus, be sure to stop and tell them what you want for Christmas! Please R.S.V.P. to Lisa by calling 618-394-5900 ext. 297.

EAST ALTON

Our Christmas celebration for the East Alton office will be held at Julia's Banquet Center in East Alton on December 17, 2012. Dinner will be provided for foster parents and foster children at 5:30pm. Santa will arrive around 6:30 with a surprise for the children! If you are planning to attend, you must R.S.V.P. to Helen Cresswell by calling 618-258-8750 by December 13, 2012.

Fun Spot
1400 West Boulevard
Belleville, IL 62221

Julia's Banquet Center
101 East Gate Plaza
East Alton, IL 62024