



COMMUNITY AND FAITH BASED INITIATIVE MAY 2009 UPDATE MAY IS NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH



THIRD ANNUAL FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE CELEBRATION

If you happened to have driven by afternoon of May 16, you would have celebration that was unfolding. Eighty children were treated to a day of food freely given to let our families know appreciated. A team of almost 200 and her "Makeover Ministry" team as Manchester Christian Church, and organizations such as Stoneyfield Yogurt, and Life Is Good, all donated their time, boundless energy, and goods to make this the biggest celebration to date.



Shiloh Community Church on the been hard pressed not to smile at the foster families, representing 380 and fun activities, all of which were how much they are loved and volunteers, headed up by Lisa Teague well as volunteers from Shiloh, community businesses and

organizations such as Stoneyfield Yogurt, and Life Is Good, all donated their time, boundless energy, and goods to make this the biggest celebration to date.



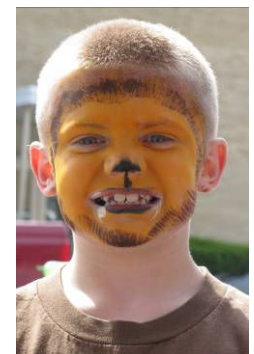
Our program included speakers Eileen Mullen, from the Division for Children, Youth, and Families and Paul Desmarais, Chairman of the NH Foster and Adoptive Parent Association. We were also pleased that Tamara Flecchia and her mother Michelle; Mrs. New Hampshire, Christine Hunt; and Lisa Marro were willing to come and share a bit about how foster care and adoption have changed their lives. We also were treated to the talents of Lyn Nadeau who volunteered her gift of music and Human Video, a drama group of dynamic teens directed by Sherri McCluskey performed "Safe and



Sound," a powerful depiction of the care provided for a child coming into a safe family. The Saving Grace Dance Ensemble, directed by Robyn Goulette, blessed us with two dances about the joy of life and coming home.



Following the formal program the families spent time playing games, making Legos, reading, coloring, being entertained by Mr. Phil the magician and his artist wife, learning about bees, and picking out clothing from a tent filled to the brim with good used clothing of all sizes. Lunch was provided throughout the afternoon for all of the families as well as the volunteers, by the volunteers in the kitchen crew who worked tirelessly to make sure no one left hungry.



We are humbled by the selfless giving of the staff from the Division for Children, Youth, and Families; Casey Family Services; and all of the volunteers from the community and faith based groups who worked so hard to make this day such a great success. We so appreciate each and everyone one of you and are hoping to see you all next year for the fourth annual celebration.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Website: www.bethany.org/faithfullyonebyone

Jan Lessard at Bethany Christian Services, Tel: 483-2886, E-mail: faithfullyonebyone@bethany.org

Keith Marsh CFBI Advisory Board, Chairperson, Tel: 738-7759, E-mail: keith@cybergrace.org

Beth Bascom (Claremont, Keene, Laconia, Nashua, Portsmouth, Rochester, Salem), Tel: 401-8309 E-mail: blessings@metrocast.net

Kelly Smith (Concord), Tel: 491-9244, E-mail: Kellylynsmith@comcast.net

Scott St. Louis, Wendy's Wonderful Kids (Manchester region) Tel: 401-8303, E-mail: sstlouis@bethany.org

CAN YOU HELP?

JOB NEEDED IN HAVERHILL AREA

A 16 ½ year old male youth will be returning to his adoptive home in the beginning of July and is looking for a job on a farm or in carpentry. He has been working at the Upreach Therapeutic Riding Stable in Goffstown mucking stalls, cleaning etc and has also been involved in a school program where he cared for farm animals. He enjoys the work, but more importantly, he benefits from an employee/mentor kind of relationship with someone who provides encouragement to him and gives him positive feedback. It would be good if the position paid, but it would not have to be a lot, just something to let him know that his work has value. Perhaps two people could collaborate to provide the job; one providing the work and mentoring and the other donating the pay. This young man has not done carpentry work, but has expressed an interest in learning to do this. He has a lot of potential, but really needs someone to make a difference in his life. Please contact Catherine Meister, Post Adoption Specialist at the NH Division for Children, Youth, and Families at 271- 8382 or e-mail her at Catherine.L.Meister@dhhs.state.nh.us if you can help meet this young man's needs or if you have questions regarding this request.

ADOPTIVE FAMILY IN WOODSVILLE NEEDS HOME RENOVATIONS

We are in need of skilled volunteers to help an adoptive family add a bedroom to the bottom floor of their home, transforming what is now a play room into two rooms. The family and their children very much need the extra room to meet the special needs of their children. If you or your group can help with this urgent need, please contact Catherine Meister at 271-8382 or e-mail her at Catherine.L.Meister@dhhs.state.nh.us.

HEART GALLERY NEEDS HOSTING

The Heart Gallery is a powerful group of photos of some of the children in New Hampshire who are waiting for adoptive homes. The gallery travels around New Hampshire and is set up in places that potential parents frequent...which means just about anywhere in the state where the exhibit can be kept safe and dry. Please consider whether your place of business, church, or community group has a space that can provide the exposure that is needed to share the need for homes for the waiting children. Ideally, the exhibit is set up for a one month period, then moved on to another location. If you would like to host the gallery, please contact Mary Breen at 271-4454 or e-mail her at MBreen@dhhs.state.nh.us

NH WAITING CHILDREN



Jenny age 12 and Emma age 10 are two sisters looking for a permanent home together. These cute and adorable girls enjoy putting together puzzles, lots of outdoor activities, and running. Their special needs will require a skilled family to assist them with much patience who are willing to learn new skills and create a positive atmosphere where they can grow. A family with experience with special needs children is helpful but not required. If God is touching your heart to assist Jenny and Emma, contact *Scott St. Louis* at **(603) 401-8303** or sstlouis@bethany.org

With thanks for the many ways you care for children,
Jan Lessard

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