



# Hoke County DSS Resource Family Newsletter

## FOSTER & ADOPTIVE FAMILIES NEEDED!

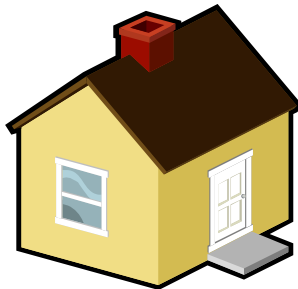
Once again, we need foster and adoptive families. Is this starting to sound like a broken record? But it's true...homes are always needed. In particular, we need Native American foster homes; we have 11 Native American children in care, but no Native American foster homes. We are required to recruit foster and adoptive families that mirror our foster child population...we have a long way to go!

We are ready and willing to speak at community events, churches, etc to pro-

mote recruitment of families. Let us know if we can come and speak to your group, organization, or church.

We currently have 17 licensed foster homes—two more than our last newsletter, but still not enough! Will there ever be enough? Probably not! However, we are very thankful for the families we have and look forward to bringing more families on board.

We will help our current families organize a foster/adoptive parent & relative caretaker association in 2010. Hopefully this will be an added support system for you and be a means of bringing in new families.



Being a foster/adoptive parent or relative caretaker is a very important role...please tell us what we can do to support your needs. We want you to know that as caretakers of our children, we appreciate all that you do and we want to provide you with supportive services so we can reach successful outcomes. Ideas? Suggestions? Call us!

## DID YOU KNOW? NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

Every November, efforts are made nationwide to increase awareness of the thousands and thousands of children in foster care that need a forever family—children that are ready and waiting to be adopted.

Across the US, people are hearing Public Service An-

nouncements (PSA's), reading newspaper articles, watching TV commercials, and even receiving adoption information included with paystubs. Word is getting out about the need for adoptive families...thanks to the many child welfare workers committed to finding children families. What can you do? Continue to help us get the word out!

Our current foster & adoptive parents and relative families are our best means of recruitment, as you can speak first hand as to how the 'system' operates. We need your help! Please talk to your families, friends, co-workers, church family, and anyone else you know about foster care adoptions!

## Hoke County DSS Foster Care & Adoptions

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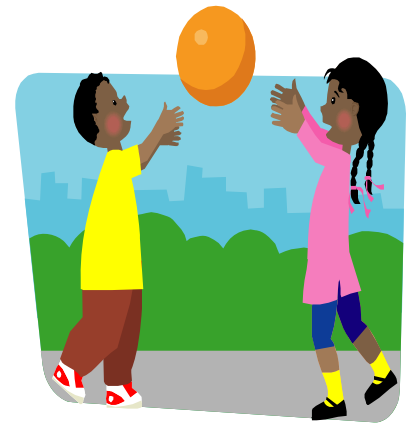
## Special Points Of Interest

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- © [WWW.ncdhhs.gov/dss](http://WWW.ncdhhs.gov/dss)

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# ADOPTIONS



What does it mean to adopt a child? Simply put: adoption establishes the parent/child relationship according to the law. An adopted child has the same privileges as any birth child would, to include the right to inherit. As an adoptive parent, you become fully responsible for the safety and welfare of your adopted child.

When a child is legally adopted, the child's birth certificate is amended to show the adoptive parent(s) as the 'birth parents'.

Adoption is a legal process. Legal paperwork is completed by an attorney and filed with the court to start the adoption process. Don't be scared

away because of the 'legal process; we will help you every step of the way! At Hoke County DSS, we assisted with the adoption of 8 foster children last year; we anticipate 11 more foster child adoptions this year.

People adopt children for a variety of reasons: they were never able to have a birth child of their own; they were foster parents and developed a bond with a foster child; they themselves were adopted; and often times a relative adopts their niece/nephew or grandson/granddaughter or cousin. Whatever the reason that brought you to think about adoption, we will help you make a sound decision to adopt. As always, we encourage you

to become a foster to adopt parent! Children come in a variety of colors, shapes, sizes, and attitudes....just as adults do! If you want more information about foster child adoption, just give us a call...we would love to answer your questions and clear up any misconceptions about foster child adoptions. Children are waiting for you!

## Legal Risk Placement

What is a Legal Risk Placement? A legal risk placement is the placement of a child who is not legally cleared for adoption at the time placement occurs. Say what? In order for a child to be adopted, parental rights must not exist—the child must be cleared for adoption.

Example: There are times when one parent relinquishes (gives up) their rights but the parental rights still exist for the other parent—this is a situation when a child is placed as a legal risk placement. It is anticipated

that the parental rights will be terminated on the other parent, but until that occurs, the placement is considered a legal risk—meaning, there is the possibility that the child does not become available for adoption and may have to be removed from the



'planned' adoptive home. The purpose behind a legal risk placement is to move a child in to a permanent home as soon as possible. Legal risk placements are not common and are primarily used in cases where termination of parental rights is highly probable. Legal risk placements allow the child and family to begin bonding

For more information about Legal Risk Placements, visit <http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/manuals/manuals.aspx?dc=dss>.

## What is a disruption?



Sometimes things just don't work out as everyone had planned and hoped for. An adoption disruption is when the placement of a child in a home for purposes of adoption doesn't work out and a joint decision is made to stop the adoption process before the Decree of Adoption is issued by the court. Disruptions can occur for a variety of reasons and no one is to blame—not the adoptive family nor the child. Disruptions can have a

significant impact on a child and on the family; support services are put in place to help all involved deal with the disruption. When disruption occurs, the child is moved to another home, usually a foster home.

When we place children for adoption, we work hard to make a good match between the child and the parent—we don't want disruptions to occur. We provide as much information as possible to the adoptive parent up front so that a sound decision to adopt can be made. Children in foster care have already experienced several family losses so we try hard to find the right family for every child.

# Foster Care/Adoptions Unit & other Important Contact Info

## Supervisor:

Kristi Pigford 878-1925

## Foster Care Social Workers:

April Locklear 878-1927

Wally Sirenko 878-1928

Judy Anderson 878-1932

Wanda Harley 878-4040

## Adoptions Social Worker:

Ana Watson 878-1989

## Facilitator:

Jennifer Otero 878-1987

## Office Assistant:

Sheila Campbell 878-1926

## E-Mail Addresses:

Kristi.pigford@ncmail.net

Alocklear@hokecounty.org

wsirenko@hokecounty.org

janderson@hokecounty.org

wharley@hokecounty.org

awatson@hokecounty.org

jotero@hokecounty.org

scampbell@hokecounty.org



DSS Main Number 875-8725

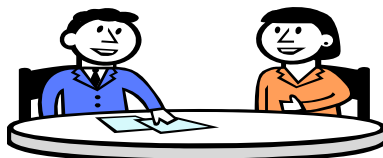
After Hours Emergencies:

875-2135 or 911

## Pre-Placement Assessment

A more common term for pre-placement assessment is 'home study'. A Social Worker meets with you in your home and in our office several times to write a study on your home and family. In order to adopt a child in foster care, families must have an approved pre-placement assessment. The assessments are approved by the Social Worker and Supervisor.

What information is needed about your family? Here is a brief list: motivation to adopt; finances; criminal



history; emotional stability; physical and mental health; interpersonal and marital relationships; domestic violence; child rearing practices/beliefs; childhood; references. MAPP training is also a requirement to adopt a child; a Pre-placement assessment will not be completed until you have completed the 30-

hour MAPP training.

Pre-placement assessments are conducted free of charge by DSS when adopting a child from foster care. Once you have an approved Pre-placement assessment, we will try to help you find a child if you have not identified one already. Should you desire to adopt a child who is not in foster care, there are many private adoption agencies you can choose from. Visit <http://www.ncdhs.gov/dss/adopt/searchinfo.html> for more information and to meet the children waiting to be adopted in North Carolina.

## Can I be an adoptive parent?

Yes you can! Literature put out by the State Division of Social Services says: "you don't have to be perfect to be a perfect parent". You don't have to be married—you can be single, divorced, or widowed. Some things you do need: stable housing; financial stability; good health; acceptable criminal history background check; & 4 other background checks; a support system; be willing to participate in

the process; and develop skills to be a successful adoptive parent. Ok, so that is a pretty long list, but it is not all-inclusive. A Pre-Placement Assessment (above) is completed and then is approved (or denied) by the department. We encourage all of our foster parents to consider adoption as we often look to them first when a child becomes available for adoption. There hundreds of children across

the state waiting for an adoptive family—it could be you!



## Hoke County DSS Foster Care & Adoptions

PO Box 340  
314 S. Magnolia Street  
Raeford, NC 28376

Phone: 910-875-8725  
Fax: 910-875-8119



October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Millions of women are affected by breast cancer every year. Statistics indicate that there are 2 million breast cancer survivors alive today. Encourage the women in your lives to get mammograms every year. Take part in a Relay for Life or Race for the Cure event; educate yourself about breast cancer; chances are if it has not already affected someone you know, it will.

Topics for the next issue of

### HOKE COUNTY RESOURCE FAMILY NEWSLETTER

1. Foster Parent training schedule for 2010
2. NCKids—what it is & what they do
3. Adoption Statistics
4. Pre-Placement Assessments in detail
5. Foster to Adopt-what we mean when we say this!
6. MAPP training-2010 schedule

Our newsletters are now available online!  
Visit [www.hokecounty.org](http://www.hokecounty.org), and click on the  
Social Services link!

## Foster Parent Training

Foster parents are required to have 30 hours of pre-service training—which is usually accomplished through the MAPP training. Once licensed, foster parents are required to have an additional 20 hours of training over the next 2 years. In years past, we have not had specific on-going training for foster parents. A new service we will begin in January 2010 is regular quarterly foster parent training sessions. We will hold trainings every 3 months at the department; training sessions will last 2 1/2 hours...this will ensure that all foster parents receive the necessary training hours and those hours can be tracked by us. A training schedule will be provided in November.

Foster Parent Association: The first scheduled training session will also allow for discussion of setting up a Foster parent Association.

Visit the website to the right for information on the statewide foster parent association. Be prepared to bring ideas to the table—this will be YOUR association!

North Carolina Foster  
and  
Adoptive Parent  
Association  
[www.ncfapa.org](http://www.ncfapa.org)

This is a state-wide organization for foster and adoptive parents. Membership dues are required for the state association; visit the website for more information.

