Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

NEWS RELEASE

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LSSI Promoting Awareness of Foster Care Month, Seeking Foster Parents to Assist in Reunification

May is National Foster Care Month, and in addition to promoting awareness of foster care, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) is seeking individuals and couples who are interested in becoming foster parents.

"Children in foster care, like all children, are full of promise and possibilities," says Ruth Jajko, associate executive director at LSSI. "We all share responsibility for making sure these children have the love and support they need to have a bright future. We need adults who are willing to step forward as foster parents to help foster children succeed and fulfill their dreams."

LSSI is especially looking for foster parents who are interested in working for the early reunification of children with their birth parents. Recently, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) enacted a new, early reunification initiative statewide to return children to their birth parents as quickly as possible to help maintain the child-parent relationship. So the agency is working in cooperation with DCFS to reunite children earlier with their parents, says Jajko. "We have always worked with birth parents and children to facilitate a move home as soon as it is possible, as long as it is in the best interests of the children," she adds.

LSSI is also looking for foster parents for teens, sibling groups, special needs children and, in some areas, Spanish-speaking children.

"Foster care really focuses on providing care for the kids, while birth parents work to remedy the problems that brought their children into foster care," Jajko says. "We want to work with foster parents to help kids maintain their ties with their birth families. Reunification work with birth parents is part of what foster parents do, in addition to providing a home for the child."

For more information about foster parenting, call 1-888-322-LSSI or e-mail CCS@LSSI.org. Founded in 1867, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) is a statewide, not-for-profit social service agency of the three Illinois synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. LSSI is an Illinois Licensed Child Welfare Agency (license no. 013005). For more information, visit www.LSSI.org.

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