



Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **LSSI's Steps to Life Program for Foster Care Youth Receives Grant from Community Foundation of Central Illinois**

Steps to Life, a program of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) in Peoria, was recently awarded a \$4,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Central Illinois (CFCI). Steps to Life has been made possible, in part, by a grant from the Caterpillar Community Leadership Fund of the Community Foundation of Central Illinois.

Steps to Life is part of LSSI's foster care services and prepares at-risk youth for life after foster care. Most foster children "age out" of foster care at the age of 18 and are then expected to perform as adults in society. In addition, with life histories that include violence, substance abuse and troubled relationships, these youth are often unprepared to live successfully after foster care. In the Peoria area, LSSI provides foster homes for 277 children; 29 of those children are 13 years and older.

The goal of Steps to Life is to help young people transition to adulthood by exploring and practicing life skills needed to live independently. To achieve this goal, Steps to Life:

- Teaches young people the skills necessary for a productive life and to utilize community resources.
- Introduces young people to experiences and cultures outside of their immediate environment.
- Challenges young people to use their skills and knowledge to help others in addition to themselves.

(Insert quote from foundation officer here?)

CFCI's mission is to serve the central Illinois area by providing a bridge between needs and resources through a growing endowment, entrepreneurial grant-making service to the non-profit sector, and promotion of philanthropy. It links donors with the charitable agencies that can most efficiently carry out the donors' objectives and desires, and it works with agencies within a 50-mile radius of Peoria.

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Founded in 1867, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois is a statewide, not-for-profit social service agency of the three Illinois synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. For more information, visit [www.LSSI.org](http://www.LSSI.org).

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