



Quarterly Newsletter

ISSUE NO 6 | April 2022



Spring is here and warmer weather is just around the corner! With warmer weather comes busy schedules, the end of school, summer break, vacations, summer camps and much more. No matter what the spring and summer season brings for your family, we want to pause and say a huge Thank You to all of the foster parents, adoptive parents, respite providers and their supports. Caring for Kentucky's most vulnerable children and families would be impossible without you all.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. During April we raise awareness of the importance of supporting safe and healthy families through preventative services. We urge you to use your voice to raise awareness and discover supports in keeping families safe and healthy. In News from Central Office (page 6) you will find a link to the National Child Abuse Prevention Month website.

National Foster Care Month is celebrated in May. While foster parents truly deserve to be celebrated every month, we take this month for a special celebration and thank you to all of those who have fostered in the past, those who continue to foster and those who are considering fostering. Many regions are working on plans for celebrations and recognitions for our foster families and ways to spread awareness of the need for more foster homes for the children in out-of-home care.

You will find a link to the National Child Abuse Prevention Month and National Foster Care Month websites in the News from Central Office Section (page 6) of this newsletter.

Thank you Foster and Adoptive families for your dedication, love and support to the children and families of Kentucky.

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Family Spotlights

Gary and Charlotte Brandenburg of Beattyville, Kentucky have been Foster/Adoptive parents with DCBS for the last seven years. They have fostered 13 children and have adopted four children. Currently, they have two medically complex children in their home who have been there since their birth and both are moving toward adoption. The Brandenburgs have two biological adult children, Joshua 31, and Alyson 22. They have several grandbabies who are the loves of their lives.

Ms. Brandenburg stated "we are a growing family and have been blessed beyond measure." Gary and Charlotte have stated that they would not trade their lives for anything and have surely enjoyed fostering.

Congratulations to Gary and Charlotte Brandenburg for Being Selected as March 2022's Lee County Foster Family of the Month.



Brianna (Bri) and Dylan Perry have been foster parents with NYAP since June of 2021. The Perrys have three beautiful daughters who are bubbly and full of personality. They are a lively and energetic family who enjoy being outdoors and spending quality time together. Although new to fostering, the Perrys have done an exceptional job managing the responsibilities of being a foster parent. They are communicative, open, and accepting. Bri and Dylan work together in equal partnership as a team. They both take an active parenting role by spending individual time with all their children and supporting them in their activities and interests. Bri and Dylan have had four foster children in their home, and all of them made significant progress and showed healing from their trauma during this time. Bri and Dylan are working a concurrent case plan with the intention of adopting one of their foster children if that becomes the goal. Both parents are empathetic and thoughtful individuals that have created a safe home for foster children to be themselves and enjoy being a kid, while their parents work their case plans. Bri and Dylan are advocates for all their children, work well with biological families, and are always willing to go above and beyond as role model foster parents. We are so thankful to have foster parents like Bri and Dylan to support and love our foster children!

This lovely couple is Kevin and Mary Hockley. The Hockleys have been certified foster parents with Ramey-Estep Homes Treatment Foster Care since 2014. The Hockleys have adopted 3 children from foster care, and will soon be welcoming another child into their forever family. The Hockleys have been faced with many obstacles throughout their time as foster parents. They have faced each one with grace, compassion and perseverance. They Hockleys have displayed an unwavering dedication to the youth placed in their home and treat each child as part of their family. Kevin and Mary surpass all expectations when making a child feel welcomed and comfortable in their home and assisting them with exploring their interests and passions. They truly have a gift for helping children grow while accepting them for who they are! The Hockleys consistently seek guidance, resources and training opportunities to ensure they are up to date and to work toward improving their ability to provide optimal care! The Hockleys are never shy about advocating for their children to ensure all of their needs are met at home and in the community, they are the voice for children who aren't able to ask for what they need! We are truly thankful to them for their 8 years of service as foster parents and the lasting positive impact they have made on many families and children!



Family Spotlights



Danielle and Josh Green became certified foster parents with Gateway Children's Services Therapeutic Foster Care program in mid-2019. Not long after completing certification, the Green family received placement of two sisters. Danielle and Josh welcomed the girls into their home with open arms! Through many obstacles and challenging days, Danielle and Josh remained strong and patient in their will to provide a loving home for the girls. While fostering, Danielle and Josh also welcomed their first biological child into the world and the girls immediately took on the roles of big sisters! The adoption was finalized in November of 2021. Autumn and Heavenly now have a supportive and caring family to forever call their own!



Steven and Ashlee Bell are DCBS foster/adoptive parents in Knott County. Steven and Ashlee are both very involved in supporting foster parents and advocating for children in out-of-home care. Ashlee is a volunteer for the Citizen Foster Care Review Board and Steven developed the Non-Stop Families online video-based ministry resource. The Bells are an integral part of the yearly Hope for the Journey Conference which premieres Friday April 8, 2022 and is available online through May 31, 2022 (more information in Resources).

The Bell's DCBS foster home was first opened in March 2015. They adopted a child through the Cabinet in 2018 and closed their foster home. Steven and Ashlee applied with options Assistance and Life Adoptions in 2011 and adopted a child from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Africa. In December 2020, their home was opened again, and they currently have a foster placement who has been with them since January 2021.

Steven and Ashlee are wonderful foster parents and work in partnership with the Cabinet. We are blessed to have the Bells as Knott County DCBS Foster Parents. We would like to recognize them for all they do for foster and adoptive children.

KAPE KORNER



Madison "Maddie" (04/04) is an intelligent, beautiful young lady with a great sense of humor. Maddie enjoys listening to music, socializing, and writing poems that come from the heart. Maddie has great leadership skills; she is a good communicator, she is confident and can inspire others. Maddie does exceptionally well in school. She is a straight A student and her favorite subject is Math.

Maddie needs a structured family that will set clear rules and boundaries for her to follow. Maddie is a country girl at heart. She stated, "I would love to have a family that lives in the country with at least one dog." Maddie would do best in a home where she is the only child or the youngest so that she can receive all of the care, support and attention that she desires.

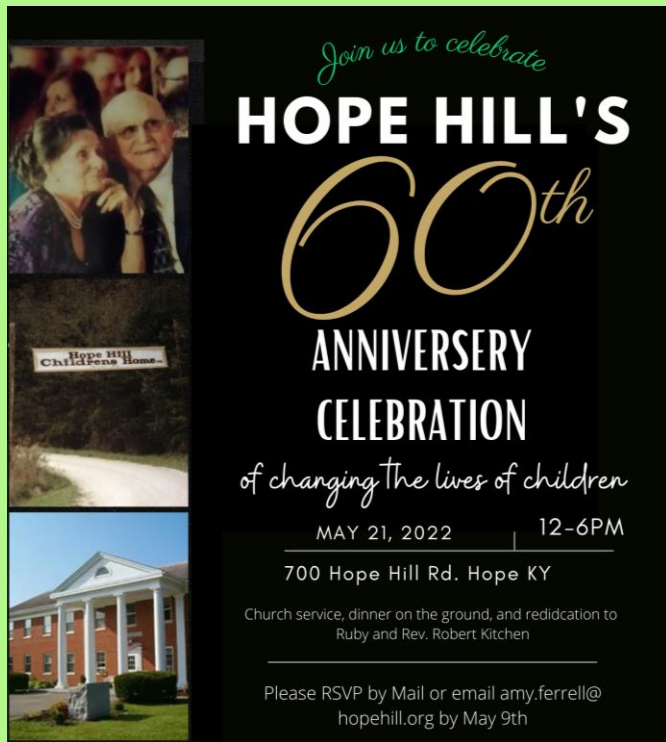
[Maddie Adopt US Kids Bio](#)



Austin (03/06) is a teen boy who loves all things basketball! He has played in the past, and hopes to be able to play in the future. He would love to talk to you about his favorite teams and players, as well as shoot some hoops with you. He likes to stay in shape by running. He says it helps keep him ready for basketball season and keeps him ready to run track and play football- which are also sports he enjoys playing. Austin is just very athletic in general. He says he would like to try other sports as well, if ever given the opportunity. He works hard to make good grades at school, which is something he takes pride in. He's a tall, slender, handsome young man. He enjoys wearing nice clothes, and takes pride in his appearance. He would definitely be described as more of a follower than a leader. He would do best with a family who have a lot of time and attention to focus on him. He would most likely not do as well with a large family with multiple children. He will need a family who is able to forgive, and doesn't easily give up. Austin can be very sweet and thoughtful. He enjoys praise, and is a good kid at heart. Like all kids he enjoys video games. However, he is definitely more of an outdoors type of person. One of his favorite activities is fishing- and he could happily spend hours casting and reeling in fish at a day at the lake if he was ever given the chance.

Find out more and watch Austin's video at
[Austin F0031 - America's Kids Belong \(americaskidsbelong.org\)](#)

Regional Happenings



Hope Hill Youth Services invites you to join in two upcoming events: Hope Hill's 60th Anniversary Celebration and Hopefest!



The annual Hopefest event is designed for families to have a great night of fireworks, games, music, food and vendors. By attending the event you bring greater awareness to the ministry of Hope Hill while at the same time bringing financial support to help with their mission.

The Southern Two Rivers Region was busy during the end of 2021 celebrating Adoption Awareness and their foster and adoptive parents and children. They kicked off the festivities on November 16th with a night of celebration, worship, food and music hosted by Ironwood Farms in Bowling Green. Over 110 people gathered for this event to celebrate all adoptions- including relative, foster and international.

One very special community member, Jack Cooper, gathered over 75 blankets from truck drivers to office personnel to donate to foster and adoptive children. One truck driver bought every blanket on the shelf and from the back storage for this blanket drive. One worker stated "Blankets are such a security thing for all children, but especially our children need blankets to help them through some of the most traumatic of times."

To end the year with a bang, Southern Two Rivers Region hosted their annual DCBS Adoption Celebration for the 100 adoptions that occurred over the 2021 Fiscal Year. The event was held at SKYPAC and hosted by the Family Enrichment Center, ELPO and DCBS. The event included dinner sponsored by Wendy's and Chick-fil-A, gifts and ornaments to each adopted child and a box of homemade goodies donated by Three Forks Church.



The Foster/Adoptive Parent Association in the Northern Bluegrass region hosted a holiday party for kids in foster care and their families. Bounce houses, a movie, Santa, gifts and pizza were a huge hit for everyone!



Foster/Adoptive Parent Resources

Leveraging Technology to Connect With Youth and Young Adults

Project Description: The [Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline's](#) Prevent Abuse of Children Text & Chat (PACTECH) project is a 4-year grant to develop and disseminate knowledge on utilizing text and chat-based capabilities for child maltreatment reporting and resource sharing.



Project Highlight: Childhelp, in partnership with Dr. Laura Schwab-Reese of Purdue University, is performing qualitative research to determine best practices and protocols pertaining to text and chat-based interactions with youth and young adults. One evidenced-informed strategy includes a [stages of a text and chat model](#) that aids in successful conversations with youth who are reaching out to a crisis hotline for information and support.

Learn More: View [additional research findings](#) to support hotline and child welfare professionals, including quantitative findings from a one-year research period.

Photo provided by [Childhelp](#)

YOUR TRAINING IS OUR PRIORITY

Our website includes:

- ✓ Approved online training hours available to DCBS and Private Agency foster homes
- ✓ New trainings added monthly
- ✓ Links for Network trainings
- ✓ Links for ASK trainings
- ✓ Commonly used forms and resources

NO PASSWORD REQUIRED

Track Your Training

www.jitkentucky.org

Made with PosterMyWall.com

Watch our introduction video on the website for more details

The KYRISE.KY.GOV site has information regarding services and resources transitioning aged youth need, such as:

- Tuition Waiver
- Education Training Voucher
- Vital Documents
- Independent Living Specialists contact information
- Housing information
- Employment information
- VOC Employment - NOW HIRING!



Eastern Mountain's Citizen's Review Panel is making it possible for any foster/adoptive parent to attend the annual HOPE for the Journey Conference (formerly Empowered to Connect Conference)! The conference brings together proven, practical teaching and insight as well as everyday, hopeful wisdom-designed for parents and caregivers meeting the needs of children impacted by adoption and/or foster care.

The conference will be available online April 9th-May 31st. Look for more information to come out through email soon!

Mark Your Calendars



Join us to hear from speakers, attend workshops, connect with resources, network with peers and more.

Registration coming soon!

News from Central Office

Know the Kids in Care

There are currently 8,862 kids in out-of-home care in Kentucky.

Age

Of the children in care, 44% are between the ages of 12 and 21 years and 24% are between the ages of 6 and 11 years. School aged youth and teens are the hardest to place due to a lack of homes willing to accept youth between these ages.

Sibling Groups

Many children in out-of-home care come into care with siblings; however, currently 1,385 siblings are not placed together. Less than half of the foster homes in Kentucky (DCBS and Private) are open to accepting sibling groups.



In 2021, Just in Time Training issued 12,396 certificates to foster, adoptive and kinship parents across the state. This number continues to grow and new trainings are added throughout the year.

JIT Kentucky recently launched monthly topics including resources pertaining to each month's topic. This month's topic is National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Visit jitkentucky.org to access resources and trainings.

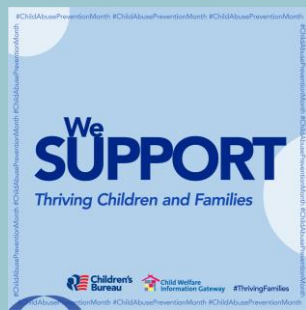
April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month

"National Child Abuse Prevention Month recognizes the importance of families and communities working together to strengthen families to prevent child abuse and neglect. Through this collaboration, prevention services and supports help protect children and produce thriving families."

Childwelfare.gov

Visit the National Child Abuse Prevention Month website for resources and information on how to spread the word.

[National Child Abuse Prevention Month](#)

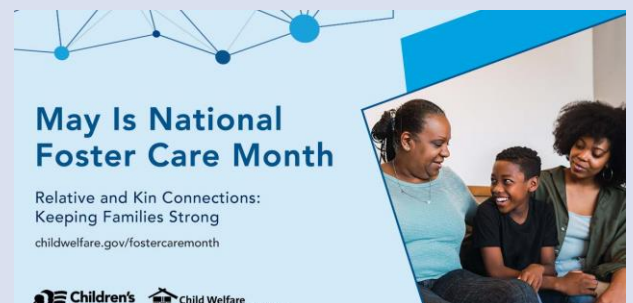


May is National Foster Care Month

The theme for this year's National Foster Care Month is **Relative and Kin Connections: Keeping Families Strong**. The campaign recognizes the important role that members from all parts of a child welfare play in supporting children, youth and families.

Learn more about the National Foster Care Month campaign, ways to raise awareness and hear personal stories of Foster Care at the National Foster Care Month 2022 website.

[National Foster Care Month](#)



Know the supports available to you as a foster/adoptive/kinship provider:

Adoption Support for Kentucky [Adoption Support For Kentucky](#)

ASK VIP Group Trainings [ASK-VIP Group Trainings](#)

The Mentor Program [Office of Foster and Adoptive Support and Training – College of Social Work \(uky.edu\)](#)

Foster Parent Training Program [Foster Parent Trainings](#)

Kentucky Foster and Adoptive Parent Training Support Network (The Network) [KY Foster and Adoptive Parent Training Support Network](#)