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May 2009

**Dear Child Advocate,**

One of the best ways to take a stand against child abuse and neglect is to know the stories of those who have experienced these trials and have gone on to live successful lives with the help of Franklin County Children Services. Check out the moving journeys of some of these individuals by watching the **videos** on our website [News page](#). They range from the Child Abuse Prevention video that was premiered at the Child Abuse Prevention Breakfast, to our new Insight cable show, *Children Services Today*. You can keep up-to-date by watching and sharing these amazing stories.



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#### Message

Welcome to *Children Services Connects!* We are very excited to announce information that you can use and share ways to join us in protecting children by strengthening families. Please let us know what you would like to see in future issues by emailing us at [enews@fccs.co.franklin.oh.us](mailto:enews@fccs.co.franklin.oh.us)

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**Taking A Stand Against Abuse**

**Teens Compete To Be A Star**



Franklin County Children Services invites local youth to compete in the ["Be A Star Teen Showcase!"](#) Teens must be between the ages of 12-18 and be accompanied by a parent/guardian. Auditions will be held May 26 from 7-9pm at Southside Settlement House, 310 E. Innis Ave., and May 27 from 7-9pm at St. Stephen's Community House, 1500 E. 17th Ave. **The final showcase will take place on June 11 at East High School in the auditorium with doors opening at 6 pm.** Prizes donated from the community will be awarded. Call Troy Lindsey at (614) 341-6174 or (614) 341-6060.

### Youth Artwork Wins Praise at Art Show

Children under the care of Franklin County Children Services displayed a variety of artistic and creative talents at the agency's annual Art Exhibit and Silent Auction. Youth who participated are available for adoption, in foster care or in the Therapeutic Arts Program (TAP). The two-week exhibit showcased 135 pieces of art. Youth incorporated their feelings, thoughts and experiences in various creations, including paintings, drawings, photographs, jewelry, and flower arrangements. The art contest was competitive and entrants were judged for best overall, most original, and best in show. The silent auction raised more than \$1500 which was donated to the Franklin



Village Children's Fund. [Click here for more photos.](#)

If you missed the art show and would like to help support the Children's Fund, you can make a donation online [here](#).

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## Ways to Act Now!

### Furnishing Families



Franklin County Children Services is proud to partner with [MAP Furniture Bank](#) which provides free furniture to neighbors in need in central Ohio.

Kathe is a loving grandmother to three wonderful children. A couple of years ago, Kathe received full custody of the children (then 2, 3 and 5). At the time of the custody change, the case manager from Franklin County Children Services suggested that Kathe get some new furniture, but she didn't have a chance to check in to it. Kathe was connected to MAP and picked out furniture one Monday that was delivered the same day. Kathe was extremely grateful and said, "I cried, I was so overwhelmed by their kindness."

If you have used furniture to donate, MAP will come to your home and pick it up for free! To donate furniture, call (614) 272-9544.

### Spanish Video and Speakers Available

Franklin County Children Services' Speaker's Bureau is expanding its outreach efforts to the Spanish speaking community. The agency's goal is to help people understand how we interact with children and families who are in crisis or just need some extra support. Franklin County Children Services now has a [video in Spanish](#) that communicates the agency's message to a Spanish speaking audience.

To be truly successful in the agency's mission to serve and protect children, help is needed on every level. That is

why Franklin County Children Services is seeking opportunities to attend community meetings and share information about the agency.

To schedule a speaker, call (614) 341-6017 or [email](#). For more information, go to our [Speakers](#) page.

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## Children's Heroes

### Volunteers Honored For Their Gift of Time



Franklin County Children Services recently celebrated the 25th annual Volunteer Recognition Reception. These volunteers provide not only the gift of time, but the gift of friendship to youth who need that special person in their lives. The theme was *Celebrate the Kid in You* to honor the 478 volunteers who dedicate their time to agency youth. To learn more about these amazing volunteers, [click here](#).

### Our Heroes, Our Foster Parents

*Thanking the Heroes that Impact the Future of Our Children* is the theme of 45th annual Foster Parent Banquet hosted by the Franklin County Foster Parent Association and Franklin County Children Services.

This year FCCS is honored to have one of The Ohio State University's favorite Buckeyes, National Championship winning football player Maurice Hall serve as the emcee of this event.

This annual celebration honors Children Services' foster parents for years of service and dedication to abused and neglected children. The agency has nearly 400 foster families with years of service ranging from less than one year to 44 years. Winners will be highlighted in next month's Connects!

Franklin County Children Services needs foster parents willing to care for teenagers, sibling groups and teen mothers. If you would like to become a hero who makes a difference in the life of a child, call (614) 341-6060 or visit the [foster care page](#).

### Emancipation Youth Take Trip to D.C.



During a spring break trip to Washington D.C., 28 youth in Children Services' Emancipation Department got to see many historical sights, including the White House. Agency employees accompanied the youth on the four-day tour of the nation's capital. They enjoyed visiting the memorials on the Mall, the Smithsonian museums, the U. S. Supreme Court, and Arlington National Cemetery.

The trip was part of the Emancipation Department's Project Enlightenment, which provides hands-on life experiences to create positive memories, develop experiential knowledge

and improve self-esteem. The trip was paid for through federal Chafee funds, which are designed to help older teens in placement achieve independence and prepare for productive futures. To learn more about the Emancipation Department, [click here](#).

### Girl Scouts Do a Good Deed for Foster Kids



Girl Scout troop 1712 decided they wanted to do something nice for children who are living away from home in foster care. The Dublin 3rd graders donated 46 boxes of their popular Girl Scout cookies to foster children under the agency's care. The girls decided to donate a percentage of their final cookie sales to a non-profit organization and they chose FCCS foster children.

## Tips for Today

### FCCS Helps Fight Hunger



Did you know that thousands of people in Central Ohio are hungry or at serious risk of not having enough to eat? As part of its mission of strengthening families, Franklin County Children Services is tackling the growing problem of local hunger head on. In an effort to help out those most in need, the agency's involvement with this year's Operation Feed food drive is more extensive than ever. The food drive runs through June 30, with 100% of donations going to feed hungry children and families throughout Central Ohio. If you'd like to give back, pasta meals in a can, canned fruit and vegetables, tuna, canned meat, soup and peanut butter are most needed items. Since monetary donations go especially far -one dollar can buy two meals- cash also is greatly appreciated. Donate online at [www.midohiofoodbank.org](http://www.midohiofoodbank.org).

### Upcoming Events

#### May

##### **May - Foster Care Month**

During May, Franklin County Children Services takes the time to recognize foster parents and heighten awareness about the need for more foster homes. Call 341-6060.

##### **May 15 - Foster Parent Banquet**

Sponsored by the Foster Parent Association, this annual event to honor foster parents will be held at Monaco's Restaurant. Call 278-5987.

#### June

##### **June 8-10 - Emancipation Life Skills Conference**

This conference complements the Life Skills curriculum that includes topics such as budgeting, money managing, shopping, job readiness, and much more.

##### **June 11 - Be A Star Teen Talent Showcase**

This event at East High School is a unique way to bring families together to celebrate our youth and promote the need to adopt and foster older children.

#### July

##### **July 11 - Family Enrichment Festival**

This annual celebration is held to heighten awareness about the needs of children under Children Services' care. Come and enjoy the live entertainment, food and festivities at Franklin Park.

### Contact Information

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