



Beth W. Duncan
Director

Department of Social Services

Samuel R. Frazier
Board Chair

PRESS RELEASE: Foster Care: The Rest of The Story

“Success: Saving a Child’s Life.”

May was National Foster Care Month and we informed our community that there are currently 36 licensed foster family homes in Randolph County and 110 children in foster care. Therefore, we need more Randolph County families to foster...that is to provide temporary living arrangement for abused, neglected, and dependent children who need a safe place to live when their parents or another relative cannot take care of them. That is true, and in the words of Paul Harvey, it is time for “the rest of the story.”

Occasionally, Foster Care receives a bad rap because of a horrific news story. However, one story should not define the system...or discredit the thousands of local county government social workers and foster families that provide loving care and a safe place for children. Remember, the foster care system did not create the abuse, neglect, or dependency experienced by the child, but joins in partnership with the community and the courts to rescue those children from terrible circumstances. Growing numbers in the foster care system are not a failure of the system, but are a reflection on the ills of society. The increasing use of illicit drugs, alcohol abuse, untreated mental health issues, domestic violence, broken families, and absent parents have all been recorded as factors leading to increased incidents of child abuse...and therefore the increase in the number of children in the foster care system.

Now, the rest of the story. Over the past year in Randolph County, 62 children entered foster care, but 43 exited to a safe and caring home. Fifteen children were reunited with their families. Thirteen achieved safe and caring permanence through a custody or guardianship arrangement...most of the time with relatives. Nineteen adoptions were finalized. Six children successfully entered adulthood.

Also, Randolph County DSS is currently serving approximately 90 LINKS eligible youth. The LINKS purpose is to build a network of relevant services with youth so that they will have ongoing connections with family, friends, mentors, the community, employment, education, financial assistance, skills training, and other resources to facilitate the transition to adulthood. LINKS provides ongoing support for children 13-21 that are or were in foster care to help achieve the seven outcome goals: economic self-sufficiency, safe and stable place to live, academic/vocational prep, personal support network, avoidance of high risk behaviors, postponed parenthood, and access to needed health care. Success is saving a child’s life...and breaking the chain of abuse.

For more information you can also call (336) 683-8062 or visit www.childwelfare.gov or the visit the Randolph County Department of Social Services website at: <http://www.randolphcountync.gov/Departments/Social-Services>

P.O. Box 3239 • Asheboro, North Carolina 27204

www.co.randolph.nc.us/dss/

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