

Especially for  
Adoptive  
Parents  
and  
Relative  
Caregivers



Family Support Services  
OF NORTH FLORIDA INC.

SERVING DUVAL AND NASSAU COUNTIES

JULY | 2008

## FSS – the ‘Michael Jordan’ of the adoption world

Family Support Services of North Florida (FSS), its subcontracted agencies and the 4th Circuit Dependency Court are celebrating a milestone – 500 finalized adoptions in one year. That means that 500 children have found “forever families,” breaking a state record.

Many people worked hard to achieve such a feat, according to Linsay Warren, FSS adoption department supervisor.

“This was a team effort among our adoption partners – Jewish Families and Community Services, Daniel, Children’s Home Society and the Mental Health Resource Center, adoption attorneys and many hard working folks at FSS,” she said.

FSS CEO Jim Adams said he appreciated the coordinated efforts of all the agencies and the Dependency Court.

“The judges – David Gooding, Waddell Wallace, Brian Davis and Jack Schemer – have really dedicated themselves to expediting the permanency process for our

most vulnerable children,” Adams said.

“Everyone involved has worked so hard. Once we hit 400 in May, everyone pitched in to make this happen.”

Nancy Dreicer, Northeast Florida regional administrator for the Florida Department of Children and Families said Circuit 4 has consistently been one of the leading areas in the state for adoptions.

“This year, we have raised the bar even higher. Family Support Services is the state’s number one community based care partner for adoptions, with nearly 100 more children adopted than the second-ranked community-based care agency in Florida,” she said. “FSS is the Michael Jordan of the adoption world.”

She said the Jacksonville adoption numbers this year is one of the highest adoption numbers ever in the country.

“Everyone who helped make this achievement possible- can take pride in this monumental



Jim Adams, CEO, Family Support Services

accomplishment,” she said. “Better yet, Judge Gooding and other local family court judges have taken the time to talk to judges and advocates in other part of the state to share best practices, so more children can be adopted more quickly.”



### Spanish speakers needed

The Family Nurturing Center of Florida is looking for a Spanish-speaking individual to be trained as a visitation supervisor. The agency is seeing an increasing need for bilingual interpreters— whether as staff or on a volunteer basis. Complete the agency’s employment inquiry online at [www.fnsflorida.org](http://www.fnsflorida.org)

under About Us, then under Staff. Please mention fluency in Spanish in the cover letter.

### Get direct deposit

Family Support Services of North Florida offers direct deposit to parents receiving monthly adoption subsidy payments. Fax or send a voided check to the attention of Mandy Hooks and your monthly payment will be directly deposited into your bank account. Send a fax to (904) 988-0787 or call (904) 421-5837.

To change your address, fax or call Mandy at the above numbers or email [Mandy.Hooks@fssnf.org](mailto:Mandy.Hooks@fssnf.org).

### Parent associations meet

The Northeast Florida Foster and Adoptive Parent Association will meet at 6:30 p.m. Monday, July 14, at the Northwest Branch Library on Edgewood Ave.

The Nassau County Foster and Adoptive Parent Association will meet at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, July 17, at the North Florida Baptist Association building, 921 U.S. 17 North in Yulee. Candidates for Nassau County School Board and Sheriff will be there to answer questions before the business meeting.

There will not be a July meeting of the Great Jacksonville Foster and Adoptive Parent Association.

If you would like to submit a story idea, calendar item or ask Jim Adams, FSS CEO, a question, please email [mary.hurst@fssnf.org](mailto:mary.hurst@fssnf.org).



## All Things Behavioral...

### Routines

Summertime...and the livin' is easy—sometimes, for children, a little too easy. Television, video games, and piles of junk food are often the activities of choice. Routines will keep your children busy and build good habits. Help your children by taking a few minutes to work in a summertime routine. Here's how:

- Schedule snack time.
- Schedule and limit screen time. To improve the chances of a smooth transition from screen to other activities, let snacks follow screen time.
- Plan reading times. Nothing like a good story to stretch the imagination.
- Plan regular activities, including activities outside and inside. Encourage fun tasks, hobbies, and even learning experiences or experiments.
- Schedule a few "surprise" activities—a sudden trip to the library, a trip to the water, or even a long stroll through a park.
- If chores are part of the routine—and why not? Then plan for fun activities (screen time, for example) to follow the completion of chores. Proper motivation does wonders for the work habit.

The Behavior Analysis Services Program helps caregivers to teach children to talk about emotions and choose better behavior.

Got a question? Email me at [davelee@ufl.edu](mailto:davelee@ufl.edu)  
David E. Lee, MS BCBA  
University of Florida  
Behavior Analysis Services Program

### House Safety – scalding from hot water

The leading cause of deaths and injuries to children at home are accidents and scalding from hot water is one of the most dangerous.

Did you know that water at 150 degrees can cause burns in two seconds, while water at 120 degrees takes 10 minutes to cause the same burns.

Recent research indicates that up to 5,000 children are scalded each year, most often in bathtubs, children under 5 are at increased risk of kitchen injury from scalding liquids. Tragedies like this can be avoided by turning down the thermostat of your water heater, thus reducing the temperature of the water inside to 120 degrees.

For more home safety tips, check out [www.FosterParentCollege.com](http://www.FosterParentCollege.com)

# Surf's Up!



Second-time surfer, Lyllian Blackshear, (above) went to the camp last year. This year, she caught more than one wave!

Surfing isn't exactly the thing that most foster or adopted children get to do often—especially if they don't live at the beach.

But in June, 35 youth got to catch more than one wave on a surfboard, thanks to Rick Terry, a Florida Department of Children and Families employee and his son, Daniel, who's the east coast marketing manager for Volcum Clothing Co. at the beach, who, along with Electric Sunglasses, sponsored the event.

The second annual Surf Camp was held off South 16th Avenue in Jacksonville Beach. Surfer friends of Daniel Terry, some professional, helped the teens with using the surfboard. Some got the hang of it; some did not—riding the waves, even if it meant just laying on their surfboards.

Lyllian Blackshear, who lives on the Northside, said this was her second time surfing. She went to the camp last year. She was able to stand on her surfboard and catch more than one wave.

"I'm getting better," she said. "But it's not as easy as it looks."

Christine Grodell, 13, and her brother, Nathan, 12, of the Southside, were successful also. This was their first time surfing.

"While they've never done this before, they're game for trying new things," said their mother, Patrice Grodell. "Because of that, I try new things too. I never went camping before—but I do now."

Family Support Services of North Florida provided a pizza lunch.

Family Support Services would like to take this opportunity to thank Nassau County for their commitment and support of our foster children in the community.

**EFFECTIVE**  
**July 1, 2008**  
our Nassau office  
telephone number  
will change to  
**904-225-KIDS**  
(5437)



Jim Adams, CEO  
Family Support Services of North Florida  
Serving as Lead Agency for Foster Care and  
Adoption in Nassau and Duval Counties

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