



## Family Support Services OF NORTH FLORIDA INC.

### Attention Foster Parents:

The Florida Department of Children and Families is doing a great job of finding relatives and family friends for children being detained. As a result, fewer young children are coming into the foster care system. There are however, many teens needing loving foster families.



### First priest to adopt founds One Church, One Child

## Local One Church, One Child finds families for three in care

Father George Clements, the founder of One Church One Child, told an audience of African American pastors in Jacksonville that his four adopted sons represented love to him.

How he became the first Catholic priest ever allowed to adopt children is quite a story starting with a former Florida Department of Children and Families director who moved to Chicago years ago in a similar position.

"I really didn't want to see him but I met with him," Clements said. "And he told me, 'If you people aren't interested in your own children, how do you expect anyone else to be.'"

Clements, a priest at Holy Angels Church, a 5,000-member parish in Chicago, said he found what the man said to be true.

That's when he decided to found One Church, One Child, a 29-year ministry of getting African American churches to "adopt" a foster child—whether to find a family within the congregation to adopt the child or to spiritually adopt a child in their prayers.

An adoption meeting he held at his parish back then brought in only 15 people. That's when he thought 'I'm going to adopt, myself.'

National media from Chicago to New York called him and asked if it was true. "I said yes," Clements said. When the Bishop called to tell him priests had never adopted children nor would they ever, Clements agreed not to do it.

And then, a reporter called from the Vatican newspaper. Pope John Paul XXXIII had heard about it and was pleased, Clements said. "When John Cardinal Cody's office called and said the Church would be pleased to have me adopt, I did."

The 76-year-old priest—the first to adopt a child—carries photos of his sons in his wallet. His idea went national years ago, with Florida launching the program in 1988. On March 18, One Church, One Child held its national conference in Jacksonville.

The local One Church, One Child chapter opened its doors in November and has already arranged for three children to be adopted through Family Support Services.

Rev. Al Williams is currently the only employee of One Church, One Child in Jacksonville. He operates out of donated space at Higher Ground Church of God in Christ in northwest Jacksonville. He speaks to local pastors at events to get more African



Jim Adams, CEO of FSS, with Father George Clements.

American churches to "adopt" a child. He also visits individual pastors.

Northeast Regional Director and Circuit 4 DCF Administrator Nancy Dreicer(CQ) said while Duval County has the highest rate of adoption in any county in Florida, there is more work to do.

Four years ago, nearly 500 children were waiting to be adopted. That number has dropped to around 150. "But one child waiting for adoption is too many," Dreicer said.



### Have a Medicaid credit waiting?

Medicaid's enhanced benefits account program sends letters to Family Support Services regarding dollars that accrue in your child's account—a

reward for your child's regular doctor visits, immunizations, etc. Foster Parent Liaison Carlese Floyd will have them with her at any of the foster and adoptive parent associations in Duval and Nassau counties. Please attend the meetings and see if one has been sent for your child.

The enhanced benefits credit allows for the purchase of items including diapers, baby shampoo, pain relief products, vitamins, sleep aids, diabetic products and blood pressure monitors. For more information visit [http://ahca.MyFlorida.com/Medicaid/Enhanced\\_Benefits](http://ahca.MyFlorida.com/Medicaid/Enhanced_Benefits).

### Find a summer camp

[www.jax4kids.com](http://www.jax4kids.com); [www.jacksonvillefamily.com](http://www.jacksonvillefamily.com) and [www.firstcoastparent.com](http://www.firstcoastparent.com). Also, any children interested in attending a summer baseball or softball camp, please call Debbie Campbell, (904) 421-5628.

### FSS collects used cell phones

Family Support Services (FSS) will be collecting old cell phones to sold as a fund raiser. Help spread the word to keep the environment clean, and at the same time, you'll be donating a to gift to charity. FSS receives a minimum of \$5 per phone and as much as \$150 depending on the make and model—just one way FSS raises money for the "extras" for our foster children.

### Foster Parent Meetings

The Northeast Florida Foster and Adoptive Parents Assn. will meet at 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 14, at the Northwest Branch Library, 1755 W. Edgewood Ave.

The Greater Jacksonville Foster and Adoptive Parents Assn. will meet at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 24 at St. Johns Presbyterian Church on 4275 Herschel St.

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... **Manners**

Good manners improve relationships, make a person likeable, show respect for others, and form the basis for a civil society. But good manners do not come naturally. A child races to the front instead of waiting a turn because being first gets the goodies immediately. A child must learn good manners but more importantly must learn that good manners work.

Caregivers who model good manners show children that saying “please” and “thank you” have benefits, such as getting what you want and having others treat you better.

Caregivers can also teach manners by telling the child what is expected, for example, “I want you to say ‘please’ when you ask for a cookie,” and then making sure that meeting the expectation works. If saying “Please, may I have a cookie?” gains a cookie, then saying “please” will keep happening. If it doesn’t work, it will go away.

When caregivers also avoid attending to bad manners, then children learn very quickly what is expected of them if they want to receive the benefits of good manners.

The Behavior Analysis Services Program helps caregivers to teach children behave with good manners. To enroll in our classes—free!—please contact your Foster Parent Liaison at (904) 421-5800.

*David E. Lee, MS BCBA, University of Florida, Behavior Analysis Services Program*

Got a question? Email [davelee@ufl.edu](mailto:davelee@ufl.edu)

## **New Briefs cont.**

### **Mark the calendar**

The eighth annual Scholarship Awards Luncheon will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 19 at Evangel Temple, 5755 Ramona Blvd.

Children who are on the A-B Honor Roll, have perfect attendance, good citizenship or improved academic performance during this school year. Children who don’t qualify for an award are still encouraged to attend.

### **Join the party**

Earth Day Ecology Fair will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Jacksonville Landing. There will be entertainment, hands-on activities, make and take craft items, animal encounters and a children’s area.

### **Attention sports enthusiasts**

The University of North Florida and Family Support Services are hosting an event from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 5, to meet nationally recognized student athletes and participate in baseball, softball, golf, swimming, volleyball, basketball and soccer.

Register children, staff and foster parents with Kitty Loor at (904) 421-5868 or e-mail [kitty.loor@fssnf.org](mailto:kitty.loor@fssnf.org) by Thursday April 3.

Foster parents and group home staff must stay at the event with the children. Parking will be in Lot 18 at the north entrance.



**Family Support Services**  
OF NORTH FLORIDA INC.

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## **Preventing childhood poisoning**

A poison is any substance that can cause harm to your body. Children can be poisoned by swallowing or inhaling poisons or absorbing them through the skin.

Common poisons include cleaning products, cosmetics and personal hygiene products, art supplies, alcoholic beverages, houseplants, pesticides, lead, prescription and over-the-counter medicines, overdoses of iron-containing supplements including pediatric multi-vitamins and carbon monoxide from unvented heaters.

### **Most unintentional poisonings occur in the home:**

- Know which household products are poisonous and never leave them within a child’s reach.
- Keep foods and household products separated, keeping all household products in their original containers.
- Do not mix cleaning solutions together.
- Always read medicine labels and follow dosage instructions.
- Turn on the light when giving or taking medicine so you can clearly see that you have the right medication and dosage.
- Never refer to vitamins or medicine as candy.
- Avoid taking medicines in front of children and never drink medicines from the bottle.
- Store household products and medications in high cabinets and use child-resistant cabinet locks.
- Remove poisonous plants from in and around the home, including poinsettias.
- Teach friends and relatives to keep their medications and other potentially poisonous items out of children’s reach.

**Poison Control Information Hotline: 1-800-222-1222**