Despite the adversity that our children in care face they continue to hope for a better chance in life.

Each and every one of them deserve to have a forever family that can give them the love, care and support they need to succeed.

They are trusting in us to give them that chance.
“Each new adoption is a new life. The adoption affects the future of the family for all eternity, and it changes our community for the better.”

– Judge David Gooding, Fourth Judicial Court
Imagine a world in which the concept of family is turned on its head—a world in which you are forced to pack your few belongings and move to a strange home and a new family. Imagine that most of the time you are not making the move with your brothers and sisters—who are being placed in other foster homes.

Or, imagine for a moment, that you are the new family taking in a child who is confused, scared, and angry.

Little imagination is required if you actually are one of the 2,000 new children who were introduced to a foster home last year, or if you are one of the hundreds of foster families who opened their hearts and homes to children in need of love and stability. Because for you, the reality of abuse and neglect is with you every moment.

Duval County is suffering from a shortage of foster and adoptive families so recruitment of new families is desperately needed. And unfortunately, the need is never ending. As children are adopted or reunited with family and leave foster care, an average of 52 new children come into our community’s foster care system each week.

These are our children; their well being is dependent on the willingness of our entire community to care for them.

As the lead agency for dependency care in Duval County, Family Support Services of North Florida is committed to improving the foster and adoption process. Our goal is to ensure that we always represent the best interests of the children.

The interrelated elements of foster care are only as good as the people who are a part of it. We invite you, as members within our community, to join us to improve the lives of our children in care, and those waiting to be adopted. Only then will the system improve.

Thank you for your continued interest, advice and support.
“Over 3,000 Jacksonville children are currently in foster care. We thank the many foster parents who have embraced our children by opening their hearts and their homes.”

– Jim Adams, CEO
Florida’s child welfare system has undergone substantial reform and redesign. In the past, like most states, Florida performed protective investigations and provided services to children and families through caseworkers who were employees of the state agency.

Under Governor Bush’s leadership, our child welfare system has been transformed by implementing a community-based care model. The key feature of community-based care is that the provision of services is fully-integrated into the infrastructure of communities. In Florida, a lead agency is charged with coordinating and providing all foster care and related services in a geographic area no smaller than a county. With 22 competitively selected lead agencies serving Florida’s 67 counties, the statewide transition to community-based care was completed in May 2005.

Family Support Services of North Florida (FSS) was selected as the Lead Agency for Child Protective Services in Duval County. Currently in its second year, Family Support Services and its’ agencies have made a positive impact on the children and families in our community.

**vision**

That children grow up connected to their own families, supported by foster families and protected by the community.

That children have the opportunity to succeed in school and to learn to be productive citizens.

That Duval County citizens, organizations, and agencies, recognize that child protection is a community responsibility and represents the best interests of all County residents.

**mission**

To provide for the safety and stability of children and families by strengthening the child protection system and involving neighborhood networks to ensure success.

**Family Support Services strives to:**

- Develop a network of family foster care that is neighborhood-based, and makes every attempt to place children in their own communities.
- Reduce the number of children served in institutional and group care—shifting to family foster care and family-centered services.
- Lessen the number of children coming into foster care.
- Decrease the length of stay of children in out-of-home care.
- Reunite families quickly by implementing preventative measures.
- Streamline the adoption process and provide ongoing support to adoptive families.

Each month, six neighborhood advisory boards, from across Duval County, meet to determine where funds will be spent and which services can be delivered/improved for children in foster care.
Family Support Services is committed to increasing awareness and support for our children in care.

A special thanks goes out to our many partners and sponsors for helping us to continually provide quality services and programs.

**Media Partnership Helps Children Find Families**

CBS Channel 47 and Family Support Services have teamed up to create Jacksonville’s *Children*, a weekly news segment that features children currently waiting to be adopted. Since April of this year, a child or a sibling group, has been featured every Friday on the 5:30 p.m. news. The children and/or foster parents participate in a personal interview which enables the general public to get a glimpse of the true personalities of each child. The media coverage has helped increase the interest and recruitment of adoptive families for our children.

**STEPS**

Family Support Services’ prevention program, *Strengthening Ties and Empowering Parents* (STEPS), provides direct services and resources for Duval County families to help prevent abuse and neglect. The program supports prevention in child welfare activities through its service center network and contracted community providers. Direct services include assessment, referrals, family support worker (paraprofessional), intensive case management, in-home parenting, money management skills and behavior management strategies.

This year the STEPS program serviced a total of 326 families and 737 children with an average length of time in the program of two months.
Annual Back-to-School Party
Foster kids, aged 5-17, attended the first annual Back-to-School party at Skate World. Sponsored in part by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, JEA and Skate World, more than 60 volunteers donated school supplies in backpacks to over 400 kids in care. The Jacksonville Jaguars Foundation donated 120 pairs of tennis shoes as well. The annual event helps to provide our children the necessary items for the upcoming school year.

Honoring Academic Achievement
Independent Living is a Family Support Services program that assists youth, aged 13-23, make the transition from foster care to living on their own. Thirteen graduates from the Road to Independence Scholarship program were honored at a special ceremony celebrating academic excellence and their graduation from high school, technical school or college. All of the graduates have been in foster care since childhood.

Annual Foster Children Academic Awards Luncheon
More than 50 foster children received trophies at the "True Winners" luncheon on April 23, 2005. The event recognized children for their academic success in spite of unfortunate personal circumstances. Awards were given for A-B honor roll achievement, most improved academic progress, good citizenship and perfect attendance.

Community Events
Benefit Children and Families
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida delivered over 250 Easter baskets filled with candy and food to our children in care.
- The Junior League of Jacksonville and First Coast News continued their annual Foster Bundles campaign, which provides children with basic necessities when entering care. The Junior League also collected car seats for protective investigators, caseworkers and foster parents to ensure that children remain safe while on the road.
- Family Support Services teamed up with HabiJax, the local affiliate of Habitat for Humanity, and obtained a four-bedroom brick home for a single foster parent of five teenage girls.
- Family Support Services received 2,500 free haircut coupons from Hair Cuttery's annual Share-A-Haircut Campaign. For every child’s haircut (up to age 18), Hair Cuttery donated a free haircut to children in foster care.
- The Jacksonville area Foster Parents Associations co-sponsored informative seminars to reinforce parenting skills and re-licensing requirements for active foster parents in the community.

Holiday Events
- Over 400 foster care children attended the Salvation Army’s Snow Ball party in December.
- The Florida Air National Guard, Young Lawyers Association, Rayonier, Inc. and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida delivered gifts to both foster care children and to families in the prevention program who were financially unable to purchase even the smallest of gifts.
- Shop with a Jock – Jacksonville Jaguar linebacker Ephraim Salaam and other team players took children shopping at Wal-Mart for Christmas presents.
- The U.S. Marines hosted a holiday party at Dave & Busters. Santa Claus was there with presents, food and special awards.
Everyone knows an out of control fire can destroy lives—but so can an out of control temper. And like fire, it can leave scars that last a lifetime. Child abuse takes on many forms...it can be physical or verbal or a child whose basic needs are just not being met at home. Together we can prevent child abuse. After all, these are Jacksonville’s children.”

– Rick Barrett, Fire Chief, Jacksonville Fire and Rescue
Statistics

**Children in Care**
Duval County

- 2,760 July, 2004
- 2,853 October, 2004
- 2,947 January, 2005
- 3,148 June, 2005

*Numbers reflected are quarterly*

**Children in Out-of-Home Care**
Duval County

- 2,036 July, 2004
- 1,940 October, 2004
- 1,972 January, 2005
- 2,114 June, 2005

*Numbers reflected are quarterly*

**By Age Group**

- 0-4: 1,104
- 5-9: 796
- 10-14: 683
- 15-18: 458
- 18+: 107

**By Racial Profile**

- African American: 1,803
- Caucasian: 1,236
- Asian: 23
- Hispanic: 61
- Multi-racial: 25

**By Gender**

- Female: 1,559
- Male: 1,589

Finances

Family Support Services became the first community-based care organization in Florida to receive a “Green” rating for fiscal responsibility. The rating, from the Department of Children and Families, is awarded to State agencies in recognition of appropriate handling of federal and state funds as well as regulatory compliance of funding utilization.

The audits ensure that community-based care agencies, in contract with the Department of Children and Families, demonstrate the ability to manage funds in the best interest of the children and families within the State’s care.

**Total Budget**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Area</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Casework Service &amp; Related Support</td>
<td>$14,980,000</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prevention and Preservation</td>
<td>$630,000</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adoption Promotion and Support</td>
<td>$115,000</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
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<td>Community Development</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coordination of Health Care</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Support</td>
<td>$450,000</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse and Mental Health Treatment</td>
<td>$730,000</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
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</table>

**Total**: $17,180,000 54.5%

**Room and Board**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Area</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adoptive Care</td>
<td>$4,120,000</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foster Care</td>
<td>$7,440,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shelter Care</td>
<td>$1,980,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent Living</td>
<td>$830,000</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total**: $14,370,000 45.5%

**Annual Community Donations**

$165,000

Year-End Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active foster homes in Duval County</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>350</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adoptions finalized</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children in cases closed (adopted, reunited with family member, long-term permanent placement)</td>
<td>1,719</td>
<td>1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families in prevention program</td>
<td>326</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in prevention program</td>
<td>737</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Prevention figures not available for 2003-2004 fiscal year.*
“If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in.”

– Rachel Carson
Board of Directors

Dr. Dennis Lafer, Board President
Pediatric Surgeon

Charles Brazil
Attorney General’s Office, State of Florida

Christine Carr
Department of Juvenile Justice

Carol Daniels
Community Representative

Nancy Edwards
Community Representative

Dr. Harriet Howe
University of North Florida

Joanne Lipp
Community Representative

Karel Moerings
Nicolaas Alexander Jewelers

Linda Rubens
Florida Statewide Advocacy Council

Michael Shorstein
Attorney at Law – Family Practice

Kerrie Slattery
Website Professional

Standralyn Terry-Jones
Florida Community College at Jacksonville

Celeste Turain
AmSouth Bank

Michael Widman
Johnson & Johnson

Family Support Services
Executive Staff

Jim Adams, Chief Executive Officer

Joanne Robertson, Chief Operating Officer

Lee Wilson, Chief Financial Officer

Sherry Fowke, Information Technology Director

Chuck Young, Community Development Director
“I keep my ideals, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart.”

– Anne Frank
Child protective services for children and their families are delivered within neighborhoods through eight local community care-based service centers contracted by Family Support Services of North Florida.

Service center providers are non-profit agencies, some of which have been serving children and families in Jacksonville for over 50 years.

**Boys Home Association**
2354 N. University Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32211
743-3611

**Child Guidance Center**
1100 Cesery Blvd., Ste. 100, Jacksonville, FL 32211
745-3070

**Children’s Home Society**
3027 San Diego Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32207
348-2811

**Daniel**
4203 Southpoint Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32216
296-1055

**Jacksonville Youth Sanctuary**
390 Park Street, Jacksonville, FL 32204
389-5231

**Jewish Family & Community Services**
6281 Duport Station Ct., Jacksonville, FL 32217
448-1933

**MHRC**
900 University Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32211
642-9100

**PSI Family Services**
4819 Soutel Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32208
723-6049
Your **Support** is needed.

Foster or adopt a child and help fulfill their dreams.

Monetary contributions can be sent to:

4057 Carmichael Ave.
Suite 101
Jacksonville, FL 32207
email: info@fssnf.org