



children's home + aid

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CHILDREN'S HOME + AID RECEIVES ADOPTION EXCELLENCE AWARD FROM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ROCKFORD (**October 6, 2010**) – On October 4, 2010 the Northern Region of Children's Home + Aid was awarded an Adoption Excellence Award for Support for Adoptive Families from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, DC. Eileen Liezert, Vice President of the Northern Region, and Pamela Langholf, Supervisor of the Adoptive Families Together program, accepted the award on behalf of the Adoptions, Adoption & Guardianship Preservation, and Adoptive Families Together programs in the Northern Region.

Children's Home + Aid, Northern Region, has been providing traditional adoption and post-adoption support services to birth parents, adoptive parents, and adoptees since 1939. A total of 652 children's adoptions have been finalized between 1993 and 2009, and 288 of these adoptions were in children in the Illinois foster care system. In 1994, the agency began offering counseling and respite services to families who have adopted internationally, privately, through the agency, or from the child welfare system or have legal guardianship of a child. The Adoption & Guardianship Preservation program (A&GP) has served 373 families, averaging 46 families per year. For the years 2006-2011, the Northern Regional office has received a federal grant from the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, to provide Marriage Enrichment and Adoption Education for families who have adopted through the child welfare system. This Adoptive Families Together program (AFT) has served 524 individuals from 40 different Midwest counties, from ages 6 months to 56 years old. AFT also receives a portion of the program's required 10% matching funds through a grant from the United Way of Rock River Valley. The Children's Home + Aid, Northern Region, was instrumental in organizing the first National Adoption Day celebration at the Winnebago County Courthouse in November 2004, and since then has taken a lead in the yearly celebration. Each year 20 to 30 adoptions are finalized on Adoption Day for children from the

Illinois DCFS foster care system. Because of the successful National Adoption Day in Winnebago County, other Illinois judicial circuits have started similar National Adoption Month Celebrations.

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The Adoption Excellence Awards were established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in 1997 to recognize outstanding accomplishments in achieving permanency for America's children waiting in foster care. The awards honor states, local agencies, private organizations, courts, businesses, individuals, and families who have made key contributions to supporting permanency for children in the foster care system. Children's Home + Aid is extremely proud to be one of four agencies nationwide to receive this prestigious honor in 2010.

About Children's Home + Aid

Children's Home + Aid is a leading child and family service agency in Illinois. Each year, it protects, educates and counsels more than 40,000 children, youth and families to improve their lives.

Since 1883, Children's Home + Aid has been a compassionate advocate helping to shape public policy in child welfare, early childhood and juvenile justice. Children's Home + Aid is recognized for establishing best practices and achieving outstanding results through its programs and services that focus on child abuse prevention, healthy child development and strengthening families.

Headquartered in Rockford, the Northern Region of Children's Home + Aid is devoted to serving the area's most challenged communities. The Northern Region of Children's Home + Aid provides services in many of the counties in Northern Illinois, including Winnebago, Boone, Lee, Ogle, Jo Daviess, Stephenson, Carroll, Whiteside, and DeKalb. Services encompass the needs of the entire family, and include *adoptions, adoption preservation, child and family counseling, MotherHouse Crisis Nursery, Pregnancy and Early Parent Counseling, Healthy Families Illinois, foster care, and family support services.*

Children's Home + Aid's comprehensive, quality programs help children and families overcome the obstacles of poverty, abuse, and neglect to achieve healthy family structures and self-sufficiency.

For more information about Children's Home + Aid, visit www.childrenshomeandaid.org.

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