



Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

media release

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Children Services Honors Outstanding Foster Parents: Those Who Truly Make a Difference, One by One

Franklin County Children Services recently held its **46th Annual Foster Parent Appreciation** banquet, recognizing the outstanding efforts of the agency's 350 foster families and honoring those with significant years of service. Truly making a difference, one by one, these inspiring families have gone above and beyond to ensure the health and happiness of our community's abused and neglected children.

It was because of her positive spirit and amazing commitment to helping children and their families, that Westerville resident **Vernita Provitt** was named **Foster Parent of the Year**. Provitt has made a difference again and again in the lives of children— working diligently on their behalf to make sure they stay healthy and strong. She has been a continual source of love and support to foster children with some very critical needs, helping to turn their lives around. Provitt also demonstrated the unique ability to develop strong relationships with birth parents, encouraging them in every way possible.

For unconditionally opening their hearts and home to four special-needs siblings under the age of 8, Pataskala residents **Katrina and Mike Sheely** were honored as **East Region Foster Family of the Year**. The Sheelys have lovingly nurtured these children, striving tirelessly to meet their every need.

As the **West Region Foster Parent of the Year**, Northland area resident **Jim Maurer** has had a tremendous impact as a foster parent, especially when it comes to a sibling group of four he's expertly cared for. In just a short time, Maurer has helped to build a solid foundation for these children, so they can have the safe, secure childhood they deserve.

Southwest Columbus residents **Doris Simmons and James Page** were recognized as **Central Region Foster Parents of the Year**. With a dedication that knows no limits, Simmons and Page have cared for nine children since they began fostering, transforming these young lives in remarkable ways.

For always being there for their foster children, in good times and bad, Clintonville residents **James and Andrea Mocharski** were named **New Foster Family of the Year**. The Mocharskis have made a profound difference in the lives of three young siblings in particular, who have flourished under their compassionate, patient guidance.

If you're willing to make a difference, one by one, Franklin County Children Services currently needs foster parents able to care for teenagers, large sibling groups and teen mothers. The agency also has a need for foster families who speak Spanish. Call 341-6060 or visit www.franklincountyohio.gov/children_services for more information.

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