



The Caring Difference

The Newsletter of the Citizen Foster Care Review Board

After all, a home should be forever . . .

Advancing the Welfare and Happiness of Children



By Kevin Smalley
Manager of
Dependent
Children's Services

Advancing the welfare and happiness of children is the noblest of goals, and we can all be proud we are part of this endeavor. The work and dedication of every Citizen Foster Care Review Board impacts the lives of children in the Commonwealth. The boards are doing their part to make sure that children in foster care are given an opportunity to find happiness while also ensuring the children's fundamental rights are protected. The boards cannot function without you, the volunteers who make up this organization, and for that, I want to thank you for your service.

Through tireless efforts, the Citizen Foster Care Review Board program has come a long way since it first began. Increased numbers of volunteers have allowed more time and effort to be dedicated to each file that is reviewed. Additional staff and administrative support have allowed more reviews to be performed by the volunteers. Better computer technology has helped us identify which children are actually in the foster care system and allowed us to track vital information about their out-of-home status. By using these resources and working together, we have truly contributed to our communities. More importantly, we have provided a benefit to the children in foster care.

As the CFCRB program continues to grow, we will experience changes. We have seen the renaming of the Cabinet for Families and Children to the Cabinet for Health & Family Services (the Cabinet). We have also seen the appointment of a new administration at the Cabinet. With this new administration, we will see renewed efforts to improve the entire process. Similarly, I

“All CFCRBs should be proud of their accomplishments. The number of reviews conducted last year alone is phenomenal.”

— Kevin Smalley, Manager of Dependent Children's Services

have been introduced to you as the new manager of the Division of Dependent Children's Services for the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). I am honored to fill this role and I will work diligently to add to a program that already deserves much praise.

The AOC and the Division of Dependent Children's Services are working with all those involved in the foster care system to bring about positive improvements. We want to ensure that reviews conducted by the CFCRBs are productive, valuable and used by the judges for the benefit of the children.

We want to improve the services being provided and we want to expand our roles in ways that will be most beneficial. In these difficult financial times, all changes have to be carefully weighed to make sure they can be properly pursued. Ultimately, our decisions must make a positive impact. Open communication will allow us to consider all options. Please call on the chair of your board, your regional representative, the chairs of the CFCRB committees, the Executive Committee,

your field coordinators, this office and me. At times, difficult decisions will have to be made. However, open communication will allow these decisions to be made in an informed and purposeful manner.

All CFCRBs should be proud of their accomplishments. The number of reviews conducted last year alone is phenomenal. While we still have “miles

to go,” we must focus on the fact that the CFCRB program does make a difference ... the caring difference. I am glad to be on this journey with you. Hurdles will be experienced and obstacles overcome. All the while, we will have the satisfaction of knowing that our contribution is helping the children of this Commonwealth.

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Message From the State Chair

By Anita C. Williams



With the beginning of a new year we are faced with more changes than usual. Not only have we changed managers at the state level, we have also faced a change in the top administration at the Cabinet for Health & Family Services. The team of people with whom we had established a rapport in Frankfort has now been replaced. We can only hope that all of these changes will be positive for us and for Kentucky's children.

The impact of change may not be immediate and may be met with resistance from some, but I hope we

will reap some benefits as we try to grasp what it all may mean to us.

If you did not attend the state board meeting last November, you may not have heard about our change in managers. Patrick Yewell was promoted to general manager for the Department of Juvenile Services and Kevin Smalley was appointed manager for Dependent Children's Services. You will be learning more about Kevin through personal contacts, phone conversations and our newsletter. He attended the state board meeting and the Executive Committee meeting in November, and has attended many committee meetings so far. He is very interested in learning about our program and is enthusiastic about his new role as staff leader. We welcome him aboard.

Committees are meeting to plan their activities for the year. If you have not signed up for a committee this year, it is not too late. Call the Dependent Children's Services Office at the AOC at 800-928-2350 and tell Hanna Harvey you would like to serve on one of the committees.

If you are interested in legislation and policies, please add your name to the very active Legislative Committee chaired by Bill Goetz. The Public Relations Committee chaired by Christy Reaves is off and running. You will notice some positive changes to the newsletter. We will highlight a board in each issue, so send in information about your board to Mae and you may be selected. The Recognition Committee led by Martha Garland will be gearing up soon to find the volunteers and others to recognize at the conference this year.

Don't forget about the Conference Committee, which will be a very important group of volunteers this year. Angie Funk, who also serves as vice chair of the state board, chairs this committee. She needs a tremendous amount of help preparing for the conference on Nov. 5-7. Please make plans to attend the conference this year in Owensboro. For more information, see page 6.

Crystal Bohlander is leading the Training Committee to help everyone receive the recommended annual training. Beth Lucas leads the Nominating Committee and will be looking for many good leaders this year for our elections.

The new year and the changes we face will be a challenge we must meet with much enthusiasm and energy. Join me and let's travel this path together and continue to reach for the sky in possibilities for our organization.

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Elizabeth Lucas, Past Chair
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Charlene Greer, Region 2
Curtis Williams, Region 2
Martha Blevins, Region 3
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Mike Hodge, Region 6
Wendy Birchfield, Region 7
Linda Reeves, Region 8

State Committee Chairs

William "Bill" Goetz, Legislative Committee
Elizabeth Lucas, Nominating Committee
Crystal Bohlander, Training Committee
Christy Reaves, Public Relations Committee
Martha Garland, Recognition Committee
Angie Funk, Conference Committee

Editorial Staff

Christy Reaves, Editor
Mae Philbeck, CFCRB Liaison
Jennifer Sharp, Graphic Designer

Growth & Reorganization

Brings Positive Change for Local Boards

Along with the growth and reorganization of Dependent Children's Services, some changes have been made in the areas covered by the field coordinators. The reallocation of some of the boards to different field coordinators has improved the workloads of all and allowed the field coordinators to provide greater support to their individual boards and each other. The map illustrates the areas of coverage and the following provides a list of each field coordinator's boards.

Dolores Smith (dark green): Dolores was promoted to professional services supervisor in December and her supervisory duties have increased. Dolores will now travel statewide to each of the field coordinator areas to determine what the needs are there. Her boards include Ballard, Carlisle, Crittenden, Daviess, Henderson, Livingston, McLean, Union and Webster counties. She can be reached in the Owensboro office.

Kari Hutchison (brown): Kari was promoted to education specialist in December. In the coming months, Kari will be researching the various forms of interested party review nationally and will be compiling these findings. Due to the intensive research time needed for this project, she will be covering only the counties of Warren and Monroe. Kari is in the Bowling Green office.

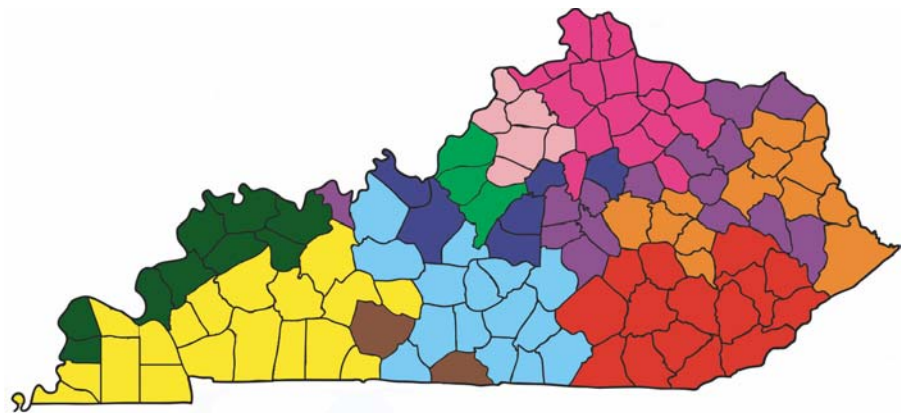
Danielle Scott (yellow): Danielle was promoted to field coordinator to fill Kari's vacancy. Danielle had been working as an assistant to Kari for some time and was a great choice for this position as she is familiar with a field coordinator's duties and responsibilities. Danielle will be covering the boards in Butler, Caldwell, Calloway, Christian, Fulton, Graves, Hickman, Hopkins, Logan, Lyon, Marshall, McCracken, Muhlenberg, Ohio, Simpson, Todd and Trigg counties. Her office is also in Bowling Green.

Melissa Huffman (light blue): Melissa was hired as a result of additional federal funds obtained by Dependent Children's Services with the naming of Kevin Smalley as manager. Melissa comes from the Victim's Advocate Office in Glasgow. She will be covering a majority of the area formerly covered by Mae and part of the area covered by Kari. Melissa's boards will be in the counties of Adair, Allen, Barren, Breckinridge, Casey, Cumberland, Clinton, Edmonson, Grayson, Green, Hart, Larue, Metcalfe, Russell, Taylor and Wayne. Melissa is currently in the

Billy's office remains in Frankfort.

Amy Smitha (pale pink): Amy's area is unchanged. She will be the office coordinator for the newly formed Department of Juvenile Services. Her area includes the counties of Franklin, Henry, Oldham, Shelby, Spencer and Trimble. Her office is in Frankfort.

Bruce Jones (bright pink): During the process of reassigning the field coordinator areas, it was discovered that Bruce had the largest number of



Bowling Green office, but will be moving to an office in Glasgow in the near future. We welcome Melissa to our team.

Karma Childress (bright green): Karma's area remains unchanged. She has done a remarkable job in this area and has built very productive boards. Karma will continue to cover Jefferson, Bullitt and Nelson counties. Her office is in Louisville.

Billy Stover (dark blue): Billy has been called on to assist in a law-related education program he loves, the Kentucky Mock Trial Tournament. Billy had worked with this program before coming to Dependent Children's Services. While Mae gains some of his boards, he will continue to provide support to the boards in Anderson, Fayette, Hardin, Marion, Meade and Washington counties.

meetings to attend annually. He will retain the majority of his boards and Mae will provide services to those being transferred. The counties he has retained are Boone, Bourbon, Bracken, Campbell, Carroll, Fleming, Gallatin, Grant, Harrison, Kenton, Mason, Montgomery, Nicholas, Owen, Pendleton, Robertson, Scott and Woodford. Bruce's office is in Frankfort.

Mike Broughton (red): Mike has gained some counties and has transferred some to Melissa. He has acquired some of the counties that were formerly in Deb's area. His assigned area includes Bell, Breathitt, Clay, Harlan, Jackson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Leslie, Letcher, McCreary, Perry, Pulaski, Rockcastle and Whitley counties. Mike's office remains in London.

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What happened to the Kentucky Organization for Foster Youth?

By Christy Reaves, Editor

Do you remember Jennifer Shaffer? She spoke at our conference in Bowling Green in November 2002. What a moving experience it was to have a former foster child stand before our group and relate a story of foster care from the eyes of the child. As reviewers for the Citizen Foster Care Review Board, the one voice we almost never hear is that of the child. Yet in the end, we do not exist to give the child a voice; we exist to review CFC's cases and report recommendations. So, on the day we were finally able to hear some perspective, we all listened with open hearts and ears.

Jennifer Shaffer not only told us her story, she told us about her dream. We marveled at the strength, intelligence and determination she focused on the Kentucky Organization For Foster Youth (KOFFY) project. In Jennifer's own words, KOFFY was her "life for three years." Even though she was paid for her position as coordinator, there was only altruistic compensation for the nights and weekends she and her co-workers/co-advocates gave to the program.

But where is KOFFY now? The University of Kentucky took over the KOFFY from NECCO & Associate last year and pared it down from the original vision of the NECCO team. Jennifer is no longer part of KOFFY.

The KOFFY program is now one part of the KYnex program with the University of Kentucky. The primary program under KYnex is Kentucky Youth Connects, which seeks to

provide adult mentors for youth (18-21) aging out of foster care. Kentucky Youth Connects also provides career planning, employment training and university connections.

The secondary program under KYnex is KOFFY, which is combined with the Youth Leadership Development Program. KOFFY now brings together youth ages 15 to 21 who are in independent living programs while in a foster home, including CFC and DJJ placements. "Training, support and relevant issues regarding youth in transition" are the focus of KOFFY now. The program has developed the Youth Leadership Council, whose members are elected from their peers. The council advises the coordinator on planning and implementing state and regional events where the youth are

allowed to voice their concerns and develop areas of concentration for their advocacy. They are taught that they have a voice and the power to have it heard. The children are also given the sense of belonging to a group which is unique.

As KOFFY evolves, we wish the program and its employees well. Most of all we wish that they continue to educate and empower the children entrusted to the state of Kentucky. For more information about KYnex, you can reach the director at 859-257-4094.

As for Jennifer, there have been other changes. Now Jennifer Vasseur, she is married and living in Cincinnati, and is enjoying new opportunities in her new public relations/human resources position. She is taking a "year off" from work with foster youth. It seems to be a well-deserved break from all the years foster care has determined the direction of her life. Jennifer, after her break, seems open to wherever the wind may blow in foster care advocacy. We are sure to see her spirit again in all of our work.

Reorganization brings change for local boards

Continued from page 3

Deb Bennett (orange): Deb provides wonderful service to the counties of Eastern Kentucky. Madison County was added to Deb's area as she lives in Richmond and her office is located there. Some of Deb's counties will now be covered by Mae, who is returning to the area to continue the positive growth. Deb's area includes Boyd, Carter, Elliott, Estill, Floyd, Johnson, Lawrence, Lee, Madison, Martin, Morgan, Owsley, Pike and Powell counties.

Mae Philbeck (lavender): With the addition of Melissa to Southcentral

Kentucky, Mae will be covering counties in Central and Northeastern Kentucky. Mae's new area is comprised of boards from Billy, Deb, Mike and Bruce. Mae's addition to this area will help everyone involved. She will continue to serve as the education specialist to assist with training and as the liaison for the newsletter. Her new area includes Bath, Boyle, Clark, Garrard, Greenup, Hancock, Lewis, Magoffin, Menifee, Mercer, Jessamine, Lincoln, Rowan and Wolfe counties. Her office is in Frankfort.

The field coordinators are working together to ensure that high-quality service continues to be offered to all boards during this time of transition.

Q
&
A

Is termination of parental rights (TPR) a permanency goal/plan?

— Submitted by Tom Stevenson, Union County CFCRB Chair

Actually, termination of parental rights (TPR) is not a permanency goal or plan. Instead, adoption is the permanency goal. Termination of parental rights is an objective that must be reached to achieve the goal of adoption. Consequently, on cases where the permanency goal has been changed to adoption, that is what we should be writing on the permanency plan space on the review form.



Spotlight On:

Grant County & Lee/Owsley Counties



Grant County

By Bruce Jones
CFCRB Field Coordinator

Grant County has one of the more experienced boards in the CFCRB program. The board members are dedicated to the children they review and are diligent in their efforts to help these children reach permanency. The four women on the board are Ann Adams, Sherry Hall, Diana Morgan and Wanda Simpson.



The Grant County CFCRB is comprised of, left to right, Ann Adams, Diana Morgan, Sherry Hall and Wanda Simpson.

The Grant County board wanted to do something a little extra for the children in their county who are in the state's custody so they began a birthday card program. They send birthday cards to all of the children and this gesture has brought smiles to hundreds of children in Grant County.

The board members are a joy to be around. Although they all work full time, they are always present for their review board meetings. They have a wonderful relationship with their DCBS office and have a smile for everyone.

Lee/Owsley Counties

By Deb Bennett
CFCRB Field Coordinator

The board members for Lee/Owsley Counties are truly dedicated to children. This board is always willing to learn and do what they can to improve reviews. They have a wonderful relationship with the local DCBS office. For example, at Christmas they provided a table of homemade goodies for the employees.



The board members for Lee/Owsley Counties are, left to right, Norma Moore, Betty Johnson and Dennis Johnson.

Norma Moore has been on the board for 16 years and provides great leadership for Dennis Johnson, who has been on the board for two years, and Betty Johnson, who has been on the board for one year. All three board members are retired.

Deb Bennett, the field coordinator for this board, is especially grateful for all of the homemade jellies and goodies she receives from this board. They also presented her with a handmade afghan for Christmas.

Newly formed Review Committee begins work

By Christy Reaves
Editor

In the past decade, the laws that govern children in out-of-home care have been reformed. The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) mandates shorter timelines; a permanency decision is to be made by the 12th month after a child has entered care. Both the court and the Cabinet for Health & Family Services are governed by these laws. As reviewers, we must check to see if these timelines are followed.

Simultaneously, in the past decade, both the Cabinet and the courts have experienced major technological changes in their information systems. The Cabinet for Health & Family Services has implemented the TWIST system and the courts have implemented CourtNet and now KyCourts. Technology has improved the ability to work more efficiently and reliably.

So now the CFCRB has determined that with the implementation of ASFA and the availability of new technology, our review system has room for improvement.

The Review Committee was formed to examine our system and determine any direction to take. At our next meeting, we will begin the process of dividing into regional subcommittees. Any volunteer is welcome to join the subcommittee, but we are strongly urging your local board chair to join.

When the schedule is created, each board will be contacted to enlist subcommittee members. The work we are beginning will determine the scope of review for years to come in Kentucky. We look forward to improving our ability to serve the children in care in Kentucky.



Gearing up for the 2004 CFCRB Conference!

Conference Committee

Angie Funk
Conference Committee Chair

The Conference Committee is gearing up for the 2004 CFCRB Conference to take place Nov. 5-7 at the Executive Inn Rivermont in Owensboro. The committee will meet in March to begin planning and is very excited because our last statewide event was in 2002. We have more than 35 volunteers and staff members committed to bringing you a top-notch conference that appeals to both new and seasoned reviewers.

For those of you who are new to our organization, the conference is a combination of volunteer training and recognition. We have a volunteer banquet on Friday night followed by educational sessions on Saturday and Sunday. It's a great way to get your six hours of continuing education and meet volunteers from across the state to share ideas. Hotel rooms and meals are provided free of charge and mileage of more than 200 miles roundtrip is reimbursable. With all of these advantages, there's every reason to attend!

You will receive registration information in the coming months, but we'll keep you posted via the newsletter in the meantime. Mark your calendars today for Nov. 5-7. We look forward to seeing you then!

Public Relations Committee

Christy Reaves
Public Relations Committee Chair

The Public Relations Committee has been working on foundation issues of our work. We have created a volunteer-based recruitment plan. You will begin to see a consistent effort from the field coordinators that will help each board determine the need for volunteers and the means to accomplish the recruiting. We hope the reviewers might be willing to

assist with attracting volunteers by targeting people they know.

Our brochures and posters are nearly ready for print. They have a new look and a streamlined message. We expect the material to be ready for distribution by May.

Our newsletter format has changed, with a greater focus on individual boards. We plan to begin a stronger emphasis on educational material in the future.

Legislative Committee

Bill Goetz
Legislative Committee Chair

The Legislative Committee continues to work on the legislative issues we hope will get passed this session. As the session progresses, it may be that fiscal concerns keep our bill from passing again. We shall see.

Our committee is also hard at work on evaluating our Policy and Procedure Manual. We strive to provide the optimal tool that will keep our work focused and alleviate reinventing any wheels. We are busily recording procedures in use and clarifying any ambiguous policies.

Our committee members are still trying to identify how to align ourselves for

legislative collaboration. This seems like a simple idea on the surface. But once the topic is examined, we see

that the process is multifaceted. We have to ask ourselves what type of collaboration, with whom, what our organization is willing to offer in the collaboration and to what extent we are willing to accept the influence of other organizations. At this point, our committee has more questions than answers.

Please join us for these discussions as we welcome your input.



Training Committee

Crystal Bohlander
Training Committee Chair

The Training Committee has wrapped up a year of work. In the past year, we saw the committee adjust from conference training to the regional training concept. We were pleased to see positive results from our efforts. It seems that the regional opportunities were appreciated.

The committee has begun a catalog of resources that volunteers can use at home to earn their six hours of training credit. The resource library concept will be developed in 2004.

We are also revising the CFCRB Handbook for use as a training tool. We hope the handbook will be an easier tool to access than the Training Manual when members are conducting reviews.

Recognition Committee

Martha Garland
Recognition Committee Chair

The Recognition Committee will begin its work in June when nomination forms for recognizing the outstanding work of volunteers, judges and social workers are mailed to all reviewers. The awards will be presented at our conference in November. Please be thinking of the people in your community who are doing outstanding work for CFCRB and/or children in care.

This is a special year when we will also recognize volunteers who have devoted an extraordinary amount of their lifetime to CFCRB. Our organization was built on the work of many people, some of whom are still reviewing today. We hope to thank them for their years of service to the children of Kentucky. Look for recognition of these volunteers at the conference as well.



State Officer Nominations

All members of the Citizen Foster Care Review Board recently received a packet from Nominating Committee Chair Beth Lucas. The packet included nomination forms for state vice chair, regional representatives, state treasurer and state secretary.

State Vice Chair: These nominees must have served on the Executive Committee as a regional representative or committee chair for a least one year prior to being nominated. Nominees are not required to serve as local chairs or vice chairs prior to nomination, but must be in compliance with CFCRB Standards and Retention Policies (attend 75 percent of local board meetings and complete at least six hours of ongoing training annually).

This person is elected to serve a two-year term before assuming the role of state chair for an additional two years. He or she will assist the state chair and perform the duties of the state chair in the latter's absence. The state vice chair will perform duties as assigned by the state chair,

Executive Committee and state board. This person will serve as chair of the Conference Committee during the conference years (even numbered years) and is required to attend the quarterly Executive Committee meetings and the annual state board meeting. The state vice chair will assume the role of state chair at the conclusion of the previous state chair's term or removal from office.

Regional Representatives: These nominees must also be in compliance with the CFCRB Standards and Retention Policies and must serve on a board in the region they are to represent. They are elected to serve a two-year term on the Executive Committee. The representatives are to contact the local boards in their region to discuss progress, concerns and problems. They are to identify and address the problems and/or issues that are common to their region. The representatives are to prepare a quarterly written report to present to the Executive Committee, and to attend the quarterly Executive Committee meetings and the annual state board meeting.

State Treasurer: This person is elected to serve a two-year term and must be in compliance with the Standards and Retention Policies. The treasurer is required to maintain records of any monies paid by review board members toward state conference activity fees or other such expenses, maintain receipts and records as to how any such money was spent, maintain records of bank statements regarding income and expenditures, and report to the Executive Committee at its quarterly meetings regarding such income and expenditures. The treasurer is further required to prepare volunteer account records for a biennial audit. At the end of the term, the treasurer must transfer all such minutes and records to his or her successor upon vacating the office.

State Secretary: This person is elected to serve a two-year term and must be in compliance with the Standards and Retention Policies. The duties include recording, maintaining and preparing for distribution minutes of all Executive Committee and state board meetings. These minutes are to be forwarded to the state chair within two weeks of the board/committee meeting. All records and minutes are to be transferred to the secretary's successor at the end of the term.

If you would like to nominate someone for a position, complete the nomination form included in the packet and return it to the AOC central office as soon as possible. All nominations must be postmarked no later than April 16, 2004.

A Committee Application for the various committees under the state board was also included in the packet. The majority of these committees meet on a quarterly basis. Some committees, however, meet more frequently based on need.



On the Calendar Meetings • Events • Trainings

Committee Meetings

March 18, 2004
Legislative Committee
Frankfort

March 20, 2004
Conference Committee
Owensboro

March 27, 2004
Public Relations Committee
Frankfort

April 2004
(Date & location to be announced)
Nominating Committee

April 23, 2004
Training Committee
Elizabethtown

May 7, 2004
Executive Committee
Frankfort

State Conference

November 5-7, 2004
2004 CFCRB Conference
Executive Inn Rivermont
Owensboro

For more information, call Hanna Harvey at 800-928-2350.



The Nominating Committee Needs YOU!

By Beth Lucas, Nominating Committee Chair

Looking for a few good volunteers. Well, okay, maybe more than a few! The Nominating Committee is gearing up for this year's officer elections. Nominating information has been mailed. If you want to become more involved, then running for an executive office may be what you're looking for. This year we will elect a vice chair, nine regional representatives, a treasurer and a secretary. Qualifications and responsibilities are on each nominating form. The timeline for the election process is as follows:

February: Nomination forms mailed to reviewers. **April:** Deadline to send in nominations. **May:** Nominating Committee reviews nominations. **June:** Ballots are mailed to the state board. **July:** Deadline for ballots. **November:** Report results to state board.

Also, for the first time, we will include information about committees. If your time is limited, but you want to participate at the state level, then you might want to serve on a committee. Don't miss this opportunity to become involved. The children need YOU and so does the state organization!



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