



FOSTER/ADOPTIVE FAMILY NEWS

Unkefers Named Foster Parents of the Year at Annual Banquet

By: Regina Schwartz, Foster/Adoptive Home Recruiter



*Thad & Stephanie Unkefer
2009 Foster Parents of the Year*

Thad and Stephanie Unkefer were honored as Foster Parents of the Year at the 26th Annual Foster Parent Banquet held on May 13th. The Unkefers were chosen by WCCSB staff as the Foster Parents of the Year from 51 families who provide foster care through WCCSB. The Unkefers have been licensed for three years and originally got involved with the agency to care for a relative placement of four siblings. Since that time, they have cared for several sibling groups and a teen mom and her infant. They are committed to helping birthparents during their reunification efforts and have actively mentored birthparents. The Unkefers live near Smithville and have three children of their own.

“They do a great job of making children feel welcome in their home and of reunifying children with their birth families,” said their caseworker, Nancy Ballinger. Ballinger also stated she admires the

Unkefers for the calm attitude they maintain in all situations. The Unkefers are the owners of Livecom, a computer service business, and manage to keep their home and business running smoothly despite the busy schedules of their foster and biological children.

Receiving certificates for 15 years of service as foster parents were Rick and Tammy Yoder of Apple Creek, and Richard and Edith Speegle of Wooster. Recipients of certificates for five years of service were Eric and Joellen Fone of Dalton, and Ella Troyer of Apple Creek.

The following new foster families were also recognized: Kim Peden, Ashland; Mat and Christina Biggs, Wooster; Mark and Lisa Miller, Apple Creek; Jerome and Heidi Fatzinger, Shreve; Paul and Laura Graebing, Big Prairie; Bill and Laurie Harris, North Lawrence; Brian and Clara Yoder, Apple Creek; Pam and Larry Yonts, Marshallville; Art and Rebecca Jones, Wooster; Bill and Patricia Galanski, Wooster; Robert and Jenny Rybicki, West Salem; and Dalewyn and Julie Martin, Dalton.

The event was held at Wooster Church of the Nazarene in Wooster, which donated the banquet proceeds to Relay for Life. Door prizes were given to the length of service award winners thanks to the generous donations of area businesses, including Wal-Mart, Buehler’s, and Valvoline Instant Oil Change.



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2009 FOSTER/ADOPTIVE CAREGIVER TRAINING SCHEDULE

Helping Children w/Mentally Ill Parents

Thursday, June 18 - 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Trainer: David Zidar

Speaking the Truth in Love

Friday, October 23 - 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Trainer: John Ward

Re-Parenting the Wounded Child

Saturday, October 24 - 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Trainer: John Ward

Play with a Purpose

Friday, November 6 - 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Trainer: Bert Nero

Child Development

Saturday, November 7 - 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 Noon
Trainer: David Zidar

Chemically Dependent Parents

Saturday, November 7 - 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Trainer: David Zidar

Computer Safety

Saturday, November 7 - 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Trainer: Pieri Levandofsky

Coaching & Mentoring for Foster Parents

Sunday, November 8 - 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Trainer: Mel Gravely

NOTE:

All adoptive parents are also welcome to attend these trainings.

To register for any of the trainings listed, please call a foster care specialist at 330-345-5340.

****Please remember to pre-register at least five days prior to the training. If we do not have ten people registered by that deadline, the training will be cancelled.****