



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Friday, May 20, 2016

May is National Foster Care Awareness Month

Maryland's Human Services Agency Celebrates by Fostering Faith, Hope and Love

St. Mary's, Calvert, Kent & Charles Counties (May 20, 2016) — State child welfare professionals are implementing family centered focus strategies to enhance the child welfare service delivery as it relates to Maryland's Foster Care Program. Children placed in the care of the state are faring better because of the type of services they are receiving. As a result of abuse and neglect, children must be removed from their homes. In Maryland, we are fortunate to have caring citizens who make a difference in young lives by welcoming them into their hearts, lives and home making them feel safe and protected. "It's the quality of care that is making the real difference in the lives of these children," said Governor Hogan.

May is Foster Care Awareness month. It is a time to reflect on the needs of our children and to ensure that they have a safe place to call home. In Maryland, we are taking time out to recognize some of the outstanding citizens who are providing safety and wellbeing during such a critical time in their lives. "When a child needs protection, we intervene with a plan of safety and ongoing security," said DHR Secretary Sam Malhotra. "Our foster homes provide a safe nurturing environment for children in need of stability during a traumatic time."

The DHR child welfare professionals are taking time to recognize those unsung heroes who step up in defense of children and have identified foster parents from around the state who has gone beyond answering the call for help.

On Sunday May 22, 2016 Foster Parents **Paula and Jared Cox** of **Saint Mary's County** will be honored. Although they have been resource parents for a short time, they have fostered faith, love, and hope in their dedication to the children in their care. When their current foster children came into their lives, they dropped everything during the holidays and gladly welcomed them home on Thanksgiving Day. They have shown unconditional love and care and are always willing to be a support for other resource families in the community. They show love by the way they truly love the children that come into their home as if they were their own.

The Maryland Department of Human Resources protects the State's vulnerable children and adults and provides temporary economic assistance. DHR strengthens Maryland families and improves communities through its 24 Departments of Social Services, community partnerships and its four administrations: the Social Services Administration, Family Investment Administration and Child Support Enforcement Administration.

- Larry Hogan, Governor
- Boyd k. Rutherford , Lt. Governor
- Sam Malhotra, Secretary

In **Calvert County Cindy Hogan** has been an approved resource parent for three years. As a nurse, her main interest was in assisting with special needs infants and substance-exposed newborns. Ms. Hogan has had 12 children placed in her home over the past three years. She recently stretched her capacity by allowing for a sibling group of 4, ages ranging from 2 months to 6years to be placed together. Ms. Hogan is a joy to work with and does whatever it takes for the children of Calvert County. She is a great role model to the birth parents of children in foster care she has assisted in reunifying several of her previous placements.

Dawn Holden & Scott Barney of Kent County have worked with the department for nine months. During this time they have been open, energetic and committed to one particular youth who was identified for their home prior to placement. This youth has had several adult abandonments in her short time in foster care. Dawn and Scott opened their home and hearts to her and stayed committed to her treatment while she was in their home. This youth identifies Dawn and Scott as her family and has the continued desire to remain connected with them. They have provided this youth with hope for her future and have shown love through their continued interest in her wellbeing.

In **Charles County**, Foster Parents **Calvin Anderson & Corey Creech** opened their home to two children who were experiencing some major difficulties. The children had many problems including night terrors, academic challenges and some complex behaviors. Corey and Calvin worked consistently on providing a safe, stable and nurturing environment for the children. As a result, the children have thrived; experiencing academic success and a boost in their self confidence. Both children have come a long way due mostly to the dedication of Corey and Calvin in making them a part of their family and in making sure the children had and continue to have everything they need to be successful and well-adjusted. They have provided what these children desperately needed in order to feel loved, full of hope and to have faith!

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