

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Be a Foster Parent and Change a Life** *May is National Foster Care Month*

**Lincoln** – Foster parents help young people in Nebraska receive the caring support and guidance they need for a better chance at life, according to Courtney Phillips, CEO of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

“During National Foster Care Month in May, we especially thank the wonderful foster parents who open their hearts and homes to provide a temporary, safe place for the children who are not able to remain with their parents,” Phillips said. “We appreciate the love and compassion they show for these children, and we know there are more Nebraskans willing to help.”

She invited others desiring to help children by providing foster care or considering adoption to call 1-800-7PARENT (1-800-772-7368) for more information.

“It’s important when the court places children in our care that, if they must be removed from their homes, we find the best possible match depending on the needs of the child,” said Tony Green, acting director of Children and Family Services. “The more foster homes available to us, the more likely we are to find foster parents who will be best for a child.” DHHS puts an emphasis on reducing trauma for children by placing them in foster homes meeting various criteria, such as those close to the child’s school, and consideration of relatives, if possible.

At the start of May, the number of children living out of home in foster care in Nebraska totaled 2,746. Overall, children under care of the state is one-third lower than three years ago. While DHHS is seeing a decrease in children in its system, they continue to call for more caring foster families who can provide a positive environment.

The goal of DHHS for children in foster care is to return to their families, and foster parents are team members for the child striving for the best outcome.

Pam Allen, executive director of the Nebraska Adoptive and Foster Parent Association, reiterated appreciation to all foster parents in the state. “And, I’d like everyone else to chew on this; fostering is families helping families. If you would like to help children and their families, please call.”

Support groups for foster parents are available in 14 cities across the state, and they receive training before receiving children. With chapters across the state, the Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association supports and advocates for foster families. DHHS foster care employees also work with foster families.

Information about foster parenting is available by calling 1-800-7-PARENT. Or, go to:  
[http://dhhs.ne.gov/children\\_family\\_services/Pages/foc\\_focindex.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/children_family_services/Pages/foc_focindex.aspx) .

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