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**A VERY Special Thanks** to all of the donors who contributed to our Christmas Program. Over 150 families were adopted, and with general donations included, nearly 250 total families received gifts!

MFCAA staff, and our member families, cannot tell you how much your time and dedication means to us. This is the time each year that we most wish for happiness and hope in the lives of the children we serve, and you have helped make that wish a reality for OVER 1,000 CHILDREN!



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**The MFCAA Staff wishes you all a SAFE and HAPPY New Year!  
We hope you look back on 2008 with fond memories,  
and look forward to a joyful 2009.**



## Midwest Foster Care & Adoption Association Newsletter



### Letter From the Executive Director

Dear Friends;

As we begin 2009, MFCAA looks ahead with hope for another year of progress in improving the lives of the kids we all serve. Our goals are both personal and professional. They include improved services for each individual child and family we seek to help, and overall systemic improvements designed to result in large scale progress for all of us working within and impacted by the Missouri child welfare system.

We remain committed to participating on numerous boards, committees and task forces in order to partner with other child welfare professionals for improved policy and practice. We'd like to once again extend an invitation to any of you who have an interest in increasing your involvement in advocacy to contact our offices and let us know about that interest. We can connect you to lots of opportunities to serve this community no matter what level of experience, education or availability of time you may have to offer.

We're also working closely with foster and adoptive parent support groups throughout the state of Missouri to assist them in developing similar supports and services in their own areas, and to help them to develop the kind of empowerment necessary to energize and encourage their local foster and adoptive families. If you live outside of the Metro KC area, and have an interest in forming or energizing a support group in your area, contact Shandra at MFCAA for information on how we can help.

We've already begun the process of legislative advocacy for the session beginning in January of 2009. We've reviewed the DSS budget request for FY2010, and we were pleased to find requests for additional small increases for foster care maintenance and adoption subsidy. We've already testified in support of those increases before the Senate Appropriations Committee in December 08. We're working on developing connections to the incoming Governor's office with the goal of sharing our wealth of information on what foster and adoptive parents really need in order to better serve Missouri's foster and adopted kids. We've also completed a legislative agenda for the upcoming year which includes improvements to Missouri law regarding educational issues for foster and adopted children, improvements in Guardian ad Litem representation for Missouri foster children, movement toward the professional recognition and treatment that foster and adoptive parents should receive within this child welfare system, and improvements in accountability for all child welfare partners. Toward that end, we're also participating on a legislative committee working on system improvements, and we're partnering closely with both the Children's Division and the Office of the Child Advocate.

#### MFCAA CONTACT & DIRECTIONS:

From I-70, take the Lee's Summit Rd Exit and go North, drive for about a mile, and we are located on the West side of the road (across from a park, just before 32nd), on the Drumm Farm campus. We are part of a collection of "houses" set back from the road. Stay to the right of the drive; MFCAA is the second building on the right.

#### Address:

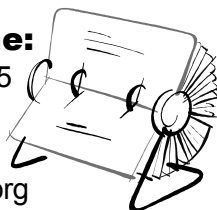
3210 S  
Lee's Summit Rd  
Independence, MO  
64055

#### Main Phone:

816-350-0215

#### Website:

[www.mfcaa.org](http://www.mfcaa.org)



#### In This Issue:

We hope you enjoy the first newsletter of the New Year! This month is a little shorter, since we spent most of our December hours in the Christmas Cave!

As always our goal is to move mountains on behalf of all of you. We encourage you to share your own energy and talents with us in any way you can. We know that it is only through the unification of our voices that we can shout loud enough to be heard. Please contact us and let us know what you want us to work on, and we'll make that part of our agenda for 2009. We know that each of you makes miracles happen in kids' lives each day, and it is your example we strive to emulate in the work we do here at MFCAA.

Thanks for your ongoing support!  
*Lori*

*We love our kids.....but*

## **We are not able to provide any childcare during the January trainings.**

The Drumm Farm Gym will not be available until February. With the cold of winter there will be no outside activities and the available office space will not handle all of our children safely. From February on we will be providing fun, safe activities for your children during monthly trainings.

We are very excited about the new gym and looking forward to seeing the kids in February. We also have a new outdoor playground area that the kids will love as the weather warms up.


The Boys Scouts of America are trying to increase the troop size at Drumm Farm. If you have boys who are interested in becoming a Scout, contact Becky.



816-350-0215  
becky@mfcaa.org

## **Top Ten New Year's Resolutions**

Do your plans for the new year match up to the most popular resolutions?

1. Spend More Time With Family & Friends
2. Fit in Fitness
3. Tame The Bulge
4. Quit Smoking
5. Enjoy Life More
6. Quit Drinking
7. Get Out Of Debt
8. Learn Something New
9. Help Others (you can all check that off your list) 
10. Get Organized

### **Food Pantry & Clothes Closet**

MFCAA's Food Pantry provides basic food items, available to Members between 9a and 2p on Tuesdays and Fridays, at MFCAA (the Food Pantry and Clothes Closet are closed Dec. 24-Jan. 5th).

Extended items (canned goods, meat, hygiene items, etc) are available once each month per family, and can be picked up during regular Food Pantry hours (Tues/Fri) or by appointment.


MFCAA's Clothes Closet provides clothing for children ages baby to 18 yrs, and is available to our Members on Tuesdays and Fridays, 10a-2p, or by appointment.

For Food Pantry/Clothes Closet appointments or questions, or to donate items to the Food Pantry or Clothes Closet, please contact Becky at 816-350-0215 or [becky@mfcaa.org](mailto:becky@mfcaa.org)

Our foster home licensing program is off to a great start, and we look forward to adding new dimensions to the program in the coming year. If you are interested in becoming a foster parent or know someone who is, please call Suzen at:

(816) 350-0215. We'd love to answer any questions you have!

## **Time of Giving**

At this time of year we can count on joyful family celebrations, wonderful holiday meals and children hopeful of that very special gift. Another annual tradition is the end-of-year request for your tax-deductible contributions to needy non-profit organizations filling up your home's mailbox and your email. PLEASE remember to consider a donation to Midwest Foster Care and Adoption Association. 












In 2008, here at MFCAA we have expanded our food pantry and kids' clothes closet due to increased need. The current economy has led to challenges for many of our families, and a little community support can go a long way in keeping families together. We have also increased our parent trainings that provide caring, nurturing families many of the tools they need to care for children who have suffered abuse and neglect.

It has been a successful and exciting period of growth for MFCAA, but in order to continue our work we need your help. Not everyone can be a foster parent, but we can all make a difference in a child's life. Please consider making an end of year donation or a New Year's pledge for 2009! You can help change a child's future.

MFCAA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all donations are tax-deductible.

Donations may be mailed to:  
MFCAA  
3210 South Lee's Summit Rd.  
Independence, MO 64055

You may also make a donation online at [mfcaa.org](http://mfcaa.org),  
or by calling 816-350-0215

January		monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday
		MFCAA Closed	MFCAA Closed	New Year's Eve MFCAA Closed	1 New Year's Day MFCAA Closed	2  *No Food Pantry	3
4	5		6 	7	8	9 	10
11	12		13 	14	15	16  	17
18	19		20 	21	22	23 	24
25	26		27 	28	29	30 	31



Clothes Closet  
10a-2p



Food Pantry  
9a-2p



Training  
6:30p



Career/Behavioral Training—7p  
(6:30p dinner)

\*For Dental Van Appointments:  
Bobbie Mitchell/ 816-889-3512

## Monthly Reminders



Foster Parents are required to maintain a certain number of training hours in order to keep their licenses, and ALL parents can use additional tools to care for the children in their homes. MFCAA provides two great resources for “parent training.”

### Resource Library

MFCAA has a lending library with video tapes, dvd's, cd's and books that can be checked out and used for outside training hours. Call Tammy at 816-350-0215.

### On-site Training

**Jan. 2/6:30p/Childcare** will NOT be provided in January

*Trauma in Students/Joe Holt*

Many children in foster/adoptive care have experienced trauma both before and after their placement in care. This training will help parents understand how they can help support their students with special medical, emotional, and social needs as they strive to meet academic achievements.

**Jan. 16/6:30p Dinner (RSVP to [tammy@mfcaa.org](mailto:tammy@mfcaa.org)/816-350-0215/7p Training**

Childcare will NOT be provided in January

*Cultural Competence/Betty Blackmon*

Within the foster care system there is a great amount of diversity among foster parents, birth parents, children, caseworkers, etc. This training will focus on developing skills to effectively interact with people from different cultural backgrounds.

### Update:

We are currently still planning our College workshop for high school students. Check the February newsletter, and our website, for details.