

Northwest Media Receives Grant for Online Marital Education Program for Resource Parents

Northwest Media, Inc., parent company of Foster Parent College.com, has received a three-year grant to develop and evaluate a specialized online version of a marriage education program for resource parents. The Phase II SBIR grant (#9 R44 MD005197-02A1) was awarded by the National Institutes of Health, National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities. The online program will be developed by Northwest Media in collaboration with the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP).

The Colorado-based PREP, co-founded by psychologists Howard Markman, Ph.D. and Scott Stanley, Ph.D. is a well-researched, highly effective, and widely used curriculum that has already been adapted for use with select populations, though not specifically with resource couples.

Foster, kinship, and adoptive couples face extraordinary challenges that can, and do, have a big impact on their

marriages. Standard family contexts and dynamics for intervention do not generalize to these couples. However, marital education tailored to the special needs and circumstances of these parents could serve to provide a healthy framework for their marriages.

In Phase I, Northwest Media successfully developed and tested the first two modules from the PREP program. Findings provided strong support for the efficacy of the online version with this population. The resulting class, "Relationships: Strengthening Communications," is available online on Foster Parent College.

In Phase II we will produce another 13 modules adapted to this population. We will evaluate the full, finished program with a national sample of 100 foster, adoptive, and kinship couples. Psychologist Richard Delaney, Ph.D. is the principal investigator for this project.

Adoption Month & Day Promote Adoption of Teens and Children in Care

In the United States, more than 129,000 of the half a million children in foster care are waiting to find permanent homes. Some are babies and some are teens, some are healthy and some are not, but they all share a need and a desire to have their own forever family. The month of November is set aside as National Adoption Month to promote public awareness of those children and encourage families to open their hearts to them.

For thousands of lucky children, November 21 will be a turning point in their lives. That day is set aside as National Adoption Day and more than 300 public events will be held to finalize the adoptions of children in foster care, and to celebrate all families who adopt. Last year, more than 4,000 children were formally adopted on Adoption Day and since it

began in 2000, Adoption Day has marked the finalization of more than 25,000 adoptions.

The 2009 Adoption Day theme is "Answering the Call – You don't have to be perfect to be a perfect parent. There are thousands of teens in foster care who would love to put up with you." The goal is to spotlight the need for permanent families for teens in foster care.

We at Foster Parent College applaud all families no matter how they are formed. But this month, we tip our hats to parents who choose to adopt children out of the foster care system, giving them the stability and love they deserve and need. And we applaud the hard-working social workers who assist in bettering the lives of displaced children.

What's Happening

Workshop proposals are now being accepted for the Vermont Foster/Adoptive Family Association 23rd Annual Spring Conference. The conference will be held April 23-25 at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Burlington. The deadline for submissions is early December. For more information, email leslie.williams@ahs.state.vt.us

FPC Advanced Parenting Workshops begin Nov. 3rd, so sign up your parents today. Workshops are available on Anger and Lying.

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Everyday Heroes is now Champions of Children. We'd like to share the story of foster parents, CASAs, volunteers and agency staff whose efforts on behalf of displaced children are above the cut. Please email your nominations to Lisa at press@northwestmedia.com. Thanks.

Follow us on Twitter at [FosterCollege](https://twitter.com/FosterCollege) for updates, offers and the occasional pearl of wisdom.