



## VEFC North Central Notes

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### MILESTONES OF A NEW PROGRAM

Volunteer Emergency Families for Children (VEFC) was formed 26 years ago in response to a need for families who could temporarily house children in crisis. VEFC has since served nearly 15,000 children. The North Central Region, including Louisa, Fluvanna, and Goochland counties, was started in December of 2004. The program responded to the need for more local families to provide emergency shelter. Before VEFC many local children have been sent out of county not only leaving their family, but all familiar surroundings, including their school. In cooperation with the local Department of Social Services (DSS) agencies, VEFC recruits and trains volunteer families who are willing to open their homes to local children and youth in crisis. The program exists as a viable alternative to group homes, detention centers, or in cases of emergency when a child needs to be removed due to abuse or neglect. VEFC families also provide "time out" respite care for families in crisis to prevent future abuse or neglect or to provide long-term foster families with a much needed break.

Placements are for children birth to age 18 and last from one to 21 days at the most. The average placement lasts 5 days. Volunteer host families receive complete training to prepare them for this challenging and fulfilling opportunity. We ask volunteer families to commit to one year of service or three placements. Families always have the right to say no to a placement and have the option of indicating a preference in gender and age of child with which they are most comfortable. We hope local volunteers will step forward and serve our children out of the goodness of their hearts, as there is no financial compensation for host family service. People who want to help without hosting a child in their home can serve on the local community council that meets once every 6 weeks to help spread the word about VEFC by attending community events, assisting with mailings, trainings, and volunteer appreciation efforts

### MANY THANKS!!!

Many organizations have helped VEFC spread its mission in the new local program area:

- **Galilee Baptist Church** provided training space with warm hospitality for VEFC's first local training in Louisa.
- The **Fluvanna Christian Service Society**, led by Mike Finn-McKenzie, connected VEFC with 15 Fluvanna churches.
- The **Lake Monticello Jr. Women's Club** generously provided all of the refreshments for North Central's second host family training.
- **University Montessori School** in Charlottesville donated a table top copier for the coordinator's home office to reduce copy costs.
- **Jennifer Zajak of Fluvanna Review and WINA radio** featured VEFC in her column and on the weekend news radio program. **Nancy Minor of The Central Virginian** completed a feature article on VEFC in April.

### Training and Host Family update:

- The first two training sessions were conducted in March and May. A total of four families were trained and are in different phases of the approval process. At press time **Ann Symmers** from Fluvanna County and **Tim and Nancy Hoyt-Duncan** from Goochland County have been approved! Congratulations! **Benita and Michael Wagner** and **Susan and Paul Seehaver** from Fluvanna should be approved soon. Welcome to the VEFC family!
- **Betsy and Alan Turf** from Goochland continue to dedicate themselves as North Central Region's only experienced family with almost 3 years of service.

### CHILD ABUSE IN VIRGINIA: (fiscal year '04)

**47,445** children reported as possible victims of abuse or neglect

**6,876** children were legally founded as abuse/neglect victims

**29** of those children died (21 of which were under age 4)

from Virginia Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention

## Introducing the new North Central Community Council...

The VEFC local community councils help carry out the mission of the organization in the communities in which they live. They help the home-based program coordinator by being VEFC's eyes, ears, and mouth and by creating presence and name recognition in their county. They help with volunteer recruitment, training, and appreciation. The North Central Region is proud to introduce four new community council members:

**Janyce Caulkins** who served as a VEFC family for 15 years and as a program coordinator for Eastern VA for 8 years, now lives at Lake Monticello in Fluvanna County and serves as the council secretary. She got into the program initially through a presentation in her church. She and her husband felt that this was one way they could live out their faith commitment in a tangible way.

**Linda Miller** has been a long-term foster parent for 2 years with Louisa County. She is also a volunteer Adoption Specialist for Adopt America Network in Toledo, Ohio. The agency specializes in finding families for special needs children. She is active in rescuing Louisa's orphaned puppies and kittens, and finding forever homes for them. She hopes to assist with training and working with the families directly.

**Murphy Terry** is Director of Missions for the Goshen Baptist Association and is active in many volunteer efforts including the Louisa County Commission on Aging, the Louisa Resource Council, the Louisa Minister's Conference and Orange Minister's Conference. His connections with local churches as well as his public speaking and fund raising skills are sure to be an asset to the council.

**Valerie Tyler** represents Goochland Fellowship and Family Services as their Assistant Literacy Coordinator. Valerie and the Fellowship believe in the motto, "help people, help themselves". She has 26 years experience of teaching and looks forward to contributing toward the goals of VEFC.



## Give Your ♥ to a Child!

There are many ways one can contribute to the VEFC mission of helping children and youth in crisis.

- \* Become a VEFC host family who provides short-term shelter care and mentoring to abused, neglected, runaway, homeless and at-risk children and youth in Virginia. Serving children birth - 18, for placements one to no more than 21 days (average placement 3-5 days).
- \* Help recruit volunteers by serving on the North Central Community Council. Meets once every 5 weeks (8 times per year) at the Louisa DSS office. Next meeting Tuesday, July 12<sup>th</sup> 1pm at Louisa DSS.
- \* Contribute a tax deductible donation.
- \* Invite a VEFC representative to speak to your church or community organization. Call 1-800-756-6167 to set up a time.

Contact the Program Coordinator to help with small projects such as mailings, providing snacks for training, etc..

### Job Opening:

After getting the North Central program started, Sarah Cooper will no longer be serving as our program coordinator as of July 15, 2005. The following is the job announcement:

### Program Coordinator-North Central Region; Volunteer Emergency Families for Children (VEFC).

15 hours. BA/BS preferred plus 3-5 years experience in volunteer recruitment and program management, teaching, or human services work. Child Protective Services and Criminal Records Check and car required. Highly motivated self-starter to work from home based office with flexible scheduling. Must be multi-task oriented and able to work some evenings. Recruit, train and work with volunteers in Fluvanna, Goochland, and Louisa Counties. Concurrent employment is not compatible with this position. Salary \$9,333. Send or fax resume to VEFC, P.O. Box 35074, Richmond, VA 23235, or fax: 804-379-7933 EOE



*"A hundred years from now . .  
it will not matter what my bank account was,  
the sort of house I lived in,  
or the kind of car I drove . .*



*but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child."*