



Family Enrichment Center

How a Legislator Can Help the Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Families of Calhoun County

1. Keep the Calhoun Interagency Training Coalition informed on foster care legislation that is being considered.
2. Initiative legislation that would increase the number of ongoing training hours that a foster parent in Michigan needs to 12 hours a year. With a minimum of 6 hours being required to be face-to-face classroom training

Background:

Foster parents in Michigan currently need to receive 6 hours of ongoing training each year. This training can be received by reading books, watching videos and taking internet courses. No face-to-face classroom training is currently required.

In a report published by the National Foster Parent Association:

- 36 out of 46 states surveyed required more ongoing training than Michigan.
- Only 3 states require less training than Michigan.
- 7 states have the same ongoing training requirements.
- The National average of ongoing training hours is 13 hours per year.

Rationale:

Raising foster children is not like raising our own children. Foster parents need to understand the emotional needs of these children. They also need knowledge of the court system, community resources, agency policies, discipline techniques, special education resources etc. This information can not be gained completely by watching a video or reading a book, nor can it be obtained in 6 hours a year. While video, internet and reading books are important learning tools, they should not completely take the place of face-to-face classroom learning.

3. Public Act 172 of 1997, MCL 722.954d requires DHS to publish an annual report card for each public and private agency. The information that is to be included on this report card is attached to this paper.

Problem:

This information is important in planning appropriate programs for foster children, identifying weaknesses or "gaps" in services that can be addressed.

Solution:

Require DHS to maintain this important information as required by law

Family Enrichment Center
415 S. 28th St.
Battle Creek, MI 49015

PHONE 269.660.0448 – Main office
269.660.0449 - Child Care
FAX 269.963.0160
E-MAIL resourcefamilies@aol.com
WEB SITE <http://www.foster-adoptive-kinship.org>