



447 South Nova Road
Ormond Beach, FL 32174

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Daytona Beach, FL
Permit No. 6



NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Events



March:
3/31—Experiencing Embraced by Grace, 7:00-8:00 pm

Ephesians 1: 4 - 6

Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love, He predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved.

Mission Statement

Embraced By Grace, Inc. is an adoption and home study agency dedicated to the glory of God and the promotion of family through the adoption process. We are devoted to the ministry of placing adoptable children into permanent godly, Christian homes.

CH22858- A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7452) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

Staff

Robert Picerne
Founder and Executive Director

Gwyn Picerne
Founder and President

David Wooten
Director of Development

Pepper Wooten
Director of Operations

Amber Marshall
Director of Social Services

Emily Head
Social Services/Social Worker

Cathy Fish
Association Executive/Community Service Agent

Patti Parks
Community Service Agent

Lauren Stephens
Writer/Journalist

Meredith Holbert
Family Counselor



Volume 2, Issue 3
March, 2009

Special Points of Interest:

- Upcoming Events
- Mission Statement
- Who is the Person behind that Desk?
- Check out EBG on Facebook

Inside this Issue:

- What has God called you to do for His Kingdom?
- Hope's Boy
- The Investment of a Lifetime



What has God called you to do for His Kingdom?

By Lauren Stephens

Living in a world marred by the effects of sin multiplies the different ways children are brought to a place they should never come to know...Foster Care. Every year, hundreds of children enter the state controlled institution of foster care. These children are placed into foster care for various reasons depending upon their family situations. Some children do not have a safe and stable home-life due to drugs, physical and/or sexual abuse or parental neglect. The list can go on and on. Foster care is to be a temporary solution, but often times children remain in foster care for the remainder of their childhood as a result of our overburdened state system.

While much focus is placed on children in foster care (and rightfully so), we sometimes forget about the youth slipping through the cracks of the foster care system and into the world of 'Adulthood'. Many of the foster youth are not prepared to be fully self-sufficient due to being transferred from one foster home to another. Every year, at the tender age of eighteen, an estimated 20,000 teen foster youth are emancipated from the foster care system with no support group or anyone to turn to for help.

These youth are on the verge of spreading their wings, and they desperately want to succeed. They want to go to college. They want to make something of themselves and give back to their communities. They have hopes and dreams too. Yet many of their dreams are dashed by the harsh realities of life as they struggle just to survive. Below are a few statistics of youth who 'age out' of foster care, courtesy of the Child Welfare League of America.

- Earned a high-school diploma - 54%
- Obtained a college bachelor's degree or higher - 2%
- Became a parent 12-18 months after discharge - 84%
- Were unemployed - 51%
- Had no health insurance - 30%
- Had been homeless - 25%
- Received public assistance - 30%

How many eighteen years olds in stable families are turned over to be completely self-sufficient? The key to success is support from family.

How can we help the foster youth who are 'aging out' of foster care? How can we reach out to them and make a difference in their lives? How can we show them the love of Christ?

You can show teen foster youth the love of Christ by praying that God would make you a willing vessel to be used for His honor and glory. You can give of your time and resources to assist these teen foster youth. You can share the gospel. By God's grace, you can help!

Below is a list of local foster care agencies and resources that you can use to bless the youth who are 'aging out' of foster care.

Local Foster Care Agencies: (Volusia / Flagler Counties)

- Community Partnership for Children - (386) 238 - 4900
- First United Methodist Children's Home - (386) 668 - 4774
- Children's Home Society - (321) 397 - 3000
- Neighbor to Family - (386) 248 - 0712
- Devereux - 1 (800) 338 - 3738

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from first page)

Below are different ways you can help youth who are ‘aging out’ of foster care:

- **Mentor**—Volunteer your time to mentor teen foster youth. Many local foster care agencies accommodate teen foster youth with mentorship programs. Many mentorship programs allow the mentor flexibility with their time and schedules. You can also contact the guidance office at your local college to inquire of their mentorship programs.
- **Support Education**—Donate school supplies to your local foster care agency. Call the local foster care agency to learn of the supplies that are needed most. School supplies are expensive and you can help lift the financial burden by providing Wal-Mart or Target gift cards. Tutoring is also a necessity for teen foster youth. They need the guidance and help of a trusted adult to advise them as they prepare for the rigors of college.
- **Provide Transportation**—Many teen foster youth do not own a car by the time they graduate from high school. You can help them attend their school functions, job interviews, and doctor appointments by offering to chauffeur them to their events. Contact the local foster care agency to learn of teen foster youth who could benefit from your willingness to help.
- **Donate Supplies**—Many foster children grow up with very few possessions. As they seek to make it on their own, many teen foster youth do not have the necessary items to furnish a house. Take a look around your home, and see if you can find household items that could benefit a teen foster youth. Donate the items to your local foster care agency.

You can also send ‘care packages’ to teen foster youth with goodies they need and that will brighten their day knowing that someone cares about them. The **Orphan Foundation of America** welcomes ‘care packages’ and distributes them to the teen foster youth. They will also allow you to include a personal note of encouragement with your ‘care package’.

Search your heart. Won’t you help? Won’t you do something to help these youth who desperately need the care and love you can provide for them? Even if you can only play a small part in helping the youth who are ‘aging out’ of foster care, a small part is better than no part at all. Please do not read this article and forget about it two minutes later as you rush to pick up the dry cleaning on your way home from work or start to prepare dinner for your family. You can make a difference! Don’t just sit there. Think about it...the youth ‘aging out’ of foster care need you!

¹ www.cwla.org

² www.charityguide.org

Looking for a good book to read? ... Pick up ‘Hope’s Boy’

“The haunting look on the cover of ‘*Hope’s Boy*’ tells the story that has been repeated far too many times in the child welfare system. ‘*Hope’s Boy*’ is a must read for any person that cares about the plight of the abused and neglected of our country.” *Tony Walker, MA, President and CEO, St. Anne’s*

‘*Hope’s Boy*’ is a true tale of the unbreakable bond of love between a mother and her son. Andrew Bridge, also known as Andy in the book, was taken to foster care after living for two years with his mother, Hope, who suffered from a mental illness that eventually consumed her life.

This memoir reveals insight into the fear and loneliness of a little boy who desperately wanted to belong and know that he was loved, yet struggled to secure his identify as he grew up separated from the one woman that no one could replace, his mother. Growing up with a harsh foster family that only tolerated his presence for a monthly stipend, Andrew longed for Hope to come rescue him.

Through all the obstacles stacked against him as a foster child with no ‘hope’ for his future, Andrew defied those odds and became an extremely rare success story of the foster care system. Andrew clung to the love his mother gave him and found strength in her love to persevere through life’s obstacles.

Andrew went on to attend Wesleyan University and Harvard Law School. As a lawyer, Andrew has devoted his life to fighting for the rights of children in foster care. As Executive Director of the Alliance for Children’s Rights, Andrew’s company won a lawsuit against Los Angeles county for its lack of oversight in foster children’s safety under the county’s care (www.hopesboy.com).

Many people do not consider the heartache foster children carry with them throughout their childhood. Thankfully, Andrew Bridge has given us a window into the thoughts and experiences of children separated from their loved ones. Reading this book, will open your eyes to the reality of foster care, and you will never look at foster care the same again.

*** Note—The content of this book may be unsuitable for young readers.**



The Investment of a Lifetime

By Pepper Wooten

In our economy today with the market as it is, the ups and downs, people are looking for a good investment. You may worry about losing what you have worked so hard for or be overjoyed when an investment is well placed and turns a profit.

I have been thinking.....

What would you consider an investment of a lifetime? Would it grow over time and mature into something of magnificent value? Would it outlive you? Would it bring you great delight and benefits all of your days? Would you labor for it and pour yourself into it if you knew one day it would return invaluable rewards to you and to your family? What if this investment had such value that it would define you and make your life meaningful? What if this investment might be difficult at first and bumpy along the way but multiply exceedingly as it matures? Would it be worth investing in? Would it be worth the time and attention in the beginning? Would it be worth your careful watching and making the necessary decisions to help it grow?

Adoption is the investment of a lifetime. It is your lifetime and the lifetime of a child who needs you. What is more valuable than your life or the life of a child? Invest your life by giving it. Give hope to a child who has no hope. Open your heart and life to the life and heart of a child. The results.....growth. Your life will be a wonderful adventure of giving and learning and loving a new person who might not even appreciate it at first. But, over time, as you invest in a life who has been searching for hope.....returns will come. They will return in a smile, maybe long in coming, but worth the wait. What is the value of the opportunity of a lifetime? Will you give a child opportunity? Will you give them hope? Will you open the door for them and give them a future?

And in return, what will you get? Most likely you will, over time and as they mature, get the rewards of seeing a life blossom. You will reap the sweet rewards of an invested life in doing something meaningful and God honoring. Your investments will take root and produce an oak tree from an acorn. You will see much fruit and there will be great joy in watching it grow.

Check out Embraced by Grace’s Cause on....



Have you checked out the Embraced by Grace Cause on Facebook yet? We now have a page devoted to the cause of raising adoption awareness and donations for Embraced by Grace.

2008’s Volunteer of the Year, Rebecca Hochstetler, is the creator of our page and keeps all the members up-to-date on membership recruitment and donations. Periodically, we offer prizes to those members who recruit the most people to our Cause within a set period of time. Amy Cobb received ‘*The Treasure Principle*’ as her prize for recruiting the most members in February. Congratulations, Amy! Keep up the good work!

As you browse the page, you will find a place to recruit your friends and family to join our Cause as well as a place to donate funds towards the work of Embraced by Grace.

Within the first month, we had 500 members join the Cause. We currently have 724 members and are looking for more people. Everyone one is invited to join our Cause on Facebook.....so check us out at www.facebook.com!

Who is the Person behind that Desk?



Emily Head is the Case Manager of Social Services at Embraced by Grace. The Lord has given Emily a burden for foster children as she desires to see them placed into homes where they will be loved and raised in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

Working to assist the adoptive couples, Emily conducts their home studies and oversees the process of adoption until the adoption is finalized in court. She periodically meets with adoptive parents to keep their files up-to-date.

An encourager at heart, Emily exhorts the adoptive parents to wait on the Lord for the child that God has sovereignly ordained for their family.

Emily also keeps our foster homes up-to-date and ready for foster children to be placed in a home until they are reunified with their biological parents or are placed in an adoptive home.

Emily received her Master of Social Work degree from Florida State University. She graduated from Flagler Palm Coast High School.

In her spare time, Emily enjoys spending time with her husband, Michael and two children. She is fun-loving and light-hearted and an absolute joy to work with. Emily is also a member of Riverbend Community Church.

