

LOUISVILLE ORPHAN CARE INITIATIVE

Issue 3, Fall 2009



**JOIN US AT THE ADOPTION SEMINAR!
[OCTOBER 10]**

Inside this newsletter...

About the Adoption Seminar - Page 1
Stepping Up Our Commitment - Page 2
Career Connect - Page 2
LOCI Prayer Focus - Page 3
LOCI's Website is getting a whole new look! - Page 4
Parent Unity.org - Page 4

Praise Reports!

Reaching Out - Page 4
Quarterly Event - Page 4
LAFS- Page 4
Shining Star Gallery - Page 5
Wait No More - Page 5
A 'Thank You' from TONIC - Page 5
Immanuel Baptist Church - Page 5

October-December '09 Events - Page 6
Who's Who in LOCI? - Page 7



Do you want to get involved with LOCI?

Call us!



Louisville Orphan Care Initiative
7608 Highway 146, Suite 300
Pe Wee Valley, KY 40056
(502)238-1093
info@louisvilleorphanicare.com

This seminar is geared to pre-adoptive couples who are just starting their adoption journey by gathering facts, and is led by adoptive parents who have experienced the journey first hand.

Lightning Ahlers shares his very moving testimony about time in war-torn Liberia and how God sent a wonderful couple to adopt him and his sister (plus three others). Lightning was almost reaching the age to be "adoptable" reminding us that adoption is not always about cute little babies but there are children all over the world like him hoping to be adopted and loved by a mom and dad.

The General Session is geared for all the attendees and includes the topics God's Heart for Orphans, Preparation for Adoptions, Adoption Support, Home Studies and Financial Assistance. On October 10, we will also hear from guest speaker, Joe Gerber, of Loving Shepherd Ministries.
www.loving-shepherd.com

After the General Session the couples are directed to breakout workshops to learn more about specific types of adoption; including Foster to Adopt, Domestic and International Adoption.

There has been a growing interest in Foster to Adopt and Domestic Adoption in the last several seminars. The cost and waiting times for many foreign countries discourages many families. Foster to Adopt is becoming much more accepted especially with the great training and financial stimulus provided by the State.

In past seminars, the experts in the Domestic Adoption workshop have been able to easily answer the questions of eager parent's-to-be. Couples learn the difference between closed, semi-open and open adoptions and many fears are dissipated.

[LOCI is looking to host this seminar in several churches across Louisville. If your church may be interested in hosting us, please contact Kris Zoeller at 245-8353 for details.]

LOCI - Stepping Up Our Commitment - Darren Washausen

Many of you familiar with LOCI may know that most of the opportunities to volunteer are periodic events. As we work to create a true Alliance of Christian churches in Louisville, the hope is that God will work among us to raise up volunteers to serve the orphans of our community in various ways on a continual weekly basis. It is our prayer that the representatives from each of the churches will work to communicate opportunities to serve to their congregations.

After a meeting with Kentucky CHFS in June there were a few different opportunities to serve at a higher level identified. We have had a follow up meeting regarding those opportunities on September 22nd. In particular, it is LOCI's desire to develop the following ministries to foster children.

1) Mentoring to Children aging out of foster care – CHFS currently provides some mentoring here, and it is our hope that we can supplement their program. We will be discussing that scope with them.

2) Mentoring and Support to Foster Teens with Children – These teen mothers and children are at high risk of being split up because of the difficulties of a foster family to keep the child and the baby. LOCI hopes to develop a program that supports this most difficult need.

3) Tutoring to early teens – This is a tutoring effort that we want to establish to help children stay on the right track early in their teens years. Success in school at this age, will surely help for success as they grow older.

4) LOCI resource store – This store would be a place to let the children who participate in the tutoring and mentoring program to shop. Coupons would be earned in the

programs that allow them to shop at the store.

The larger goal of these programs is to help these children get a good start into adulthood and not repeat the errors of their ancestors repeating the cycle of placing more children into the states care. We also hope that the above programs will be a feeder into the existing Career Connect program where we work to place teens into internship positions with workplace mentors.

We look forward to these programs developing and the support of the Christian community in making that possible.

Career Connect - Bruce Zoeller

The History

When Bruce Zoeller caught the vision of LOCI, he asked developer and visionary, Bob Mudd how he could get involved. Out of the combination of his willingness and area of expertise, Career Connect was formed.

What is Career Connect?

Career Connect, put simply, is an internship / mentorship program providing the opportunity for business-leaders to impart into the futures of Louisville's youth.

In more depth:

“Career Connect is an innovative partnership between Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.) and Louisville Orphan Care Initiative (LOCI), collaborating with the Department of Community Based Services. Y.O.U. Is funded by KentuckianaWorks and managed by Jefferson County Public Schools - Adult and Continuing Education.

“Career Connect’s goal is to match youth (ages 16-21) facing multiple barriers, such as lack of family support or positive role models, with caring supervisors in businesses that will provide paid mentoring internship positions.”

For the business-leader:

Career Connect can become a local mission-field of sorts, providing you with the opportunity to mentor and pour into the life of a disadvantaged youth, in a valuable and effective way.

For the youth:

By providing you an opportunity to become involved in the business realm, as well as to learn from respectable business-leaders, Career Connect can be a valid opportunity to learn, grow and launch into a successful business career.

Why Career Connect?

According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, over 24,000 youth “age out” of foster care each year.

Four years after “aging out” of foster care: (according to <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/agingout/index-hi.html>)

- Fewer than half of emancipated youth graduate from highschool
- Fewer than 1 in 8 graduate from a four year college
- 2/3 have not been able to maintain employment for a year
- More than a quarter of males have spent time in jail
- 4 out of 10 have become parents
- 3 out of 10 homeless persons have a history of being in foster care

These statistics are compelling, but how do we turn these numbers around?

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(...cont.) Career Connect

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This is where mentorship and internships through Career Connect come in. We believe that through the positive example, caring supervision and guidance of respectable business-leaders, these youth can be given a chance to not become one of the above statistics.

How does Career Connect work?

Career Connect is a connecting point for qualified, career-minded youth and the business-leader, through a paid internship position lasting a minimum of 2 months.

Upon contacting Career Connect and completing the employer interest form, the employer/supervisor will be introduced to mentoring workshops to help them better understand and deal with barriers the youth will be facing. They will then be matched with a qualified youth, who has also gone through an application and training process. Both applicants will be interviewed, and matched for a paid internship with a definition of hours, duties and terms of employment.

Prayer Points

- Career Connect as it continues to grow and develop.
- The individuals who are involved with this program.
- The youth in particular, as they learn, grow and benefit from the training available to them.
- Also, keep in prayer the challenge that Career Connect is currently facing, of recruiting interested youth, and encouraging them to participate in this beneficial program.

How can I get involved?

If you are interested in applying for a mentorship role through Career Connect, please contact:

Bruce Zoeller
(502) 419-8248

Bzoeller@TheChristianAdvantage.com

LOCI Prayer Focus - Bobbi DeZarn

Beginning in January 2010, LOCI would like to hold a monthly prayer gathering on the 2nd Sunday of each month preferably from 3:00-4:00PM. In an effort to cover the entire community, we would like to have it at a different church every month. This would allow those living closest to participate as well as members of that specific congregation. We will supply you with printed prayer guides that would include a time of praying specifically for your churches ministry.

Would you be willing to speak to your Pastor about hosting one Sunday for the year?

Please let us know just as soon as possible – months will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis and are as follows:

January 11	February 15
March 8	April 12
May 10	June 13
July 11	August 8
September 12	October 10
November 14	

I look forward to hearing from you!

Bobbi DeZarn

502.243.3597 / dezarn@hotmail.com

LOCI's website is getting a whole new look!

We at LOCI, would like to extend our most sincere thanks to 524Concepts (www.524concepts.com) for their contribution to the ministry! Through 524Concepts, LOCI will be upgrading to a website with higher functionality, regular updates and more information, by the end of December 2009.

Tom DeZarn will be in charge of the website's content. Thank you!

Join our LOCI group at ParentUnity.org

Come and join LOCI's group at Parent Unity! www.parentunity.org/group/louisvilleorphancareinitiative

Parent Unity is a new and upcoming social networking site (similar to the secular Facebook.com) for Christian parents to "learn from, grow with, and encourage one another."

We hope to see you there!



WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP!!

Over the past year LOCI has distributed thousands of diapers and touched just as many families through the neighborhood centers.

Our supply has significantly dwindled, to the point of perhaps having enough for one more delivery.

If you are interested in either buying a box of diapers and/or wipes or making a financial contribution to LOCI for these items, please contact the LOCI Hotline at (502) 238-1093.

All contributions are tax deductible.

Praise Report: How God has been using LOCI



Reaching Out

God is definitely at work in Louisville!

The LOCI network is growing in the number of churches interested in stirring congregations to God's command to help the fatherless. LOCI is currently speaking to 13 church leaders or lay people that represent these congregations.

The churches represented at this time are:

- Southeast Christian Church
- Northeast Christian Church
- LaGrange Baptist Church
- Emmanuel Baptist Church
- Highview Baptist Church
- Graceland Baptist Church (Indiana)
- Sojourn Church
- Grace Evangelical Free Church
- Kingdom Christian Church
- Trinity World Outreach
- Evangel Christian
- Eastside Christian Church (Indiana)
- Southern Seminary

May God bless and lead this ministry!



July 25th Quarterly Event

On July 25th, LOCI had its second foster family picnic this year. The main theme of the picnic was to be able to provide children with book bags for school complete with supplies. The weather wasn't completely cooperating and we were not able to have an inflatable for the kids. However, everyone had fun with 1000 water balloons, hitting golf balls, and playing corn hole.

The LOCI volunteers grilled up a great meal and everyone was able to eat before the rains hit. Despite the rain, we were able to handout 75 book bags and gave away \$50 gift certificates, bed comforters, and stuffed animals. A great time was had by all.



LAFS

Louisville Adoption & Foster Support

On September 12th, LOCI hosted their first LAFS Family Fun Night! What an amazing testimony to the adoptive community here in Louisville!

There were a total of 21 families - 86 people - attending, with 10 churches represented. There were about 3 families with no church home.

It was a nice evening; very low key, with the majority of the children having been internationally adopted. We hope next month we will have a number of foster families joining us from the greater Louisville area as well!

We are still in need of volunteers... If we do not have some more volunteers sign up to help with LAFS, it will be put on hold to re-evaluate for next year. We also are looking for any families who would open their home to a small group (for families) that would meet on the night of LAFS, as well as one other night of the month. Our desire is to connect people to each other in intimate ways while strengthening their walk with the Lord.

Our next LAFS will be October 10th from 6:00 to 9:00 pm.

[If you are interested in serving as a volunteer for LAFS, please contact Kathy Brooks at 254-7049]



Praise Report: How God has been using LOCI



The Shining Star Gallery

Shining Star Gallery

LOCI has been working with CHFS to place the Shining Star gallery in various venues. LOCI believes that the gallery is an effective tool to bring awareness of local orphans and provide opportunities to serve these children or even become a foster or adoptive family.

So far, LOCI has had the gallery placed at Immanuel Baptist Church,

and Grace Free Evangelical Church. Trinity World Outreach is scheduled to receive the gallery at the end of October into early November. Just recently LaGrange Baptist has expressed interest in scheduling it as well.

If you have an interest, please contact Darren Washausen at dlwashausen@insightbb.com or Stacia Washausen at srwash@insightbb.com, or

A 'Thank You' from TONIC

TONIC is a group of foster teens who have formed an advocate group to speak on behalf of foster children. They are an energetic young group who were recently taken on a retreat. In appreciation of their attitude, leadership, and participation, LOCI was able to provide an appreciation gift to the teens for their efforts. Below is a reply of appreciation from CHFS:

Thanks everyone. I know this effort to put together a retreat for the TONIC group ~with all the other duties you have was not easy. I know the youth at TONIC appreciate your efforts. I talked to several of them and the excitement they expressed was priceless. This is not to mention how resource parents of teens must feel supported and that we are their partner in providing instruction for these youth.

Wait No More

LOCI is still working to partner with Focus on the Family and bring Wait No More to Louisville. This program will likely be a statewide marketing blitz to raise up Christian families to adopt local orphans hosted here in Louisville. An application has been submitted but a firm schedule has not been set for 2010. LOCI is also working to identify a facility and a lead pastor for the event.

When a person does something for another person with no payment or promise of great reward involved it means so much more to the recipient of this gift. You all were and are a blessing to the youth that are placed in foster care.

Truly these children know that there are others out there that care about who they are and who they become.

Thanks LOCI for the gifts that brought so many smiles!! You're the BEST!!!!

- CHFS

Immanuel Baptist Church (Orphan Care Ministry)

Immanuel Baptist's orphan ministry began just a few short months ago in the sunny month of July 2009. We had a three-week Adoption series, which included hearing the Word of God proclaimed with much power by Dr. Russell Moore and Immanuel pastors, Ben Hedrick and Jeff King. We ended the adoption series by hosting an "Adoption Luncheon" where we had information booths set up for International & Domestic Adoption, Foster to Adopt, Voice for the Unborn and LOCI. We had a panel of Immanuel families representing each mode of adoption, who led a question and answer time. Through surveying our congregation we found that we had 31 people that wanted to definitely adopt, and 8 people who said that they might want to adopt one day, as well as dozens upon dozens of people who expressed an interest in caring for the orphan in a myriad of other ways. Praise the Lord!

Lift up your voices in praise to our God who works in ways we never could have imagined. For He has been doing an awe-inspiring work in the hearts and lives of the members of Immanuel Baptist concerning the plight of the orphan. God has truly been stirring the hearts in our congregation. Not only did we see this to be true in the months of July, but also in the months following.

Since the month of July we have had several families begin the adoption process; we had the Riddle family bring home 2 beautiful babies from Ethiopia;

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we have had lives of numerous babies saved through God using the tireless efforts of those involved in our Speak for the Unborn ministry; the Alexis Kids Closet was formed to minister to the needs of our adopting and fostering families; and we have had the privilege to serve other church bodies with the work that we have done as they begin to form orphan ministries of their own. God truly has been doing awe-inspiring things for the cause of the orphan through his servants at Immanuel. All praise is truly due to our great God. Praise Him. Praise Him. Praise Him!! - Casey Cashell

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER

Together for Adoption Conference 2009

October 2-3 / Christ Community Church, Franklin, TN - For more information visit www.TogetherForAdoption.org

International Adoption Playgroup

Every Friday / See "Recurring Events" below for more information

Adoption Seminar

Saturday, October 10th / 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. / Southeast Christian Church

Christians interested in expanding their family through adoption are invited to The Adoption Seminar. The General Session will include: Pre-adoption education, financial assistance awareness, Empty Bedrooms video, and adoptive support. Workshops representing various adoption options will include Foster-to-Adopt, Domestic and International adoptions.

To register: call (502) 253-8446 to have a registration form mailed to you. Registrations and fees (\$10 per person) should be mailed to Southeast Christian Church, Attn: Parenting Groups 920 Blankenbaker Parkway, Louisville, KY 40243. Although walk-ups are welcome, we can best plan your day if you will have your registration back to us one week prior to the seminar. For additional information, contact Peggy Henderson at (502) 253-8446 or at phenderson@secc.org.

LAFS - Louisville Adoption and Foster Support

October 10th / See "Recurring Events" below for more information

Community Yard Sale!

October 9th and 10th / Washausen Home LOCI will be hosting a fund raising yard sale on October 9 and 10 in Lake Forest during the Lake Forest Community Yard Sale at the home of Darren & Stacia Washausen located at 14701 Isleworth Court.

This yard sale will serve two purposes. First, families needing to raise money for their adoptions are welcome to join in. Second, LOCI will be selling items to raise money for the local fund to help fund the projects that they are involved in.

If you know of any families who would like to be a part of this fundraiser or **if you would like to donate items for LOCI to have in the yard sale, items will gladly be accepted from now until October 9th.** Volunteers are also needed to help at the sale...so if you are interested in participating in any way, please send an email to Lisa Twyman at twymanm@bellsouth.net or you may call her at 964-8759.

Indoor Corn-hole Tournament and Adoption Fundraiser

October 24th / 6PM til ? / Buckson Family Life Center All proceeds will help us fund the LifeSong Adoption fund of Trinity World Outreach Center. This fund will help Christian adoptions by coming alongside a family, helping them with their fundraising for adoption through matching grants and interest-free loans. Each \$20 per person ticket, includes a meal plus at least 2 games of corn hole. Tickets can be purchased by contacting Kevin or Susan Mercer 502-495-9105 adoptions@trinitywoc.org

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER

November 8th is Orphan Sunday!

If you or your church would be interested in hosting an Orphan Sunday event, go to www.orphansunday.org for ideas and available resources.

International Adoption Playgroup

Every Friday / See "Recurring Events" below for more information

LAFS - Louisville Adoption and Foster Support

November 14th, December 12th / [See "Reoccurring Events" below for more information]

REOCCURRING EVENTS

International Adoption Playgroup

Every Friday / 11:45 - 1:00 / Noah's Ark at the Sports and Fitness Center on SECC campus This is a closed session, open only to the playgroup, so it is a safe, fun, supportive time to gather information and form lasting friendship and bonds. Please feel free to pack a lunch and eat downstairs in the snack room before or after play group. No food is allowed in Noah's Ark. This is open to all families who have adopted internationally and their children are birth to 6 years of age (siblings always welcome) or to anyone interested in adoption. Call Kathy Brooks for details 254-7049.

LAFS - Louisville Adoption and Foster Support

Every 2nd Saturday, / 6 - 9 PM / Sports and Fitness Center on SECC campus

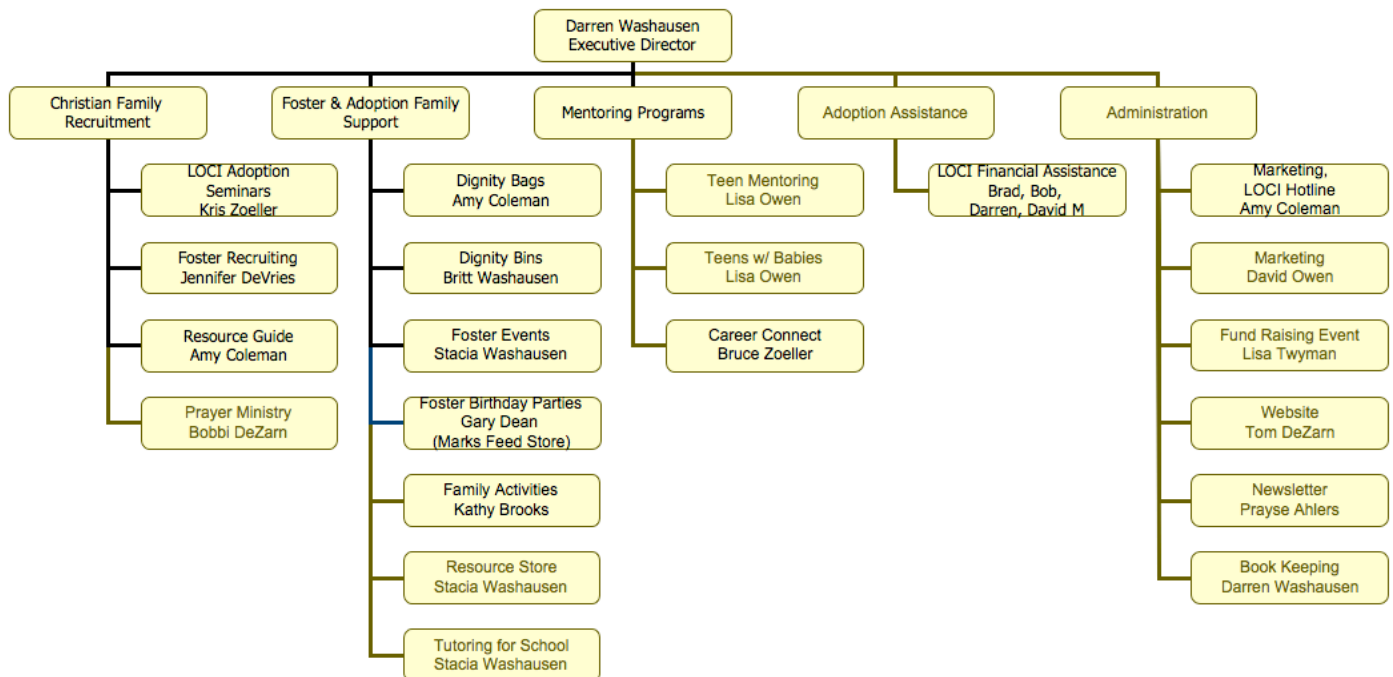
Bring your own picnic dinner and join the fun! This is open to all families who have adopted, foster or foster to adopt. We'll have games and fellowship for the whole family. For information call Kathy Brooks 254-7049

Who's Who In LOCI?

Below is a loose description of the LOCI organization and the key people leading various efforts. We will announce volunteer opportunities through newsletters and email distribution. In the mean-time, if you have an interest in volunteering for LOCI, please call the LOCI Hotline at (502) 238-1093 with your interest, or contact one of the key people listed below.



LOCI Organization



WE NEED YOUR HELP!!

As many of you may know, LOCI has been blessed with an international adoption fund that we use for matching grants or loans to Christian families interested in adoption. However, these funds have a narrow application and when it comes to funding our various activities for the local foster and adoption support, LOCI really has no funds.

LOCI is officially registered as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. We are able to accept donations of goods and monetary donations. We also have receipts to give those who donate for their tax records if they wish to receive them. If you are interested in making financial donations to the international adoption or local foster care initiatives or donating goods to the local foster community, please call the LOCI Hotline at (502) 238-1093.