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News & Media

Foster-parent recruitment drive going online

Port Saint Lucie – Devereux Community Based Care is giving e-recruitment a try in its ongoing pursuit of more foster homes.

Foster home recruitment went online earlier this month with the first of a yearlong series of social media ads designed to drive interested Facebookers to a website landing page of information and upcoming classes.

The ad has reached 13,363 people in Martin and St. Lucie counties. Nearly 300 of those residents took the critical step to click through the ad and visit the website for additional information, including registration links to upcoming foster-parent training classes.

"This is a new approach for us, so we're just watching the ad now and waiting to see how those 300 clicks translate into class attendance," said Christina Kaiser, director of community relations for Devereux Community Based Care.

The nonprofit organization coordinates and oversees the child-welfare system in Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and St. Lucie counties.

There are about 140 foster homes in the four-county area, where about 1,000 children and their families receive services. Of that number, about 250 children are living in foster homes or group homes.

"We have many children in group care who should be in foster homes," Kaiser said. "We want to see group care used only for those children who need it - and that requires more foster homes."

The organization's online recruitment campaign is part of a larger project gradually being rolled out called One School, One Child. The project is a peer-to-peer recruitment drive that uses school employees who are also licensed foster parents to recruit from their schools.

Campaign organizers will spend much of the spring scheduling presentations at local schools.

The official kickoff of the campaign is May 16 at Jensen Beach High School. If you work at a school and would like to have a One School, One Child presentation, please contact christina.kaiser@devereuxcbc.org.

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