

# Devereux

COMMUNITY BASED CARE OF OKEECHOBEE & THE TREASURE COAST

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## News & Media

### Campaign to focus on recruitment of teen foster homes

*"Currently, only one teenager is living in a foster home locally," said Jeandel Georges, Devereux CBC placement supervisor. The rest are in group care or in foster homes outside of the area.*

**Port St. Lucie** - Devereux Community Based Care of Okeechobee and the Treasure Coast made up 20 percent of the new foster homes licensed in Florida during the past 12 months. But few of those homes are available for teenagers.

"We had a tremendous year in foster-home recruitment, but we still have a long way to go - especially when it comes to licensing homes for teenagers," said Christina Kaiser, Devereux CBC community relations director.

Of the more than 200 children in licensed foster care, 67 - or about 34 percent - are teenagers. However, less than 2 percent of the 126 local foster homes are licensed to take teens.

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For that reason, the 25 by 25 campaign - the public relations campaign started last spring to help recruit and license at least 25 new homes by December 25 - will now focus more on teens.

"We can do that by adopting elements of a similar campaign launched earlier this summer by the Department of Children and Families and the Quality Parenting Initiative," Kaiser said.

One of those elements is a David Letterman-type Top 10 list of reasons to foster or adopt teens:

10. We're tech savvy9. We want to learn from you8. We can help you with chores7. No bottles required6. No carpools, we can drive!5. We keep you up on the latest fashions4. You get a child and a friend3. We'll move out sooner, but come back to visit2. We sleep through the night1. No diapers to change!

Devereux CBC will also give financial "bonuses" to its child-placing agencies when they successfully license new homes for teen placements.

"We're dedicated to seeing improvements for our older children in care, and so are the agencies we work with," said Kaiser, referring to Camelot Community Care, 4KIDS of South Florida and Place of Hope - all child-placing agencies contracted by Devereux CBC to recruit, train and license foster homes.

For information about becoming a foster parent, visit [www.fostercare.devereuxcbc.org](http://www.fostercare.devereuxcbc.org) or call (772) 226-6235.

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