

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Families United Network, Inc. Raising Awareness of National Foster Care Month**

Monroeville, PA, April 26, 2010 – May is National Foster Care Awareness Month. Almost 20,000 Pennsylvania children are in foster care according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services\*. Families United Network, Inc., a private, non-profit foster care and adoption agency, strives to raise awareness of the need for foster families with a variety of outreach activities this month. Events are also planned to recognize the dedicated individuals currently providing foster care.

“We are constantly looking for families across the state, who will be a good match for children needing temporary foster care,” said Families United Network’s Executive Director, Leo McLaughlin. Children in foster care come from urban, rural and suburban areas. The goal of the agency is to identify the most suitable environment for the child or sibling group. “If we are not able to place the child with family or someone already familiar to them, we do our very best to keep the child in their home school district. For that reason we have five foster care offices across the state dedicated to training and supporting foster families,” said McLaughlin.

Johanna Belako, Program Supervisor of the Western PA Office in Monroeville has good reason to celebrate: “We have 72 families that have opened their homes to children in Allegheny, Westmoreland and the surrounding counties. We also enjoy a good working relationship with our area Children and Youth agencies.” Belako went on to stress the need for stable homes and families who can offer a kind and nurturing environment especially for teenagers and said, “We are grateful for our families diligence in working not only with the children, but also with their birth families.” To learn more about fostering children and see which office is closest to you, visit [www.families4kids.org](http://www.families4kids.org) or call the Western Office of Families United Network directly at 412-373-2355.

\* “Foster Care FY 2002—FY 2008 Entries, Exits and Numbers of Children in Care on the Last Day of Each Federal Fiscal Year.” U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children & Families.

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**About Our Agency**—Families United Network, Inc. is a leader in child welfare services. The agency provides quality foster care and adoption services, domestically and internationally. The agency also operates Community Residential Care/Life Readiness programs to prepare adolescent boys and girls as they age-out of the child welfare system. A non-profit, social service agency, founded in 1995; Families United Network is among a select group of social service organizations in the nation that is accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA). COA is an international accreditation that requires agencies to demonstrate rigorous standards in quality of services and management.

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Professional Affiliations and Accreditations:

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[www.families4kids.org](http://www.families4kids.org)