

Media Release

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Youthville Celebrates Foster Care Month

(Wichita, Kan., May 1, 2009) – All children deserve a safe, happy life — including the nearly 500,000 American children and youth in foster care. Young people in foster care especially need nurturing adults on their side because their own families are in crisis and unable to care for them.

Each May, Youthville salutes the compassionate people who make a difference by serving as foster parents, relative caregivers, mentors, advocates, social workers, and volunteers. Thanks to these unsung heroes, many formerly abused or neglected children and teens will either safely reunite with their parents, be cared for by relatives, or be adopted by loving families.

Today, Youthville cares for approximately 1,440 foster care children total and 865 foster care children in Sedgwick County. Since the inception of privatization by SRS in 1996, Youthville has cared for 7,401 foster care children.

Children and youth in foster care are capable of overcoming the repercussions of previous neglect and/or abuse. Those aging out of the system can become successful, productive adults when provided with educational opportunities, career training and emotional support.

No matter their age, all youth in foster care need a meaningful connection to a caring adult who becomes a supportive and lasting presence in their lives. Without families or stable relationships, too many of these formerly neglected and/or abused children and teens will end up facing life's challenges all alone.

Youthville's vision is to provide the best sources of help to children who have been abused, abandoned, or neglected with its mission of **Giving Children Back Their Childhood**. Over 3,000 children are cared for annually by Youthville. To learn more or to get involved with Youthville visit www.youthville.org.

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