



Jim Doyle
Governor

Reggie Bicha
Secretary

Cyrus Behroozi
Administrator

State of Wisconsin

**Department of Children and Families
Division of Safety and Permanence**

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Date: April 15, 2009

To: County Directors
County Foster Care Coordinators
Directors, Child Placing Agencies
Tribal Indian Child Welfare Directors

From: Cyrus Behroozi
Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cyrus Behroozi".

Subject: Foster Care Month

May has long been celebrated as Foster Care Month throughout Wisconsin and the country. This year we encourage you to celebrate and recognize foster families who continue to show their dedication to children and families. Each time I meet with foster families in Wisconsin, I am reminded of the sacrifices that families make and the compassion families share with the children entrusted to them by child welfare agencies.

While the current budget situation creates challenges at the state and local level, supporting foster parents is a high priority. To provide the foster care program with opportunities for growth and improvement, Governor Jim Doyle's proposed budget for the next biennium includes the following proposals:

- A 5 percent increase to the Uniform Foster Care Basic Rate for foster parents in 2010 and in 2011. The budget also includes a 50% increase to the one time clothing allowance provided to foster parents.
- Implementation of a Levels of Care licensing structure for the foster care program that better aligns the needs of children with foster care services and the skills of foster parents.
- Funding to implement a statewide foster parent training program as recommended by the Foster Parent Training Committee.
- Funding over the biennium for a statewide foster care public information campaign for recruitment activities to increase the supply of foster care families.

In honor of Foster Care Month, the Department will be sponsoring the second annual Foster Care Award Ceremony. Governor Jim Doyle will be highlighting the contributions of foster parents and foster care alumni through the Governor's Foster Care Awards. The Department of Children and Families will host an event to distribute these awards honoring foster parents who have made a difference in our foster care program. The Governor will also be signing the Proclamation, declaring May as Foster Care Month. Please see the attached request for nominations.

Governor Doyle will again be sending out letters of appreciation to all foster parents recognizing their service and commitment to children in foster care. Included with the letter from the Governor will be the new brochure from the Foster Care and Adoption Resource Center. This statewide distribution will give all foster parents information about this important resource available to support their work. We are working with your agency and our Area Administration staff to distribute the letters and obtain current mailing labels for all licensed foster parents. If you have any questions about the mailing, please contact your Area Administration Office.

In addition, on our foster care website (<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/children/foster>), we have included useful resources to help you celebrate Foster Care Month in your community. We will post the Governor's letter to foster families, the proclamation of May as Foster Care Month, and a press release announcing May as Foster Care Month. There is also a link to the national website for Foster Care Month where you can post what you are doing in your community, collect ideas from across the nation on activities for the month, and access pins/ribbons for Foster Care Month celebrations in your community. For more information on how the Foster Care and Adoption Resource Center can assist you, visit their website at: www.wifostercareandadoption.org or contact them at 1-800-947-8074.

Thank you for your commitment to recruiting, training, and supporting foster families across Wisconsin. The work you provide supports the success of children living in foster care today and tomorrow.

Attachment