



## 2nd Quarter 2013 Newsletter

*The Salvador Foundation is committed to serving God by bringing together people from all walks of life for the common cause of helping our fellow man. We, as the body of Christ, have a responsibility to care for those in need. By helping and enabling people one project at a time, our goal is to share encouragement, hope and faith.*



There are approximately 500,000 children within the American foster care system. They enter into foster care for many reasons:

1. **Not being safe at home because of physical, emotional or sexual abuse to the child or the siblings**

2. **Neglect of basic needs**
3. **Parental mental illness or alcohol/drug abuse that prohibits care or safety**
4. **Parental incarceration**

The Foster Care system is able to provide many of the basic needs — the “tangibles” — for the children and their Foster Parents. However, it takes more than just the basics for youngsters struggling to overcome their traumatic beginnings. For the youth who aren’t returned home or adopted by the age of 18, they are discharged from the foster care system. Economic security for them is fragile. Becoming a productive adult is an uphill climb. The statistics bear witness to these challenges. Within 2 years of “aging out” of the system:

1. **50% will be unemployed; the remainder are underemployed**
2. **50% face homelessness**
3. **Girls are at 5 times the risk for getting pregnant than other girls their age.**

4. **It's estimated half the prison population and 1/3 of the chronically homeless are former foster children.**

Foster parents open their hearts and their homes to offer love and nurturing to these children to change these statistics – but the job is often more than what one family can manage.

The Salvador Foundation is supporting a non-profit organization called “Fostering Hope” to address some of the “intangible” needs of Foster families.

At Fostering Hope, a team of volunteers from a faith community is brought together as a substitute “extended family” to assist and support foster parents in their task of caring for foster children. They take their lead from the foster parents and are carefully trained to support – and not judge – the foster parents. They help with a number of tasks: transportation, tutoring, laundry, meals, outings, parties – even giving parents a night out every now and then. They befriend the foster parents, giving them a safe outlet to be themselves and a chance to feel less isolated.

With trust on both sides, the relationship grows and the children in foster care see and feel differences of calm, stability and nurturing within the household. They see adults modeling caring behavior with each other, something they may not have seen in their families of origin.



## The Process

Fostering Hope has combined the resources of volunteers from the faith community with the professional staffing within the Fostering Hope organization. They work together through the following steps to ensure that foster families are supported and get what they need to do their job well:

1. Solicit volunteers from churches and other faith communities.
2. Hold an informational meeting about Fostering Hope and its mission.
3. Train the team, with the help of professionals.
4. Screen prospective volunteers for safety concerns.
5. Hold a team commitment session, to commit volunteers with a foster family for at least one year.
6. Introduce the volunteers to the foster parents, and then to the children within the home.
7. Hold monthly meetings of the team and foster parents.

8. Facilitate the process of relationship building between the volunteers and the foster family and monitor the progress towards the goals of stability, enrichment, and community connections.

The Salvador Foundation is currently supporting efforts in the US and Latin America. If you would like further information on this or any other activities, please contact:

**The Salvador Foundation**

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