



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## FOSTER & ADOPTIVE FAMILIES NEEDED IN ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY, SUSSEX COUNTY AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

### Consider Becoming a Foster or Adoptive Parent—Attend a Free, No-obligation Information Session

**Norfolk, VA, February 21, 2014** — According to the Virginia Department of Social Services, more than 4,000 Virginia youths are in foster care and nearly 1,000 children are in Hampton Roads and the surrounding Isle of Wight and Sussex counties. To help combat this issue, [The Up Center](#), the region’s oldest and largest family services agency, is reaching out to individuals or couples considering foster care or adoption with a **free, no obligation information session on Saturday, March 22, 12-1:30 p.m. at Virginia Diner, 408 County Drive in Wakefield**. Adults age 25 and older are invited to attend, and will receive a complimentary lunch. Interested couples are recommended to attend the information session together.

Representatives will provide an overview of the foster care and adoption process and will be on hand to answer questions. Registration is required by March 20, 2014. Call (757) 965-8649 or email [heather.watkins@theupcenter.org](mailto:heather.watkins@theupcenter.org). If you are married, both the husband and wife should attend. Foster parents don’t have to be married, own a home, have kids of their own, be a stay-at-home parent, have a college degree or be wealthy to foster or adopt a child.

“We rely on caring, committed foster and adoptive parents to provide stability for children that have been abused or neglected,” says Shonya Anderson, recruitment specialist with The Up Center. “Youth in foster care need the support of a nurturing family to protect them and help them maximize their fullest potential. The number of children in foster care waiting to be adopted currently surpasses the number of available adoptive homes. We have the greatest need for families willing to provide safe, loving homes to youth between the ages of 10 and 16 and sibling groups.”

### ***About The Up Center***

*The Up Center, headquartered in Norfolk, Va., is the region’s oldest and largest non-profit social services agency dedicated to helping people live better lives. Since its founding in 1883, the agency has responded to the needs of our community’s most vulnerable citizens by providing comprehensive, effective and innovative services in four core areas: Protecting our children, Strengthening families, Empowering people in crisis and Maximizing independence for those with disabilities. The Up Center has seven locations throughout Hampton Roads and serves over 10,000 people each year. For more information, visit [www.theupcenter.org](http://www.theupcenter.org) or call 757-622-7017.*

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