

# They fight child abuse by training parents

By Margaret Neubacher  
staff writer

"Parenting is a very difficult job, one we're all thrown into with little or no training," said Ruth Turner, parent education coordinator for Family Focus.

The Birmingham-based child abuse prevention and intervention agency spends the bulk of its time working with parents.

"Once parents learn some family life skills, they can be more responsible and less prone to crisis, said founder-director Dee Duse.

Turner and Duse oversee Family Focus, which will move into a new center in downtown Pontiac later this month.

We will keep our offices at Redeemer Lutheran Church at 1800 W. Maple Road," said Turner, "but will move our supplies and the most of the family education classes to Pontiac [Pontiac] since we've been offered at the YMCA, at Wildwood Park [Wildwood]."

Family Focus was founded 13 years ago on the premise that there isn't adequate help for parents.

The non-profit agency started with only a consciousness-raising pitch they gave to anyone who would listen.

Today it provides a variety of services that have helped some 38,000 families in Oakland County, according to Duse.

"We see parents from all economic classes," Duse said. "We see an extreme range of problems as well — everything from neglect to parents who expect too much from their children."

Parent education has grown in popularity over the past five years," Turner said. "Many middle class, average parents are seeking reaffirmation of their parenting skills. About 60 percent of the parents we see are not abusive. They have simply said, 'OK, I know this is a hard job. What can I do to be a better parent?'"

THROUGH ITS work, Family Focus has become well known in Oakland County's courts. County judges have ordered many parents to attend Family Focus family education classes.

**ROLEX**  
AUTHORIZED  
ROLEX  
SALES  
AND  
SERVICE

**GREENSTONE'S**  
Creators of fine jewelry  
for over 55 years.  
528 N. Woodward Ave.,  
Birmingham, Mich. 48011  
(313) 642-2650  
Monday-Saturday, 10:00-5:30  
Major Credit Cards

**French**  
With Alliance  
Française  
de Detroit  
at Bloomfield  
University  
School  
5003 West Maple Road  
10-class term, after & even  
beginning Jan. 18  
\$40-310 for bimonthly  
CLASSES FOR  
CHILDREN  
SCHOOL  
10-classes term begin  
Saturday, Jan. 21  
class \$40-310

**CASH For JEWELRY**  
Cash paid for your diamonds,  
gold, or fine jewelry!  
All sales in strict confidence

**Fredrick**  
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY  
689 West Long Lake Road  
at Telegraph  
646-0973

**Dale Boot**  
Do Your Ski  
Boots HURT?  
Ours Won't...  
We guarantee comfort-money back-no strings!  
Reasonable Prices!  
683-6145

**INTRODUCING**  
*"Abby and Lisa"*  
Premier  
Mother's Day Annual  
by EDNA HIBEL  
ONLY  
\$29.50  
1981 Edition  
Dollars Edition  
Date by Shirley Chon  
Art by Dee Duse  
Music by Edna Hibel  
Our allotment is very limited. Hurry.  
LENORE CRAWFORD'S  
The  
*Plate Lady*  
16347 MIDDLEBELT  
LIVONIA  
(Between 5 & 6 Mile)  
New Hours: M-T-W-T 10-4  
F-S 10-8  
261-5220

"They try to heal families and refer many of them to us for help," said Duse, a grandmother four times.

Last fall the Oakland probate judges, in a letter to the state DSS, endorsed Family Focus and its proposal for a new center. Similar letters of support were also written by the Oakland County Community Mental Health Services, a caseworker for the county juvenile court, and a local psychologist. All have worked closely with the agency.

Family Focus also provides the services of a group of credentialed professionals called family aids. They meet and work with families in their home.

ANOTHER Family Focus service is the parent response phone, which provides an instant source of information and support for parents.

"We get calls from abusers, those afraid of abusing and those who suspect a neighbor of abusing. We answer questions and make a lot of referrals. Any one who answers this line has had at least 25 hours of training by social workers, communication specialists and child development specialists," Turner said.

To get the new center in Pontiac under way, Family Focus is looking to raise about \$10,000, said Duse. The agency has received \$3,000 in donations from such groups as the Junior League of Birmingham, the Troy Junior Women's Club and Church Women United. Another \$3,000 of gifts have been in-kind services, furniture, curtains and paint.

The agency is hoping to receive some money from the state's Child Abuse Trial Fund this year. The fund, established by the legislature almost two years ago, receives funds from a \$2 check-off box

Thursday, January 12, 1984 O&E

(T, Ro-7B, F-13G)(O)11A

on Michigan personal income tax forms. The fund helps private and non-profit agencies which work to strengthen families.

"Fortunately the fund has received only a small amount of money," Turner said.

Money is needed to get the primary program in place at the new center in Pontiac. The agency's plans are to establish what it calls a Parent-Child Center in Pontiac. There it will furnish child care for parents who are attending meetings and classes as well as provide information and referrals.

Last year in Oakland County there were 2,981 reported incidents of child abuse and neglect.

The agency also needs money for such things as educational games and supplies, equipment for infants and toddlers' room, trained child care workers, and office supplies, Duse said.

And still there are plans for expanding the program, if possible.



## OUR NEW IRA PROGRAM GIVES YOU A HANDLE ON MORE THAN INTEREST RATES.

At First of America, our new IRAs offer you investment options with a full range of maturities, from three months to 5 years. That gives you more control over changing interest rates. And helps your IRA earn more money. But that's just the beginning.

Start an IRA with our low minimum deposit.

Another reason to start your IRA at First of America is our low minimum deposit requirement. And you can open an IRA at First of America even if you already have a retirement plan where you work.

It's easy to save for your retirement with an IRA. Because you never pay taxes on your

principal or interest until you retire and withdraw from your account. By then, you'll probably be in a much lower tax bracket.

Each year, the money you put into your IRA is deductible from your taxable income. Currently, you can deduct up to \$2,000 per year if you file individually, and up to \$2,250 if you file a joint return with a non-working spouse who also has an IRA.

What's more, your IRA at First of America gives you the protection of FDIC insurance. So your IRA is safe and secure, insured up to \$100,000 per depositor.

With more than 200 convenience, full service offices across Michigan, First of America offers you a variety of flexible IRA investment options at competitive rates.

And that's a great way to save for your retirement and shelter funds from taxes, year after year.

Get our line on a great retirement.

For more information on IRAs, drop by or call your nearby First of America bank.

When we work together, our new IRA program gives you a handle on more than interest rates. It gives you our line on a great retirement.

Substantial interest penalty is required for early withdrawal.

**FIRST OF AMERICA**  
WORKING TOGETHER TO BE FIRST.

Members FDIC.