

Foster homes for teens needed

By Suzie Rollins Ginger
staff writer

Compassionate Oakland County families willing to open their homes to abused and neglected teenagers are desperately needed.

"We have a real difficulty placing teenagers," said Kevin McMacken, foster care licensing worker in Oakland Probate Court.

"We have several empty (foster) homes in Oakland County, but they only want preschoolers or infants," McMacken said.

"Teenagers usually have behavioral problems, and people aren't that receptive to them," he added.

ABOUT 20 youths are presently awaiting placement, McMacken noted. During 1981 approximately 50 teens were placed in the county's 148 licensed homes. The remainder were young children.

Foster care is short-term placement, usually no longer than six months.

"After that, the child is usually reunited with the natural family," he said.

During the period that youths are in foster homes, they are wards of the court.

"The court is responsible for the child at all times. We're the legal guardians. By placing them

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in foster homes, we're giving them temporary, physical custody," he added.

MANY YEARS ago, foster children would remain in state licensed homes for years on end. But because so many "got lost in the system," the six month maximum stay was imposed by the court.

"The court and the state feel that if you have a child for a long period of time, then you should adopt him. So we make every effort to get counseling for the natural parents before reuniting the children with them," McMacken said.

Foster parents are paid \$54 per week for teens 13 and older. All their medical and dental expenses are paid by Medicaid, and they may go to any den-

tist or doctor in Oakland County who subscribes to the state-supported system.

"We have a program for clothing that is based on need. When a child comes in, we take an inventory of his clothing, then give a check to the family. They can shop wherever they choose," he said.

TO QUALIFY for a state foster care license, the family must consist of both a husband and wife, be married for at least one year and have a stable, happy marriage. They need not have children of their own.

After a couple submits its application, a licensing representative interviews them, requests a complete medical history on both husband and wife, and checks their police records and state child abuse files. Three reference letters also are required, he said.

Once the teenager is placed in a foster home, a full-time caseworker is assigned to the family. The caseworker meets regularly with the family, dealing with any problems as soon as they arise. Psychological clinics also are provided for the teenagers, McMacken said.

"If a couple does have their own children, we stress that they be very receptive to the newcomer. If they have teenagers, it is ideal if they each have a bedroom of their own, but it's not necessary," he added.

OCC has new transfer pacts

Oakland Community College has established "articulation" agreements with the University of Michigan-Dearborn and the University of Detroit.

"We are pleased that the University of Michigan and the University of Detroit are willing to accept our credits. Students who may not have the opportunity to continue their studies may now go on," said Robert Reelofs, OCC president, in making the announcement.

These agreements will enable OCC students who have completed associate degree requirements in specific areas to transfer credits to UM-D and U-D and continue their studies toward a bachelor's degree without loss of credit.

OCC STUDENTS who earn an associate degree in applied science in one of more than 60 specified career programs — including alternate energy, communication arts, data processing and health care administration — may transfer into the baccalaureate degree program in general studies at UM-D.

All credits up to a maximum of 62

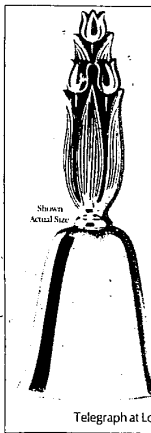
credits will be accepted.

The program is designed so that students who do not deviate from the program guide can complete bachelor degree requirements within the same time frame as students who begin their studies at the UM-D.

STUDENTS who follow the engineering or respiratory therapy curriculum plan established by OCC and the U-D will be entitled to enter the third year of U-D's baccalaureate program.

OCC engineering graduates may transfer all courses up to the maximum required in the U-D engineering program.

Students who have received associate degrees in respiratory therapy from OCC may transfer a total of 71 semester credits. Prior to graduation from U-D, respiratory therapy students must successfully pass the registry examination established by the National Board of Respiratory Therapy or complete 120 clinical hours at Henry Ford Hospital.



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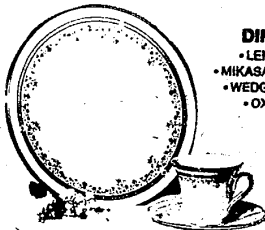
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