

Focus on the Family, *Colorado Springs Independent* join forces to celebrate and support foster children and their families

Event to be held Saturday, June 11 at Colorado College

Colorado Springs, Colo. -- The *Colorado Springs Independent* and Focus on the Family are teaming up June 11 to celebrate and support area children in foster care and their families.

The free event will be from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Cornerstone Arts Center at Colorado College, 825 N. Cascade Ave. Focus on the Family President Jim Daly, a former foster child himself, will be the keynote speaker; *Independent* Publisher John Weiss will be the master of ceremonies.

"More than a few people around the Springs may be scratching their heads at this partnership, since Focus and the *Indy* don't exactly see eye-to-eye on the issues," Daly said. "But one thing John and I agree on wholeheartedly is what heroes foster families are and how important it is for the community to rally around them."

Weiss agreed.

"Our goal in teaming up with Focus is to bring community attention to the spiritual rewards local families get when they take in a foster child for a month or a year while their parent or parents get their acts together," he explained. "We also want to showcase the support healthy families can get from local nonprofits if they are willing to permanently adopt hard-to-place kids – often those over 4 or 5 years of age and/or those with special mental or physical needs."

The event is designed to inspire local nonprofits and churches wanting to help improve the lives of children in foster care, educate potential long- or short-term foster families and encourage current foster parents. In addition to Daly's personal story, the event will feature workshops for current and potential foster families as well an informational expo. Foster parents who attend will get what Weiss described as "gratitude bags" filled with gifts from *Independent* advertisers.

The ultimate goal, Daly and Weiss said, is to improve foster care in the Pikes Peak region.

"I was one of these kids," Daly said. "So I know firsthand how important a stable, loving home environment is to them. John doesn't share my personal story, but he shares my passion for improving the lives of these children and their families – and we're thrilled he's pledged the resources and reach of the *Independent* to raise awareness of how the community can help do just that."

"In the months and years ahead," Weiss added, "the *Independent* anticipates working with Jim and his team at Focus as well as other religious and secular

groups to improve our community. We loudly applaud the great work of Focus and other local non-profits to improve the lives of foster kids -- especially Vanguard Church, Woodman Valley Chapel, New Life Church, CASA and Fostering Hope.

“To paraphrase the great AcademyAward winning film *Casablanca*, ‘this is the start of a great friendship.’ ”

For more information about the event, contact Claire@csindy.com, call 719-577-4545 or visit: www.fostercelebration.org.

For businesses wanting to donate to the Gratitude Gift Bags, contact jack@csindy.com , or call 719-577-4545

To schedule an interview with Daly or Weiss, call Carrie Kintz at 719-531-3312.

About Focus on the Family

Reaching more than 220 million people in 155 nations, Focus on the Family is a Christian nonprofit organization dedicated to serving, strengthening and defending families worldwide. Founded in 1977, Focus on the Family provides practical tools, spiritual resources and emotional support to families at every stage of life. Focus on the Family is online at www.FocusOnTheFamily.com.

About the *Colorado Springs Independent*

The locally owned *Independent* is the second largest paper in El Paso County with 36,000-plus papers distributed every Thursday at more than 950 high-traffic locations. Our editorial staff has won more than 100 awards for excellence in investigative reporting and feature writing.

Colorado Springs is now the 46th most populous, and the 17th fastest growing city in the country, with a population of more than 650,000. We're proud to say that the *Independent* is outpacing the rapid growth of the market while the daily's circulation is down. □ □

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