

August 2014

INSPIRING INDIVIDUAL

Plantation Couple Named Foster Parents of the Year

BY JILL SHARPE

PLANTATION RESIDENTS ANNE AND MIKE DAVIS WERE RECENTLY recognized as Foster Parents of the Year by ChildNet, the Community Based Care (CBC) lead agency in Broward and Palm Beach Counties. The Davis' have been foster parenting for 23 years, having cared for 129 babies. As foster parents with the Children's Home Society, the couple currently cares for two medical needs babies, taking them to numerous weekly doctors' appointments and to ChildNet every week for supervised visits with their birth mothers.

The Davis' who have two adult children, two grandchildren and a teenage daughter of their own, said they started fostering and continued it as a family ministry project to support their strong Christian values. "We wanted to do something to serve our community," said Anne who has always loved infants. "We decided that if we could give these children a good start they would have chance to become all that they could be."

The best example of that is their daughter Megan who the Davis' fostered from the time she was one day old and then adopted as a baby 17 years ago. Megan was diagnosed with cerebral palsy when she was a baby and the Davis' were told she wouldn't be able to do a lot of things. "Megan proved the



Anne Davis and her two grandchildren.

doctors didn't realize the power of a family's love as she has gone above and beyond every expectation and is now an avid dancer and a happy, well adjusted teenager who loves helping take care of the foster babies," Davis said. "We call Megan our miracle."

The Davis' only keep in touch with five or six of the children they have cared for over the years as many families understandably want to start on a fresh foot with their adoptive children, however the few that they have kept in touch with are doing so very well. One boy is about to be a senior in high school and has grown up to be such a source of pride and joy. "He's like the picture of an all American boy," said Davis. "He has great grades in school and plays on the football team."

The Davis', who usually take two babies at a time, said it can be hard to say goodbye to a baby they have cared for but they say it is also one of the best parts of being a foster parent. "There is nothing better than to present a child to their forever parent knowing that you have given them everything they need to achieve a good start in life," said Anne.

The Davis' said they hope the publicity they receive from this honor inspires others to sign up to be foster parents as there is a dire need. "A lot of people say it is something they might like to do but never end up taking action," said Anne.

Foster parents definitely experience many ups and downs but in the end Davis said it's just important to keep your eye on the children. "If you can make a difference in the life of just one child, it's worth it," she said.

As the lead agency in Broward and Palm Beach counties and single private non-profit entity responsible for administration of the local child welfare system, ChildNet brings years of dedication to protecting abused, abandoned and neglected children in the communities it serves. For more information about becoming a foster parent, please contact ChildNet in Broward County at 954-414-6001. Visit www.ChildNet.us and www.facebook.com/ChildNet.

Anne and Mike Davis



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