

iCARE4 Adoptive And Foster Families Awarded \$33,500 Grant from the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption® to Expand School-Based Support

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CHICAGO, IL — iCARE4 Adoptive And Foster Families is proud to announce it has been awarded a \$33,500 grant from the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, a national, nonprofit public charity in the United States dedicated to dramatically increasing the number of adoptions of children waiting in North America's foster care systems.

This investment will support the distribution of bilingual iCARE4 Schools Connection Kits™ to 4,500 schools across Illinois, helping expand access to practical tools and training that strengthen how schools support students impacted by adoption, foster care, and kinship care.

The Connection Kits™ are a cornerstone of the Adoption & Foster Friendly Schools™ Movement, iCARE's initiative to ensure every school is equipped to recognize and respond to the needs of students with complex family stories. The kits move beyond awareness into everyday practice, equipping classrooms, counseling teams, and school offices with ready-to-use tools that build shared language, strengthen family-school partnerships, and deepen educator confidence, whether a school is new to this work or building on what's already in place.

"Permanency is the beginning of a child's story, not the end," said Laura Adams, Founder and President of iCARE4 Adoptive And Foster Families. "Schools are one of the most important environments where healing, identity, and belonging continue to unfold. We are deeply grateful to the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption for recognizing the critical role our Connection Kits™ play in equipping schools to support children and families long after adoption or foster placement."

Through this grant, iCARE will reach 4,500 Illinois schools, advancing the Adoption & Foster Friendly Schools™ Movement and positioning schools as a lasting source of stability, understanding, and opportunity for students and families statewide.

iCARE4 Adoptive And Foster Families is the nonprofit behind the Adoption & Foster Friendly Schools™ Movement, working at the intersection of education, mental health, and child welfare to support adoptive, foster, and kinship students and the systems that serve them. Through Connected We Thrive™ professional development and Connection Kits™, iCARE equips educators and school leaders with resiliency-oriented, hope-focused tools to build relationship-centered learning environments where every child can thrive. Because adoptive, foster, and kinship students are in every school and every ZIP code, iCARE is working to ensure no child goes unseen.

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