



FOR: CHILD FOCUS
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CHILD FOCUS:
ENRICHING THE LIVES OF
CHILDREN LIVING IN FOSTER CARE**

Las Vegas, Nevada – Child Focus, founded in 1999 by Dr. Stephanie Holland and Gloria Bernal, is proof of what two people can do. Confronted with the problems they saw every day within their work in the foster care system, Holland and Bernal decided to act for change. As a non-profit organization, Child Focus is dedicated to helping foster children live happier, more fulfilling lives all across Clark County.

In her role as a child psychologist, Holland had first-hand experience with the issues that have plagued the foster care system. She and Bernal, a licensed social worker, decided to take on the challenge of enriching the lives of children living in the foster care system. “The idea of approaching such a large problem ourselves was daunting – we really weren't sure how to approach this at first,” admits Holland. “But now, Child Focus is such a part of our lives and I think we're making a tremendous difference for many children out there.”

Today, Holland heads the organization as its Founding Director, putting countless hours of her free time and passion into this worthwhile cause. With the help of Executive Director Sherry Brock, Holland has built up an organization over 200 volunteers strong, with a number of ongoing projects serving the 3,000-plus foster children in the county. Each program aims to address a particular problem Holland has experienced in the field. Current projects include:

- **Academic Success** – With overwhelming numbers of foster children at risk academically, Child Focus offers both mentoring and tutoring services to help promote educational success.
- **Sibling Preservation** – While foster children frequently get separated from their siblings, Child Focus works to preserve that sibling bond through quarterly “get together” events, creating shared memories for siblings living in separate homes. In addition, Child Focus supports “Camp to Belong,” a national summer camp program that reunites foster siblings separated by the system.
- **Birthday Wishes** – Because too many foster children's birthdays go by unnoticed, Child Focus provides children with a gift and a card to make sure their special day is a memorable one.
- **Step-Up** – Child Focus has been chosen to administer the Nevada state initiative FAFFY, which offers public funding to support youths in the transition from foster care to adulthood, teaching them to be self sufficient members of society through education, financial aid, and employment.

Brock joined the Child Focus team in 2006, bringing with her years of experience in leadership roles at non-profit agencies across the country. Says Dr. Holland, “Sherry is the ideal executive to help us transition from a grassroots movement to an incredibly innovative and bona fide non-profit organization.”

Child Focus has set its ultimate goal of building a multi-service clinic for children living in foster care, providing primary care services on-site (both medical and dental), facilitating development screenings by a specialized pediatrician, and providing on-site assessment of sexual and physical abuse cases. In addition, the clinic would monitor children receiving psychotropic medications, along with providing after-school programs, and offering educational services for biological and foster parents.

Funding for Child Focus comes completely from donations and charity events. The ‘Hats Off To Child Focus Mother's Day Tea’ completed its third successful year in May, raising funds for a variety of Child Focus projects. Other upcoming events include The Bass Pro Shops Fishing Tournament and Flemings Golf Tournament. Thanks to major corporate donors such as Integrity Chrysler and Target, Child Focus is able to provide these valuable services to the foster child community in Southern Nevada.

“We have a strong volunteer base already, but we're always adding new people to our team. And we need them, because there are still problems endemic to the foster care system,” says Holland, “But with enough community involvement and volunteers, we can make a difference.”

Child Focus is a non-profit agency, providing many vital supportive services and resources which enrich the lives of children living in foster care in Southern Nevada. The organization partners with many national and local child welfare organizations to create a strong network of support and caring within our community. Child Focus works within the system and is a powerful voice for change.

Current programs and services include: **Academic Success** offers both mentoring and tutoring services to help promote educational success. **Sibling Preservation** coordinates quarterly “get together” events, creating shared memories for siblings living in separate homes. In addition, Child Focus supports Camp to Belong, a national summer camp program that reunites foster siblings who are separated by the system. **Birthday Wishes** ensures no child is forgotten on their birthday providing presents to children living in care so their special day is a memorable one. **Step Up** is a state of Nevada funded initiative supporting youths in transition from foster care, teaching them to become self sufficient members of society. **Step Up** is administered by Child Focus. Child Focus: 4310 S. Cameron, Suite 13, Las Vegas, NV 89103. 702.436.1624, www.childfocusnv.org.

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