

# Beech Acres celebrates family for fostering 29 children



**Linda and Derrell Dick, with their family.**

Beech Acres Parenting Center is celebrating the family of Linda and Derrell Dick, from Loveland, who recently completed a journey of more than 21 years of foster care, during which they adopted three girls and provided a loving foster home to 29 children.

"Linda and Derrell have earned respect and love from all the children and families they helped over the

years. They leave a lasting impression on the entire Beech Acres Foster Care Program," said Jessica Thompson, director of foster care and adoption, Beech Acres Parenting Center.

Linda and Derrell began serving as foster parents in 1998 and started out by helping teenage boys, moving on later to provide foster care for infants and sibling groups.

"This couple has impacted us all through their amazing drive and determination to help children. They gave nurturing, consistency and life skills to teenagers, and were equally as skilled with infants and siblings, providing security and promoting their development," added Tricia Raby, foster care supervisor at Beech Acres.

In addition to the direct support provided to children, the Dicks also served as mentors for other foster parents and families.

Thank you, Linda and Derrell, for your unwavering love and support of children for more than two decades!

"Linda Dick was the first person I called when we had our first placement. She and Derrell told us how things will work and gave us suggestions on working with the county. They also supported us by giving us real life expectations for foster care and confirmed what we learned in the preservice classes."

- Nancy Bowman, Foster Parent

"My experience in foster care was good. I was able to get an understanding of what families should be and how it feels to be part of a family. I was also able to get to stay in one school and have a better understanding of what it's like to not have to move around all the time. The family I have is great, loved having the other kids in the home and they are loving and very fun."

- Jaymielyn, Linda & Derrell's daughter



## Virtual Town Hall

### Save the Date

Wednesday, April 28, 5 PM

Topic: Talking to your kids about racial equity and inclusion



**A Celebration honoring Jim Mason and his extraordinary leadership**

**Sunday, June 13**

Invitation with all the details to be sent in May, but Save the Date now!



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# INSIDERS' SCOOP

Volume V | Issue I | WINTER 2021

HELPING **FAMILIES** OF ALL SHAPES  
AND SIZES, **SPANNING GENERATIONS,**  
**PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.**





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## Continuing to Make a Difference

As the country enters its second year of coping with COVID-19, I am quite mindful of the pandemic's near and long-term impact on kids and families. While I am hopeful for a brighter future, I am keenly aware of the magnitude of the work required to get there.

"Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) can affect children and young people directly and indirectly. Beyond getting sick, many young people's social, emotional, and mental well-being has been impacted by the pandemic. Trauma faced at this developmental stage can continue to affect them across their lifespan."

-CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

***Beech Acres has been preparing for this for over 170 years.***

As you know, Beech Acres Parenting Center was founded as an orphanage in 1849 in response to another public health crisis, a cholera epidemic. The typical "family unit" then included children, parents and grandparents living together and working on a farm. Growing urban environments lacked sanitation, clean water and other public services we take for granted today.

These unsanitary conditions spawned the cholera epidemic that killed 4,000 people in our region. The German General Protestant Orphan Asylum was founded as a community response to the need for safe, clean housing for the orphaned children. The modern family structure is significantly different, and today's pandemic is considerably more complex, wide-spread and deadly. It requires a wider community response to which Beech Acres brings its unique strengths in supporting parents trying to cope with unprecedented levels of stress.

More dangerous for our country than the Coronavirus are the historic racial inequities that have plagued us since the United States was founded. We see the disparities every day in the schools, health care systems, and communities in which 40% of the families we serve are African American. Quickly adapting to the growing community awareness, Beech Acres has developed its strategy, in partnership with others, for making a positive impact on this urgent challenge.

**Thanks to your generous support, Beech Acres is uniquely equipped to respond effectively to these critical issues. Through our proprietary Natural Strength Parenting™ model, we intentionally build on the unique strengths of each parent, family and community to raise children who are ready to thrive in this uncertain world.**

As when we were founded, a child's support system begins with her or his parents. Today's 'parent' might be by birth, blood relative or kin, adoptive or foster parents. The special people who open their homes and hearts to

children come in all shapes and sizes. Outside the home, children's support today includes teachers, coaches, churches, health care providers, friends, and of course community networks such as social service agencies. Beech Acres Parenting Center supports and advocates with all of these systems across our entire continuum of care.

**In this issue of Insiders' Scoop, you'll hear a uniquely personal story connecting our distant past to our present. Donna Steinmetz's mom and dad met as children while living in Beech Acres' orphanage.** As parents they brought their family to campus to attend the annual Orphan Feast fundraiser, which Donna loved attending. Later, as a parent herself, Donna sought help for her son at Beech Acres Parenting Center when he was bullied during the 4th grade. Donna's deep personal connection has inspired her to support our work with families as we evolve to meet the needs of modern parents in today's uncertain world.

**We say farewell to the Dick family, who fostered 29 children over the past 21 years. They adopted three wonderful girls, creating a beautiful forever family for them.**

While we celebrate the Dick's awesome contributions to saving vulnerable kids these two decades, we're reminded of the continuing need for safe, loving homes for our community's most vulnerable children...especially teens, sibling sets, and those children with specific medical needs.

Finally, **you'll hear directly from parents with bolstered confidence and new skills who have benefited from guidance provided by our Parent Connex™ specialists.** This innovative program partners with pediatric offices to help parents manage the stressful challenges of raising children in today's uncertain and chaotic COVID world. Your generosity has made their stories of gratitude possible.

We believe all parents love their children, want the best for them, and can benefit from some compassionate, hopeful guidance along the way. **I am grateful to you, our generous donors, for empowering us to continue to do good work for families in our community. Together, we have faced the challenges of the past, innovated to address today's troubles, and confidently face whatever unforeseen obstacles present themselves in the future. Thanks for your loyal partnership!**

James R. Mason  
President & CEO



# Because of YOUR generosity, Parent Connex<sup>TM</sup> provides parents with prompt, practical support for a variety of parenting challenges that families face every day.

## 9 out of 10 parents would recommend Parent Connex<sup>TM</sup> to a friend. Here's what they have to say:

"I find that people are afraid to ask for help or say parenting is hard or admit that it is stressful. I'm forever grateful for this program and am glad my pediatrician recommended it."

"My Parenting Specialist is a beacon of light, a friend along the parenting journey. She is an exceptional listener, thoughtful, and connected. She makes me feel confident in our ability to overcome challenges."

"My Parenting Specialist was incredible!"

"It's been a great experience. I learned lots of different techniques that I had never tried before - and they are

effective. Hoping to continue to use them as time goes on. It was great knowing we weren't alone and lots of kids go through phases like this."

"I feel every parent has had some eye raising moments or doubted their parenting when it comes to their kid. Why not get another perspective from an advisor?"

"I found this incredibly helpful and am walking away with lots of tools in my parenting box so I can be the best mom I can be."

"My Parenting Specialist is fantastic. She helped me gain the skills needed to support my children during this difficult time."

To learn more call 513-231-6630 or email Katie Helmes at [khelmes@beechacres.org](mailto:khelmes@beechacres.org).



## DONOR SPOTLIGHT ANNUAL SUPPORTER DONNA STEINMETZ'S CONNECTION TO BEECH ACRES SPANS DECADES



There are several reasons why people give generously to their favorite charities. They give because they believe in the cause. They may give out of a sense of wanting to be a part of something larger than themselves or to support their community. Often, they give because they have a personal connection to the organization.

**Donna Steinmetz supports Beech Acres Parenting Center because of a personal connection** to the organization. Many personal connections to the organization.

Beech Acres Parenting Center began as the German General Protestant Orphan

Asylum back in 1849. **Donna's mother, Rita Linz and her two uncles, Leonard and Orville Linz were raised here during the 1930s. Amazingly, her father, Donald Brunswick was also a resident.** Despite the challenges of their childhoods, **Rita and Donald met each other and fell in love while living at the orphanage.**

The Brunswicks would return to Beech Acres Parenting Center, bringing Donna to the Orphans Feast each summer. An annual festival held to raise money for operations of the orphanage, the grounds, and facilities, the Orphans Feast was a huge community-wide event. **"We used to attend the Orphans Feast when I was a child,"** Donna said.

Fond memories of the annual festival and her familial connection to Beech Acres inspired Donna to give back. **"In 1985, I was married and financially stable and started giving to Beech Acres,"** she said. "I believe I have been giving annually, except for the two years I was laid off work."

Donna's personal connection to Beech Acres didn't end with the Orphans Feast.

In the 1980's, as society's norms began to evolve, the idea of orphanages raising children began to change. Beech Acres Parenting Center continued to evolve as well, changing to meet the needs of parents, families, and children in the community through a modern approach to parenting and mental health.

**When Donna faced her own parenting challenges, she turned to a known, trusted resource for help.**

**"When my son was in the fourth grade, he was bullied, and when looking for resources on how to deal with the situation, I called Beech Acres where I found a 'nice lady' to talk to,"** Donna recalled. "She told me I could call back anytime."

Beech Acres Parenting Center continues to evolve, meeting the ever-changing needs of parents wherever they are in their parenting journey. **Thank you, Donna, for sharing your story and for helping parents and children thrive** through your continued generous support of Beech Acres Parenting Center!