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OPINION EDITORIAL FOR THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR ARTICLE TITLED “STATE CHILD ABUSE POLICIES HAILED” PUBLISHED TUESDAY, APRIL 29, 2008

Congratulations to the DCS on receiving a grade of A minus in the report issued by First Star. I was glad to hear that Indiana ranked among the top six states in the country for state laws and policies that are easily accessible and call for the mandatory release of information in child abuse and neglect fatalities. Indiana’s high ranking in the report is a positive affirmation of the practice reform instituted by the DCS. These efforts have directly contributed to the declining fatality rate and are a true benefit to communities across the state of Indiana. The overall reform efforts are making our local agencies stronger, more accountable and transparent, which will ultimately improve the protection of children in our communities.

I believe because Indiana has gone to a seamless community-based approach, the recent decline in fatalities in our state is due to the new reform efforts mandated by the DCS. It is my belief these state statutory and policy changes have placed Indiana child welfare agencies in a better position to serve children and families as we deliver services and measure outcomes for families in our communities.

About Lutheran Child & Family Services

Lutheran Child & Family Services (LCFS) is a multi-service, nonprofit 501(c)(3) member agency of United Way of Central Indiana and provides services that strengthen vulnerable children and families throughout the State of Indiana. LCFS’s services include: a 24 hour residential treatment facility for children ages 6-21; a satellite K-12 public school in partnership with Indianapolis Public Schools; an independent transition living program for boys; and a continuum of community-based support services that includes: Mentoring, Parenting Classes, Family Preservation; Adoption & Foster Care; and two local Food and Clothing Pantries that serve more than 30,000 people annually.



About Michael Johnson

Michael Johnson is the Executive Director of Lutheran Child & Family Services of Indiana and has more than 15 years serving vulnerable children in families in urban communities like Chicago, Philadelphia and St. Louis. He has an MBA in Global Management and Youth Development Certifications from the YMCA of America and Boys & Girls Clubs of America. He has managed programs that have affected thousands of children and families in Chicago Public Schools, Philadelphia Public Schools and the YMCA of America.

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