

Florida foster child pleas for permanent family

by Sarah Padbury

(WNS)—Fifteen-year-old Davion Navar Henry Only made national headlines in October when he stepped up to the podium at St. Mark Missionary Baptist Church in St. Petersburg, Fla., and pleaded for someone in the 300-member congregation to adopt him.

“I’ll take anyone,” Only said. “Old or young, dad or mom, black, white, purple. I don’t care. And I would be really appreciative. The best I could be.” His story ran in the Tampa Bay Times on Oct. 7 and went viral. Within days he was featured on ABC News as Diane Sawyer’s “Person of the Week.” Only and his Eckerd adoption specialist, Connie Going, then appeared on The View where Going announced more than 10,000 families from around the world had con-

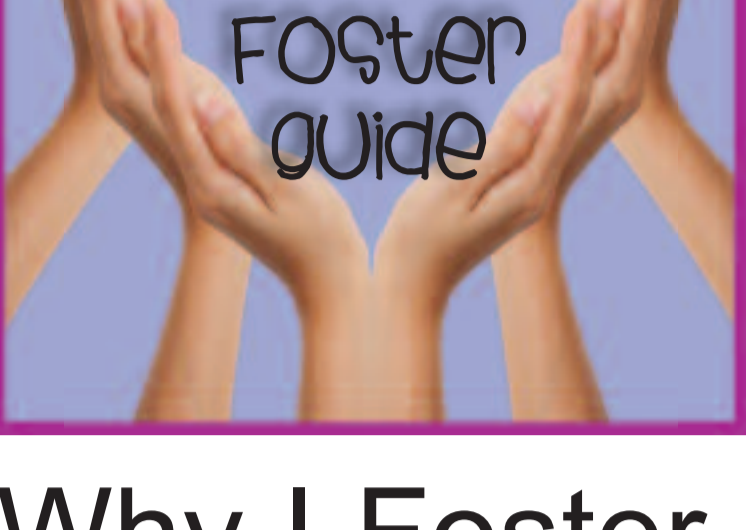
See Our Adoption & Foster Guide PAGE 7

tacted her, wanting to offer the teen a home. Sitting in the front row of The View audience was Richard Prince, 23, Only’s mentor for the last year and a half. Prince could hardly believe the teenager in front of him, the one who prayed before going on stage for God to give him the right words to say, was ■ Please see ORPHAN page 7



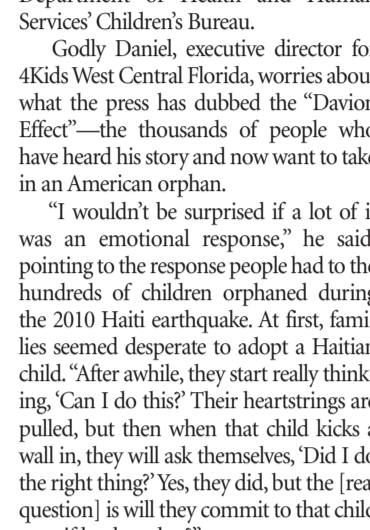
Davion Only at 8. He’s spent his entire 15 years in foster care.

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ORPHAN continued from page 1 the same one who used to use profanity, kick holes in walls, and do all he could to push people away.

bringing awareness about other boys in the same situation. St. Mark was the second church to let Only speak. The morning they arrived, brought surprises all around: Going didn’t know Only had already attended St. Mark several times with his mentor; Only didn’t know he was going to his mentor’s church that morning; and Prince didn’t know they were coming.



Only’s plea in his church has made international headlines

Children with no legal parents, living in limbo as “wards of the state,” and needing new parents to commit to them. Almost 102,000 foster children currently are waiting to be adopted, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Children’s Bureau.

Why I Foster

Jacque Bretton of Phillipsburg, Kan. always knows to expect a few phone calls on Mother’s Day...and not just from her biological children. As a TFI Foster Family Services, Inc. (TFI) foster parent, Jacque receives a “Happy Mother’s Day” call from several children who were once placed in her home.

little girl who just fit in with our family,” Jacque said. “A few months later she came up for adoption and a few months later our adoption was final. She has been such a blessing to our family.”

For families who are considering fostering, Jacque says it is challenging, but the end result is very rewarding. “There are always challenges in fostering but you also face challenges no matter what you do in life,” Jacque said. “There are so many children out there needing a family – if you are willing to do that for them then you will love being a foster family. I love fostering and feel it is very rewarding.”

Prince agreed to learn more and One Church One Child referred him to 4Kids of West Central Florida, a Christian foster care and adoption agency that also offers mentoring for foster children. After Prince learned he’d have to meet with a child for an hour a week for a year, he said he was too busy to commit. But in the end, he agreed to a compromise of meeting every other week with his mentee. When asked what kind of child he’d like to be paired with, he said, “I’ll take anyone.”

With the comfort of his mentor nearby, the familiarity of St. Mark, and the hope of God flowing through him, Only went off script and gave his now-famous address. Prince was as shocked as everyone else when Only passionately disclosed he was an orphan looking for a family.

Initially Jacque considered fostering because she was interested in adoption. Like all foster families, Jacque took the PS-MAPP class (Partnering for Safety and Permanence Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting), a 10-week foster parent training course designed to educate prospective families about the children they may have placed in their home.

Thousands of Kansas children are in need of a home and a family that will give them a nurturing environment in which can grow. Call 800-279-9914 or go to www.tffamilieservices.org to learn more about becoming a TFI licensed foster home in your community.

As they spent time together, Prince found it natural to bring up God when Only discussed his struggles, offering him a different way to look at his circumstances. Early on, Only said he didn’t know how to pray, so Prince told him “just talk to Him like we do and tell Him what you’re angry about [and] happy about.” Over the months, Prince continued to tell the troubled teen he cared about him and his future.

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November is NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH To Celebrate November as National Adoption Month, Metro Voice dedicates both our October and November editions to Adoption and Foster Care

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You Can Adopt...or... by Jessie Voiers November is National Adoption Month. A month dedicated to celebrating adoption. In Kansas, Sunday, November 3rd, is known as Orphan Sunday.

Alpha Christian Children’s Home & School www.alphachristianchildrenshome.com WHAT WE DO: 1. Share Christ to offer hope and healing 2. Provide a Christian family safe haven 3. Help the kids get caught up in school

Every child deserves a loving, caring home. Adopt Kansas Kids www.adoptkkskids.org • 877-457-5430 Adopt Kansas Kids works to connect foster and approved adoptive families with children throughout Kansas who need adoption.

FAMILY EXPLOSION

Our story begins with God’s agape love. God so loved us that Jesus died for us. Because of this love, Christians are to reflect His love. James 1:27 tells us that God finds pure religion to be caring for widows and orphans in their distress, and keeping oneself unstained by the world.

announcement by then SRS secretary Rob Siedlecki. That day we were also able to connect with Brandon and Missy Hoffman of Project Belong. They had adopted 12 children and had heard God calling them to speak to churches across Kansas.

Caring Pregnancy Options solutions of hope Kathy Hart Executive Director 2041 SW McAlister • 785-272-3316

ability. Obviously, not every family is called to adopt. But there are still ways that anyone can help support and advocate for adoption. As a congregation you can support families that are pursuing adoption. You can offer prayers and support. You can provide meals and babysitting services so they still have time to nurture their marriages and just catch their breath.

Jonathan and Allison Schumm of Topeka, Kansas, are vocal advocates for adoption, who strongly believe in the value of family and keeping families together. Including their four biological children, Jonathan and Allison are the proud parents of fourteen after adopting two sibling-sets of five each from the foster care system.

- Excerpted from U.S. Senator Jerry Moran’s nomination of the Schumm family as Angels in Adoption for 2013. community of support meant. Adoption does not happen alone, our story exists because of God and our support systems.

Music video from KANSAS lead singer shows his adopted daughter surviving abortion



LifeNews.com - The former leader singer of Kansas, known for such hits as “Dust in the Wind” and “Carry on My Wayward Son,” has produced a touching video to go along with a new single he’s released that tells the story of his adopted daughter’s birth.

and went on to produce well-known Christian music artists. “I can’t imagine life without my daughter, Sami, and it breaks my heart that pregnant young women choosing like her birth mother, instead of choosing life for their babies, are denying them the chance to be born,” Elefante says. “If our song can in any way bring attention to this issue or encourage those who are considering abortion to choose life through options such as adoption, then we couldn’t be happier.”

KC Area Author Uses Stories of Nine Adopted Cats to Share God’s Word

According to the Humane Society, there are more than 86 million cats living as pets in the United States. Author Teresa Herbic has owned many throughout her life and tells the wonderful and unique stories of nine of her adventures. Through each of their individual adventures, parents can teach their children about various Biblical teachings. In her new book Cat Tales (Ambassador International; July 2013; \$9.99, paperback), Herbic will have you turning the pages to see all nine stories of adventure.

Specializing in private, step-parent, agency and ICPC adoptions. Samantha R. Harrington ATTORNEY AT LAW 2708 NW Topeka Blvd. Topeka, KS 66617 Phone: 785-234-0600 email: srharrington1@aol.com

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