



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1989

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FOSTER CARE - A GIFT OF LOVE

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WHEN FAMILIES GATHER TOGETHER TO ENJOY THE LUNAR NEW YEAR, PERHAPS IT IS ALSO THE TIME FOR US TO SPARE SOME THOUGHTS FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE UNABLE TO ENJOY A NORMAL FAMILY LIFE.

THERE ARE SERVICES FOR THESE UNFORTUNATE CHILDREN, SUCH AS CHILDREN'S HOMES AND SMALL GROUP HOMES, RUN BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, BUT THE ONLY DIRECT WAY RESIDENTS CAN HELP THEM IS THROUGH FOSTERING.

"THE AIM OF FOSTERING IS TO PLACE A CHILD IN A STABLE FAMILY WITH PEOPLE WHO CAN ACT AS SATISFACTORY SUBSTITUTE PARENTS FOR A CERTAIN PERIOD," A SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID.

"THE PURPOSE IS TO PROVIDE FAMILY CARE TO CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 16 WHO HAVE NO PARENTS OR IMMEDIATE FAMILY ABLE TO CARE FOR THEM OR WHO FOR VARIOUS REASONS, HAVE TO BE SEPARATED TEMPORARILY FROM THEIR NATURAL FAMILIES.

"FOR EXAMPLE, ONE OR BOTH OF THE NATURAL PARENTS MAY NOT BE ABLE TO LOOK AFTER THE CHILDREN BECAUSE OF ILLNESS, FAMILY PROBLEMS, IMPRISONMENT OR THEIR UNWILLINGNESS OR INABILITY TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE CARE," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"IT IS HOPED THAT THROUGH FOSTERING, THE CHILD WILL CONTINUE TO ENJOY FAMILY LIFE, AND SHARE THE FAMILY HAPPINESS AND THE AFFECTION OF THE FOSTER PARENTS.

"IT IS ALSO HOPED THAT HE WILL ENJOY A NORMAL AND HEALTHY CHILDHOOD AND REMAIN AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF A FAMILY UNIT."

THE IDEAL FOSTER PARENTS SHOULD BE COUPLES AGED BETWEEN 25 AND 60 WITH A HAPPY AND STABLE MARRIAGE, THE SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED, ADDING THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE A STEADY INCOME AND THERE SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT SPACE IN THEIR HOME FOR THE FOSTER CHILD.

"MOST IMPORTANTLY, THEY MUST BE SURE THAT THEY ARE ABLE TO OFFER INDIVIDUAL LOVING CARE AND AFFECTION FOR A CHILD WHO CANNOT RECEIVE IT FROM THE NATURAL PARENTS.

"IF YOU HAVE A LOVING HEART AND THE TIME, WHY NOT DROP IN AT OUR CENTRAL FOSTER CARE UNIT (CFCU) AT THE SECOND FLOOR, ODEON BUILDING, 28 SHU KUK STREET, NORTH POINT, OR CALL US ON 5-618946 OR 5-618504 TO BECOME A FOSTER PARENT?" THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

FOSTER PARENTS RECEIVE A MONTHLY ALLOWANCE OF \$1,454 COMPRISING A MAINTENANCE GRANT OF \$1,090 FOR EACH CHILD AND AN INCENTIVE PAYMENT OF \$364 FOR THE PARENTS.

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THERE IS ALSO A "SETTING-UP" GRANT OF \$545 FOR EACH CHILD, WHICH IS NORMALLY PAYABLE WHEN THE CHILD IS FIRST RECEIVED INTO THE FOSTER HOME TO ASSIST IN ANY INITIAL EXPENSES SUCH AS PURCHASE OF ADDITIONAL BEDDING, TOYS AND OTHER ITEMS.

THERE HAD BEEN NO LACK OF SUPPORTERS FOR THIS FORM OF NON-INSTITUTIONAL CARE. SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CFCU IN 1983, OVER 300 CHILDREN HAD BEEN PLACED IN THE FOSTER HOMES.

NEVERTHELESS, THE SPOKESMAN URGED RESIDENTS LIVING IN THE URBAN AREAS WHO ARE WILLING TO TAKE CARE OF SIBLING GROUPS AND OLDER CHILDREN SUCH AS THOSE AGED OVER SIX TO EXTEND THEIR LOVE TO THESE UNFORTUNATE CHILDREN BY BECOMING FOSTER PARENTS.

MEANWHILE, A PILOT FOSTERING PROJECT FOR MILD GRADE MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN IS BEING OPERATED BY THE SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND AND INTERESTED PARTIES MAY CALL 5-726798 FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

"FOSTERING CHILDREN MAKES GREAT DEMANDS ON ALL PARTIES CONCERNED BUT IT MAY WELL BE THE ONLY WAY IN WHICH THESE CHILDREN FIND THE HAPPINESS AND AFFECTION THEY NEED AT A CRUCIAL STAGE OF THEIR LIVES.

"WHAT COULD BE MORE REWARDING THAN TO HELP A CHILD GROW TOWARDS HEALTHY ADULTHOOD OR TO MAKE HIM FEEL WANTED AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE COMMUNITY TO WHICH HE HAS TO ADAPT HIMSELF," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

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RIGHT-TURN BAN IN KWAI CHUNG
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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED THAT TO FACILITATE THE LAYING OF WATER MAINS, VEHICLES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO TURN RIGHT FROM EASTBOUND TAI WO HAU ROAD TO SHEK TAU STREET, KWAI CHUNG, FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (FEBRUARY 10) TO MARCH 30.

AFFECTED VEHICLES CAN TRAVEL VIA SHEUNG KOK STREET, WESTBOUND TAI WO HAU ROAD AND THEN TURN LEFT TO SHEK TAU STREET.

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