



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FOR MORE INFORMATION
Nicole Bleuer
Healthy Families Illinois Program Supervisor
(815) 284-6611
nicolebleuer@sinnissippi.com

Sinnissippi Centers Inc. Healthy Families America Site, Accredited for Quality Service by Prevent Child Abuse America

Leading National Organization Accredits Healthy Families America site to Serve Families

(Dixon, IL)

Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America) announced that the Healthy Families America (HFA) affiliate, Sinnissippi Centers Inc, has been accredited as a provider of high-quality home visiting services to pregnant families and families with infants and young children.

HFA is the signature program of PCA America and has been providing home visiting services for nearly 30 years. Expectant and new parents are facing new stressors and have questions about their child's development. HFA connects with families through community partners like hospitals and pediatricians to support parents, meeting within the familiarity and convenience of the family's own home. HFA is an accessible, voluntary, and well received service.

"HFA sites utilize evidence-based best practices to provide individualized support to families when needed most, and linkages to community services," said Melissa Merrick, President and CEO of PCA America. "We congratulate Sinnissippi Centers Inc, Healthy Families Illinois and we commend the staff for their leadership and commitment that has contributed to this most notable and highly regarded achievement."

The accreditation process is based upon a stringent set of 12 critical elements grounded in more than 30 years of research. The process involves an in-depth examination of the site's operation, as well as the quality of the visits made by HFA home visitors.

"We commend Sinnissippi Centers Inc. for opening itself up to such an intensive review process," said Kathleen Strader, National Director of HFA. "We believe that all families and all communities deserve access to quality home visiting services."

One of the primary goals of HFA home visiting is to promote nurturing, responsive parent-child relationships. Home visitors in each community receive extensive training on a wide range of topics important to just about every new parent, such as: caring for a new baby, ensuring the baby is receiving the nutrition needed, promoting healthy child development, and coping with a myriad of other potential stresses, such as financial, housing, partner relationship, etc., that may become heightened with an addition to the family.

Sinnissippi Centers Inc.'s Healthy Families Illinois (HFI) program has provided free home-visiting services, education, and peer support to families in Carroll, Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside counties for more than 25 years. Dedicated to strengthening early childhood development and family well-being, HFI helps parents lay a healthy foundation for their children's learning, relationships, and lifelong success.

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“Becoming a parent is life changing,” said Nicole Bleuer, Healthy Families Illinois Program Manager. “When someone becomes a parent, they are no longer navigating the world and building connections for just themselves. They are now responsible for shaping the growth, experiences, and connections of a new person who is completely dependent on them to set a healthy foundation for their learning and relationships throughout life.”

“Through regular home visits, parents receive personalized education on child development, health, and nutrition; access to community resources and referrals; emotional support in a nonjudgmental environment; and connection with other families through group activities, says Bleuer. “Our program exists to provide support, information, and community for both those new to and those deep in this stage of life,” Bleuer added. “Infants and young children need responsive, nurturing relationships to thrive, and families need reminders that perfection is not the goal—connection is.”

One participating family shared, “The HFI program helps reinforce my parenting skills and helps me better understand being intentional in my parenting. It is nice to be reminded that you do not need to be a perfect parent and have someone there regularly cheering you on.”

PCA America was established in 1972 with the belief that child abuse and neglect is preventable. The not-for-profit, volunteer-based organization is committed to preventing child abuse in all forms through education, research, public awareness, and public policy development. Today, PCA America supports a network of state chapters across the United States.

PCA America implemented the Healthy Families America (HFA) initiative in 1992. HFA serves families of all ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, meeting the needs of close to six hundred communities in thirty-eight states, the District of Columbia, U.S. Territories, and Israel.

Healthy Families America is an effective and proven evidence-based home visiting program according to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. PCA America is proud to support HFA and to be part of a national movement dedicated to improving the lives of families and children.

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