

CATAWBA COUNTY North Carolina

SOCIAL SERVICES NEWS

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DISCOVERY CHURCH HOSTS PARTY FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

HICKORY -- Discovery Church in Hickory recently partnered with Family Builders to provide a fun-filled event for local children in foster care and their foster families.

Family Builders is the adoption and foster care unit of Catawba County Social Services. The church hosted an outing for the families on Sunday, Feb. 8 at Hickory Dickory Dock where over 100 Discovery Church members, including about 30 youth, had fun interacting with the foster children as they played a variety of arcade games.

In addition to the games and laser tag, the foster children were treated to pizza and dessert while their parents were able to relax in a reception area with refreshments. They also had the opportunity to mingle with other Discovery Church members and share their experiences as foster parents.

A total of 28 foster and kinship care families attended the event, including 59 children. Both foster and biological children of the families participated in the event. Eight staff members from Catawba County Social Services also attended and were available to answer questions and provide information about the foster care system.

"The children had a great time, and the foster parents had a chance to get together," said Megan Hildebran, a social worker with Family Builders. "We appreciate all that Discovery Church has done to be supportive of our foster families. We are currently looking for more adults who are willing to become foster parents. Catawba county has approximately 210 children in foster care. Because of the lack of local foster parents, 94 of



Two children enjoy a game at Hickory Dickory Dock during a party for foster families sponsored by Discovery Church. There is currently an urgent need for more foster parents in Catawba County. To find out more, go to fostercatawba.com.

them (almost half) have to live outside the county. This means that they are removed from their friends, schools and churches, as well as their parents."

Earle Fincher, director of Discovery Church's Outreach Team, said: "What a great opportunity it was for our people at Discovery to show love to the sometimes forgotten folks who open their homes and hearts to foster children. It was really cool to see the Discovery teens helping the foster kids play the games and just having fun together. We felt like it was important for our folks to learn firsthand about foster care and how important it is in providing care and love to children in crisis."

Discovery Church is a nondenominational church that currently meets at Catawba Valley Community College with worship services at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. They have plans to build a church on their Startown Road property in the spring of 2015.

Of the children currently in foster care, 30 have a plan of adoption. In the other cases, Social Services is working to reunify the children with their original family.

If you would like to explore the possibility of becoming a foster or adoptive parent, contact Hildebran at 828-695-4553 or email mhildebran@catawbacountync.gov. For more information about becoming a foster parent, go to fostercatawba.com.

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