

# Children helped through Family Care Network

By ROSELLE GOZA  
Staff Writer

"All you need is love" is more than the title of a Beatles' song. It's the requirement for becoming a foster parent. All that are needed is love, patience and a physically safe home with adequate sleeping quarters and a family free of a felony record.

Anyone fitting this profile can make an important investment in the nation's most important resource: its children. And the need is desperate.

Family Care Network, Inc. will help you become a foster parent, the most important person in a child's life when his family has fallen apart.

"We are a private, nonprofit, foster family agency licensed by the State of California," said Vincent S. Giordano, Division Director. "The agency was founded in 1987 to provide certified foster homes for children needing out-of-home placement. The need was not being met by government agencies.

"This agency was formed to provide foster homes that fulfill the needs of the children and to extend and complement the services as provided by government agencies. We do this by matching needs of kids with families that can meet the children's special needs."

A shortage of foster homes in Kern County and especially Ridgecrest led the agency to extend its services here.

Originally, it served only Inyo and Mono Counties where at any one time more than 50 children are placed in foster homes and group homes, according to Giordano.

However, many children cannot be placed due to a lack of homes. Many times youngsters cannot

find homes in their area and must be placed out of their county, away from familiar surroundings.

Children referred to the agency have varying needs.

"We work with molested children, the physically abused, neglected and emotionally abused children. They all take special care."

Any interested adult, married or single, with or without children, is urged to join the Family Care Network as a foster parent.

The agency works closely with the foster family. Training is given to foster parents in areas of child behavior, diet, disciplinary measures, communication with the household, and other areas of education to ensure that the needs of the child and the foster family are met.

"We'll work with the foster family to help train them to meet special needs that are specific to a foster child," said Giordano. "We see the child at least once a week and more, if necessary. We provide 24-hour emergency services.

"We work closely with placing agencies (Department of Social Services and the probation departments) and the courts. We provide counseling for foster families that experience grief at separation from the foster child and emotional support for the foster family while the child is in the home.

"We provide financial support starting at \$550 per month. Medical services are provided for.

"Foster homes give children the stability and security they may never have had before."

Family Care Network in Ridgecrest can be reached at 371-8452. To contact Giordano immediately, call 873-8146. To communicate by mail, write to 586 W. W. Line St., Bishop, CA 93514.