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**Belleville's Cecilia Castro Honored with the FAFS President's Award**

*Essex County woman routinely cares for medically fragile children, trains other potential parents and has four adopted children*

Monmouth Junction, NJ, May 1, 2009 – Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) presented Cecilia Castro with the FAFS President's Award at the annual Resource Family Recognition Dinner on May 1.

The event, which took place at the Sheraton-Eatontown Hotel in Eatontown, NJ, coincides with May's National Foster Care month. Castro was presented the award by FAFS president, Janis Nietzer. Castro received this special award for her work as a foster and adoptive parent since 1992. In fact, many of the children Castro has helped have had some form of physical or emotional disability.

Castro, who is known for being an honest, loving and supportive caretaker, has always made it a point to include her foster and adoptive children with her biological family. In addition to four adopted children, Castro has two biological adult children.

One of the great things about Castro it that she has managed to develop special relationships with the families of the children she has fostered and adopted. She continues to be a support to the families even after the children are returned to their biological parents.

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Castro is a reliable provider who never hesitates to take any child. In fact, she once stated: "Give me a child that needs me."

She also has assisted other foster families by occasionally speaking at Special Home Service Provider trainings. She gives potential providers vital information that is needed to be a successful foster parent for children with disabilities.

FAFS is a nonprofit organization dedicated to meeting the special needs of the more than 5,000 foster, adoptive and kinship families in New Jersey, who provide care for more than 9,000 children. FAFS advocates for improved foster care and adoption services, provides support to foster, adoptive, and kinship parents, and promotes an enhanced understanding of foster care and the adoption of children from foster care.

The new FAFS Foundation is a nonprofit that provides the parent organization with financial support for many of its privately-funded programs. For more information about the Foundation please call 609-977-4880 or visit the Web site, [www.fafsfoundation.org](http://www.fafsfoundation.org).

For more information about FAFS or its services please contact Mary Jane Awrachow, Executive Director, at 609.520.1500.