

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 11, 2009

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Sussex County Couple Helping Children Defy The Odds

The Novaks have spent the last 13 years caring for medically fragile children

Monmouth Junction, NJ, May 1, 2009 – Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS), along with the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), presented Cheryl and Larry Novak with the Outstanding Special Home Service Provider 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. The Novaks, residents of Sussex, NJ, have provided care to more than 150 children for more than 30 years. Over the last 13 years they have specifically cared for children with physical and emotional disabilities.

One of their more challenging moments as foster parents came while caring for medically fragile twin preemies who wore heart monitors. Larry Novak spent weeks sleeping next to their cribs just in case the babies were in distress and needed immediate attention.

In addition to fostering children, the Novaks have two biological adult children and five adopted children. They are in the process of adopting a sixth child.

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Cheryl Novak also is co-chair of the FAFS Sussex County Volunteer Committee. Both Novaks have spent a large portion of their adult lives advocating for children in care on local and state levels.

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.

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