

May: Foster Care Awareness Month

Tampa, FL – Did you read about that poor kid in your morning paper and think about how awful it is that her parents abused and neglected her? Thank goodness the state has swooped in to rescue this child from such a terrible home. But wait, not so fast! “Sometimes the foster care system can be worse than the horrible family life a child has endured,” says former foster child and advocate Margret Luculano. “It was one foster home after another – one more possibility to get kicked down and pulled in half. It was one more opportunity to confront the truth; I was unwanted and unloved.” Luculano based her new book “My Godbox” on her experiences in 15 different homes over 5 years. Many of the half million children currently in America’s foster system may feel as worthless as Luculano did. “I inhaled and exhaled, walked and talked. I ate and drank but lacked personality, direction and spirit in life...I was invisible; just a nobody among many some-bodies.” Opening your home to a foster child takes either an incredibly loving heart or an incredible desire to abuse the system. The amount of money a foster parent receives for each child varies by state. Idaho pays only \$3,000 per year per child whereas Connecticut pays \$8,280 per year per child. Nationwide the range is from 8-23 dollars a day which is about \$425 per month per child. Payment is higher for special needs children. Foster parents get extra checks for the child’s ‘clothing allowance’ and a ‘holiday allowance’ meant to cover Christmas presents. Most foster parents take in several children at once creating an income of tens of thousands of dollars a year. “I’m not saying all foster parents are bad,” says Luculano. “That would be unfair to those who foster for the right reasons. But there are many unscrupulous people who bring emotionally fragile and physically wounded children into their homes simply for the paycheck.” Also, the amount of training foster parents get varies by state. “Children are ripped from their less than idyllic homes and shuffled around to foster parents who don’t always have the child’s best interest in mind.” Luculano moved on to own two businesses, serve as the President and CEO of a multi-million dollar Microsoft consulting company and become a successful wife, mother and author. Margret insists her prosperity is despite the treatment by the many families which used her during a ‘horrifying childhood.’ “I was inspired by faith and overcame the victim mentality so it’s my responsibility to help other foster children triumph as well.” Proceeds from her book “My God Box” will go to many different not-for-profits dedicated to foster care children. “You can do something. Get involved with a local charity. It’s up to all of us to try and change the failures of the foster care system this month and beyond.”

About the Author

Margaret Luculano’s personal account of how the foster care system failed her and others and the subsequent triumph over her childhood demons to become a successful wife, mother and CEO is chronicled in her book, “My God Box.” Once she accomplished professional success that included owning two companies and serving as President and CEO of a multi-million dollar Microsoft consulting company, Luculano turned her focus to children’s advocacy. Luculano was habitually beaten by an alcoholic step-father, who labeled her an ‘incorrigible’ child and insisted she be placed in foster care. She then was a firsthand witness to the shattered foster care system, which was commonly used by foster parents as source of added income, not a way to make a difference in a vulnerable child’s life. Luculano, who currently lives in Tampa, FL with her family, hopes her story will encourage activism on behalf of America’s forgotten children and inspire others who have faced seemingly insurmountable struggles. Luculano’s website is www.Margaretlano.com.

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