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For Immediate Release

## **Lifebooks Connect Children with Their Past**

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. —The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services announced it will be providing a Lifebook for every child in care.

“Lifebooks, and other similar programs, are a growing trend around the country because too many children age out of care without knowing their life's history,” said George Sheldon, Acting Director of the Illinois Department of Children Services. “Tools like these enable children to connect with their past and actually help them deal with the trauma they have faced in their young lives, and I’m pleased that Illinois will be offering them to the children in our care.”

Lifebooks are an expanded form of a scrapbook, and can be useful in working with children in out-of-home care and children who have been adopted to record memories and events that occurred prior to placement as well as when the children were in foster care. They help children retain connections to people who have been important in their lives and help children integrate past experiences with their present circumstances in a healthy, constructive manner.

Experts also say the Lifebooks go a long way in helping a child deal with his or her trauma. Children who experience trauma relive it every day, and because children are natural storytellers, the books serve as an outlet for their emotions. It can be very difficult for an adult to find out what a child is feeling, and the books help open the door to conversation, understanding and healing.

*DCFS receives, investigates and acts upon a report of child abuse or neglect every five minutes. Tens of thousands of children are safer thanks to those who call our Child Abuse hotline, 1-800-25-ABUSE (252-2873) each year. Working together, we can ensure a safe, loving home and brighter future for every child.*

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