



Building Brighter Tomorrows for Families and Children

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## **Douglas County Sheriff Honored at Governor's Conference**

**Lawrence, KS, November 7, 2008** – Last week at the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Governor's Conference for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, Douglas County Sheriff Ken McGovern was recognized by TFI Family Services for his outstanding law enforcement services for Kansas Children and Families. Steve Solomon, PhD, Director of Public Policy for TFI presented the award to Sheriff McGovern during the Awards Luncheon where more than 500 people were in attendance. Afterward, Peggy S. Martin, TFI's CEO thanked Sheriff McGovern personally for all he has accomplished on behalf of Kansas families and children. The Governor's Conference was held in Wichita at the Airport Hilton during October 29-30, 2008.

Sheriff McGovern and the Douglas County Sheriff's Department (DGSO) have worked for over ten years with TFI Family Services' Douglas County Supervised Visitation and Exchange Center (VEC). Sheriff McGovern has worked with TFI to provide consistent security at the VEC as well as safety and awareness trainings for VEC staff. In situations involving domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault or stalking, supervised visitation and exchange programs can make a world of difference when parents need to exchange physical custody of the child or have a court ordered supervised visit. The Visitation and Exchange Center provides a safe haven for children and parents alike.

In addition to Sheriff McGovern's work with the VEC, he has been actively supportive of the community's drive to develop a Child Advocacy Center. Currently, DGSO has

deputies who've undergone specialized training in child abuse investigation, best practices and are also active members of the Child Abuse Response Team in the community.

As Sheriff McGovern, DGSO has innovated children and family visitation at their correctional facility to allow positive family connections when appropriate. The correctional facility also utilizes mental health services and offers parenting education classes to inmates, ultimately improving the lives of children and families.

Beth McKenzie, the Senior Facilitator for the VEC stated, "Sheriff McGovern holds his department to a higher standard, going above and beyond common expectations for a law enforcement department when considering abused, neglected, or at-risk children. His department is actively involved with and/or supportive of both preventative and treatment measures for the youth in our community."

**ABOUT TFI Family Services** – To learn more about TFI and the Douglas County Supervised Visitor and Exchange Center, visit [www.the-farm.org](http://www.the-farm.org) TFI Family Services is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for youth and families through Behavioral Health and Child Welfare Services. Their goal is always to build brighter tomorrows for families and children together.

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**Pictures Attached**



Steve Solomon, PhD., Director of Public Policy, Beth McKenzie, Senior Facilitator of VEC and Sheriff Kenneth McGovern



Peggy S. Martin, CEO of TFI Family Services, Steve Solomon, PhD., Director of Public Policy and Sheriff Kenneth McGovern