

NEWS FROM YOUR PEER LIAISON



CANDICE YORK

IFAPA Peer Liaison

How to Contact Me:

888-299-4486

641-226-6227 Ottumwa
cyork@ifapa.org

Find me on Facebook at:
"South Central IFAPA"

**I UNDERSTAND...
I AM A FOSTER PARENT TOO**

IFAPA recognizes that foster parents often need the perspective of peers during the foster parenting and adoption experience.

I can provide support and assist you with questions regarding:

- Licensing requirements
- Training needs
- Respite care
- Behavior challenges
- Working with birth families
- Confidentiality issues
- And much more!

Working with Birth Parents: Foster Parents Making a Difference

You may have become a foster parent to make a difference in a child's life. A big part of caring for a child involves being kind and respectful to the child's birth parents.

Below are a few ideas for you to incorporate into your everyday work with birth parents. All things big and small can make a difference and help build a solid working relationship with birth parents!

- With DHS permission, contact the birth parents when the child is placed in your home. Ask the birth parents if there is anything you need to know for this first night. This first call is the foundation for a positive working relationship.
- Ask the birth parents' advice on even small things: favorite foods, hair products to use, what detergent they use, does the child sleep with a night light, bedtime routine, fears, allergies or any special considerations to help make the child feel comfortable in your home.
- Consider saving or making small gifts and mementos for the birth parents. A child's artwork, a note from the child, or photos make great gifts for the birth parents from the child. Even a two-year-old's very best artwork of multicolored scribbles becomes something very valuable to her birth parents.
- Include the birth parents in the child's medical and dental appointments, school events or activities. Allow them to take the lead in discussing the child.
- Be respectful of the effort a birth parent has made to provide for their child. Make sure they get to see their kids in clothing or with the toys they have provided.
- Keep a journal of the child's activities and share this with the birth family.
- Send a disposable camera on family interactions so the family can take pictures of their time together. When getting the photos developed get two copies--one set to share with the birth family and one to keep for the child's life book.
- Encourage birth parents to share important dates such as birthdays for siblings, parents, or grandparents. Help the child make cards to celebrate these milestones as well as a card for Mother's and Father's Day.
- Provide transportation to and from family interactions when possible. This will give you an opportunity to share information directly with the birth parents.
- Work on the child's life book with the birth parent using IFAPA's life book pages.
- Share some of the routines in your home with the birth parents. (Examples: the family shares dinner together each night, each person takes their plate to the sink, a chore chart is used, family rules or bedtime routines.)
- Allow family interactions to take place in your home and involve the birth parents in normal childcare tasks such as bathing, feeding, reading stories, or tucking into bed. This shows the child that you and their parents are working together and it minimizes loyalty conflicts.
- Be kind and professional when working with the birth parents. Leave the judging to the



www.ifapa.org

NEWS FROM YOUR IFAPA PEER LIAISON

Upcoming Trainings and Events

- 7/25/15 9:00—12:15 3 HRS Alakazam! Does it Take Magic to Create Healthy, Positive Attachments with Foster and Adoptive Children?
Ankeny IFAPA Training Center 6864 NE 14th St.
- 7/25/15 1:30—4:45 pm 3 HRS Get the Real Hook Up: Teens and Technology
Ankeny IFAPA Training Center 6864 NE 14th St.
- 8/1/15 9:00—12:15 3 HRS When Old Parenting Strategies Don't Work! Help Us Please!
Ankeny IFAPA Training Center 6864 NE 14th St.
- 8/1/15 1:30—4:45 pm 3 HRS Hope for Healing: Trust Based Relational Intervention
Ankeny IFAPA Training Center 6864 NE 14th St.
- 8/15/15 9:30—4:45 pm 6 HRS Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking and Its Impact on Children in Care
Ankeny IFAPA Training Center 6864 NE 14th St.
- 8/22/15 9:00—12:15 3 HRS Connect the Dots: Emotions to Behaviors
Burlington Great Prairie AEA 3601 West Ave
- 8/22/15 1:30--4:45 pm 3 HRS How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will talk
Burlington Great Prairie AEA 3601 West Ave.

Check out the IFAPA website to register for trainings and for other training opportunities in the area or call 800-277-8145 ext. 1

Don't forget to sign up for Adventureland Day on August 8th. You can purchase tickets on the IFAPA website or by calling the office.

The IFAPA Fall conference will be held in Waterloo on October 16-17th at the Five Sullivan Brothers Convention Center.

Summer Activity!

Summer is a great time to build special memories with the kids in your home. Enjoy!

DIY Bubbles:

1/3 cup liquid dishwashing soap

1 1/2 cup water

2 tsp sugar

or another recipe:

1 gallon water

2/3 cup liquid dishwashing soap

2-3 Tbsp glycerin
(available at most pharmacies or online)

