

NEWS FROM YOUR PEER LIAISON

March 2015

DID YOU KNOW???

Did you KNOW that IFAPA now offers our awesome publications on our website? You can visit www.ifapa.org to access the following booklets: *The Child Abuse Assessment - A Guide for Foster Parents; Completing the Circle - Uncovering, Discovering & Creating Connections for Your Foster & Adoptive Children; Confidentiality - A Guide for Foster Parents; Educators Making a Difference for Students - Adoption, Foster Care and Kinship Care in the School Setting; Foster Parents and the Courts; Navigating Iowa's Adoption Subsidy Program; Raising Relatives' Children; Transracial Parenting in Foster Care and Adoption: Strengthening Your Bicultural Family.* Check them out!

How prepared were you, the last time you received a phone call about taking a foster placement? After you hung up the phone, did you wish you had asked **this or that, in order to make the best decision for your family and for the child? When is the last time you printed off and updated your **SUGGESTED PRE-PLACEMENT AND TIME-OF-PLACEMENT QUESTIONS?** Perhaps it is time to get that done. You can find it at www.ifapa.org, under the publications tab. Do it now!**

Are you caring for a foster teen in your home? Then it is time to look at Transition Planning! The Department of Human Services has Transition Planning Specialists (TPS) who focus on resources available to teens in care. Your teen is facing many questions that might seem very scary, such as:

Where will the youth live once they leave foster care?
How will they support themselves?
Will they pursue higher education or immediately enter the workforce?
Will the youth continue to receive Medicaid benefits for health insurance and prescriptions?

The TPS is prepared to assist with these issues and many more. Go to www.ifapa.org, click on Resources tab, and find Resources for Youth.



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IFAPA Peer Liaison

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Find me on Facebook at:
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**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!



www.ifapa.org

NEWS FROM YOUR IFAPA PEER LIAISON

What children in foster care Want YOU to know

A former foster child suggested that there were ways to help new foster children when they arrive in your home. Here is what he said:

1. SMILE...a simple smile will go a long way and make sure you are at eye level when speaking to us, especially little ones.
2. I'm hungry...have some food out. Then let us know that it's ok to eat it any time. We're usually pretty hungry.
3. If you have kids living in your house, let them show us around. It's just a little weird to have the parents do this. We feel a little more comfortable with kids instead of you.
4. Give us some time. Then discuss the rules. Please understand that many of our families do things differently than yours. Please be clear of what you expect (i.e. we only eat in the kitchen; take your shoes off at the door). Be patient until we learn.
5. We won't say it but we usually are scared. When it's bedtime, leave a light on. Then say, "the bathroom light is on so that you can find it in the night easily." The truth is we are not comfortable in your house and it's a little creepy.
6. What is this place? We may not know what a foster home is. If you have some books about this or even a book about your family, we would very much be interested in looking at these books.
7. Show us where our space is and let us know if it's just our space or if we are to share it with each other or anyone else. We desperately need to protect each other and our belongings.
8. Act normal. I'm sure you are excited to have us move in, but we may not feel the same way. Again, be patient.
9. Don't try to fix us. We may not seem happy and we may even cry. Be patient. We were just pulled from everything we know and we miss that a lot.
10. Give us some space. We need to adjust what has happened. We are trying to figure everything out, which also includes you.
11. Be honest. We will want to know when we are going to see or talk to our family. If you don't know, tell us that, but try to find out and do whatever you can to make this contact happen.

Upcoming Training:

March 26, 2015: 6-8 pm
Federated Fellowship
309 S. Roosevelt; Pella
Area Support Group.
Topic: Maintaining
Healthy Boundaries.

April 11, 2015: 9-12:15
Ottumwa Great Prairie
AEA: Topic: Stop,
Collaborate and Listen:
Collaborating with Birth
Families for Better
Outcomes.

April 11, 2015: 1-4:15
pm Ottumwa Great
Prairie AEA: Topic:
Grrrr....I am just so
mad: Helping young
children deal with
anger.

May 2, 2015 8:30 am-4
pm: Planning for
successful transitions
Mini Conference—
Preparing Youth for
Adult living, learning
and working. View Flyer
and Register here:
http://www.ifapa.org/pdf_docs/TransitionsMiniConferenceFlyer.pdf