

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!


Iowa Foster & Adoptive Parents Association
www.ifapa.org

October News

National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness of the more than 100,000 children in foster care waiting to find permanent, loving families. This annual, one-day event has made the dreams of thousands of children come true by working with policymakers, practitioners and advocates to finalize adoptions and create and celebrate adoptive families. In total, National Adoption Day helped nearly 50,000 children move from foster care to a forever family. Communities across the country celebrate the Saturday before every Thanksgiving. This year the National Adoption Day Coalition expects 4,500 children in foster care to be adopted on National Adoption Day, on November 22, 2014.

Adoption Saturday Celebration, Saturday, November 15th 8:30 am to 12:00 pm. Polk County Courthouse 500 Mulberry St. Downtown Des Moines. For more information contact Michelle Saveraid (515) 244-1172 or msaveraid@youthlawcenter.org

HOPE Adoption Conference: Windsor Heights, Iowa 900 64th St. at 12:30 pm. HOPE Adoption Conference 2014 celebrates adoption, educates individuals about adoption and motivates people to engage in caring for children who need families. Contact Diana Christiansen, Business Manager, Beauty Amidst The Ashes, Inc. (712) 229-6456 or diana57.DC@gmail.com

Here are some National Adoption links you may find useful and interesting:

www.adoptuskids.org

www.nationaladoptionday.org

www.davethomasfoundationforadoption.org

www.adoptionfriendlyworkplace.org

www.adopt.org

www.cwla.org (Child Welfare League of America)

www.nacac.org (North American Council on Adoptable Children)

www.adoptioncouncil.org

www.fpsol.com/adoption (Adoption Policy Resource Center)

Adopting from foster care does not mean that the challenges the child faces cease to exist. Adopted foster children still face many emotional obstacles. This article helps to bring this issue to light. <http://www.npr.org/2012/08/28/159928096/helping-foster-kids-even-after-adoption>

NEWS FROM YOUR IFAPA PEER LIAISON

[Do I belong here? Or is this just another stop for me?](#) By Adam Robe, MSW

Listen. This is the most powerful thing you can do in any relationship, but it is sometimes the most difficult to do. Have you ever been around a baby or a toddler that you don't know who is trying to communicate their needs to you and they get frustrated because you don't understand what they need? They may cry, pout, or throw a fit. Yet, their parent may know instantly what the child wanted—meanwhile you are trying to figure out how they knew when the child grunted that they wanted their favorite stuffed animal. The short answer is that the parent has learned to interpret their child's verbal and nonverbal communication. They have done this by listening to their child. Now imagine, working with a child or having a child move into your home who may have learned a whole new way to communicate. A child may have learned that misbehavior is the quickest and most effective way to get their needs met. Sometimes, a child's misbehavior is a way that they have learned to protect themselves. If things are starting to feel too comfortable, or they are starting to have feelings for a foster parent or caseworker, they misbehave to keep from getting hurt again. Learning what the child needs to takes someone who is willing to listen. Not only to their verbal communication, but their non-verbal communication as well.

Here are some tips for creating an environment for truly listening:

- Spend quality time with your child. This doesn't mean you have to have a sit-down meeting with them and ask them a bunch of questions. Rather, play with them, interact with them, read to them and talk about what is happening.
- No video games or television! Playing video games and watching TV creates a vacuum that both parent and child gets sucked into and neither of you walk away with anything.
- Give the child your full attention. Don't answer the phone or respond to text messages, even if you think it will only take a second. This is one-on-one time or family time that you will be spending with the child. And doing homework doesn't count! Kids watch your body language to see if you are really paying attention to them. If they see you are not really into them, they will move on to the next thing.

Upcoming Events

11/1 9:00—12:15
Ottumwa Great Prairie
AEA 2814 N. Court
*Through the looking
glass: Life through the
filter of personality
disorders*

11/1 1:30—4:45
Ottumwa Great Prairie
AEA 2814 N. Court *Get
me off this roller coaster:
Coping skills for
emotional intensity issues*

11/11 Oskaloosa Support
Group: Topic-
Confidentiality (Trainer
Julie Seemann) 6—8 pm
Gateway Nazarene
Church—Child Care
Provided.

11/13 Centerville
Support Group: Topic:
*Understanding Discipline
and its role in effective
parenting* 6—8 pm. No
child care.

11/20 Ottumwa Support
Group: Speaker:
Wapello County Judge
Owens 6—8 pm. If child
care is needed, please
rsvp to cyork@ifapa.org

NEWS FROM YOUR IFAPA PEER LIAISON

- Don't do all of the talking. The best way to hear someone is to let them talk to you and you just listen. Kids in foster care become master listeners! This way they don't have to talk about their feelings. They will try all kinds of methods to distract you-like misbehaving or rambling. Try to get them to focus on a topic they are interested in. Overtime, they will open up more to you because they know you are really interested.
- When your child does start talking, it is important not to judge the conversation or them. If you start questioning them or trying to dig deeper, they will know what you are doing and shut down. You can use prompting questions to keep the conversation going, such as "What happened next?" or "Sounds like it was quite an experience."
- Get animated during conversations. Give great eye contact and show a wide range of facial expressions. Children will model these behaviors and you will start to see more animation from them when they tell a story.
- Listen to what is not being said. What isn't your child saying? This can be useful information and you can use this information to help open further dialogue in the future.
- If a child is misbehaving, remember this is communicating. Think about what was happening right before the behavior. Over time, you may start to see patterns and you can develop an intervention before he/she acts out.

If you follow these tips, you will learn a lot about your child. Not only that, you will develop a trusting relationship with him/her that will open the door for more meaningful and honest conversations. Listening is one of the best ways to show a child that they are valued—which is one of the ways to show a child that they belong.

For more from Adam Robe, check out his website at www.robbietherabbit.com