

JULY 2015

NEWS FROM YOUR PEER LIAISON



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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!

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- makes great gifts for the birth parents from the child. Even a 2-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. Then, 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 child care 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 courts.



www.ifapa.org

NEWS FROM YOUR IFAPA PEER LIAISON

Support Group Happenings

NCIFAPA Support Group

*Due to the low attendance at our quarterly support group meetings, The NCIFAPA SUPPORT GROUP will now be "ON HOLD".

*Area IFAPA trainings: "CPR/FA "on Sept. 12, 2015 and "What are You Trying to Tell Me" on Nov. 7th, 2015, (both at Mason City NIACC) and the Waterloo IFAPA conference on October 16-17, 2015. Register at www.ifapa.org. Watch my newsletter for additional trainings.

* Please contact Christie McGuire with questions at 855-929-2005

HHWW Foster/Adoptive Parent Support Group

*This support group will be on summer break for June and July but watch my newsletter for the August date and details.

*Contact Julie Schroeder for more information at 515-291-3029.

Ames Foster/Adoptive Support Group

will no longer be formally meeting. Please watch my newsletter or go to IFAPA's website (ifapa.org) for trainings in your area.

Save the date: Oct. 20, 2015 Cornerstone Church-Ames

"Human Trafficking" by Mike Ferjak (Attorney Generals office)

Fort Dodge Lunch and Learn

*This support group will be on summer break for June and July but watch my newsletter for the August date and details.

*Contact Julie Schroeder for more information at 515-291-3029.

MARSHALL COUNTY SUPPORT GROUP

*This support group is on **SUMMER BREAK** and will resume in September! Watch my newsletter for details!

*New Hope Christian Church, 3901 S. Center in Marshalltown

*Child care is offered--donations accepted.

* Contact Mindy Speake for more information at 515-291-1292.

SUMMER TIDBITS

IFAPA Activities

Save the Date!

IFAPA's Fall Conference

Friday & Saturday,

October 16-17, 2015

Five Sullivan Brothers

Convention Center – Waterloo

More details will be posted in July at

www.ifapa.org

Summer Family Fun!!

IFAPA's Appreciation Day at
Adventureland - August 8, 2015

Families are able to purchase tickets from IFAPA at greatly reduced rates!! For details and to order tickets :

http://www.ifapa.org/pdf_docs/2015AdventurelandForm.pdf

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 Tblsp glycerin (available at most pharmacies or online)

