



# Iowa Foster & Adoptive Parents Association

For 38 years, the Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parents Association (IFAPA) has been a voice for Iowa's foster and adoptive children through the support it provides to the parents of these children. The Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parents Association empowers, supports and advocates for foster, adoptive and kinship families across Iowa. IFAPA provides peer support, training and resources to promote safety, permanency and well-being for Iowa's children. IFAPA provides the following programs and support to families:

## Friends of Children in Foster Care

The Friends of Children in Foster Care program provides foster children with the funds they need for those special "extras" in life which they would otherwise not receive. Some items this program has been able to help foster children obtain include music instruments, summer camps, schools trip and senior pictures.

## Trainings for Foster and Adoptive Parents

IFAPA offers a variety of continuing education to foster and adoptive parents throughout the year. Because most foster children have experienced abuse and neglect prior to entering foster care, they may need therapeutic parenting techniques to help them heal. IFAPA offers trainings that will teach special techniques to foster healing, build self-esteem and resiliency, and improve relationships with others in their lives. IFAPA strives to provide effective trainings on parenting, working with the system and birth parents, and other relevant issues in foster care and adoption.

## Peer Liaisons

IFAPA has Foster and Adoptive Parent Peer Liaisons across the state. Peer Liaisons provide peer support to foster and adoptive parents in their assigned areas. They contact newly licensed foster homes and are available as an on-going source of information and support to all foster and adoptive parents.

## Resource Information Specialists

The Resource Information Specialists help families successfully meet the challenges of parenting the children placed in their home through telephone support, educational materials, knowledge of services available, and connections to other families.

## Kinship Connections Project

The Kinship Connections Project is a resource for families caring for a relative's child or a child considered kin placed through Juvenile Court. The Kinship Project provides peer support, information, resources, and referrals to community services.

## Listserv Discussion Group

The IFAPA listserv connects and provides support to foster and adoptive families via the internet. Members can post questions and answers and share information on topics of interest.

## Support Group Affiliation

Support groups offer opportunities for parents to provide mutual support as well as obtain required training. IFAPA promotes the development and growth of these groups by offering an annual retreat, general support and financial assistance.

## Public Policy Agenda and Advocacy

IFAPA members are 7,205 voices strong. Iowa's foster and adoptive families are improving the child welfare and child protective system by advocating for positive change. Each year the public policy agenda defines issues IFAPA members have identified and prioritized as important to families. IFAPA will continue to advocate for innovative and established best practices to improve the Iowa Child Welfare system. Every year, IFAPA hosts a Legislative Breakfast at the Iowa State Capitol. During this event, foster and adoptive families have the opportunity to meet legislators and advocate for children issues.

## Subsidized Adoption Respite Program

Families who receive adoption subsidy are eligible for five days of respite per year. IFAPA administers the Subsidized Adoption Respite Program for DHS by facilitating the respite payments. IFAPA does not locate respite providers for adoptive parents.

## F.A.I.R. Line (Foster Allegation Information Resource)

This program was developed to assist foster and adoptive parents across Iowa who face an allegation of abuse or neglect. The FAIR phone line is designed to provide support, information and resources to parents during a difficult time.



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www.ifapa.org  
ifapa@ifapa.org

## IFAPA

empowers,  
supports and  
advocates for  
foster, adoptive  
and kinship  
families in Iowa.



## Membership with IFAPA

Membership with IFAPA is free to all foster, adoptive and kinship parents in Iowa. Membership benefits include the following:

### Annual Spring Conference

Foster and adoptive parents receive approved training credits based on sessions from child and family experts at an annual conference. It is also a venue for parents and social workers from across the state to network.

### Appreciation Event for Families

IFAPA hosts our annual appreciation day at Adventureland. All foster and adoptive families are invited to a day of fun at discounted prices.

### IFAPA Publications

IFAPA publishes a variety of resource materials for foster, adoptive and kinship parents to assist them in understanding procedures of DHS and to enhance their parenting skills. All publications are free of charge and are available on our website.

- *Adoption Basics for Educators - How Adoption Impacts Children & How Educators Can Help*
- *The Child Abuse Assessment - A Guide for Foster Parents*
- *Completing the Circle - Uncovering, Discovering and Creating Connections for Your Foster & Adoptive Children*
- *Confidentiality - A Guide for Foster Parents*
- *Foster Parents and the Courts*
- *Kinship Caretakers - How to Navigate Iowa's Child Welfare System*
- *Lifebook Pages*
- *Welcome Book pages*
- *Navigating Iowa's Adoption Subsidy Program*
- *Raising Relatives' Children*
- *Resource Parents Partnering with Birth Parents to Benefit Children*
- *Transracial Parenting in Foster Care & Adoption - Strengthening Your Bicultural Family*

### IFAPA Newsletters

- **News & Views** - IFAPA produces the *News and Views* newsletter on a quarterly basis. Policy updates, peer support, training opportunities and resources relating to foster, adoptive and kinship families are core subjects of this newsletter.
- **Weekly Word** - IFAPA also produces a weekly newsletter called the *Weekly Word* that is sent electronically to all IFAPA members. This newsletter contains information regarding IFAPA's programs, trainings and other information helpful to foster, adoptive and kinship families.

### IFAPA Website

The IFAPA website ([www.ifapa.org](http://www.ifapa.org)) serves as a resource for families. Parents can access upcoming training dates, information on Peer Liaisons and Resource Information Specialists, support groups, copies of IFAPA publications and newsletters, the Foster Parent Handbook, DHS forms and links to other helpful websites and much more!

## THE FACTS

- **Number of foster, adoptive and kinship parents that are members of IFAPA—7,205**
- **Number of licensed foster parents across Iowa—2,504**
- **Number of subsidized adoptive families in Iowa—4,714**
- **Approx. percentage of special needs adoptions in Iowa completed by foster parents—75%**
- **In 2010, IFAPA offered 204 trainings to foster, adoptive and kinship parents.**
- **IFAPA's Peer Liaisons and Resource Information Specialists provide support to an average of 2,000 foster, adoptive and kinship parents each month.**



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*\*\*Families interested in learning more about becoming a foster or adoptive parent, should call Iowa KidsNet at 800-243-0756.\*\**