

NEWS FROM YOUR PEER LIAISON

March 2015



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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

Hello families!

Please remember that this month's Total Thursday (Cedar Rapids support group training) will be held at a different location – Four Oaks Smith Center, 5400 Kirkwood Blvd. SW. There will not be an April Total Thursday. Instead, consider attending the Foster Care Appreciation event held Saturday, April 18 for one or both sessions. There will be lunch and prizes. See training sidebar for more information information.

Janet

Future Fest 2015

You are invited to attend Future Fest 2015 - a night all about teens. Future Fest will be held from 5:00 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, March 19 at Grant Wood AEA , 4401 Sixth St. SW, Cedar Rapids. Child welfare advocate and musician Rusty Johnson, who grew up in foster care and aged out of care in Iowa, will be speaking to the group. Dinner provided. From 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. the focus will be on adults and providing information on the needs of teens in foster care as well as the need for foster and adoptive families to provide care for teenage youth in out-of-home care. From 6:15 to 8:30 p.m. the focus will be on youth in out-of-home placement, family foster care, and adoptive families. The Independent Living Simulation will help youth answer questions surrounding what will happen at age 18. Questions: Contact Rachelle DuVall ILP Facilitator: 319-368-3376: rduvall@foundation2.org or Teresa Jacobs DHS TPS: 319-892-6818, tjacobs2@dhs.state.ia.us. RSVP not required to attend, but for food planning purposes it would be helpful to let Rachelle or Teresa know if you plan to attend.

African American Hair and Skin Care Help

Have a bi-racial or black child in your care? Wondering how to care for that child's skin and hair? The Community Partnerships for Protecting Children has provided copies of "African American Hair Care Kit and Handbook" about how to care for hair and skin to DHS for all foster parents. Simply ask your child's caseworker for a copy.

Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire

It drives parents crazy, but still children lie.

Recently, I caught my son red-handed with a screwdriver twisting the screws on the light switch plate in his room until the plate broke and split in two pieces. (It quickly dawned on me why my house mysteriously had cracked light switch plates.) As I was asking him what he was doing, he slipped the screwdriver into his other hand and into the laundry basket right next to him. "Nothing," he said. "I don't know what happened." Seeing the look on my face, he quickly said his sister did it. I could feel the heat start to rise. He lied right to my face and he was blaming someone else.

Sound familiar? Not only is lying common to all children, but foster children and even adoptive children seem to turn to the tactic quicker than most and hang on to the naughty trait longer than parents would like.

My child's therapist provided me with this handout that has proven invaluable to me, so I'd thought I'd share.

Did you know that there are four stages of lying? See if you can recognize where your child is at:

1. The behavior didn't happen.
2. The behavior happened, but he or she (someone else) did it.
3. I did it, but they/someone else made me do it.
4. The behavior happened and I did it.

Progress is defined as moving to the next stage – not a complete lack of lying.

Treatment

- Lying is a deficit in constancy – knowing that the nurturing part of the caregiver still exists even when the caregiver is angry is not the same as feeling that the nurturing still exists and is still available to you.
- The lying is often unintentional, unplanned and impulsive in response to the underlying fear that the caregiver won't continue to love him or her if told the truth.
- Parents need to work on building trust and repeated activities that focus on "I love you even when..."
- Don't ask questions, instead make statements and focus on the end result of personal responsibility -- not if they admit what they did.
- Later when everyone is calm, remind the child that he is safe and nothing can make him unlovable, then follow with a brief statement such as, "You can always tell me the truth."

Treating Defiance

- Avoid power struggles
- Offer choices
- Be mindful of your own responses to the defiance
- Be aware of and attuned to what triggers the child may be experiencing
- Be aware of and attuned to the age that this behavior would typically be seen
- Set and follow through with reasonable limits on a consistent basis
- Teach the life lesson later when child is calm

For me, once I understood what was going on, I have been able to solve the problem relatively quickly. I started emphasizing that I might be mad, but that didn't mean I didn't love him or her. I also started stressing that things happen and things get broke, but if you tell me right away and don't lie, I won't be as mad. And I also began our conversation with, "I know you did this..." when I knew who did what, cutting out the blame game right away. While we used to be stuck at stage 2, my older children are actually telling me the truth – at least the majority of the time -- and I do find myself not getting as mad as I used to. (My 4-year-old seems stuck at stage 3, but she is apologizing, so stage 4 may be right around the corner. Sanity restored – at least for now.

- Janet Rorholm

Training Corner

Total Training (Cedar Rapids Support Group), 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Thursday, March 19 at (note: different location) Four Oaks Smith Center, 5400 Kirkwood Blvd. SW, Cedar Rapids. Topic is *Drug Affected Children* presented by University of Iowa Hospitals Dr. Resmiye Oral. Childcare is offered, but RSVP by the Tuesday prior to jrorholm@ifapa.org or kmillsap@fouroaks.org with number of children and ages.

Foster Parent Appreciation Day on April 18 - Two trainings: 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. "I Won't Do it & You Can't Make Me: Oppositional Defiant Disorder in Kids & Teens; and 1 to 4:15 p.m. "Psychotherapy 101: What Therapy Is, How it Works & What You Need to Know About It." Both classes are worth 3 credit hours and will held at Four Oaks Bridge, 2100 First Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids. Take one or both. Lunch will be provided. Register at www.ifapa.org or 1-(800) 277-8145.

IFAPA Training: CPR & First Aid, 8 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. May 9 at a location TBA. 4 credit hours. Cost: \$40. Register at www.ifapa.org or 1-(800) 277-8145.

IFAPA Training: Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training, 1:30 to 4:45 p.m. May 9 at a location TBA. 3 credit hours. Register at www.ifapa.org or 1-(800) 277-8145.