

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!



www.ifapa.org

Anxiety Disorders

NAMI Basics Education Program

"The fundamentals of caring for you, your family and your child with mental illness"

What are anxiety disorders?

Anxiety disorders cause people to feel excessively frightened, distressed, or uneasy during situations in which most other people would not experience these same feelings. When they are not treated, anxiety disorders can be severely impairing and can negatively affect a person's personal relationships or ability to work or study. In the most severe cases, anxiety disorders can make even regular and daily activities such as shopping, cooking or going outside incredibly difficult. Anxiety disorders can further cause low self-esteem, lead to substance abuse, and isolation from one's friends and family.

Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illnesses in America: they affect around 20 percent of the population at any given time. Fortunately there are many good treatments for anxiety disorders. Unfortunately, some people do not seek treatment for their illness because they do not realize how severe their symptoms are or are too ashamed to seek help. Furthermore, these disorders are often difficult to recognize for friends, family and even some doctors.

What are the most common anxiety disorders?

Panic Disorder—Characterized by "panic attacks," panic disorder results in sudden feelings of terror that can strike repeatedly and sometimes without warning. Physical symptoms of a panic attack include chest pain, heart palpitations, and shortness of breath, dizziness, and upset stomach, feelings of being disconnected and fear of dying. Some people with this disorder may experience unrealistic worry of having more panic attacks and become very ashamed and self-consciousness. This can result in some people feeling too afraid to go to certain places (e.g., airplanes, elevator), which can be very intrusive in their daily lives.

Obsessive-compulsive Disorder (OCD)—OCD is characterized by repetitive, intrusive, irrational and unwanted thoughts (obsessions) and/or rituals that seem impossible to control (compulsions). Some people with OCD have specific compulsions (e.g. Counting, arranging, cleaning) that they "must perform" multiple times each day in order to momentarily release their anxiety that something bad might happen to themselves or to someone they love. People with OCD may be aware that their symptoms don't make sense and are excessive, but on another level they may fear that the thoughts they are having might be true.

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)—When people experience or witness a traumatic event such as abuse, a natural disaster, or extreme violence, it is normal to be distressed and to feel "on edge" for some time after this experience. Some people who experience traumatic events have severe symptoms such as nightmares, flashbacks, being very easily startled or scared, or feeling numb/angry/irritable/distracted. Sometimes these symptoms last for weeks or even months after the event and are so severe that they make it difficult for a person to work, have loving relationships, or "return to normal." This is when a person may be suffering from PTSD. Many people with PTSD have difficulty discussing their symptoms because they may be too embarrassed or scared to recall their trauma. This is common in victims of sexual abuse and in combat veterans.

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Phobias—A phobia is a disabling and irrational fear of something that really poses little or no actual danger for most people. This fear can be very disabling when it leads to avoidance of objects or situations that may cause extreme feelings of terror, dread and panic. “Specific” phobias center on particular objects (e.g., caterpillars, dogs) or situations (e.g., being on a bridge, flying in an airplane). Many people are very sensitive to being criticized and are ashamed of their phobias which can lead to problems with self-esteem.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)—A severe, chronic, exaggerated worrying about everyday events is the most common symptom in people with GAD. This is a worrying that lasts for at least six months, makes it difficult to concentrate and to carry out routine activities, and happens for many hours each day in some people. Some people with this disorder anticipate the worst and often experience physical symptoms of fatigue, tension, headaches and nausea due to the severity of their anxiety.

Social Anxiety Disorder—An intense fear of social situations that leads to difficulties with personal relationships and at the workplace or in school is most common in people with social anxiety disorder. People with social anxiety disorder often have an irrational fear of being humiliated in public for “saying something stupid,” or “not knowing what to say.” People with this illness may have symptoms similar to “panic attacks” (e.g., heart palpitations, dizziness, shortness of breath) or may experience severe sweating (hyperhidrosis) when in social situations. This leads to avoidance of social situations, which can make it difficult to go to parties, school, or even family gatherings.

Other recognized anxiety disorders include: agoraphobia, acute stress disorder, anxiety disorder due to medical conditions, such as thyroid abnormalities, and substance-induced anxiety disorder, such as from too much caffeine.

Some people with other mental illnesses, such as depression or schizophrenia, may have symptoms of severe anxiety. These symptoms of worrying, panic attacks or compulsions may make treating their primary illness more complicated for mental health professionals. Therefore, complete treatment of depression or schizophrenia often requires treatment of anxiety symptoms.

People with anxiety disorders are more likely to use or abuse alcohol and other drugs including benzodiazepines (e.g., diazepam, alprazolam and clonazepam), opiates (e.g., pain-killers, heroin) or cigarettes. This is known as self-medication. Some people use drugs and alcohol to try and reduce their anxiety. This is very dangerous because even though some drugs make people feel less anxious when they are high, anxiety becomes even worse when the drugs wear off. Other people are anxious because they are intoxicated or withdrawing from drugs and alcohol.

For additional information please contact me, your IFAPA Peer Liaison for handouts and information from NAMI. Idodson@ifapa.org

Want to attend a support group in your area?

There are several across the Des Moines Service Area. Support groups give families an opportunity to connect to other foster and adoptive parents and many provide training options. For additional information please contact me, your IFAPA Peer Liaison. Idodson@ifapa.org

Happy New Year!



Life isn't about getting and having, it's about giving and being. —[Kevin Kruse](#)

IFAPA

Spring Conference

March 6 & 7, 2015

Adventureland Inn

Altoona, IA

Registration Deadline is
Tuesday February 17th, 2015

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DES MOINES SERVICE AREA #5

Date & Time	Name of Training	Credit	Location
Jan. 10, 2015 9am-12:15pm	Law and Order: Foster Care	3 hours	Ankeny IFAPA Training Center 6864 NE 14th St, Suite 5A
Jan. 10, 2015 1:30pm-4:45pm	Why Can't They Stop: Addiction and New Drug Trends	3 hours	Ankeny IFAPA Training Center 6864 NE 14th St, Suite 5A
Jan. 17, 2015 9am-12:15pm	Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training	3 hours	Ankeny IFAPA Training Center 6864 NE 14th St, Suite 5A
Jan. 17, 2015 1:15pm-5:30pm	CPR & First Aid (REGISTRATION FORM) To avoid late fees pay by Jan. 2	4 hours	Ankeny IFAPA Training Center 6864 NE 14th St, Suite 5A
Feb. 7, 2015 9:30am-4:45pm	What Are You Trying to Tell Me? Responding to Troubling Behaviors	6 hours	Ames Public Library 515 Douglas PEO Room
Feb. 14, 2015 9am-12:15pm	Darkness to Light (Sexual Abuse Prevention)	3 hours	Ankeny IFAPA Training Center 6864 NE 14th St, Suite 5A
Feb. 14, 2015 1:30pm-4:45pm	Nurturing Healthy Sexual Development	3 hours	Ankeny IFAPA Training Center 6864 NE 14th St, Suite 5A

To register for a training:
Call IFAPA at 800-277-8145 ext. 1

Training Requirements for Foster Parents

In Iowa, foster parents need six hours of training annually to renew their foster care license and at least three of those training hours must be done in a group setting. In order to maintain your foster parent license, the DHS requires foster parents to complete [CPR and First Aid](#), [Medication Management](#) and [Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training](#). **PLEASE KEEP IN MIND** - With the exception of *CPR, First Aid and Mandatory Reporter classes, foster parents CANNOT receive training credit for any class that they have previously attended and used for re-licensing credit.*

Foster, adoptive and kinship parents are welcome to attend any of IFAPA trainings. There is no cost to attend trainings (with the exception of the Fall and Spring Conferences and CPR & First Aid classes). All trainings are approved for foster parent credit.

CPR & First Aid Clarification from DHS

Question: When are the CPR and First Aid trainings required to be completed again?

Response: The CPR and First Aid Trainings are required to be completed during, but before the end, of every third training cycle.