

# BLACK HAWK FOSTER & ADOPTIVE PARENT NEWSLETTER

INVEST IN IOWA'S CHILDREN...OUR FUTURE

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JANUARY 2013

## January Meeting

### “Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma”

Our next meeting is **January 8**, starting at **6:30 pm for social time**. Then at **7 pm**, we will continue our training on **“Caring for Children who Have Experienced Trauma” Module 5, Dealing with Feelings and Behaviors**. This module focuses around a concept known as the cognitive triangle which encourages parents to better understand the connections between thinking, feeling and doing and the role these three areas play in the management of trauma related behaviors. This module provides ways of understanding the feelings your child may have as well as giving you concrete ways of encouraging a sense of mastery and control in your child. This series has 8 modules. You don't have to attend all 8 sessions, but it would be beneficial if you did. Each time you come to group your name will be added to the drawing to win \$100 at our May meeting! Please join us at Grace Lutheran Church, 1024 W. 8th Street, Waterloo for an evening of fellowship, snacks, beverages, door prizes and training!



With winter weather, there is always a chance of snow and icy roads. In case of inclement weather we will try to make a decision to cancel no later than 4:00 pm the day of the meeting. We will post the cancellation on the KWWL website. If schools in our area are closed or dismiss early, you can assume that we will cancel the meeting. If in doubt call any of the numbers below.

Childcare will be available for children ages 0-12 years and AMP for 13- 18 years.

If you have any questions please contact Dianna Seedorff, IFAPA Peer Liaison, at 319.235.2534 or one of our dependable co-chairs: Judith Jefferies at 319.610.1861 or Nicole Grieves at 319.939.7693.



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A HAPPY  
NEW YEAR



## - Waterloo Chapter



Happy Holidays everyone! AMP has been busy this last month celebrating the holidays! With the help of extremely generous community members, we had a very successful Thanksgiving meal and Holiday party. The youth received some wonderful gifts and got to enjoy each other's company. We have also seen an increase of youth participating in AMP meetings! This is wonderful and I hope to see it continue to grow in 2013!

We have some big things coming up in the New Year! We will have a speaker from Allen's Women's Health Clinic come for 2 meetings to talk about healthy sexual choices and STI education. We are also hoping to have a couple of local chefs come and teach us how to make easy meals on a simple budget. We are planning on beginning some service activities after the holiday season and getting our name out in the community more.

We continue to have 3 young people engaged in the Youth Advocacy group at the state level. They just had their first conference call this last week. The group is continuing to grow and move forward. We also had 4 youth attend the Dream Team Peer Advocacy training held in Ames at the beginning of December. The youth said the training was great and were very glad to attend. Youth that attend AMP meetings are able to learn more about upcoming trainings and leadership activities they can get involved with!

On behalf of the AMP young people, we would like to wish you a Happy Holiday and look forward to working with you in the next year!

Thanks!

Carrie Dunnwald (carrie\_d\_12@hotmail.com)

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

## *Getting to know our foster families*

### Meet Terry and Angel Schwickerath

Terry and Angel are newly licensed foster parents. They are licensed for 3 children. Angel and Terry take ages 4-14 years. They are willing to do respite and you can reach them at 319-346-1039.



### Meet Marcy and Warren Blatz

Marcy and Warren have been licensed since 2006. They are licensed for 2 children. The Blatz's take age 0-5 and are willing to do respite. You can reach Marcy at 515-205-3118.





## *Ways to build and maintain sibling connections when placed separately*

- \* Arrange for face-to-face visits at least two times a month.
- \* Foster parents, adoptive parents, and social workers should help the children imitate contact. Do not wait for the children to do it.
- \* Families should put pictures of siblings in their home.
- \* Include information about siblings— known and unknown— in the children’s lifebooks.
- \* Have the children see the same therapist on the same day. They can visit in the waiting room and have lunch or dinner together after. The therapist can also make recommendations based on information on all the children.
- \* When visiting birth parents, add extra time after visiting time so the children play and process the visit together.
- \* Have foster/adoptive parents provide respite for siblings of the children they foster or have adopted.
- \* Play games and use other techniques that encourage sibling interaction during visits.
- \* Invite siblings to share birthday’s, ball games, dance recitals, and more.
- \* Go on vacation together.
- \* Gather all the siblings for a family portrait.
- \* Use e-mail and letters. Parents and workers should provide pre-addressed and stamped envelopes, if necessary.
- \* If possible, place siblings in the same community. Even if the children are not able to live together, they will be able to visit each other easily. Also, to sure to send pictures at least yearly, so the children understand that their siblings are growing, too .
- \* For the siblings that the children cannot visit or do not know, make a “Sibling Box”. Let the child put cards, pictures, drawings, and small gifts in a pretty box to give to the sibling if and when they do have contact.
- \* Add missing siblings to the holidays. For example, have an ornament on the Christmas tree for the missing sibling, have a cake on the birthday, or light a candle on a special day. Create rituals.



Source: Keck, G.C & Kupecky,R(1998). Siblings: the old, the new, the feelings! In *Adopting the hurt child: Hope for families and special needs kids*

## *When Foster Parents First Meet Birth Family*



Your foster child has moved in, is settled into his room, and learning your home rules. Now comes the time that many foster parents worry most about— meeting the child's birth parents. For the sake of all concerned, it is very important for the foster parents and the child's birth parents to form a working relationship. This relationship will help everyone involved on the team to work the family back together. The team is usually made up of you (the foster parent), the birth parents, the social workers, the therapists, and other workers. The reunification of the family is almost always the primary goal.

### **First Steps**

#### **Be on time.**

Always have the children at their visits on time. Do not short the parent's time with your lateness.

#### **Ask questions.**

That child's parent knows them better than anyone, and almost everyone likes to talk about their kids.

Questions to ask could include:

- Health Questions: Is the child allergic to anything?
- What are some of the child's favorite foods?
- What are some of the child's favorite things?
- What are some of the child's fears?

By asking them about their child, you will begin to form an important relationship between the parents and yourself.

#### **Remember to trust your instincts.**

If the parents don't seem open to communication with you at this time, don't push it. They are dealing with a lot of stress and worry. Over time, you and the parents will have many more opportunities to meet and to hopefully form a working relationship.

#### **Tell them about you and your family.**

Don't be afraid to introduce yourself. Allow them time to ask you questions. But, be prepared for rudeness, anger, and distance. Remember that they have just been through a traumatic time in their lives with the removal of their children. Be respectful of that, no matter what the reason for the child's removal.

#### **Ask About Educational Needs.**

If you have any school forms that need to be signed by the parents (or the social worker), be sure to have them with you. Any questions that you may have regarding school should be prepared in advance.

- Ask which schools the child went to in the past, so that the current school can retrieve the child's information.
- Ask what range of grades the child usually brings home, and in which subjects.

Once the child starts bringing home school papers, take a few to show the parents. If the school isn't sending grade cards to the parents, be sure to bring them to the meetings or visits.

#### **Prepare the children.**

Have the child prepared for the visit. Some points to consider:

- Will the visit take place during dinner? If so, is it your responsibility or the parent's to make sure that the child is fed? Sometimes the case workers like for the parents to provide dinner, so check on this. Nothing would be worse than a child that is grumpy due to hunger. This is not fair to the parents or the child.
- Gently pre-teach the child about how the visits will happen. Detail where you are meeting her parents, how long the visit will last, and that there will be a time to say good-bye until next time.
- Consider buying a calendar and placing stickers on days of future visits. But each child is different. Some children will thrive with this information, while others will stew and worry.

#### **Be kind and professional.**

Above all, the best bet in forming a connection with the child's parents is through the use of kindness and understanding. Leave the judging to the courts.

*Adapted from; About.com Adoption/Foster Care, by Carrie Craft, About .Com Guide*



## Training Available in Black Hawk County

In Iowa, foster parents need six hours of training annually to renew their foster care license. At least three training hours must be done in a group setting. Foster parents must complete their training two months prior to licensing date. *Note: Families will no longer be granted extensions or exceptions for not getting their training credit on time.*

If you want to receive foster parent training credit, it is your responsibility to send your training certificates to your KidsNet licensing worker within 30 days following the training. Be sure to keep the original copy for your records.

**PLEASE KEEP IN MIND** - With the exception of CPR, First Aid and Mandatory Reporter classes, foster parents CANNOT receive training credit for any class after October 2009 that they have previously attended and used for re-licensing.

Foster parents are mandatory reporters of child abuse. As mandatory reporters, foster parents are required to complete two hours of training in child abuse identification and reporting. This training must be taken within the first year of initial licensing and every five years thereafter. CPR & FIRST AID every three years, but before the end of the third training cycle.

### “On Line Training”



DHS has approved that foster parents may receive up to 3 hours foster care training credit for courses listed on [www.FosterParents.com](http://www.FosterParents.com) and [www.FosterParentCollege.com](http://www.FosterParentCollege.com). The foster parent will read the course material, answer the test questions, and click on submit button. A certificate will be generated immediately. The certificate will need to be sent to your licensing worker. Remember to make and keep a copy for your records. There is a charge for these trainings.

### “Mandatory Reporters Training”

The Iowa Department of Public Health has approved one online Mandatory Reporter Training Class for foster parents to take. Foster parents will receive 2 hours of credit for this course. The cost to take this course is \$18.95 per person. PLEASE REMEMBER-IFAPA promotes this online class as an additional resource for foster parents; however, this is not connected to IFAPA. For detailed instructions on how to take this online course, visit the IFAPA website: [http://www.ifapa.org/training/other\\_trainings.asp](http://www.ifapa.org/training/other_trainings.asp)

**Need Support? Have a question?  
We are here for you!**

**Dianna Seedorff**, IFAPA Peer  
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## More Available Training

### “ COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CHILD THROUGH PLAY”

**Date:** Saturday, January 26, 2013  
**Time:** 1:30—4:45 PM  
**Location:** Hawkeye College, Waterloo  
**Credits:** 3 hours

For our children who can't verbalize what they are feeling or have experienced, toys become their words and play becomes their form of expression. This training provides an overview of the rationale for play therapy with children and how trauma affects a child's play, provides information on how to gauge what play is appropriate and when to seek help, and how to use your child's natural language of play to help build connections to you and to others. This training covers communicating through play with all age ranges, including ideas for how to connect with your teen. It will also provide information on how to best communicate what you are seeing with your child's therapist.

To register for this training call 800-277-8145 ext. 1 or register on line at [www.ifapa.org](http://www.ifapa.org) under the training tab on the home page. You will receive an email or letter from IFAPA about one week prior to your class. This reminder will include additional details on the training location.

### “DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT!!!!!!” ANXIETY, PANIC AND OCD

**Date:** Saturday, February 9, 2013  
**Time:** 9 AM—4:30 PM  
**Location:** Clarion Hotel, Cedar Falls  
**Credits:** 6 hours

We all worry and at times feel anxious and at certain times worrying can turn into real symptoms of anxiety and panic. And in more extreme cases, anxiety and panic can manifest itself into obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors. Have you ever wondered exactly why it is that we worry and experience symptoms of anxiety and panic? The purpose of this workshop is to help participants gain greater insight and understanding behind the biology of why anxiety exists and teach the skills needed for children and adolescents, as well as adults, to be able to manage anxiety, panic, and obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors more effectively.

To register for this training call 800-277-8145 ext. 1 or register on line at [www.ifapa.org](http://www.ifapa.org) under the training tab on the home page. You will receive an email or letter from IFAPA about one week prior to your class. This reminder will include additional details on the training location.

### “MANDATORY CHILD ABUSE REPORTER TRAINING”

**Date:** Saturday, March 23, 2013  
**Time:** 9 AM—4:30 PM  
**Location:** Falcon Civic Center, Independence  
**Credits:** 3 hours

This is the state approved Mandatory Reporter class required for foster parents to complete within the first year of licensure, and then every five years thereafter. In addition, the Foster Allegation Information Resource (FAIR) program will be discussed. This is an IFAPA program that provides information and support to foster parents who have had an allegation of abuse made against them.

To register for this training call 800-277-8145 ext. 1 or register on line at [www.ifapa.org](http://www.ifapa.org) under the training tab on the home page. You will receive an email or letter from IFAPA about one week prior to your class. This reminder will include additional details on the training location.



## More Training

### MOVIN' ON OUT...PREPARING TEENS FOR LIFE ON THEIR OWN"

**Date:** Saturday, April 13, 2013

**Time:** 9 AM—4:30 PM

**Location:** Clarion Hotel, Cedar Falls

**Credits:** 6 hours

Finding the right resources to assist teens as they transition to adulthood can be a frustrating and time consuming process. This training seeks to remove those barriers by providing you with a multitude of resources that can assist teens during their time in foster care as well as into young adulthood. During this educational and interactive session information will be provided on available resources in the areas of education, employment, health, housing, services and supports. Teens are encouraged to attend with an adult.

To register for this training call 800-277-8145 ext. 1 or register on line at [www.ifapa.org](http://www.ifapa.org) under the training tab on the home page. You will receive an email or letter from IFAPA about one week prior to your class. This reminder will include additional details on the training location.

### "CPR AND FIRST AID"

**Date:** Saturday, April 20, 2013

**Time:** 1:15 PM—5:30 PM

**Location:** To be announced

**Credits:** 4 hours

All licensed foster homes must be certified in CPR and First Aid through a nationally recognized training organization or by an equivalent trainer within the first year of licensure and every three years thereafter. If you are unsure if when you need to have your CPR and First Aid completed please contact your Kidsnet Licensing worker.

To register for a CPR and First Aid Class, you will need to complete the form on the back of your Winter/Spring Training Schedule and mail with your payment to IFAPA. If you wish to pay by credit card, please call 800-277-8145 ext.1 or email. [smiles@ifapa.org](mailto:smiles@ifapa.org) to obtain the link to make your payment online.

### "GENERATIONS NEXT": SURVIVING AND PARENTING THE TEEN TOXIC CULTURE"

**Date:** Saturday, May 4, 2013

**Time:** 9 AM—4:30 PM

**Location:** Hawkeye Community College, Waterloo

**Credits:** 6 hours

In this training, we will help parents understand the often complicated, technical and frightening world of the teen toxic culture. We will look at the history, evolution, and changes that make up the world that teens live in and are exposed to every day. This class will explore victimization (and perpetrator) issues such as bullying, cyber-bullying, violence, human trafficking, and risky relationships that can result in today's teen world. This class is designed for anyone who may be parenting pre-teens and teens (or younger children that will eventually grow up!). **This training contains material that is moderately graphic in nature and is intended for mature audiences only.**