

NEWS FROM YOUR PEER LIAISON



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Connect with me on Facebook. Email me to find out more.

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

ARE YOU READY?

Summer is just around the corner! Don't let it catch you unprepared! Do you have child care lined up, if necessary? Do you have some activities planned? Camps? Extra time arranged for interactions with birth family?

Use a family calendar with "last day of school," "first day of daycare," etc., highlighted so kids can see how it is all laid out! Kids may get stressed when they don't know what to expect.

Also, don't forget to apply for grants for your kids' camps and swimming lessons, from Friends of Children In Foster Care Program! This fund is for children in foster care. Find info and an application at www.ifapa.org, under Foster Care Resources.

Please send me any awesome, inexpensive summer activities you may have – I would love to share them in my next newsletter! vwelch@ifapa.org

Make Your Voice Heard: Parents Creating Change Facebook Group, From NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Parents-Creating-Change-in-Iowa/>

"We use this space to communicate about advocacy resources and opportunities. We share information and support that helps us in advocating for our individual children in the schools and health care system. Further, we share opportunities for political advocacy to bring about positive change for Iowa's children with mental health needs. To join, e-mail namiowacmhcc@mediacombb.net with "join advocacy group" in the subject line and we will send you an e-mail invitation to join. (This is a closed group to protect the privacy of the posts.) Follow NAMI CMHC on Twitter and Facebook for advocacy opportunities to improve children's mental health care in Iowa: Twitter: @cmhclowa Facebook page: Parents Creating Change in Iowa."

Remember you may not share identifying information on children being cared for in your home.

We LOVE seeing all of your smiling faces at our trainings and we LOVE what you do for Iowa's children! But please remember that trainings are NOT a place for your children, UNLESS there is child care offered. It is IFAPA's policy that children including infants are not allowed in trainings, and families who do not respect this will not be allowed to participate and will be asked to leave.

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RESOURCES JACKPOT!!!

Have you checked out the online resources on IFAPA's website?!? Well, what are you waiting for?!? You can find reading material covering topics from Navigating Birth Family Relationships to Child Behaviors, Transracial Parenting, Transitioning from Foster Care to Adulthood, and so much more!

Go to www.ifapa.org, then click on "resources" tab, and then "online resources."

New Program for Youth

The Youth Policy Institute has a new program, OPTin for youth in the greater Des Moines area, including Polk, Dallas and Warren counties. They are working with youth 16-24 who have experienced foster care, are within six months of graduation, and are working towards postsecondary education or a career exploration/preparation. Their goal is to connect with youth to explore various options, then work with them more intensively over the summer to build a postsecondary/career transition plan, earn DMACC credit, provide academic remediation, practice the COMPASS test, and help them enroll in the college/trade school/university of their choice, or connect them to a career program.

For more information <http://www.ypii.org/OPT-in.html> Have questions? Contact Steve Havemann, Project Manager at: 515.727.4220 or shavemann@ypii.org

SUPPORT GROUP SPOTLIGHT

Worried about how the transition from school to summer will go for the kiddos in your home? Well, join the club!

Transitioning kids to summer will be the topic of Connections support/training group Tuesday, April 21!

Please feel free to join us from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at DHS River Place, 2309 Euclid Ave., Des Moines. Bring your experiences and ideas and prepare to learn from your peers!

Child care is free and awesome, and the training is worth two (2) foster-parent training credits!