Using Language to Give Foster Children a Sense of Belonging

By Traci Pedersen

When foster parents use words that emphasize a sense of belonging, it can be a powerful tool to help ease foster children into a new home and even enhance the possibility that it will be a successful placement.

When a foster parent says, "This is our house; this is your room," to a foster child, they're relaying an important message of belonging: "You are part of this family — the whole family," and that's a strong statement, says Annette Semanchin Jones, an assistant professor in the University at Buffalo (UB) School of Social Work.

This is known as "claiming language," and its consistent use by foster parents plays a critical role when foster children enter a new home. These children are better able to adapt when they feel a sense of belonging, and even further, know that their foster parents will advocate for them and help with the stressful transition to different schools and neighborhoods.

Jones conducted the research with her colleague Barbara Rittner, UB associate professor of social work, and Melissa Affronti of Coordinated Care Services Inc., a human service agency in upstate New York.

It is well understood that foster children who adapt successfully to a foster home reap long-term benefits. However, there have been very few studies exploring the link between foster parent characteristics and the developmental outcomes of children in their care. The new findings highlight important strategies that foster parents can use to successfully transition children into new homes. **CONTINUE READING**

Additional Resources

FosterCub - Free Coloring Pages for Kids Just Entering Foster Care

Touchpoints - Preparing Child for Transitions

Establishing Household Rules

What to Teach Your Child to Prepare Them for a New Placement

DON'T MISS
USING YOUR ADOPTION RESPITE DAYS

Each adopted child who receives a subsidy from Iowa is eligible to receive five days of respite care per fiscal year at $20 per day. The current fiscal year for the Adoption Respite Program runs from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. All respite days must be used during these dates and the form must be submitted no later than Wed., July 6th.

VIEW RESPITE FORM

COULD YOUR FOSTER TEEN USE $300 FOR ACTIVITIES?

IFAPA has received special money from Chafee Funds for teens (age 14 and older) in foster care. These grants will be available for up to $300 per youth and can only be requested through June 30, 2016. To view items covered and for a copy of the application, **CLICK HERE**.

CHECK OUT OUR JUNE CLASSES!

Date & Location	Name of Training & Trainer
ANKENY **June 4, 2016** (9am-12:15pm)	The ABC's of Early Childhood Connections: Nurturing Social & Emotional Development in Infants & Toddlers (Gwen Babberl, LMHC, CADC)
ANKENY **June 4, 2016** (1:15pm-4:30pm)	Grrr...I'm Just So Mad: Helping Young Children Deal with Their Anger (Joann Seeman-Smith, Ph.D.)
WATERLOO **June 4, 2016** (9am-2pm)	Planning for Successful Transitions - Preparing Youth for Adult Living, Learning & Working (Free lunch. Teens are welcome to attend.)
ANKENY **June 11, 2016** (9am-12:15pm)	Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training
ANKENY **June 11, 2016** (1:15pm-5:30pm)	CPR & First Aid (Register & Pay Here)
DUBUQUE **June 11, 2016** (9am-2pm)	Planning for Successful Transitions - Preparing Youth for Adult Living, Learning & Working (Free lunch. Teens are welcome to attend.)
SPENCER **June 11, 2016** (9am-4:30pm)	The Grieving Process: How to Help You and Your Kids Heal (Matthew Hiveley, Ph.D.)
ANKENY **June 18, 2016** (9am-4:30pm)	Beyond Parenting 101 (Debra Younger)
CEDAR RAPIDS **June 18, 2016** (9am-2pm)	Planning for Successful Transitions - Preparing Youth for Adult Living, Learning & Working (Free lunch. Teens are welcome to attend.)
MASON CITY **June 18, 2016** (9am-12:15pm)	Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training
MASON CITY **June 18, 2016** (1:15pm-5:30pm)	CPR & First Aid (Register & Pay Here) To avoid late fees pay by Sunday, June 5
SIOUX CITY **June 18, 2016** (9am-12:15pm)	Everything You Wanted to Know About Fostering But Were Afraid to Ask (Bambi Schrader)
SIOUX CITY **June 18, 2016** (1:15pm-4:30pm)	"Crazy-R-Us": Managing Crises in Foster and Adoptive Homes (Bambi Schrader)
COUNCIL BLUFFS **June 25, 2016** (9am-12:15pm)	Calming the Trauma Storm (Marty Wallace, LMHC)
COUNCIL BLUFFS **June 25, 2016** (1:15pm-4:30pm)	When Old Parenting Strategies Don't Work! Help Us Please! (Marty Wallace, LMHC)
DAVENPORT **June 25, 2016** (9am-4:30pm)	What Are You Trying to Tell Me? Responding Effectively to Troubling Behaviors (Lois Smidt & Krista McCalley)

TO REGISTER - CALL 800-277-8145 OR REGISTER ONLINE

MY CHILD DOESN'T REMEMBER THE NEGLECT AS AN INFANT, BUT HIS BODY DOES

By Penelope (Foster2Forever)

My son doesn't remember being hungry but his brain does! The trauma from infant neglect can cause lasting impressions in the memory bank of a baby.

The signs of infant neglect may not be apparent for many years.

My son was just 8 months old when he came to live with us. Even in those short months, he had experienced serious neglect that unknown to anyone had a lasting impact on his life. He spent the majority of his infanthood in a car seat, as his parents partied and fought in another room. Just how often did he get fed? His cries for a bottle went unheard. How often did he get changed? His cries of discomfort from dirty diapers weren't heard. When he came to live with us, he had a rash in the shape of a diaper on his entire front and bottom.
CONTINUE READING

RAD SABOTAGE

By John M. Simmons

In spending the last ten years parenting several children with Reactive Attachment Disorder, I see five basic reasons for why they engage in RAD sabotage.

Oh, What I'd Give for a Birthday Party Without a Meltdown. It's not just birthday parties. My children who suffer from Reactive Attachment Disorder sabotage everything. Sometimes the detail they put into a planned destruction could rival army demolition engineers' carefully calculated placements of explosives on a railway bridge. I call it RAD sabotage.
CONTINUE READING