

MAY 7, 2013

National Foster Care Month

During May, the child welfare community pauses to recognize foster parents and thank them for their service to vulnerable children, youth, and families. The Children's Bureau, together with its information service, Child Welfare Information Gateway; the National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections; and the National Resource Center for Youth Development, has launched the 2013 National Foster Care Month website. This year's theme is "Supporting Youth in Transition," and the website provides resources that highlight a variety of practices and approaches you can use to support your work with youth. These include:

- Creating meaningful connections
- Partnering with youth
- Advancing permanency options
- Preparing for successful transitions

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>

College Financial Aid Options for Foster and Adopted Youth

Voice for Adoption has a new resource, *College Financial Aid Resources for Former Foster Youth* that lists possible sources for scholarships and other financial assistance for college-bound youth who were in foster care.

http://www.ifapa.org/pdf_docs/VFACollegeAidResources.pdf

What Foster Parents Wish Other People Knew

During your tenure as a foster parent you have likely answered hundreds of questions about foster parenting. Some questions come from a place of curiosity, others from a place of ignorance and still others from a place of judgment. At the heart of it, there are always those core ideas you wish family, friends or even complete strangers understood about why you open your home to other people's children. In honor of foster care month and in honor of your hard work, IFAPA reprinted this article written by a fellow foster parent in the Spring issue of our News & Views newsletter. Share it with family, friends and even those complete strangers as a way to help them better understand why you do what you do.

http://www.ifapa.org/pdf_docs/NewsViewsSpring2013w.pdf

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH, 2013

As a Nation, we have no task more important than ensuring our children grow up healthy and safe. It is a promise we owe to the hundreds of thousands of youth in foster care -- boys and girls who too often go without the love, protection, and stability of a permanent family. This month, we recommit to giving them that critical support, and we recognize the foster parents and professionals who work every day to lift up the children in their care toward a bright, productive future.

Thanks to those efforts, the number of young people in foster care is falling and fewer children are waiting for adoption. But even now, more than 400,000 kids are looking for permanency with caring parents. Many are struggling to find the meaningful, long-term relationships that will help them transition into adulthood. Some young men and women are aging out of the system without a permanent home, making it harder for them to get a good education, find a job, and build a better life.

To give foster youth the support they need, Americans in every community are stepping up to serve. They are mentors, teachers, faith leaders, caseworkers, advocates, family members -- individuals dedicated to making a difference. As they lend their strength to our most vulnerable children, my Administration will continue to invest in services that strengthen the foster care system and encourage adoption. We will keep working to ensure every qualified caregiver has the chance to be an adoptive or foster parent. And we will support programs that help increase permanency, reduce rates of re-entry into foster care, and address the issues that bring young people in the child welfare system in the first place.

Whether as a friend, a role model, or a guardian, any of us can be a supportive adult for a child in need. As we honor the countless Americans who are answering that call to action, let us mark this month by showing children and youth in foster care the best our country has to offer.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2013 as National Foster Care Month. I call upon all Americans to observe this month by taking time to help youth in foster care and recognizing the commitment of all who touch their lives at a most challenging time.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand thirteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-seventh.



Power Through Choices

Power Through Choices (PTC) is a 10-session prevention curriculum for adolescents, ages 13-18, living in out-of-home care. It has two main themes: self-empowerment and the impact of choices on an individual's future. It is designed to help youth prevent pregnancy, HIV, and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). For additional information on this event, see the links list below.

AMES

June 3-7, 2013 (9:30am-2:30pm)

Family Life Center (125 South 3rd Street)

Cleasby Conf. Room

http://www.ifapa.org/pdf_docs/AMPEventAmesJune2013.pdf

DES MOINES

June 17-21, 2013 (9:30am-2:30pm)

Polk Co. DHS Riverplace (2309 Euclid, Rm 3)

http://www.ifapa.org/pdf_docs/AMPEventDsmJune2013.pdf

If you are interested in attending the Power Through Choices program, please contact PTC facilitator Kaylie Engelen, APP, BSN at: kengelen@yss.ames.ia.us or 515-298-0115. To sign up, please email the youth's name and contact information.

FREE TOYS FOR FOSTER CHILDREN

One Simple Wish's "Miles of Smiles" tour is coming to Waverly on Thursday, May 23rd!! One Simple Wish is traveling to 7 cities in 6 states to distribute toys and games to children in foster care in celebration of National Foster Care Month. ALL foster families are invited! EVERY child and youth (birth to age 18) will receive a toy or game compliments of Hasbro and One Simple Wish. There will be subs, chips, salads, cookies and drinks for everyone! You can come and go to this event as your schedule allows. *Please RSVP number attending PLUS the age and gender of children by 5/18 to 877-467-4100 or magnall_ifapa@msn.com.*

Event details:

Thursday, May 23, 2013 (4pm-7pm)

Vineyard Community Church

319 West Bremer Ave, Waverly

View Flyer for event:

www.ifapa.org/pdf_docs/MilesOfSmilesFlyerWaverlyMay2013.pdf

One Simple Wish grants simple wishes to children and families in need. More info at www.onesimplewish.org.

Buena Vista University Offers Program to Support Students Who Aged Out of Foster Care

Buena Vista University (Storm Lake, IA) is one of 30 Institutions nationwide and the only one in Iowa to provide the Guardian's Scholars program (GS). The GS program provides resources and supports to students that age out of the foster care system in Iowa. The Guardian's Scholars program seeks to provide financial assistance, social and academic supports, and a close personal mentor that will help the recipients meet their individual needs. The GS program includes:

- **Year-round housing:** Young adults who age out of the foster care system generally do not have the ability to find, fund or return to a suitable housing atmosphere after the completion of an academic year. Participants of the GS will be provided year-round housing on the Storm Lake Campus of BV.
- **Application and Orientation Visit Costs:** These fees will be waived for all applicants whom age-out of the Iowa Foster Care system. Housing deposits will be paid from program funds of the GS.
- **Summer Employment/Work Study:** Buena Vista University will provide employment for all GS participants. The income generated by summer employment is paid directly to the GS participant. GS participants are responsible for preparation of their own personal meals during the summer break, clothing and all personal needs. Income generated from the academic year work-study will be credited to the student financial aid package.
- **Academic Supports:** GS participants will receive an annual stipend for the purchase of textbooks, general school supplies, lab fees and other associated items purchased from the University. Allowances are given if the campus book store is unable to provide these items.
- **Faculty Mentoring:** GS participants will be partnered with experts in their given field of study. A strength of the BVU experience is the ability of our students to work shoulder-to-shoulder with experts in their chosen field of study. This collaborative experience is a pillar of the BVU academic model.
- **Career Planning and Professional Coaching:** The Office of Career Services (OCS) provides personalized career counseling to facilitate a holistic approach to life planning. The OCS promotes systematic career inquiries and provides a comprehensive program that includes self-assessment tools, exploration resources and programs, internship coordination, and recruiting services for RS participants.
- **Counseling:** GS participants are provided professional and confidential personal counseling services without cost to participants. The Counseling Office provides additional educational programming, treatment referrals, support group development and consultation services.
- **Spiritual Life/Campus Ministry:** The campus Chaplain seeks to nurture the spiritual growth, enhance faith development, strengthen connections through intentional dialogue & engage GS participants in the world that surrounds them.
- **Academic Specific Supports:** The Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) will provide GS participants with reasonable accommodations to meet their specific academic needs. The CAE also provides an individualized approach to achieving academic success through peer tutoring.
- **Retention Services:** The Director of Retention Services will monitor all GS participants. The director will personally visit, discuss and work to solve the unique challenges that face GS participants. The Director of Retention Services will be responsible, in consultation with Student Services, to manage that appropriate social, academic and spiritual supports are provided to GS participants.
- **The University will work to identify current students from foster care and develop a peer-mentoring program for new students entering the program.**

For more information on BVU's Guardian's Scholars program, contact Mark Shea, Director of Retention Services, at 712-749-1240 or go to

<https://www.bvu.edu/admissions/guardian-scholars/>.

View Our Summer Class Schedule: www.ifapa.org/training/ifapa_training_schedule.asp