

NOVEMBER 29, 2011

CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAYS WITH CHILDREN YOU FOSTER

Conflicting loyalties and lost dreams often make the holidays a difficult time for children in foster care. Just as studies show that holidays are stressful times for everyone, these reactions are compounded for children and youth placed in your home. Follow the link below for some suggestions (from *Adoption Resources of Wisconsin*) for managing your holidays.

You will see ideas on how to:

- Make the holidays easier for the children in foster care while they are in your home
- Work with birth families during the holidays
- Make family get-togethers easier

<http://www.wifostercareandadoption.org/library/394/holidays.pdf>



Buena Vista County Sheriff / Foster Parent Named Hero for Iowa/Nebraska Game

Buena Vista County Sheriff Gary Luanderville, a law enforcement officer from northwest Iowa, was honored as a “hero” during halftime of last Friday’s football game between Iowa and Nebraska. Red Cross staff selected Buena Vista County Sheriff Gary Luanderville from a field of more than 200 nominations. He and his wife, Sandy, have served as foster parents to 125 children, seven of which they adopted. To read the full story, visit:

www.omaha.com/article/2011/11/23/NEWS01/711239856#sheriff-and-wife-became-foster-parents-to-help-the-unwanted-kids

Making the Holidays Less Materialistic



KidsHealth.org has written a great article about the five ways to curb materialism in your kids and reinforce the real reason for the season:
http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/holidays_materialistic.html#



Smart Toys for Every Age

When it comes to toys that educate as well as entertain, not all toys are created equal. *KidsHealth.org* has put together a smart toys guide for parents about how kids play and what types of toys are appropriate for their age (including toy ideas for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and big kids).

http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/learning/smart_toys.html?tracking=P_RelatedArticle



Free Trainings are a Sweet Treat!



Dangerous Playgrounds - Drug Awareness and Trends

(6 hrs credit) - This class is a must for all parents of youth & teens! Do you know the meaning of terms like "Spice, Budda, Robo-Trippin', Trail Mixing, Space Monkey, Bootin, Banging, Cheese, 420, Cabbage Head?" Would you be able to tell if someone is drunk or high? Do you know the difference between Marijuana & Methamphetamine, prescription drugs & Ecstasy? Do you know what kids are sometimes doing to get high without using anything? It has been several years since IFAPA first presented the class "Drug Awareness"; and has since been completely re-written to reflect dramatic changes that have taken place in the past few years. This class features up-to-date "real" photos & videos to help parents gain knowledge about different substances of abuse; what they look like, how they are used, & their effects. **Trainer: Mike McGuire**

Mason City - Sat., Dec. 3 (9am-4:30pm)

Transitioning Resources: A Toolbox for Transitioning (6 hrs credit) - This training highlights important resources that can help youth in and after foster care. It will also explain how and when to access the many resources. This information will increase the youth's potential for success by maximizing their opportunity for achieving better outcomes transitioning from foster care to adulthood. This is a very educational and interactive class that will help you in finding needed resources in your area for the youth in your home. Topics discussed will be Positive Youth Development & the implementation of youth-centered planning strategies to help engage the youth in planning for their future. Teens are also welcome to attend with a parent. **Trainer: Teresa Sea**

Cedar Rapids - Sat., Dec. 10 (9am-4:30pm)

Snakes, Snails & Puppy Dog Tails...(I'll Take the Snakes!):

Raising Boys (3 hrs credit) - Parenting boys of any age can sometimes be called an extreme sport. Learning about volcanoes, dirty socks and landmines of affection will bring us closer to these boys as they grow into men. We will dissect their growth, thinking and actions, while looking at their influences and our interventions. Participants will learn

how to communicate with the boys in their care and most importantly how to listen, even when they are not talking. **Trainer: Ruth Buckels, LMSW**

Sioux City - Sat., Dec. 3 (9am-12:15pm)

Sugar, Spice & Everything Nice...(Ya, Right!): Raising Girls

(3 hrs credit) - Do you ever feel like one minute you know the girls in your home like the back of your hand and the next minute you know nothing? Perhaps you are grateful to know nothing! This training will give you the opportunity to learn how girls of all ages operate. We will take a look at girls and their world, thinking, behaviors, motivations and payoffs. We will focus on strengthening communication skills and ways to encourage girls in our care to be strong and independent while building a connection with us as parents. **Trainer: Ruth Buckels, LMSW**

Sioux City - Sat., Dec. 3 (1:30pm-4:45pm)

Working with Birth Families (6 hrs credit) - This training will explore the role of foster parents in working with birth families. This class will look at how the foster parent/birth parent relationship has changed over the years and with that change the expectation that foster families become more involved with birth families to better work toward positive outcomes. This class will provide an opportunity to better understand the birth family perspective. We will examine modern social issues faced by birth families and how these barriers can impact their ability to succeed. We will also examine the grief and loss process and how it affects both birth families and foster families. We will discuss strategies for working more effectively with birth families to achieve positive outcomes for children in foster care. **Trainer: Mike McGuire**

Davenport - Sat., Dec. 10 (9am-4:30pm)

REGISTRATION - To register for a class, call IFAPA at 800-277-8145 ext. 1 or register through the following link: http://www.ifapa.org/training/training_registration_form.asp.



Mark Your Calendar for Television Special!

The 13th annual **A Home for the Holidays** program will air on CBS on **Wednesday, December 21**. A Home for the Holidays seeks to raise awareness about the number of children in foster care who are in need of a forever family. Tune in for a special hour of heart-warming stories and celebrity performances. *A Home for the Holidays* is sponsored by the Children's Action Network, Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, CBS & Wendy's.