

NEWS FROM YOUR PEER LIAISON

DECEMBER 2015



CHRISTIE MCGUIRE
IFAPA Peer Liaison

How to Contact Me:

855-929-2005

641-829-2005

cmcguire@ifapa.org

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

From a FOSTER CHILD'S PERSPECTIVE

Top Things to Make a Foster Child's First Days Easier

You can't possibly imagine how "we" feel being brought to your home....so, please, never take it lightly. Little things matter and set the tone for things to come.

- Smile. If the child is small, please kneel down and meet at eye level. You are a big person and are probably scary. Be sensitive to touch. You are a stranger.
- Show the child (or let your other children) around the place and his/her room. Offer to carry the bags and help unpack, although it is normal that they may not want help. Have some new age-appropriate toys in the child's room just for them. Let the child look in the closet, under the bed, in the drawers and let them know this is safe and "their space."
- *I was ALWAYS hungry but afraid to ask for food.* Have a snack /drink ready and sit down to talk about rules. Don't be harsh, but be clear. You want to build a relationship not fear and distrust. Example: You might have a household rule that everyone must close the door when using the bathroom. Your new foster child may not be able to follow that rule at first. If he/she was abused in the bathroom, closing the door might be frightening. Always try and understand why your child is behaving a certain way. Review rules as needed.
- If the child talks about "other" parents, NEVER disrespect them, even if they did terrible things to the child. Be honest and don't judge. Validate the child's feelings and listen. The child loves their parents and needs to heal and understand at their own pace.
- Foster kids want to be treated JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE. Don't ever introduce them as your foster child and don't have different rules for them compared to your other children.
- To help foster children come out of their shell, do things the child might not have ever done--play a board game, bake cupcakes, go to the zoo, have a movie night with popcorn, go to the park and play, or read to them, even if they can read themselves. If they are teens, spend the day with them. Go shopping, go to lunch, talk.
- Be patient as the child tries to figure things out. For some children, it will take a long time. Keep talking with them and showing them you're interested. They are watching you and trying to figure out if they can TRUST you. Don't ignore them. Ask them how they are doing, how their day went, can you help, are they hungry, and if they have any questions. Be involved!
- TIME, PATIENCE, UNDERSTANDING, COMPASSION, EMPATHY, REMEMBER TO LAUGH, HAVE FUN. Ask the child what you (new foster parents) can do to make it more comfortable or to help them feel better. This alone shows to them that you care about how they feel.

NEWS FROM YOUR IFAPA PEER LIAISON

TRAININGS & TOGETHER TIME

Mason City and Surrounding Areas

*Sat. Jan. 16th (9 am-4:30 pm) "Get me Off This Roller Coaster: Coping Skills for Emotional Intensity Issues" (6 hrs credit)

Waterloo

Register at www.ifapa.org or call 800-277-8145

Fort Dodge and Webster City Areas

*Sat. Jan. 30th (9 am-12:15 pm) Mandatory Reporter Training (3 hrs credit) Ft. Dodge

*Sat. Jan. 30th(1:15 - 5:30pm) CPR/First Aid (4 hrs credit)

Ft. Dodge

Register at www.ifapa.org or call 800-277-8145

Renew Support Group, Cornerstone Church-Ames

* Thurs. Jan. 21 (6-8pm) "Sensory Processing Function and Dysfunction" Trainer: Elise Spronk (2 hrs credit)

*Register: https://cornerstonelife.ccbchurch.com/form_response.php?id=909

Allison Area Foster Parent Support Group

*Waverly Vineyard Church, 319 W. Bremer

*Tues. Dec. 1 (6-7pm) "Anger Management For Parents" (1 hr credit) Support to follow (7-8 pm)

*Sun., Dec. 6 (3 pm) "Foster/Adoptive Family Christmas Party " Fredsville Lutheran Church, rural Cedar Falls.

*Contact Nancy Magnall for more information at 319-352-3600

Marshall County Support Group

Bi-monthly lunch support meeting

11:30-1:00 at Applebee's in Marshalltown

For dates and details:

* Contact Mindy Speake at 515-291-1292.

WINTER TIDBITS

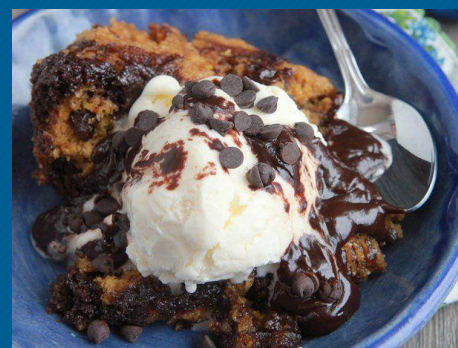
No December Trainings

Just a reminder to plan ahead for your training hours. IFAPA will not be holding trainings for the month of December.

It's Here

January through March training schedule. Register now at ifapa.org

SLOW COOKER CHOCOLATE CHIP BROWNIE CAKE



1 box fudge brownie mix
1/2 cup butter, melted
4 eggs
1 pouch chocolate chip cookie mix

Spray slow cooker with oil. Mix brownie mix, 1/4 c. melted butter, & 2 eggs. In 2nd bowl, mix choc. chip cookie mix, 1/4 c. melted butter, and 2 eggs. Drop alternate spoonfuls of both batters into slow cooker. Cover; cook on high 2 to 3 hours or until cake is set. Serve with ice cream or Cool Whip! Yum!!

