

NEWS FROM YOUR PEER LIAISON

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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

Helping Children in Care Cope During the Holidays

The holidays are coming! Besides a full belly and an empty wallet, what does that mean? For the children in our care, it means some developmental grieving. This is something that is discussed in PS-MAPP class during Meeting 3. Developmental grieving is when children go back through the grieving process due to milestones in their lives (holidays, prom, birthdays, etc.) because they are not with their birth family for these events. If a child in your care is behaving in a way that is not typical for them, ask yourself if that child could be experiencing developmental grieving. A few ways to help the developmental grieving process:

- Have everyone go around the room and share a memory they have of a past holiday (Thanksgiving or Christmas).
- Don't push the child to talk about their birth family, if they share a memory from school that is okay!
- Help the child work on their lifebook.
- Ask the child what their favorite food is from each holiday and then make it for them.
- Make sure not to cancel therapy appointments during the holidays no matter how busy your schedule gets.
- Last but not least, take care of YOU! You need to be at your best to help them through this difficult time. This can be a tough time for kids in care. If the children have not experienced a holiday with you, it can be overwhelming to have so many places to go, so much food to eat, so many relatives they have never met, and so many presents to unwrap. (Remember the *Imaginary Journey* and opening the door to all of those new faces...or the *First Day* roadwork from PS-MAPP?) Keep in mind that what is "normal" for you is very foreign to them. If a child is having behaviors, they are likely not trying to ruin the holiday spirit, but rather are expressing feelings of being overwhelmed or anxious.



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NEW REASONABLE AND PRUDENT PARENT STANDARD

Beginning September 29, 2015, foster families will be asked to sign the form, Agreement and Consent for Activities of a Child in Foster Care Agreement (Form 470-4538), found at http://www.ifapa.org/pdf_docs/470-4538.pdf on any new placement. The purpose of this new form is to establish standards for normalcy for a child who is in foster care.

This agreement between the child's parent or guardian and their foster parent(s) is to allow a child access to age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate activities. The child's parent or guardian acknowledges responsibility and approves the foster parent to apply the reasonable and prudent parent standard to authorize any of the following: community activities, social activities with peers, recreational activities, religious activities, employment opportunities and educational and extra-curricular school-related activities.

All foster parents will need to complete training on the reasonable and prudent parent standard prior to October 1, 2016. IFAPA is in the process of putting together training for foster parents. More information will be coming soon on how to get this training.

IFAPA Class Cancellations

During bad weather, IFAPA tries its best to avoid cancelling trainings. If the trainer is able to make it to the training location and the facility is open, IFAPA will still hold the class for those families that need to get their training hours completed. If you feel the weather is too dangerous to travel, please stay home and you can register for a different upcoming class. If a class needs to be cancelled, IFAPA will make every effort to notify all attendees of the cancellation via e-mail or phone. IFAPA will also list all class cancellations on its Training Coordinator's voicemail and post class cancellations on its Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/iowafosterandadoptiveparentsassociation/>). If you would like to find out if any classes have been cancelled due to weather, please call 1-(800) 277-8145 ext. 2.

Training Corner

Total Training (Cedar Rapids Support Group), 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Dec. 17 at Four Oaks Bridge, 2100 First Ave. NE, Cedar Rapids. Topic: Separation & Loss DVD. The pain of separation and loss is the universal experience of every foster child. This DVD offers insight on how the foster care system could lessen the impact of transition and strengthen a child's relationships with both foster and birth parents. 2 credit hours. RSVP for child care at jrorholm@ifapa.org or Kris Millsap at kmillsap@fouroaks.org noting ages of children.

Total Training (Cedar Rapids Support Group), 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Jan. 21 at Four Oaks Bridge, 2100 First Ave. NE, Cedar Rapids. Topic: IEPs and 504 plans. ASK Resources will talk about these two tools to help children in your care get the help they need at school. 2 credit hours. RSVP for child care at jrorholm@ifapa.org or Kris Millsap at kmillsap@fouroaks.org noting ages of children.

IFAPA Training, 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Jan. 9, Cedar Rapids. Topic: "Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter" 3 credit hours. Register: www.ifapa.org or 1-(800) 277-8145

IFAPA Training, 1:15 to 5:30 p.m. Jan. 9, Cedar Rapids. Topic: "CPR & First Aid" 4 credit hours. Register: www.ifapa.org or 1-(800) 277-8145