

NEWS FROM YOUR PEER LIAISON

June, 2016



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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!

Dear Parents,

I can't take credit for this article as *this post originally appeared on [The Huffington Post](#)*. But I thought it was a great one to include as understanding conflict can help us to have better insight!

The famous psychiatrist Carl Jung said: **Your visions will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.**

One of the best opportunities for clarity about who we are and want to become presents itself when we have conflict with others. Whenever my children have had conflict with their mom, sister, best friend, teacher, teammate, coach, or a stranger, I have done my best to focus them on questions that help them become more self-aware. That's because humans have a tendency to focus on the actions, attitudes, and beliefs of "the other" in the conflict. We want to avoid asking the tough questions about our own role in bringing about conflict. It's simply easier and more convenient to blame the other person for creating and sustaining conflict.

I've found that teaching my children to ask the following four questions has helped them navigate conflict and come out the other side more self-aware:

1. What was my role in creating this conflict?
2. Does the way I've acted during this conflict represent the kind of person I want to be?
3. Are the decisions I've made during this conflict in line with the kind of person I want to be?
4. If I saw someone else behave in the way I've behaved during this conflict, what would I think?

It's amazing how these questions have helped my children gain insight into who they are and want to become. These questions have helped them step back and take an objective view of the situation and realize that, regardless of what the other person says or does, they have the power to end the conflict or walk away from it.

Teach your children to use these questions to help them grow into self-aware youngsters and adults. You'll be glad you did.

Take Care & God Bless – IFAPA John

DATES ON DECK

Tuesday, May 31, (7:00PM-9:00PM) **It's Not About You: Yelling & Disrespectful Behaviors** (2 hours); at Pizza Ranch, 425 US-30, Carroll. John will be there at 5:30

Saturday, June 11, (9AM to 4:30PM) **The Grieving Process-How to Help You & Your Kids Heal** (6 hours) at ILCC-Spencer Campus; 1900 Grand Ave, Room 108; Spencer.

Saturday, June 18, (9AM-12:15PM) **Everything You Wanted to Know About Fostering But Were Afraid to Ask** (3 hours); at Stoney Creek Inn, 300 3rd Street, Sioux City.

Saturday, June 18, (1:15PM-4:30PM) **"Crazy-R-Us": Managing Crises in Foster and Adoptive Homes** (3 hours); at Stoney Creek Inn, 300 3rd Street, Sioux City.

Monday, June 20, (6:30PM-8:30PM), **It's Not About You: Lying** (2 hours) at Pizza Ranch, 510 IA-39, Denison. John & Dawn will be there at 5:30.

(Check the IFAPA website www.ifapa.org and go to trainings, or contact me if you need info about any classes or available trainings)

******ALERT:*** ALL foster parents are now required to complete a Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard Training by September 30, 2016. A training video is available on the IFAPA website. It takes about 30 minutes to complete. You just as well get it done before next fall!

****Friends of Foster Care grant money is still available! Check it out & Use it! The link with more information is: <http://www.ifapa.org/resources/Friends-of-Children-in-Foster-Care-Program.asp>**

FOSTER PARENT MILESTONES

Please join me in thanking the following foster parents for their years of service to Iowa's children as this month marks their renewal anniversary. Thank you for your years of dedication!

- 20+ Years: Vicky & Jeff Lower
- 15+ Years: Mary & John Bernholtz
- 10+ Years: Shelley & Jesse Kitrell

AND REMEMBER: I am just an email/phone call away. I am here for you! If you ever have a question, concern or celebration, give me a call. The conversations which I have with other parents are the best part of my day!

-IFAPA John



From My Side of the Desk!

Happy Dad's Day! You had to know I would tie school & Father's Day together ☺ Parents hear a lot these days about the importance of being involved in their children's education. Unfortunately, dads often view "parent" as a code word for "mom." Education, they say, is mom's domain. So when mom steps up to the plate, dad may stay in the dugout. But, research indicates that a father's involvement is crucial. It plays a key role in a child's success in school and beyond. Does it make a difference when dads are involved in school-related activities, like attending school events and parent-teacher conferences? You bet it does! Children in two-parent families and of non-resident fathers, who were highly involved in their children's education, were more likely to get mostly A's and enjoy school. They were also less likely to repeat a grade than children with fathers who had low or no involvement. Even when dads don't live with their children, it's clear that their involvement matters to academic achievement.

As Foster Fathers, we need to make certain that we step up to provide for the children in our care and model to our young men what a Dad does!

-IFAPA John