



JOHN SMITH

IFAPA Peer Liaison

How to Contact Me:

877-305-3396

712-665-4011

jsmith@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

March is National Reading Month

March 2nd is Read Across America Day. It is a national initiative on reading, created by the National Education Association (NEA) to coincide with the birthday of Dr. Seuss. All over the country, students will be participating in this event. The idea behind Read Across America is to encourage children to read and find a love of reading the whole year through. Many activities in schools on March 2nd will revolve around reading.

Why is reading with a child and encouraging them to read so important? According to the NEA's website, students who are read to and/or read themselves do better in many different areas including writing and math.

What can you do to encourage a love of reading?

- Read aloud to a child, especially a child who is an emerging or struggling reader. It helps with fluency. I have found that children of all ages enjoy being read to!
- Have many different types of reading materials available. Have fiction, non-fiction, magazines, newspapers, etc.
- Talk to a child about what they like to read and make that kind available to them. You may even want to read along with them so you can share and encourage!
- Go to the library and let them spend time perusing all of the different books. Help steer them in the direction of books that fit their interests and are at their reading ability level. (Librarians can help, if you are unsure!)
- Set aside time to read. Maybe they can go to bed at the regular time, but they can leave the lights on for half an hour and read.
- Let children see YOU read. Be a good role model and take the time to read yourself. This is important! What book have you read lately?

**You're never too old, too wacky, too wild,
To pick up a book and read with a child.**

~Dr. Seuss



DATES ON DECK

- Thursday, March 10 (6:30PM-8:30PM) **Topic: TBD**
NW AEA- 2nd Floor, 1520 Morningside Ave, Sioux City
- Tuesday, March 22, 2016 (6:30PM-8:30PM) **Handling a Behavior Crisis**
St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 1614 West 5th Street, Storm Lake
- Friday & Saturday, April 8 & 9, 2016; IFAPA's Spring Conference at the Airport Holiday Inn & Convention Center in Des Moines. Registration information should have been sent to each of you and is also available at the IFAPA website (ifapa.org). Please register by Friday, March 25th.

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

****Even if you have a two-year license and another year remaining on your license, six hours of training still needs to be completed each licensing year.**

****And, don't forget, if it has been three years since you last took an approved CPR & First Aid training or five years since you took your Mandatory Child Abuse training, you will need to complete these before you can be re-licensed. If you can't remember, touch base with your IKN or DHS licensing workers; they should know! AND, if you are not certain who your re-licensing worker is, contact me and I will help you out.**

****Also, as part of a new federal law, foster parents are now required to complete a Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard Training by September 30, 2016. In order to complete this requirement, IFAPA has created a training video which is available on our website. It takes about 30 minutes to complete and you just as well get it done before next fall!**

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!

- **15+ Years:** Tammy & Kirk Metcalf; Roni & John Fox
- **5+ Years:** Judy Tuhn; Robert & Lisa James



From My Side of the Desk!

“Take care of yourself first or you will have nothing left to give others!” Why is this so difficult and why do we feel guilty about doing it?

2016 has not been good to my friends, I have buried three good friends and two more have been discovered with cancer and are being treated. This has impacted me and the way I relate with others.

This past weekend, Connie and I decided to use respite and get away for a while. Even though it was just two days we came back refreshed and recharged!

When was the last time you used respite to care for yourself??

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