

# 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](http://www.ifapa.org)



Starting the new school year can be a time of great excitement...and anxiety. Help calm your child's fears (and your own) with these teacher-approved tips.

**Meet the new teacher.**

For kids, one of the biggest back-to-school fears is "Will I like my new teacher?" Breaking the ice early on is one of the best ways to calm everyone's fears. Take advantage of your school's open house or back-to-school night. If personal contact with the teacher isn't possible, try locating the teacher's picture on a school website or in a yearbook, so your child can put a name with a face.

**Tour the school.**

If your school hosts an open house, be sure to go. Familiarizing your child with her environment will help her avoid a nervous stomach on the first day. Together you can meet her teacher, find her desk, or explore the playground. With an older child, you might ask him to give you a tour of the school. This will help refresh his memory and yours.

**Connect with friends.**

A familiar friend can make all the difference when heading back to school. You might try calling parents from last year's class and finding out which children are in your child's class this year. Refresh these relationships before school starts by scheduling a play date or a school carpool.

**Tool up.**

Obtain the class supply list and take a special shopping trip with your child. Having the right tools will help him feel prepared. While keeping basic needs in mind, allow for a couple of splurges like a cool notebook or a favorite-colored pen. These simple pleasures make going back to school a lot more fun. Get your child excited about upcoming projects by explaining how new supplies might be used. Let him practice using supplies that he's not used before — such as colored pencils or a protractor — so he will be comfortable using them in class.

**Fuel your children.**

Ensure sufficient rest with regular, early bedtimes. Also schedule time for a healthy breakfast. A healthy breakfast increases children's attentiveness and helps them do well in school. Proper rest and healthy meals are very important for the overall development of your kids.

**Chat about today's events and tomorrow's plans.**

While it is important to support learning throughout the summer, don't spend the last weeks of summer vacation reviewing last year's curriculum. All kids need some down time before the rigors of school begin. For some kids, last-minute drills can heighten anxiety, reminding them of what they've forgotten instead of what they remember.

**Ease into the routine.**

Switching from a summer to a school schedule can be stressful to everyone in the household. Avoid first-day-of-school mayhem by practicing your routine a few days in advance. Set the alarm clock, go through your morning rituals, and get in the car or to the bus stop on time. Routines help children feel comfortable.

*Resource: pbs.org*

## DATES ON DECK

September 1, (7:00PM-9:00PM) **Building Bridges – Educational Advocacy** at Family Resource Center, 502 West 7<sup>th</sup> St, Carroll.

September 12, (9:00AM-12:15PM) **Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training** at Stoney Creek Inn, 300 3<sup>rd</sup> St, Sioux City.

September 12, (1:15PM-12:15PM) **CPR & First Aid** at Sioux City (TBA).

September 19, (9:00AM-4:30PM) **Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking and Its Impact on Children in Care** at ICCC East Campus, 2031 Quail Avenue, Fort Dodge.

September 22, (6:30PM-8:30PM) **Its Not About You: How to Manage Anger at Home with an Audience** at St. Mark's Church, 1614 West 5<sup>th</sup>, Storm Lake.

September 26, (9:00AM-12:15PM) **How to Organize Time and Paperwork While Raising Kids with Special Needs** at Stoney Creek Inn, 300 3<sup>rd</sup> St, Sioux City.

September 26, (1:30PM-4:45PM) **A Guide to Childhood Trauma in Kids with Special Needs** at Stoney Creek Inn, 300 3<sup>rd</sup> St, Sioux City.

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

## SEPTEMBER 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:** Marion & Jerry Dencklau
- **15+ Years:** Kenneth & Collette Huntley
- **10+ Years:** Charles & Sharon Lange
- **5+ Years:** Jennifer & Edward Witt; Sally & David Carlson

## GET IT ON YOUR CALENDAR & Look for More INFO!!

- Friday & Saturday, October 16 & 17, **IFAPA Fall Conference**, Waterloo; I have attached a copy of the conference brochure to this newsletter's email. Take the time to check it out.

## From My Side of the Desk

Summer is over and I did it! (almost) In my June newsletter I suggested that you make a summer to-do bucket list. Well, I completed all but one of my goals, and I am planning on doing that before Christmas. With summer being over, that means school is starting (my newsletter shows that ☺) and our homes need to gear up and change gears from those lazy days of summer. I have three things that I am going to mention:

- 1) **Homework** – You need to establish a time and location for homework. Some parents suggest getting it done immediately after school (even before changing clothes) and some will wait until after supper. Decide on a time and stick to it. Also determine a location and make sure that the child has all materials they need at this spot;
- 2) **Eating** – Make sure your child is fueled for the day with a good breakfast; you may want to send a snack along and have one for them when they get home!
- 3) **Sleeping** – Make sure the kids are getting enough *uninterrupted* sleep! This means turn off the TV & WIFI devices in the bedroom.

**AND REMEMBER:** I am just an email/phone call away. I am here for you! If you 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**