

NEWS DECEMBER 2016

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

Social Media and Internet Safety

How do we keep our kids safe online? What websites are our kids even visiting? What apps are our kids using? Parenting in the age of technology can be challenging. Technology like Internet and social media change the way children communicate. It changes the way they develop relationships with peers. Know what your kids are doing online!

Here is a list of popular social apps kids are using:

Twitter – a microblogging app limited to 140 character messages called “tweets”

Instagram – social media with 15 second photo and [video sharing](#)

Snapchat – messaging app with a time limit before text or picture “disappears”, includes photo filters

YouTube – video uploading platform with sharing capability in a “channel”

Musical.ly – performance and video sharing of lip synced songs – [some lewd songs](#)

Live.ly – a portion of Musical.ly that [allows for live video feed](#)

WhatsApp – messaging (text, audio, video and photos) – [uses address book](#)

GroupMe – messaging (photos, videos, calendar links) – [risk of adult themes](#)

YikYak, uChat – brief, local chats with a claim of anonymity – [bullies, live video, lewd](#)

Tumblr – combo of blog and Twitter, streaming scrapbook – [public, easy explicit access](#)

Kik – text messaging within the app – [stranger danger, tied to crimes, in-app ads](#)

Technology Tips for Parents:

- * Most social media sites have a minimum age of 13.
- * Set firm ground rules for use and stick to them.
- * Require your child to share usernames and passwords for all social media accounts.
- * Beware of children setting up multiple accounts!
- * Frequently check their devices and accounts for inappropriate content.
- * Check privacy settings on the apps and Internet browser. Set to the strictest level.
- * Frequently check the history on Internet browsers to see what sites have been visited and when.
- * Have your child turn in electronics at night/bedtime.
- * Monitor your child’s friend list within any social media account. They should only have friends they know.
- * Limit screen time.
- * Be a good example and teach manners with regards to how and when to use electronics.
- * Communicate with children. Teach them to never share personal information online or to agree to meet someone they don’t know.

Be Smart – Build Security – Be Safe

NEWS FROM YOUR IFAPA PEER LIAISON

There are so many wonderful support groups available. Please check out our website for details.

http://www.ifapa.org/support/support_group_locator.asp

Holidays can be an extremely stressful time for our children. Many children are dealing with feelings of loss and abandonment. December 13, we will be offering 2 hours of training credit as we discuss those feelings. We will also be doing a refresher of the Surviving the Holidays training during this session of "It's Not About You, Loss and Abandonment," as it all fits together. Please join us at Hope for ideas to make the holidays jolly.

Foster and Adoption Support Group

This group is open to kinship parents, foster parents and any adoptive parents.

This support group is open to any parents in Central Iowa.

MEETING LOCATION:

Lutheran Church of Hope
925 Jordan Creek Pkwy, West Des Moines

MEETING DAY & TIME:

Meets monthly - 2nd Tuesday from 6pm to 8pm
Group meets January through December
Childcare is offered up to age 12 - Please RSVP

CONTACT PERSON:

Beth Vannevel-Clark - Four Oaks / Iowa KidsNet
(319-530-4825 or bvannevelclark@fouroaks.org)

**Adoption Saturday in Polk County was a huge success.
Congratulations to all of our families that have adopted!**

<http://www.insideedition.com/headlines/20078-just-ahead-of-thanksgiving-a-courthouse-gets-record-number-of-adoptions>

<http://www.kcci.com/article/70-kids-find-forever-families-on-adoption-day/8350789>



Warren and Madison County

Order Toys for Tots (age 14 and under) by December 14

EMAIL sharon.jensen@simpson.edu

Information needed: first and last name of parent;

first and last name of each child; age; gender; parent address and phone number

Pick up Toys for Tots between 9:15 and 9:45

TOYS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED ON DECEMBER 17TH AT WALLACE HALL

Please join LSI for a book giveaway!

Thursday, December 8th, 1pm-7pm

Lutheran Services in Iowa 3125 Cottage Grove Ave, DSM Upstairs Conference Room

Books are wonderful holiday gifts for children!

Books donated by Barnes and Noble



When you're stressed,
You eat ice cream, cake,
chocolate and sweets. Why?
Because **stressed** spelled
backwards is **desserts**.

5 Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress

- 1) **Redefine traditions** - Often times we continue holiday traditions because that is what we grew up doing. Don't be afraid to redefine tradition.
- 2) **Be assertive** - You know how long your children can tolerate a gathering and what their accommodations may be. Let everyone know, ahead of time, how long you will be staying. Leave when you said you would. Be assertive when asked to "stay just a little longer".
- 3) **Accept help** - No one says you have to do it all. Holiday decorating, baking, potlucks, gatherings, social events and more can wear you out! If people offer to help, accept it. Don't be afraid to opt out. You don't have to do it all to have happy holidays.
- 4) **Don't abandon healthy habits** - Get enough sleep. Get exercise. Stress eating will only make you feel tired and irritable. Have healthy snacks and get regular exercise.
- 5) **Take a breather** - Make time for yourself. Spending 15 minutes alone, without distractions, reduces stress and is refreshing.