

NEWS

JANUARY 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

This Year Resolve to Make Time for You

It's a new year: Time for self-reflection and resolutions. This year resolve to put yourself first for a change – at least once in a while. Caring for children in foster care can be difficult, draining, exhausting and frustrating. Therefore, it is important that foster parents take the time to step away, regroup and recharge. In other words we must take time to care for ourselves. On top of lengthy to-do lists, we are also dealing with challenging behaviors. Children in foster care often project their anger and frustration onto us, which can wear us down.

Remember the safety talk you get before a flight begins? In case of an emergency, oxygen masks will drop from overhead. You are instructed to put your oxygen mask on first, and then help those around you. The idea is that you can't help anyone else if you don't have the oxygen you need. The same is true for being a foster parent. It is hard to be the calm, reasonable and compassionate parent we want to and need to be, if we are too stressed out. In other words, make sure you give yourself a little TLC.

Are you guilty of not taking time for yourself? The National Child Traumatic Stress Network offers these warning signs that you might be nearing compassion fatigue:

- You feel mentally and physically exhausted
- You are using alcohol, food or other substances to combat stress and comfort yourself
- Your sleep is often disturbed
- You are feeling numb and distanced from life
- You are feeling less satisfied
- You are moody and irritable
- You have physical ailments – headaches and stomachaches

If you suspect you are entering the compassion fatigue zone, it's time to practice some basic self-care. This includes:

- Getting enough sleep
- Eating well
- Physical exercise
- Taking regular breaks from stressful activities
- Laughing every day
- Expressing yourself
- Letting someone else take care of you
- Joining a support group

Deena McMahon, a licensed social worker, believes it is important for foster parents to realize that they are worth taking care of, and their happiness and well-being are essential to good parenting. She recommends making self-care part of your daily routine. She said, "Caring for children who have special needs is a matter of the heart. Self-care is a mindset and a positive choice. If you can find a balance between caring for your children and meeting your own needs, you will ultimately be much better equipped to do both."

NEWS FROM YOUR IFAPA PEER LIAISON



IFAPA Training

Register at 1-800-277-8145 ext. 1

www.ifapa.org

DES MOINES SERVICE AREA #5

| Date & Time | Name of Training & Trainer | Credit | Location |
|---|--|---------|---|
| Saturday, Jan. 9, 2016 (9am-12:15pm) | <u>Decoding the Mystery of ADHD</u> (Warren Phillips, Ph.D.) | 3 hours | Ankeny IFAPA Training Cntr 6864 NE 14th St. Suite 5 |
| Saturday, Jan. 9, 2016 (1:15pm-4:30pm) | <u>PTSD in Children and Teens</u> (Warren Phillips, Ph.D.) | 3 hours | Ankeny IFAPA Training Cntr 6864 NE 14th St. Suite 5 |
| Saturday, Jan. 16, 2016 (9am-12:15pm) | <u>Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training</u> | 3 hours | Ankeny IFAPA Training Cntr 6864 NE 14th St. Suite 5 |
| Saturday, Jan. 16, 2016 (1:15pm-5:30pm) | CPR & First Aid (<u>Register & Pay Here</u>) To avoid late fees pay by Friday, Jan. 8 | 4 hours | Ankeny To be announced |
| Saturday, Jan. 30, 2016 (9am-12:15pm) | <u>How to Talk So Everyone Will Listen</u> (Christy Meyer) | 3 hours | Ankeny IFAPA Training Cntr 6864 NE 14th St. Suite 5 |
| Saturday, Jan. 30, 2016 (1:15pm-4:30pm) | <u>Working Through Anger</u> (Christy Meyer) | 3 hours | Ankeny IFAPA Training Cntr 6864 NE 14th St. Suite 5 |

Notice to Foster Parents

Required Training Now Available

In September 2014, Congress passed the "Prevent Sex Trafficking & Strengthening Families" Act, H.R. 4980. This law establishes prudent parent standards throughout the United States. As part of this federal law, foster parents are now required to complete the Reasonable Prudent Parent Standard Training by September 30, 2016.

The Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard allows foster parents to give their foster children permission to do age-appropriate activities that promote cognitive, emotional, physical and behavioral growth. All states are now required to promote normalcy for children in foster care.

In order to complete this requirement, foster parents must view the [Reasonable Prudent Parent Standard training video](#). This training will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Upon completion of the video, foster parents will be directed to a form to complete. After the form is submitted, a confirmation email will be sent to the training participant that completed this required training. Foster parents must forward the email confirmation to their Iowa KidsNet Renewal/Support Specialist in order to demonstrate they have received credit for completing this required course. **For additional information and to view the RPPS training video, [CLICK HERE](#).**

