

NEWS FROM YOUR PEER LIAISON

November 2016



TINA VANDE KAMP

IFAPA Peer Liaison

How to Contact Me:

844-451-6813

712-451-6813

tvandekamp@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



www.ifapa.org

How can we work with birth families during the holidays?

- Ask children about their experiences and try to incorporate some of their traditions. The children placed in your home may miss some activities that they experienced with their family or in a previous placement.
- If possible, ask your child's family members about their holiday traditions and customs. Ask about their beliefs and observances. Although you may feel stretched at the holidays, try to coordinate schedules with the birth families. This gives the children a chance to share what is familiar while experiencing new traditions.
- This is a good time for the youth in your home to make small gifts and send cards to their birth families or old neighbors and friends.
- This is a time when many children feel conflicted feelings about their birth families and worry about them. It is a good time to let the young person know that it is okay for them to be safe and cared for even if their family struggles. Reassure them if you can, about the safety and care of their birth family.

<http://fosteringperspectives.org/fpv15n1/holidays.htm>

Religious Differences & the Holidays

The holidays can be tough for foster families. Children in care miss their families and their traditions, while at the same time they may want to be part of the activities of the foster family. When there's a religious difference between the child's family and the foster family, things can become even more complicated.

Religion can be a sensitive issue. Legally, birth parents have the right to choose their children's religion or lack of religion. Placement of their child in foster care does not take away this right.

Of course, most foster parents try to respect the culture and religious customs of the children in their care. But what does this mean when it comes to religion?

The answer lies in establishing open lines of communication among foster parents, DHS, and the birth family. If your agency knows how you feel about religious issues (for example, if prayer makes you feel uncomfortable, or if you feel compelled to convert children and their families), it will make informed placement decisions. If you haven't already done so, consider talking with your social worker about how religion affects your role as a foster parent.

This communication works both ways. The more you know about the religion, traditions, and preferences of birth families, the easier it will be for you to act in a way that honors their beliefs.

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NOVEMBER TRAININGS

Date & Time	Name of Training & Trainer	Credit	Location
Saturday, Nov. 12, 2016 (9am-4:30pm)	Utilizing the Nurtured Heart Approach in Helping Children with Challenging Behaviors (Kim Combes)	6 hours	Sheldon Holiday Inn Express 201 34th Ave
Saturday, Nov. 19, 2016 (9am-12:15pm)	Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training	3 hours	Sioux City Stoney Creek Inn 300 3rd Street Nebraska Room
Saturday, Nov. 19, 2016 (1:15pm-5:30pm)	CPR and First Aid (Register & Pay Here) To avoid late fees, pay by Sunday, Nov. 6	4 hours	Sioux City TBA

SUPPORT GROUP OPPORTUNITY

Sioux City: Thursday, November 10th AEA Building
6:30 – 8:30 p.m. 2nd Floor – Room G
2 Hr Training Credit 1520 Morningside Ave
Sioux City, IA

Topic: The Real Life Story of Tim Card

Tim is a Parent Partner and Co-Facilitator of 24/7 Dads. Tim shares his personal story of loss and addiction. Tim lost his children to foster care after struggling with addiction. He went on to overcome addiction and had his children returned. Tim has great insight and shares his story with openness and honesty.

Please remember to RSVP for support groups and training classes. Classes with low attendance are sometimes cancelled. If you do not RSVP, we do not know you were planning to attend. If a cancellation happens, we do not have contact information to let you know. RSVPs are appreciated and help leaders plan better.

Thank you!



Thanksgiving Funnies



Q: What is the best thing to put into pumpkin pie?

A: Your teeth!

Q: Why didn't the turkey eat dessert?

A: He was already stuffed!

Easy Turkey Pinecone Craft for Kids



1. Cut a small diamond out of yellow construction paper and fold in half to create the beak.
2. Cut a wattle (rectangle with a heart shape at one end) out of red construction paper.
3. Glue beak, wattle and google eyes to pinecone.
4. Twist dark pipe cleaner around pinecone base and poke into orange.
5. Glue fall leaves to opposite side of orange to create tail feathers. (Or trace your child's hand on two different color sheets of construction paper. Cut out and glue them together, overlapping.)
6. Glue two acorn caps to bottom for feet.

