

OCTOBER 10, 2017

Celebrating Birthdays with Your Foster Children

Fostering a child during the child's birthday can offer special and unique opportunities for building a relationship with birth parents, and maybe even mentoring. Here are a few ideas on fostering a child and how to build a relationship or mentor the birth family during the foster child's birthday. [READ IDEAS](#)



100 Non-Toy Gift Ideas

Season Passes

- Zoo
- Museum
- Aquarium
- Amusement Park

One-Time Passes

- Movies
- Bowling or Mini Golf
- Swimming
- Theatre Performance
- Go see a sporting event
- Ice Skating or Roller Skating
- Concert

Experiences for Kids

- Horse & Buggy Ride
- Train Ride
- Painting pottery
- Ice Cream vouchers
- Special dinner out
- A Trip to the Fire Station
- A Trip to Chuckie Cheese

Older Kids or Grown-Ups

- Hot Air Balloon Ride
- Murder Mystery Evening
- Zip Lining
- Trip to the Spa (Mani/Pedi, Massage, Facial, etc.)
- Rock Climbing
- Trip to Arcade

A Class or Season of Lessons

- Swimming
- Sports
- Gymnastics or Dance or Karate
- Musical Instrument
- Pottery Class or Art Class
- Craft class (ie. knitting)

Family Experiences

- A night away at a hotel (with a pool)
- A hotel with an indoor waterpark
- Camping
- Road trip

START TALKING

Not sure when—or how—to bring up adoption with your toddler or preschooler? Here's where to begin.

You've attended workshops, read all of the expert advice, rehearsed the story, and you plan to tell your young child about his adoption...any day now.

Except that your mother questions the need to talk about adoption ("He's too young to understand"). And your best friend suggests waiting until your son brings it up ("so you don't put ideas in his head"). And you find yourself stuttering when you try to say "birthmother" or "you didn't grow in my tummy."

The first couple of times my daughter asked about adoption, I felt tongue-tied by a flood of emotion: sadness for her birthmother, discomfort about my infertility, fear that I would say the wrong thing to her and damage her tiny psyche.

Even though adoption has moved toward openness, telling young children about it can be hard. Yet all the experts agree: We have to do it. And the younger we start, the better.

by Lee Tobin McClain, Ph.D.

[Find Answers to Other Adoption Questions](#)

<https://www.nacac.org/help/>

<http://www.ifapa.org/resources/online-resources-for-parents.asp>



THE 5 BEST STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING MISBEHAVIOR

Unfortunately, a two year old's frontal cortex is still developing the ability to control his emotions and behavior. That means they throw food, break things, have meltdowns, bite when they're mad, and scribble on the furniture. In other words, they act like two year olds.

But since the brain is still developing through the teen years, kids of all ages sometimes lack the rational control to behave as we'd like. Sometimes even 15 year olds act like 2 year olds!

So what can you do when your child acts out, whether he's a toddler or a teen? Here are the five best strategies for preventing misbehavior, for all age kids.

#1 - Connect. Stay connected by seeing his point of view, so he's motivated to develop self-control. When humans lash out -- biting his sisters, breaking things, defiance -- it's because they feel afraid or hurt. That upset disconnects your child from you, even if you're usually close. But his motivation to "behave" comes from his connection with you, so you have to re-establish the connection before you can influence his behavior. As soon as you see your child getting upset and pushing on the limits of acceptable behavior, move in close and re-connect: "Sweetie, I think we all need a hug...come here." Sometimes that's enough to turn things around, especially if you can then move into....

#2 - Play. Children process emotion through play, so you can often prevent "misbehavior" by helping your child channel her big feelings into giggles. Toddlers need regular throwing games where they can satisfy those throwing impulses. Try beanbag tossing into a bucket, or balls outside, or tossing stuffed animals down the stairs. Watch, compete (badly), admire his throwing, and be silly to get your child giggling. All young children need lots of wrestling, and games where they get to feel powerful: "You're just too fast for me! How come you always win?!" The more laughter, the less misbehavior.

[CONTINUE READING](#)

CHECK OUT IFAPA'S UPCOMING TRAININGS—CLICK [HERE](#) TO VIEW AND REGISTER ONLINE