

NEWS FROM YOUR PEER LIAISON

January, 2016



JOHN SMITH

IFAPA 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

January, 2017

Dear Parents,

The signs of New Year are all around us. Holiday decorations are slowly disappearing; the crowds at shopping malls are thinning out. Everyone is focused on getting back to a regular routine of work and family. And yes, many are contemplating those longed-for but often dreaded New Year's resolutions. Whether it's resolving to lose weight, exercise more, save money, or just become a better person, people are trying to make a new start.

My good friend Christie provided me with this Top 10 Countdown for Foster Parents:

NEW YEAR'STOP 10 COUNT DOWN

- 10) Begin the New Year with new clothing for your foster child. Clothing allowances start over January 1st. Contact your DHS worker before you purchase!
- 9) Like Magic- the Friends of Children in Foster Care has grants to help with your foster child's "special extras" To apply: www.ifapa.org (under resources)!
- 8) New Year-New Contact Information? Let your liaison know if your email, address, or phone numbers have changed!
- 7) Ready for a well-deserved break? Remember to set up RESPITE with your IKN support worker. Each placement receives 24 days per calendar year.
- 6) Snow days are a great opportunity to work on your child's Lifebook. You can find printable pages and ideas at: www.ifapa.org (under publications)
- 5) "Spring is Coming" Save the Date for IFAPA's Spring Conference! April 7-8, 2017 in Des Moines. Watch for upcoming details: www.ifapa.org
- 4) A few quiet minutes, hot chocolate, & IFAPA's Weekly Word....PRICELESS arriving in your EMAIL box each week!
- 3) Keep Your Mind From Melting! IFAPA's New Training Brochure is out with fresh, new trainings. Don't wait...Sign up now! www.ifapa.org
- 2) Jack Frost keeping you inside? Take some time to look at IFAPA's website! Full of awesome information, trainings, videos, and resources! www.ifapa.org
- 1) Lastly, You are making a difference in your Child's Life! Thank You and HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Your IFAPA Peer Liaison!! John Smith, jsmith@ifapa.org or 877-305-3396)

Take Care & God Bless – IFAPA John

DATES ON DECK

- Saturday, Jan. 14, 2017 (9AM-4:30PM); **ACT on your Stress: Stress Management for Foster and Adoptive Parents using Acceptance & Commitment Training**; Stoney Creek Inn, Sioux City.

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

REMINDERS

**Even if you have a two-year license and another year remaining on your license, six hours of training still needs to be completed each licensing year.

And, don't forget, if it has been three years since you last took an approved **CPR & First Aid training or five years since you took your **Mandatory Child Abuse** training, you will need to complete these before you can be re-licensed. If you can't remember, touch base with your IKN or DHS licensing workers; they should know! AND, if you are not certain who your re-licensing worker is, contact me and I will help you out.

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: Patricia Wdbb
- 10+ Years: Joe & Christine Collins; Sally & Tim Kraayenbrink
- 5+ Years: Jeannette Knight; Angela & Keith Schrunck; Carol Watchhorn; David & Stacy DeYoung
- ONE YEAR: Melissa & Christopher Wiederin

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



From My Side of the Desk!

"Do as I say and not as I do!" Have any of you ever heard that? Said that? I have! And I should have listened to myself! I have overextended our family and now need to reexamine and decide what the best thing to do is!

On December 2nd (heading home from a Peer Liaison meeting) in a weak moment, (without consulting my spouse) I agreed to take four kiddos (ages 7-13 & with no known behaviors 😊) until the 20th of December. I figured we could take on anything for two weeks! How wrong I was!

Yesterday, we were informed that if they don't go home by January 5th, they could possibly be with us until April!

What do we do? Better question would be "what should JOHN have done?"

We have been in this long enough to know that no one has a calendar that works! I should have considered all that goes with little rascals! But most important, this needs to be a team decision and not a John decision!

And for those curious, Mrs. Smith is speaking to me again!

Wish US LUCK!!

-IFAPA John