

# Families First

a newsletter for Nebraska Families

December/January 2014

N F A P A

## Understanding Foster Parent stress, loss and grief

by Dr. John DeGarmo

Perhaps one of the most difficult aspects of being a foster parent is the moment when your foster child leaves your home. As a foster parent, your home becomes a place where foster children come for a period of time, with the goal of being reunited with their family in the near future. Reunification is not possible for some foster children and the birth parents' rights are terminated. As a result, these children become available for adoption, and some foster parents do indeed end up making their foster child a permanent addition to their family through adoption.

If reunification is not possible with the birth parents, many foster children are instead placed into a birth family member's home. Whatever the reason might be, reunification can be a difficult time for foster parents, as the child they have come to love leaves their home. Indeed, for many foster parents, the lack of contact with a former foster child after reunification is a time of deep sadness. When any foster child leaves your home, no matter the level of attachment, there will be emotions when it is time to say goodbye for both you and the child. Rest assured, many foster parents do feel grief during the removal of their foster child as the child has come to be an important and loved member of their family. After all, the removal of a foster child from a foster home is akin to a loss and any loss can cause grieving.

### *Singes of Grief*

Grief can be expressed in variety of ways depending upon the individual as it is personal.



Some will shed tears and cry, while others will hold it inside. Some will busy themselves in a task, while others will seem detached and far away. The departure of your foster child from your home can be one that is devastating to you and your family. A brief look at the stages of grief (Kubler-Ross 1969) is important in order to fully understand the feelings that may come along with the removal of your foster child from your family. These same feelings may be felt by your foster child when he is removed from his own home and first placed in yours.

### *Shock*

The removal of the foster child may bring feelings of shock to the foster family. After a family member has formed an emotional attachment to the family, the sudden removal may cause deep shock and uncertainty, leaving the foster family confused.

## Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association Families First a newsletter for Nebraska Families

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When reprinting an article, please receive permission from the Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association, 2431 Fairfield St., Suite C, Lincoln, NE 68521, 402-476-2273, toll-free 877-257-0176, e-mail [Fam@nfpapa.org](mailto:Fam@nfpapa.org). To contact a board member or member, visit our website at [www.nfpapa.org](http://www.nfpapa.org).

### NFAPA Staff

Patricia Allen, Executive Director: 308-631-5847 or [Patm@nfpapa.org](mailto:Patm@nfpapa.org)  
Barb Nissen, Program Coordinator: 308-379-5323 or [rbnissen@hantrill.org](mailto:rbnissen@hantrill.org)  
Felicita Nelson, Office Administrator: 877-257-0176 or [Felicita@nfpapa.org](mailto:Felicita@nfpapa.org)  
Holy Dixon, Support Staff: 877-257-0176 or [Holy@nfpapa.org](mailto:Holy@nfpapa.org)  
Alicia Carlson, Support Staff: 877-257-0176

### Resource Family Consultants (RFC)

Christina Stassen, RFC  
Tanya Wynn, RFC

402-909-2197

[christina@nfpapa.org](mailto:christina@nfpapa.org)

[tanya@nfpapa.org](mailto:tanya@nfpapa.org)

Terry Robinson, Central: 402-853-1092 or [trobinson1978@gmail.com](mailto:trobinson1978@gmail.com)

Dee Nicholson, Western: 402-853-1090 or [Deedee@nfpapa.org](mailto:Deedee@nfpapa.org)

### NFAPA Board of Directors (2013)

#### President

Charles and Carla Colton  
3215 L 740 Road  
Imperial, NE 69033  
308-882-4078  
[colton@chase3000.com](mailto:colton@chase3000.com)

#### Vice-President

Jay & Tammy Wells  
21 N. 17th St. PO Box 162  
Lincoln, NE 68520  
308-973-2111  
[jwells@frontier.net](mailto:jwells@frontier.net)

#### Secretary

Bob and Pat Rice  
520 North 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Plainmoor, NE 68048  
402-296-2621  
[KR3026@windstream.net](mailto:KR3026@windstream.net)

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Larry and Lynne Wedel  
RR1 Box 61  
Bellevue, NE 68315  
402-768-6803  
[Lynne\\_wedel@ymail.com](mailto:Lynne_wedel@ymail.com)

#### Central Representative

Kathy Wagner-Wiese  
17630 W. 42<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Kearney, NE 68956  
402-752-3712  
[okwiese@midstatecan.net](mailto:okwiese@midstatecan.net)

#### Eastern Representative

Annalynn Bannister  
7820 Jackson Circle  
Council Bluffs, MO 64815  
308-62-6859  
[bannisterann@gmail.com](mailto:bannisterann@gmail.com)

Questions? Call NFAPA at 877-257-0176 or 402-476-2273.

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## FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association

by Pamela Allen

The New Year is well on its way, and as I think back over the past year I find, as always, I have many things to be thankful for! I am blessed and thankful for my family and the understanding they have as I travel across the state. My family is blessed to have my mother living with us which allows my girls to experience extended family and compassion with an older generation. I am thankful for the awesome staff we have at NFAPA! Our Resource Family Consultants are dedicated to helping foster and adoptive families and are truly empathetic and understanding as those that "walk in your shoes."

NFAPA continues to offer support groups in each of the service areas. As I have said many times before, foster care is about relationships and relationships with our foster and adoptive parents gives opportunity not only for sharing concerns, but is a great way to find those who can give each other a break and provide opportunity for respite. I am thankful for all of the foster and adoptive parents that attend support groups! Please be sure to check out our website, [nfpapa.org](http://nfpapa.org) for times and places of support groups.

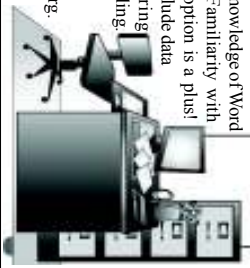
I am thankful for foster families new and old, who open their homes and hearts to children and their families. Families Helping Families is absolutely what foster care is all about! I am also thankful that more children are able to stay safely in their homes with their own families rather than coming into the homes of someone they don't know. Nebraska has done a good job this past year of lowering the number of children coming into care.

Over the Christmas season, one of the old movies we watched had a song that was sung by Ring Crosby that said you should fall asleep counting your blessings rather than cheap...I believe I will by that...how about you? Sometimes, when we are working with a particularly difficult child or a case that we don't think is going the way that "we" think it should...we can get "stuck" in the negative. I suggest to you that by counting your blessings rather than sitting with the negative, your outlook may change and because of that change, everyone else around you may have a change as well! I wish you blessings in the New Year!

## Clerical Assistant Needed.

Looking for a part-time job? NFAPA needs a part-time clerical assistant about 20 hours a week in the office. Hours are flexible. Most have general knowledge of Word and Excel. Familiarity with foster care/adoption is a plus! Duties will include data

entry, answering the phone & filing. Please email resume to [Patm@nfpapa.org](mailto:Patm@nfpapa.org).



# Do I have to knock when I come home?

The Holidays bring up many issues we often do not think about in our everyday lives. I had many calls from former foster children that had aged out of the system or moved on in other ways. It was great to hear from them and catch up.

Things are not always as we would like them to be. I heard from one who was just released from prison. She called to acknowledge she had made some mistakes and had choices, but was starting over. She just wanted to thank us for the courage to do that. She said, "I love you, and thank you for helping to raise me!" WOW! That is powerful!

This made my Christmas, because she was the first child we asked to have removed from our home. Her behaviors were really taking a toll on our own children.

We receive many cards and letters from our kiddos. This poses the question can they come to your house for Christmas? Do they have to be invited? Do they knock? Or is there a key under the mat. This is kind of a different social situation that arises as foster parents are unique.

We need to set boundaries for not only our safety, but the safety of others living in our homes. Just as we have a set of rules in our home, we also need a set for after they leave our home. Just like many of you, I have a big heart for children but remember they now are adults that maybe you have not been in touch with or heard from in many years. I am glad to keep in contact with all of them. It works easier now that social media is so accessible. We have relationships with some of our children where the key is under the mat or the door is always open. We have some that we call or text only while we work on trust or addiction issues.

I encourage you to think about this and have a plan in place before you need it. It is never fun to have to lay down the rules, but it is more stressful when we wait until the last minute. This is a subject we need to discuss with our foster children ahead of time. Often times



children even our bio children cannot wait to turn 19 so they can be rid of Foster care or controlling Parents. (Not that I would ever was a controlling Parent.). A lot of our kids do not understand body language or social cues.

If we do not point blank tell them they are welcome back in our homes for college breaks, visits or even to live during hard times they will not believe they are. We need to make it clear to them that, if they need us, we will be available or no, we will not be available and point them to some outside resources. How many of you still needed guidance and acceptance from your parents and extended family as you began your adult life? Probably most of us. I often tell my foster parents that I mentor in order to see how rewarding it is you have to stay in it long enough.

We do not often hear thank you for our rules and curfews, but chances are when our kids start to parent we hear "I am glad you made room in your heart for us." "I hear parenting is hard work." or "Heart work" and "I cannot believe you wanted to do it for strangers". In our home there are no strangers! Just kids.... I encourage you to make time to reflect and re-energize yourselves as you carry on with the hardest job you will ever love.

Robbi Blume North/ Central RFC

*Continued from Page 1*

## Understanding Foster Parent stress, loss and grief

### Denial

With a sudden departure, some foster parents may deny they ever formed a relationship with their foster child or feel any sadness towards the removal. Even though they deny these feelings they grieve, believing that they were unable to provide the help the child needed.

### Anger

A foster child's removal from a foster parent home may bring feelings of anger and severe disappointment with the caseworker, as well as with the child welfare agency system. Foster parents may blame the system or caseworker for the placement of their foster child into an environment they feel is not productive, or even harmful to the child.

### Guilt

During this stage, foster parents may experience feelings of guilt, blaming themselves with the belief they are at fault, and try to comprehend what they did "wrong" in the removal of the foster child. Still, other foster parents may experience guilt if they were the ones asking for the removal, as they were unable to continue caring for the child.

### Bargaining

Some foster parents will try to substitute the grief they have with helping others in need, in an attempt to justify the loss of their foster child. Others will try to substitute the loss with the placement of another foster child in their home, hoping that this new placement will help them forget about the child that just left.

### Depression

There are different components to depression brought on by grief. Some foster parents will become easily irritated; others will experience a constant state of feeling tired. Others will feel as if they can no longer continue with their day to day lives, and have a difficult time with the tasks associated with family, friends, work and marriage.

### Acceptance

After the passage of time, the grief from the loss of the foster child decreases, allowing the foster

parent to accept the removal of the child and move on. The emotional well being of the foster parent improves, and a sense of understanding of the child's removal becomes clearer.

Dr. John DeGarmo has been a foster parent for 11 years now, and he and his wife have had over 40 children come through their home. He is a speaker and trainer on many topics about the foster care system, and travels around the nation delivering passionate, dynamic, energetic and informative presentations. Dr. DeGarmo is the author of several books, including *The Foster Parenting Manual*, and *The Fictal Child: Opening the Door to a Safe and Stable Home for the Fictal Child*. He is also the author of *Why Did My Child Leave? The Fictal Child's Story*. Dr. DeGarmo is the host of the weekly radio program, **Foster Talk with Dr. John**, heard each Monday at 8 PM Eastern. He also writes for a number of publications and newsletters, both here in the United States, and overseas. He can be contacted at [djohndegarmo@gmail.com](mailto:djohndegarmo@gmail.com), through his Facebook page, <http://djohndegarmoofstructure.weebly.com>.

## Medicaid to 26 for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care!

Starting January 1, 2014, youth who "age-out" of foster care\* may be eligible for Medicaid through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) until age 26. Young adults who already aged out of foster care and are under the age of 26 may also be eligible. Over 1,500 young people across the state could be impacted by this.

Please help us spread the word by sharing this information with all potentially eligible young people and those who may come into contact with them.

Youth may be eligible if they:

• Aged out of foster care\*

• Were enrolled in Medicaid while in foster care.

\*At this time, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has described that youth must have aged out at 19 in Nebraska in order to get coverage. Thus, youth whose cases are closed between ages 18 and 19 may not be covered. Contact Nebraska Appressed at 402-438-8853 with questions about this. Youth whose cases are closed at age 18 or younger will not be eligible for this category of Medicaid.

To sign up, Youth can download a Medicaid application (make sure they answer Question 16, which asks whether they are in foster care at age 18 or older) from [www.nappressed.com](http://www.nappressed.com). They can also contact the DHHS Medicaid Division at 1-855-632-7653, 402-475-7000 (in Lincoln), or 402-595-1178 (in Omaha).

For additional details about this provision of the ACA, including several Q&As, check out our fact sheet here. Be sure to also check out our fact sheet about Bridge to Independence, a new program providing voluntary extended services and support for youth aging out of foster care until they turn age 21. You may also contact Nebraska Appressed or your local DHHS office.

Thank you for your partnership in serving youth across the state of Nebraska!

# Adoption Day

by **Rigo Jonathan Britz, age 10**

I got up and felt excited for what was happening to me in my life! I went out to the kitchen for breakfast. When I got done with breakfast my mom told me to get ready. I brushed my teeth, combed my hair, made my body smell good. I put on my three piece suit with a tie! I'm getting adopted!

The judge adopted me and Carmen to our mom and our dad. The judge asked a lot of questions to my mom and dad. He didn't really ask me and Carmen a lot of questions. When the judge was done asking questions to my mom and dad, he gave me and Carmen a stuffed animal to remember this very important day. Then we all said "Finally, Finally it's done, it's done!!!" Jeff took pictures and pictures of all of us even the judge. We all gave each other hugs after the pictures were done being taken.

After taking pictures, we all celebrated in the court room that me and Carmen are finally adopted. Then we went to go to El Tapatio for lunch. After we were done with lunch we went home. On the way home we said "It's finally done we can go change our clothes!!!!!!" Then finally I started a new chapter in my life!!!!!!

**Note from Jean Britz:** The journey started in October, 2008, when we got Carmen and Rigo as a foster placement. We were the third home they had



been placed. Rigo was 5 and Carmen 9. Within the first few months, we knew if it became impossible for them to go back home that we would like to adopt them.

After two years of fostering them, we took guardianship. No contact from the bio parents even though it was allowed. We had several roadblocks along the way. Finally, in February, 2013, our attorney had the case transferred to Platte County. We still had several delays, but our adoption finally took place November 5, 2013. It was a long process but definitely worthwhile.

People tell us the kids are so lucky to have us-I say we are the lucky ones!

## Thank You

Thanks to the Columbus Support Group for a great Christmas Potluck. A special thanks to Jean Britz for making the arrangements and CUTE center pieces. A fun time was had by all. Please consider joining a support group in your area. This is a great way to meet other foster and adoptive families. Check out times and locations in the newsletter or on our website:

[www.nfapa.org](http://www.nfapa.org)



## Mark your calendars!

NFAPA offers support groups at the following dates/times/cities. Up to date information with each support group location will be on the calendar page on our website. This is your chance to gain understanding and parenting tips through trainings, discussions and networking with fellow foster families. In-service training is offered at most support groups. Registration is not required, unless noted, but you are welcome to contact your Resource Family Consultant to let them know you are coming! Support Groups will be cancelled for inclement weather. Call the office or check the calendar on our website at [www.nfapa.org](http://www.nfapa.org)

**Northern Area:** Childcare offered at Columbus, SSC & Norfolk Northern Support Groups for families who attend. The Columbus support group on May 13 will be a special 3 hour in-service training.

**Columbus: Peace Lutheran Church (2720 28<sup>th</sup> St) 7:00-8:30 p.m.**

January 14, 2014; February 11, 2014; March 11, 2014; April 8, 2014; May 13, 2014  
(Time for May 13 is 6:30-9:30 p.m.)

**Norfolk: Faith Regional Health Systems (2700 Norfolk Ave, Norfolk Room) 6:30-8:00 p.m.**

January 23, 2014; March 27, 2014; April 24, 2014 (Note: No meeting in February)

**South Sioux City: Hope Lutheran Church (218 W. 18<sup>th</sup> St) 6:30-8:00 p.m.**

January 14, 2014; February 11, 2014; March 11, 2014; April 8, 2014

**Central Area:** Childcare offered at O'Neill Support Group. Childcare provided for families who call and register the children they will bring to Grand Island & Kearney support groups by calling Terry at 402-853-1092.

**Grand Island: First St. Paul's Lutheran Church (1515 Harrison) 6:30-8:00 p.m.**

January 14, 2014; February 11, 2014; March 11, 2014; April 8, 2014

**O'Neill: Assembly of God Church (204 North 7 St) 7:00-8:30 p.m.** (Childcare available)

January 23, 2014 & March 27, 2014. RSVF required to attend. Contact Robbi at 402-853-1091.

**Kearney: First United Methodist Church (4500 Linden Dr.) 6:30-8:00 p.m.**

January 9, 2014; February 13, 2014; March 13, 2014; April 10, 2014

**Eastern Area:** Childcare offered for families who attend.

**Gretna: Little Red School House (21730 Laura Street) 6:30-8:00 p.m.**

January 27, 2014; February 24, 2014; March 24, 2014; April 28, 2014

**Southeast Area:** No childcare offered. This will be a Brown Bag Lunch (bring your own lunch) Support Group. We hope you will enjoy having lunch while joining us at one of these sessions. No in-service training provided.

**Lincoln: NFAPA Office (2431 Fairfield Street, Suite C) Noon-1:00 p.m.** (No Childcare)

January 17, 2014; February 27, 2014; March 27, 2014; April 24, 2014

Also available is an Adoption Book Club.

**Lincoln: 610 J Street, Basement Conference Room. 7-00 p.m.** (No Childcare)

This is an Adoption Book Club and meets the second Wednesday of each month.

Contact Barb Dewey, LICSW at 402-525-9825 for more information and to let her know you are attending.

**Western Area:** Childcare offered in North Platte, Scottsbluff & Alliance for families who attend. Childcare available at the Lexington and Ogallala support groups if you call and register the children you will bring by calling Dee at 402-853-1090.

**North Platte: Harvest Christian Fellowship Church (1501 S. Dewey) 1:30-3:30 p.m.**

January 12, 2014; February 16, 2014; March 9, 2014; April 6, 2014; May 11, 2014

**Gothenburg: American Lutheran Church (1512 Ave G) 6:30-8:00 p.m.** (No Childcare)

January 14, 2014; February 11, 2014; March 11, 2014; April 15, 2014; May 13, 2014

**Lexington: Parkview Baptist Church (803 West 18) 6:30-8:00 p.m.** (Childcare available if needed)

January 7, 2014; March 4, 2014; April 1, 2014; May 6, 2014 (Note: Meet in February at Gothenburg Support Group)

**Ogallala: New Hope Church (118 East B St) 1:30-3:30 p.m.** (Childcare available if needed)

January 26, 2014; March 23, 2014; May 18, 2014

**McCook: Community Hospital (1301 East H St) 6:30-8:00 p.m.** (No Childcare)

January 20, 2014; February 24, 2014; March 17, 2014; April 21, 2014; May 19, 2014

**Scottsbluff: St. Francis Community Center (1605 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave) 6:00-7:30 p.m.**

January 21, 2014; March 18, 2014; April 15, 2014 (Note: No meeting in February)

**Alliance: Alliance Library Rooms A & B (1750 Sweetwater Ave) 6:00-7:30 p.m.**

January 16, 2014; March 20, 2014; April 17, 2014 (Note: No meeting in February)

## NEBRASKA FOSTER AND

## ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP

APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 1, 2014

### NEBRASKA FOSTER & ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION \$250 Scholarship Program

NEAPA offers a scholarship (1) for an adoptive, foster, guardianship or kinship child, who wishes to further their education beyond high school or GED. This can be either at a college or university, vocational and/or job training, or on line learning. The scholarship form will be available on our website ([www.nfapa.org](http://www.nfapa.org)) Requirements and submission instructions will be listed.

#### Other scholarships available:

1. Mildred Fry Scholarship at Lincoln Community Foundation: The Lincoln Community Foundation administers the Mildred Fry Scholarship for whom students that have been, or currently are in foster care, are eligible. This year, there are three awards of \$2,000 each available. Please see guidelines. Applications are filled out online at [www.lcf.org](http://www.lcf.org) beginning December 13, 2013. Most deadlines are March 31, 2014. The Lincoln Community Foundation is pleased to announce we have updated our scholarship guidelines and application materials for spring 2014 scholarship awards!
2. Lincoln Community Foundation also has many other scholarships available. The criteria varies for each scholarship. Go to <http://www.lcf.org/page.aspx?pid=477>
3. The Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation. Deadline is February 1, 2014. <http://www.buffettscholarships.org/eligibility.shtml>
4. The American Education Guidance Center recommends looking at their page for 60 no-cost scholarship search sites: [http://www.college-scholarships.com/free\\_scholarship\\_searches.htm](http://www.college-scholarships.com/free_scholarship_searches.htm)
5. Contact the EducationQuest Foundation for a free database that contains over 200 Nebraska-based scholarships! <http://www.educationquest.org/scholarshipsquest/>
6. Check out our website for additional scholarships that might be available.
7. The Horatio Alger Association and the National Foster Parent Association scholarship deadlines have already passed. Be sure to check them out early for 2015 scholarships.





# Children • • • • •

**Names :** Jeffrey & Siyca

**Birthdate:** February, 2007 & January 2009

**Race:** African American

**Number of Siblings:** 5  
**Names of Siblings:** NA

**Is Contact with Siblings Requested:** Five

**sisters & one brother** (DeJony, Araya, Manya, Adrianna, Siyca and Jeffrey), but permanency plan is for Jeffrey to be placed with only his sister Siyca.

Jeffrey is the energetic only brother with five sisters.

Jeffrey loves being active and play sports. He wants to play basketball, football, soccer and boxing. Jeffrey really desires a bicycle. He also enjoys drawing. Jeffrey is in Kindergarten and is eager to start learning more and more.

Siyca is the snssy, youngest sister. She has many interests including watching movies and television shows, especially Madagascar, singing, dancing, which she is very good at, drawing, animals, and playing games. She is very outgoing and needs to stay busy participating in a lot of activities. She adores her older siblings and is particularly close to her brother, Jeffrey. Ideally, she should be the youngest child in her family.

For more information: Email: [Inezrz@fsnrb.org](mailto:Inezrz@fsnrb.org) Phone: 402-661-3132



**View other children waiting for adoption at:**

[http://dhhs.ne.gov/children\\_family\\_services/Pages/adoption\\_children.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/children_family_services/Pages/adoption_children.aspx)

## Central Area News: Project Everlast

As foster parents to five teens, Greg and Terry Robinson strongly encourage all teens entering their home to become involved with Project Everlast. Over the past several years, they have seen how this organization greatly benefits teens in foster care. "It is so important for all children to know there are adults who care about them, not just parents or relatives, but others who genuinely care about them and their future." The Robinsons strive to help their foster kids know they can make good out of the bad. They



do not have to let their past circumstances control what their future is going to be. The Robinsons are grateful for Project Everlast and the generosity shown by Dr. Mortledge this past week.

## **Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association**

### **2014 Guardianship Training Classes**

Education for Guardians of Nebraska State Wards

Guardians of children who are in the custody of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services due to abuse and/ or neglect face many issues normally not addressed in the probate code or in probate court proceedings. Foster parents (prospective guardians) or guardians of former state wards should fully understand the permanency options of adoption and guardianship, including the rights, responsibilities and commitments necessary for each. The Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association facilitates a three hour guardianship training that provides participants with detailed information on the duties of the guardian, rights of the ward, annual reporting requirements, and instruction on the forms required for guardianships of this population of minors.

This class fulfills guardianship education requirements set by the Nebraska Probate Code Educational requirements for guardians must be met within three months of appointment.

Note: Foster Parents may attend the Guardianship training for continuing credit hours.

**Pre-registration is required for the class by phone or email to:**

The Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association

1-877-257-0176 or felicia@nfaapa.org

**A registration fee of \$30 per participant is due upon arrival to the class.**

**A full list of guardianship class are available on our website at [www.nfaapa.org](http://www.nfaapa.org). On the next page is a list of trainings available in the next three months. Registration is required at least one week ahead of the training date.**

## **Attention Foster Parents!**

### **Receive in-service training credit for reading this newsletter!**

Now you can enjoy reading *Families First* and receive in-service training credit that can apply toward your re-licensure as a foster parent. This in-service training has been approved by HHS. Simply read this issue, write down the answers to the questions below, and mail your answers to your licensing worker (i.e., Agency worker). If your answers are satisfactory, you will receive 30 minutes of credit toward your in-service training requirement. If you have questions, contact NFAPA at 877-257-0176 or 402-476-2273.

Questions for in-service training quiz: December 2013/January 2014

1. Where is the nearest support group in your area?
2. Where is the nearest guardianship training to you?
3. Who is your RFC and how can you contact them?
4. How will your foster children test your trust?
5. True or False: Your home is the last place your foster child wants to be?
6. What are the Stages of Grief?  
expecting him/her to actively participate?
7. True or False: Allow your foster child time to observe your family's routine before expecting him/her to actively participate?
8. True or False: Your child lived in a home with clear expectations?
9. Where can you go to find three scholarships available to foster teens?
10. What age is Medicaid covering foster youth who age out of the system in Nebraska?

## Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association

### 2014 Guardianship Training Classes

TRAINING DATES	COUNTY	TIME	MEETING ADDRESS
<b>January 2014</b>			
Monday, January 13, 2014	Dakota	6:30 to 9:30 p.m.	Hope Lutheran Church South Sioux City
Monday, January 13, 2014	Fillmore	6 to 9 p.m.	Public Library 1043 G Street Geneva
Wednesday, January 15, 2014	Lancaster	6 p.m. to 9 p.m.	NFAPA Office 2431 Fairfield, Suite C Lincoln
Wednesday, January 15, 2014	Douglas	9 a.m. to 12 p.m.	Omaha Comfort Inn 7007 Grover Street Omaha
Thursday, January 16, 2014	Seward	6 p.m. to 9 p.m.	Seward Civic Center 616 Bradford Street Seward
<b>February 2014</b>			
Saturday, February 1, 2014	Madison	9:30 am to 12:30 pm	Faith Regional Hospital Prairie Room 4700 Norfolk Ave Norfolk
<b>Spanish Class</b>			
Tuesday, February 4, 2014	Brown	5 to 8 p.m.	Ainsworth Library 445 N.ain Street Ainsworth
Friday, February 7, 2014	Scottsbluff	6 p.m. to 9 p.m.	Regional West Hospital Room 1202 Scottsbluff
Saturday, February 8, 2014	Lincoln	9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	Community Safety Room 715 South Jeffers North Platte
Monday, February 10, 2014	Hall	6 to 9 p.m.	St. Paul Lutheran Church 1515 Harrison Grand Island
Wednesday, February 12, 2014	Lancaster	9 a.m. to 12 p.m.	NFAPA Office 2431 Fairfield, Suite C Lincoln
Wednesday, February 19, 2014	Douglas	6 p.m. to 9 p.m.	Omaha Comfort Inn 7007 Grover Street Omaha
<b>March 2014</b>			
Monday, March 3, 2014	Madison	6 to 9 p.m.	Faith Regional 4700 Norfolk Ave Norfolk
Wednesday, March 12, 2014	Lancaster	6 p.m. to 9 p.m.	NFAPA Office 2431 Fairfield, Suite C Lincoln
Wednesday, March 19, 2014	Douglas	9 a.m. to 12 p.m.	Omaha Comfort Inn 7007 Grover Street Omaha

## Foster Parenting Manual Monthly Foster Care Tip

All families have some sort of routine and patterns of behavior that exist within their home. Your own family may have a routine you follow on a daily or regular basis. Depending upon the type of household your foster child came from, he may not be familiar with your day-to-day routine. Indeed, he may come from a home that had no set routine or schedule. Even more, he may have lived in a home

where there were no expectations of him and no rules for him to follow. It is important that you include your foster child into your family and into your routine. Before expecting too much from him, give him some time alone to become comfortable with his new home, family and surroundings. Allow him time to observe your family's routine before expecting him to actively participate. Some of your routines might be informal, such as dinner time habits, shoes in the house, respect for others when speaking, etc. If he has questions about your family's routine, answer them honestly and at a level he can understand. Let him know why you do such activities in your house.

### More Tips...

-When welcoming a foster child to your house, give the child a tour of the home, ending with the child's bedroom.

-If the child asks about the case plan for his family or future visits with family - always be clear.

age appropriate and above all honest with your answers. Do not promise a visit soon if you don't know that to be fact. A honest answer of "I don't know" is always better than a fabrication and a child losing trust in you.

-A journal/ documentation may help a foster child get needed services and supports. When a foster family is able to show through documentation that a child struggles to maintain appropriate behavior during school, or throughout a day, others, including social workers and courts, are better able to make needed referrals for services.

-A journal/documentation may help foster parents get needed services and support. After all, it is not just the foster children that are sometimes in need of services. Documentation provided by foster parents may help a social worker see that the family really needs a break, for example, such as a respite care.

For more, contact Dr. DeGarmo at [dridgegarmo@gmail.com](mailto:dridgegarmo@gmail.com), through his Facebook page, Dr. John DeGarmo, or at his website, <http://dridgegarmofostercare.weebly.com>.

## Northern/Eastern/Southeastern Notes

We have had a lot of families finalize their adoptions in 2013, CONGRATS! Here are a couple of "new" forever families.

**Rigo Britt** and his sister **Carmen** were adopted this past November. Rigo wrote a paper as part of a class assignment (please see article on page 5).



The Domina Family



# The importance of trust

by Dr. John DeGarmo

When a child is suddenly taken from his home and family, and placed in a home against his will, there are bound to be issues of trust. Many children in foster care have never had an adult in their life who has not betrayed their trust; why should they trust you? Indeed, when a child in foster care first moves into your home, he is bound to be suspicious as he is now living in a stranger's home; your home. One way to combat this is to create a trusting and nurturing environment within your own home.

Let your foster child know as early as possible that he is welcome in your house. Keep in mind your home is very likely the last place he wants to be. Despite all the pain, difficulties and perhaps even abuse, your foster child may have faced in his own home before coming to live with you, you are still not his parents, not his family and not his home. He probably will want to be with his own family and will resist opening up to you. These first initial days and weeks are essential in regards to building trust. Try to be as warm, as compassionate and as understanding as you possibly can. Your efforts in this area will be recognized by your foster child, even if he does not show it or acknowledge it.

Along with this, you will want to let your foster child know your house is a safe one, and that the world does not come to harm in your home. Not only do you want to let your foster child know this when he joins your family, it is just as important to remind him of this as often as possible. Treat him like a member of your family. You want to show your foster child you value him as a person and he is important. What he says, what he thinks, what he believes, your foster child needs to realize all of these are important. For some children, this might be a new experience, as they have never been shown value before.

Trust can also be built by showing your foster child that you care for him. Building a trusting relationship means showing your foster child you are concerned for his well being, physically, emotionally and mentally. Showing compassion for your foster child is an important part of building a

healthy relationship, as he needs to know and feel that you care for him. After all, close relationships between children and adults are a central part of avoiding further risky behavior.

You may find your foster child will try to test your trust, your love and your dedication to him. He may lash out verbally, throw temper tantrums or throw items in frustration or may lie to you. On the other hand, he might also withdraw, refuse to talk or not engage in the family in a positive way. After the so called "honeymoon" period has elapsed, he may try to determine how far you trust him and how much a part of your family he is. When this happens, remain consistent in our values, your rules, and your consequences. Indeed, this also helps to build trust, as he will see you will not waver in your rules and consequences as well as your love for him.

Trust does take time, and for some foster children, it may take a very long period of time. Remember, you are planting seeds here that you may never see come to fruition.

Dr. John DeGarmo has been a foster parent for 11 years now, and he and his wife have had over 40 children come through their home. He is a speaker and trainer on many topics about the foster care system, and travels around the nation delivering passionate, dynamic, energetic and informative presentations. Dr. DeGarmo is the author of several books, including *The Foster Parenting Manual: A Practical Guide to Creating a Loving, Safe and Stable Home*, and the foster care children's book *A Different Home: A New Foster Child's Story*. Dr. DeGarmo is the host of the weekly radio program **Foster Talk with Dr. John**, heard each Monday at 8 PM Eastern. He also writes for a number of publications and newsletters, both here in the United States, and overseas. He can be contacted at [djohndegarmoo@gmail](mailto:djohndegarmoo@gmail), through his Facebook page, Dr. John DeGarmo, or at his website, <http://djohndegarmoo@fostercare.weebly.com>.

## Nebbraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association 2014 In-Service/Training Registration

January 25, 2014

Lincoln

4 hours in-service credit

### When Attachment and Bonding go Awry by Jane Ryan, RN, M.A.

- This workshop is for anyone interested in the long term effects of early childhood trauma and other issues affecting children. Attendees will be able to identify trauma and/or breaks in the bonding process, learn symptoms and discuss RAD as a survival technique, recognize behavioral clues traumatized youngsters give us and comprehend the severity of the problem in the US and worldwide.

### Location: NEAPA Office, 2431 Fairfield Street, Suite C

(In the General Fire & Safety Building), Lincoln, NE.

Time: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. A light lunch will be provided.

**COST PER PERSON: \$18 foster/adopt parent (Parenting couple: \$34 total)**

**\$26 Professionals (Counselor/Social Workers)**

**\$22 Other adults**

### Note: Jane Ryan is also showing the award-winning film "The Boarder" at the Ross

Theater on Tuesday, January 21, 2014. Seating is limited. Contact the theater for time/ticket purchase. This film is inspired by true-life events, about the Williams family and their process of coping with an adopted child suffering from an unknown malady, Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD).

March 10, 2014

Gretna

3 hours in-service credit

### Adoption Tax Credit by Josh Kroll

- In this session you will learn how the adoption tax credit began helping families adopting special needs children without expenses in 2003. You will learn what is considered special needs for the adoption tax credit and how to take and use the credit. You will also learn about the documentation requirements to claim the credit.

**Location: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 11204 S. 204th Street, Gretna, NE**

**Time: 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.**

**COST PER PERSON: \$15 foster/adopt parent \$10 NFAPA Member \$30 agency/other**

April 12, 2014

North Platte

6 hours in-service credit

### Resiliency (3 hrs.) by Stan Waddell

- Participants will be able to identify factors that impact resiliency. Participants will be able to identify human adaptive process and how it impacts resilience. Participants will be able to list steps to build resilience in times of trauma and after times of trauma. Participants will be able to list 12 steps of successful survivors of trauma.

### Childhood Traumatic Grief: (1.5 hrs.) by Stan Waddell

- At the completion of this training participants will: Understand the impact of childhood traumatic grief. Signs and symptoms of traumatic grief versus normal grief. Suggestions that can help your child work through traumatic grief.

### Preventing Sexual Misconduct: (1.5 hrs.) by Stan Waddell

- After completion of this training, participants will be able to: describe types of harmful contact and non-contact child sexual abuse. Identify signs that are typical of younger children who have been sexually abused. Identify signs typical of a teenager who has been sexually abused. Describe steps to take to create a family safety plan.

**Location: North Platte Fire Station 1 in the conference room, 715 South Jeffers**

**Time: 9:00 a.m.-4:45 p.m.**

**COST PER PERSON: Free. Registration is required. Lunch is on your own.**

## Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association 2014 In-Service/Training Registration

May 13, 2014

Columbus

3 hours in-service credit

**Behavior Management and Using Behavior Charts (1.5 hrs.)** by Stan Waddell, LPC

- At completion of this training participants will: Define behavior management. Identify reasons children act out. Identify keys to successful behavior management. Identify the use of behavior modification plan to help manage children's behaviors. Use of structure, routine and positive reinforcing to improve behavior. Identify ways to use behavior charts to improve children's behavior.

**Coping with Trauma Reminders (1.5 hrs.)** by Stan Waddell, LPC

- At completion of this training participants will: Identify what is a trauma reminder. Role the five senses play in trauma reminders. Identify flashbacks and ways to deal with flashbacks. Identify the five R's in dealing with trauma reminders.

**Location:** Peace Lutheran Church, 2720 28<sup>th</sup> Street

**Time:** 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

**COST PER PERSON:** Free. Childcare provided. Please contact the NFAPA office to let us know how many children will need childcare.

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**Please fill out the registration below  
and mark which training you will be attending.  
Send form and payment to:**

**NFAPA, 2431 Fairfield Street, Suite C, Lincoln, NE 68521**

**Foster Parent In-Service Registration Spring 2014:**

Name	Training Date & Location
Name	Training Date & Location
E-Mail Address	
Home #	Cell #
Address, City, St. Zip	NFAPA Membership #



2431 Fairchild Street, Suite C  
Lincoln, NE 68521  
www.nfpa.org



## JOIN NFAPA....your support will enable NFAPA to continue supporting foster parents state-wide!

### Benefits

- Ongoing meetings/conferences at local and state level
- Networking opportunities with other foster (insurance) families, adoptive families, and active caregivers
- Opportunity for all foster (insurance) families, adoptive families and active caregivers to be actively involved in an association by serving on committees and/or on the Executive Board
- Working to bring change by actions to legislation affecting the child welfare system
- An advocate on your behalf at local, state and national levels
- Address to legislation affecting the child welfare system

### Thank you for your support!

Please mail membership form to:  
NFAPA, 2431 Fairchild Street, Suite C,  
Lincoln, NE 68521.

### Questions? Please call us at 877-257-9176.

NFAPA is a 501(c)3 non profit organization comprised of a volunteer Board of Directors and Members.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Floor \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

I am a Foster/Adoptive Parent. I have fostered for \_\_\_\_\_ years  
(each and \_\_\_\_\_ agency)

I am with \_\_\_\_\_ agency.

I wish to join the office:

- Single Family Membership (a single foster or adoptive parent), \$24
- Family Membership (married foster or adoptive parent), \$35
- Supporting Membership (individuals wishing to support our efforts), \$75
- Organization Membership  
(organizations wishing to support our efforts), \$150
- I wish to join the office through a donation.

My donation will be acknowledged through Families First newsletters.

- Cash Donation, \$1,000  Silver Donation, \$750
- Platinum Donation, \$500  Honor Donation, \$250
- Other, \$ \_\_\_\_\_