Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association

Families First

a newsletter for Nebraska Families

September/October 2018

N F A P A

How To Successfully Advocate For Your Children

By Mike Berry

Your job as a parent is to make sure your children receive the best possible services. Whether this is within your school system, your pediatricians office, or your family therapist's office. You do this because you care. But what do you do when you feel like you can't adequately communicate the needs of your child?



You've probably experienced something like this when speaking to a professional:

"It doesn't look like there's anything wrong with him?"

"I understand you believe she has a special need, but she is a great student, well-liked, and makes good grades. We are not sure she needs any services."

You feel lost. You are speechless. You may even feel powerless. You are frustrated but you're trying to be civil. You live day in and day out with this child and you've watched them struggle. Your heart breaks. And you want to do everything in your power to advocate for them. But you're sitting in the office of something who spent years and years in school to earn the letters next to their name. They're telling you they don't see what you see. Essentially they are telling you you're wrong.

And most likely, for a majority of your life, you've been conditioned (unknowingly) to not question the pros. Maybe you even know this pro personally and it would make it even more awkward to question them.

But you know, vital information about your child is going unnoticed. You know what you've seen and experienced with this them in your home. You know more is going on than the pro is willing to accept. How do you successfully advocate for you and your child, when it seems you're up against a wall and not getting anywhere? Here are some suggestions that have gained positive results over the years for us…

• Remain calm.

We've said this before (especially when we talk about entering into IEP meetings), but you have to stay calm and collected. No matter what. If you're entering a follow-up meeting, enter calm. Enter collected. Maintain control of your emotions. I know how hard this is to do. You are immersed in this journey with your child. You have wounds on your heart, and maybe even physically on your body. You are exhausted and you want answers because you love your kiddo. It's easy to wear those emotions on your sleeve. But…and this is a big BUT, you must….remain…calm! Calm people get noticed. Calm people are respected. Crazy people get ignored…or added to a watch list.

• Enter prepared.

Near the beginning of our journey, when we walked into our first IEP meeting, we researched ahead of time, scoured the internet, and downloaded a ton of content, printed it out, and took it with us to the meeting. We did the same when we met our children's new pediatrician a few years after. Not only did we research and print, we read as much as

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Questions? Interested in becoming a member of the Board?
Call NFAPA at 877-257-0176 or 402-476-2273.

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Attention Foster Parents!

Earn Your In-Service Hours While Getting the Chance to Win a Great Prize!

Answer these 10 questions correctly and you will not only earn .5 credits toward your in-service hours, but your name will also be put in a drawing for a prize. For this issue we are offering a $10 Walmart gift card.

There are a variety of ways to do this. You can email the information to ***Corinne@nfapa.org***, send the questionnaire to the NFAPA office at 3601 N. 25th Street, Suite D, Lincoln, NE 68521 or you can complete the questionnaire online at ***https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SepOct2018***. We will then enter your name in the drawing! We will also send you a certificate for training credit to turn in when it is time for relicensing. Good Luck!

1. Fill in the blank. But indulging these requests is one of the few tangible ways parents with limited income can demonstrate their _____.
2. Fill in the blank. Because food is a source of _____, _____, _____ and _____, managing a child's eating habits is an extremely complex task.
3. True or False. While difficult to parent, lying and stealing are often survival skills.
4. True or False. Biological children will not experience their own grief and loss toward foster children that come and go from their lives.
5. List four suggestions that you should follow when advocating for you foster children.
6. True or False. Don't stop until you get the results you are looking for, and the services your child deserves.
7. List six things that the author wishes she had known about ADHD.
8. True or False. Parenting ADHD is about listening and engaging with your child.
9. Fill in the blank. Foster children, in general, tend to perform below level in regard to both _____ _____ and _____ _____.
10. Fill in the Blank. Some foster children simply _____ and become _____ in an attempt to escape their current environment.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone #: _____

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we could on FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) before the meetings, NOT for the purpose of one-upping or proving the guidance counselor, or therapist wrong (this is important), but because we desired to be on the same page with them and get the best results for our kiddos. Remember- you are the greatest expert on your child. You're not the ONLY expert, but you are the greatest, because you live this life with your child.

• Take others.

Many, many years ago, we received call from a special education teacher demanding that we "feed our son breakfast every morning!" This came weeks into the school year. We were dumbfounded. Our children have never not received a meal. As we were preparing for this emergency meeting with the principal, guidance counselor, and this teacher, our family therapist gave us valuable advice. "Take me with you," she said. Not only did we decide to take her because she knew exactly how my child operated, we also took our close friend who understood my child's disorder. We didn't do this for the purpose of winning, we did so for the purpose of advocacy. It worked. We knew that we couldn't adequately (in those days) communicate what was really going on, so we took an entourage. If you feel like you won't be heard properly, take others with you, especially if those 'others' are also professionals.

• Be persistent.

Don't stop until you get the results you are looking for, and the services your child deserves. This is crucial. Never ever ever accept face value on an answer you're given by a pediatrician. Same is true if you're a foster parent and you're not getting adequate answers from a case manager. Call, email, text, Facebook message, day after day after day, then wash, rinse and repeat! If you give up, or accept defeat, you will not receive the services your child needs.

I do want to say as I conclude this post, to remember that most professionals (doctors, therapists, teachers, school administrators, etc) have your child's best interest in mind. Not always, but usually. They may just not fully understand your child's unique disorder (FASD or attachment issues are classic examples). That's why it's important that you use that God-given voice of yours, and all of the resources at your fingertips, and advocate. You have more power than you think you do.

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https://confessionsofanadoptiveparent.com/how-to-successfully-advocate-for-your-children/

For Low-Income Parents, Buying Junk Food for Kids Is About More Than Just Low Prices

by Gabrielle Tilley

Feeding a child is about more than just nutrition; it's also a means of communicating love. Yet, for low-income parents, meals tend to involve fast food and processed snacks. It's not that they lack knowledge on healthy eating, or that they don't care about their child's health. Rather, junk food is an affordable way to satisfy their child's needs — and their wants.

For many foster parents, parental affection in the form of candy and soda on parent-child visits is a familiar occurrence.

"The consequence is you get a child back that's high on sugar," said Shawn Johnson, foster parent and board member of the National Foster Parent Association. He says it then becomes an issue of deciding how involved you want to get in regulating visits: "Should I step in and put my foot down? Or let it go — and deal with the behavioral side effects of sugar that evening?"

A new study from Stanford sheds light on why some parents choose to show love through fast food. After in-depth interviews with more than 160 parents and children up and down the income ladder, the author found that being able to indulge a child's request might motivate poor parents to buy that can of soda more than affordability alone.

Researcher Priya Fielding-Singh conceived the study in part because of her own experience growing up in a home that fostered children.

"This early exposure to inequality got under my skin," said Fielding-Singh. "Seeing the challenges that my foster siblings were facing made me want to better understand how poverty affects everything from our education to our health."

Fielding-Singh set out to see what drives nutritional disparities between America's rich and poor. To answer this question, she interviewed 74 families of different socioeconomic status (low, middle and high), then spent more than 100 hours observing the daily dietary habits of four individual families.

Parents of all socioeconomic statuses reported that their children made frequent requests for packaged snacks and fast food. And for good reason — those foods are scientifically engineered to be delicious and addicting. Furthermore, "Kids are seeing junk food everywhere" — at school, the checkout line, and in advertisements. "The prevalence of these foods makes kids think about and want them — and they bombard their parents with those cravings," Fielding-Singh said.

But what separates low-income parents from those with higher incomes is the different means they have available to show their children that they are loved and cared for.

Having disposable income affords wealthy parents frequent opportunities to say, "yes," to their children. One of the high-income families Fielding-Singh interviewed had their children

enrolled in private school, dance classes, sports camps and volunteer organizations. But when it came to requests for junk food, which her kids made frequently, the mother would proudly say, "no," viewing these as opportunities to instill values about restraint and delayed gratification.

But parental priorities change in the context of scarcity — as does food's symbolic value.



In many of the low-income families Fielding-Singh met, their financial circumstances meant parents had to say "no" to their kids all the time. They couldn't get them the private schools or dance classes.

As Nyah, a low-income single mother of two, put it, "I'm just trying to survive."

In that context, food priorities become more about honoring children's preferences; and junk food a symbol of love, rather than a tool for teaching self-control.

While accompanying the family on a grocery store run, Fielding-Singh watched Nyah oblige her daughters' request for a 99-cent bag of Doritos and a $1.50 can of Dr. Pepper. Nyah knew these weren't healthy choices, but she also knew they would make her kids happy.

"Parents and kids across the board had a broadly correct understanding of what healthy eating was. No parent who I spoke with thought soda was healthy," Fielding-Singh said. But indulging these requests is one of the few tangible ways parents with limited income can demonstrate their love. This satisfies parents' desire to give their kids not only what they need — but also what they want.

Reflecting on her willingness to spend the last $20 she had on whatever food her kids wanted one mother said, "They know I love them and that's all that matters. So what? It's food. I don't care. If she wants a $2 candy bar, I get it for her if I have it."

For foster youth and foster parents, food's symbolic value can be even more potent, as food can be a source of comfort or a tool for control in an unstable world. That is why tying food to routine is an important step for foster families.

"Kids arrive with a taste for fast food, soda and snack foods," said foster parent Shawn Johnson. In his experience the process of introducing new foods is difficult, both emotionally and physically. "The first few days they might refuse to eat, then they have headaches and stomach aches as their systems are purging, but after a couple of weeks their taste buds change to what you're introducing," Johnson said.

It's during these first few weeks, however, that a parent-child visit can set back budding healthy habits.

When biological parents sprinkle visits with junk food, foster parents have three decisions to make: What to do with the snacks kids bring back home, how to deal with the sugar high (and eventual crash), and when to step in with regulations.

To address the first issue, Johnson keeps a candy jar where kids put all the sweets and snacks they collect on visits and holidays. Kids may access the jar at certain times, but Johnson says they tend to quickly lose interest. "The kid we have now, in four months has never asked for anything from it," said Johnson.

Like with the candy jar system, Johnson stresses routine in dealing with the post-visit crash. "The next day we just focus on rebuilding their energy with routine," said Johnson. But if kids regularly return from visits sick from a caffeine and sugar overload, that's when Johnson will ask the caseworker to set rules, like just half a snickers or caffeine-free soda only.

He finds that parents are mostly receptive, especially when it's understood that there are consequences. "You're hurting them when you feed them so much sugar, it becomes hard to hold them responsible for their behavior," Johnson said.

Because food is a source of nutrition, pleasure, comfort and love, managing a child's eating habits is an extremely complex task. Given this complexity, Fielding-Singh urges parents to go easy on themselves. "How families eat is an ongoing process of negotiation, compromise and conflict. It's unhelpful to lay all the responsibility on parents to control everything," she said.

There are a number of environmental influences that are simply outside parental control. Schools for example, "have a tremendous opportunity to cultivate palettes for healthy food," Fielding-Singh said. But if your school serves burgers and fries at lunchtime, that shapes a child's vision of a meal. It shapes their preferences.

The findings of this study challenge the notion that low-income parents buy junk food for their kids just because it's cheap, or because they don't know better. The desire to give a child what they want might be the stronger motivation. This is cause for hope, because it means parents are interested in feeding kids the foods they crave. Knowing that, efforts to reshape a child's palette are well placed, because they will in turn influence the kind of food parents buy.

Gabrielle Tilley *is an advocate for social change. Her work couples research with community engagement and multimedia production to advance food justice. Tilley is a recent graduate of the master of public policy program at University of Southern California Sol Price School of Public Policy*

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https://chronicleofsocialchange.org

How Foster Care Affects Children in Your Home

by Anonymous

Children in the foster care system are usually in state's custody for reasons beyond their control—usually abuse and neglect. Abuse and neglect have an impact on a child's behavior as well as on their mental state as studies are now confirming.

Know that the following can be brought into your foster home and be prepared to address these behaviors and issues in your home and around your children:

The Possible Cons of Foster Care on Your Children

- Cursing – Some foster families do not allow cursing in their home. These same families may be very surprised at the level of swearing some foster children use on a daily basis, this includes very young children. My daughter learned several new curse words from foster placements.
- Action to be taken. Communication with your children will be very important as you provide foster care. Talk about what words are appropriate and not appropriate. Some older children in the home may find little ones cursing amusing. Remind older children not to encourage the swearing by laughing. This can be another behavior that you choose to not allow in your foster home.
- Dishonesty – Lying and Stealing - While difficult to parent, lying and stealing are often survival skills. While in the birth home, some children had to engage in such behaviors in order to survive their environments. This is very confusing to foster children and makes them very difficult behaviors to extinguish. Children will need to learn new skills to replace the dysfunction of lying and stealing, but along the way, your children are being exposed to these behaviors. Your children may even have their possessions disappear. Your children may begin to question their faith and trust in others.
- Action to be taken. Speak with your children about the behavior and about your expectations for their behavior. This can be another behavior that you choose to not allow in your foster home.
- Safety – There may be times when your child's safety may be put at risk. Some foster children may have violent outbursts or rage when angry. This may include hitting, biting, kicking, and throwing of objects. Your child's things may get broken.
- Action to be taken. Establish a plan with your children on what to do when this occurs. Let your child know that he needs to tell you immediately when this occurs. Also, let your child know if he needs to go to his room or your room while you are handling the behavior.
- Sexualized behavior - Some children who have been sexually abused sexually act out. This acting out may range in behavior from the minor, very knowledgeable about sex; to the major, sexualized play or sexual activity.
- Action to be taken. Tell your foster care social worker what behaviors you are willing to parent and not parent in your home. Keep in mind that sometimes a child's history is not fully known before placement in a foster home.
- Think of actions you can take to protect your children from being sexually abused. Keep lines of communication open with your children and discuss good touch and bad touch. Role play ways of saying "no". Make sure your child knows to tell you immediately if anything happens that make her feel uncomfortable with a foster child.
- Insecurity in home – Some children may become confused on what "permanency" means. My daughter at the age of four asked when it was her turn to go to her new family. She thought children coming and going from a home was normal.
- Action to be taken. Tell your child the story of how she joined your family. Talk about the role of foster parents and how your family is temporary for foster children, but your child is permanent and forever.
- Loss - Your children may become attached to the different foster children that enter your home. It may be painful for them to say goodbye.
- Action to be taken. Talk to your children about the transition process on their age level. Keep pictures of past foster children in the home. Ask for continued contact with past children, if appropriate and all involve agree that it would be a positive. Many children have been a part of a fostering family and have extended their definition of family and sibling.

The Pros of Foster Children and Your Children Sharing a Home

After reading the above, you may wonder why you should continue to consider fostering while your children are in the home. Know that there are also several positive aspects of exposing your children to foster children.

- Your child may learn how to serve others and the community by welcoming in those in need into their home.
- Your children may learn how to share – not only their toys but their space and important people.
- Your children may learn that there can be an extension of caring adults in one's world, as foster children gain more caring adults through foster parents and others in the foster parent's extended family and new siblings.
- Your children will also hopefully gain a broader world view

as they learn about different cultures, races, and family values. They may not always be positive, but there will be numerous opportunities for discussion and learning.

- Your children will also become very familiar with a broad range of emotions as foster children express themselves. If the expressions are not appropriately expressed, you will be there to help your child understand that there are better and healthier ways to share feelings.
- Your children will also learn a lot about grief and loss. As foster children experience their losses, your child will learn how the losses of others impact them. They will also have the opportunity to experience their own grief and loss and foster children come and go from their lives. This does not have to be negative.
- Your children will also learn about choices and consequences and the impact they have on those around them.

Whether or not you decide to become a foster parent is a huge decision, a decision that will impact not only you as parents, but your children, home, extended family, friends, and neighborhood. You are asking a stranger to join your family on a temporary basis. Yes, it is a child, but a child that you may not know much about prior to placement.
Know what you are willing to bring into your home and ask the questions you need to ask before saying yes. Foster parenting has its rewards, but it also has its negative points, especially when you consider the impact it may have on your children.

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Top 8 Ways To Help Your Foster Child In School

by Dr. John DeGarmo

School. For so many children, it is a place of learning, of laughter, and a place to make friends and form relationships.

Not so for children in foster care. It is a very difficult place, where academic failure and behavior problems are the norm.

For your child from foster care to truly have a chance to succeed, you as a foster parent must lead the charge and blaze a path as an advocate, fighting for your child's every chance. Most likely, you will be the only one fighting for your child, as the caseworker and teacher are overwhelmed with all they have to do. Therefore, it is up to you. You need to become as involved as possible. The more active foster parents are in school and activities, the more likely children will succeed. Here are the top eight things you can do to help your child from foster care succeed in school.

1. Keep in Contact.

Reach out to school employees and form a positive working relationship with them. Let school counselors, teachers and administrators know that they can always call or email you if needed. Also obtain contact information from your child's teachers. Attempt to remain in regular contact with them. Use all forms and means of communication. Through text messages, email, cell phones, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms, there are numerous ways to reach out to teachers and school employees. It is essential that you remain up to date with your child's progress, both with academics and behavior.

2. Update Teachers

Not only should you as a foster parent request regular behavior updates from the child's school, but a responsible foster parent will provide such information to the school as well. If your foster child is having a particularly difficult time at home, let the teachers and counselors know, allowing these educators to be prepared and equipped to handle any difficulties that might come their way.

3. Let School Know About Visitation Day

Visitation day can be hard sometimes. It is likely that your child from foster care will have a difficult time concentrating and focusing on school work the day of a visitation, and many times the day after, as well. When your child is having a emotional or challenging time with visitations, you can help your child by informing the teachers beforehand, giving them some notice in advance. A note in your child's school agenda, an email, a text message, or a phone call are all means that you can use to notify teachers and school counselors. Along with this, you can suggest to the child's caseworker that visitations and medical appointments be made after school or on weekends, in order to not miss any more days of school, so the child doesn't fall even further behind.

4. Help with School Work

School work will likely not come easy. Foster children, in general, tend to perform below level in regard to both academic performance and positive behavior. And most children in foster care are behind in math and reading skills. It is important that you and the child's teachers set realistic goals for the child. Find out where the child's learning ability and level of knowledge is, and work with him at this level. Talk to your child's teachers about his/her abilities and if any accommodations need to be made. You should encourage your child to set goals and expectations, and celebrate every success, no matter how big or small they may be.

5. Be Involved

You can help your foster student in his development by encouraging your child to participate in activities outside of the

classroom. Many schools have extracurricular organizations and activities with various school sports, music, and clubs. Along with this, community sports and organizations also allow kids the opportunity to not only participate and develop these skills, but to learn new skills, develop talents and to exercise.



6. Be Ready

It is going to be tough for your child. A child in foster care often has a very hard time exhibiting proper school behavior during the school day, as school is simply a constant reminder that they are, indeed, foster children without a true home. The continuous reminder that their peers are living with biological family members, while they are not, is a difficult reality for them and can be manifested in several ways. Some foster children simply withdraw and become antisocial in an attempt to escape their current environment. Others may lash out in violent behavior.

7. Take A Tour

This is yet another unfamiliar place for your child from foster care. Before his very first day in class, take some time to go on a tour with your child through the building. Ask an administrator or school counselor to guide you and your child through the school. This will allow your child to feel more comfortable once he begins class.

8. Understand This Is Probably Not Fun

School is the last place your foster child wants to be at. He wants to go back to his home, his family, and is simply trying to survive each day. Foster children often have a difficult time exhibiting proper school behavior during the school day. For many, school is a constant reminder that they are, indeed, foster children without a true home. The continuous reminder that their peers are living with biological family members, while they are not, is a difficult reality for them and can be manifested in several ways. Some foster children simply withdraw and become antisocial in an attempt to escape their current environment. For many foster children, violent behavior becomes the norm, as they not only act out in a negative and disruptive fashion in school, but in their foster home as well. This can prompt yet another move to a new foster home and another school.

Your child from foster care is depending on you to help him, not just in your home, but at school, as well. Quite simply, if you don't help him succeed, who will?

For more, pick up Dr. John DeGarmo's book Helping Foster Children In School: A Guide For Foster Parents, Social Workers and Teachers.

Dr. John DeGarmo has been a foster parent for 14 years, now, and he and his wife have had over 50 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 foster care books, including the brand new book Faith and Foster Care: How We Impact God's Kingdom, and writes for several publications, including Fostering Families Today magazine. Dr. DeGarmo is the host of the weekly radio program Parent Factors with Dr. John, and represents Legal Shield. He can be contacted at drjohndegarmo@gmail, through his Facebook page, Dr. John DeGarmo, or at his website.

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https://www.drjohndegarmofostercare.com/

No Longer Fostering? We Would Love To Hear From You.

We are interested to learn about families leaving foster care and the reasons behind their decision. This information can assist us to advocate for future policies to support foster families. If you are a former foster parent, please take a moment to provide feedback on your foster care experience.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/nfapaexitsurvey

Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association
N·F·A·P·A

Waiting for a Forever HOME!

The following are children available on the Nebraska Heart Gallery.



Name: Tashasia

15 years old

Tashasia is a fun loving girl who cares deeply about those around her. She does well in school and enjoys the structured environment that school offers. Tashasia describes herself as a girly-girl who also can be one of the boys. Tashasia is focused on finishing high school and planning her future. Tashasia does well with peers and would fit into a family that has other kids in the home.



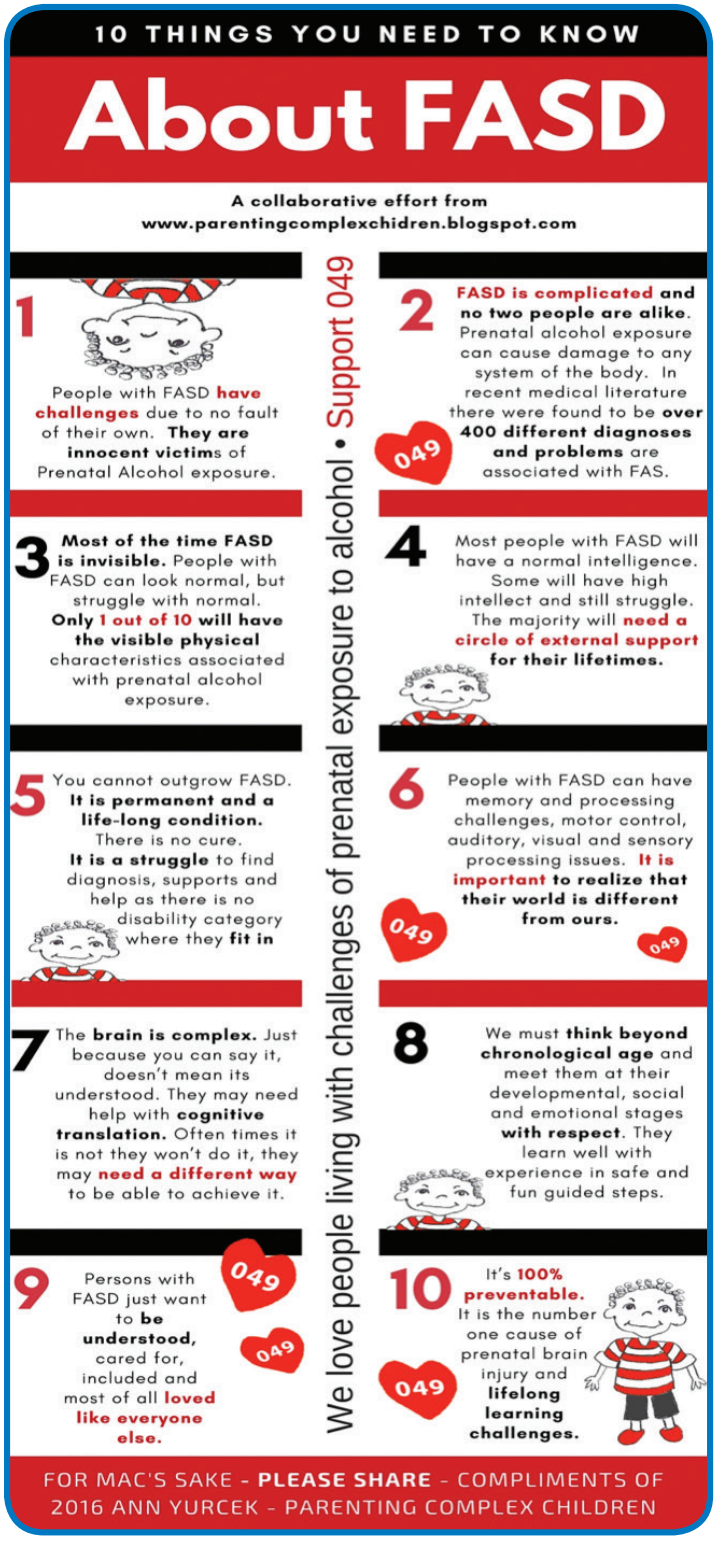
Name: Zachary

14 years old

Zachary is a very intelligent and funny teenage boy. He has a good imagination and loves to tell jokes to others. Zachary enjoys watching football and playing basketball. He also likes to spend time playing video games, especially Mario Kart. Zachary has fun being outdoors and is quite the fisherman. Zachary can often be found completing Legos, drawing and writing. Zachary is described by others as someone who laughs and smiles a lot and takes pride in being able to bring joy to others through his humor.

Connections: Zachary will need support maintaining relationships with his grandmothers and siblings.

For more information on these children or others on the Heart Gallery please contact Sarah at:
Email: scaldararo@childsaving.org
Phone: 402-504-3673



Governor to Proclaim September as Kinship Care Month

This year for the first time, Governor Ricketts will make a proclamation to identify September as Kinship Care Month in Nebraska. Relative and Kinship foster families create stability and sense of normalcy for youth entering the state foster care system. We are thrilled that there will now be an opportunity to recognize and honor grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, godparents, friends, neighbors, coaches, teachers, mentors and all others who step up for to care for thousands of children when their parents cannot.

The proclamation will occur on September 17, 2018, at the State Capital Building in Lincoln, NE.

AN OPEN LETTER TO FRIENDS/FAMILY OF THOSE RAISING KIDS WITH REACTIVE ATTACHMENT DISORDER

Written by Keri Williams, brave mom, author, and RAD advocacy hero

Dear Friend,

I've told you before how I'm struggling with my child's behavior but I'm not sure you understand how serious—how desperate—things are.

Here's the unvarnished truth—my child relies on manipulation and melt-downs to control his surroundings. He refuses to follow the simplest of instructions and turns everything into a tug-of-war as if it's a matter of life or death. Every day, all day, I deal with his extreme behavior. He screams, puts holes in walls, urinates on his toys, breaks things, physically assaults me and so much more. I'm doing the best I can but it's frustrating and overwhelming.

Most people, maybe even you, blame me for my child's behavior.

This makes me feel even worse. I already blame myself most of the time, especially because I've struggled to bond with him. It's heartbreaking to know he only feigns affection to get something from me. There's not a parenting strategy I haven't tried. Nothing has worked. Often, I feel like a complete failure as a mother and struggle to face each new day.



Fortunately, my child's behavior makes a lot more sense to me now that he's been diagnosed with reactive attachment disorder (RAD).

Let me explain. When a child experiences trauma at an early age his brain gets "stuck" in survival mode. He tries to control the surroundings and people around him to feel safe. In his attempt to do so, he is superficially charming, exhibits extreme behaviors, and rejects affection from caregivers. Unfortunately, even with a diagnosis, there are no easy answers or quick treatments.

Even though I work so hard to help my child heal, friends and family often don't believe or support me which is incredibly painful. I understand it's hard for you to imagine the emotional, physical, and mental toll of caring for a child with RAD when you haven't experienced it yourself. And, you can't possibly be expected to know the nuances of the disorder and its impact on families like mine. That's why I'm putting myself out there about the challenges I'm facing.

When you undermine me, you inadvertently set back the progress I've made in my already tenuous relationship with my child.

I wish you could understand how good my child is at manipulating people—how he turns on that sweet, charming side you usually see. In fact, you may never witness a meltdown or even realize he's manipulating you. Yes, he's that good. When you think he's bonding with you, know there's always an end in mind. He may seek candy or toys. The biggest win of all for him, however, is to get you to side with him against me.

Here's how easily it happens—my child is sitting in timeout, looking remorseful as he watches the other kids play. You think I'm too hard on him and say, "He's sorry and promises he'll make better choices next time. How about you give him another chance?"

You need to understand there's a lot going on behind the scenes that you simply don't see or know about.

When you undermine me, you inadvertently set back the progress I've made in my already tenuous relationship with my child. The structured consistency—what you feel is too strict—is exactly what my child needs to heal and grow into a healthy, happy and productive adult.

Please know I'm following the advice of therapists and professionals. Strategies for raising a child with RAD are often counterintuitive and, watching from the outside, you may not agree with them. That's okay. But, instead of interfering, would you give me the benefit of the doubt?

Over the years, well-meaning people have said some pretty hurtful things to me, things like:

- All kids have behavioral issues. It's a phase. They'll grow out of it.
- He's so sweet. It's hard to believe he does those things.
- Let me tell you what works with my child…
- Have you tried _____?
- Oh, he's just a kid. I'm sure he didn't do that on purpose.
- A little love and attention is all he needs.

I know these sentiments are meant to be helpful, but here's the thing—my child isn't like yours.

He has a very serious disorder. Statements like these minimize our situation as if there are easy solutions that I just haven't tried. Honestly, I'm not looking for advice. What I need most from you is a shoulder to cry on and an ear upon which to vent—without being judged, second-guessed, or not believed.

Reactive attachment disorder is a challenging disorder that's difficult to treat so we have a long road ahead of us. Everyday is a struggle and I'd love to be able to count on you but not for advice or answers. I just need you to listen and offer encouragement. I know how deeply you care for me and my child and I'm thankful to have you in our lives. I've lost some relationships through this incredibly difficult journey. I don't want to lose you too.

Sincerely,

A parent of a child with reactive attachment disorder

Reprinted with permission from:
http://instituteforattachment.ong/support-parents-raising-kids-rad/

Parenting ADHD: 6 Things I Wish I Had Known



by Debbie Gisle

My oldest has ADHD. We hit eight years old and man did I need help parenting a child with ADHD.

I reached out to other moms but all shared a resounding "I'm just trying to survive" mentality. Parenting ADHD is difficult. Four years later, here are six things (from one struggling mom to another) that I wish I had known when parenting a child with ADHD.

1. ENGAGE WITH THE SCHOOL

My hubby and I did not communicate with the school too much about our son and his ADHD. Conversations started to become more frequent than one would like in 2ndgrade and by the time he was officially diagnosed in 3rd grade, we didn't want to give teachers a pre-set idea of who/what he was. Bad idea. Before I knew better, I shared my concern about telling them he was ADHD with my close friend; their reply was, "Either they have the stigma of ADHD, or the stigma of the bad kid." Ugh! They were right.

I forced myself to be brave. I started the conversation with my son's educators right from the start, sharing behaviors I knew would be distracting, my expectations of him in the classroom and concerns about his education and abilities. You would be surprised what lines of communications this opens; and with parenting ADHD, communication is vital. This quickly places you and the educators on the same page and teaches them that you are open and an ally. If this doesn't happen — find a new teacher! Educators will make or break your child's success in school.

2. SPEAK POSITIVELY ABOUT YOUR CHILD TO OTHERS

As we sat in our teacher's meeting with two teachers, two counselors, one special education teacher, the hubs and me — totally not overwhelming, right? [Super Huge Eyeroll] I listened to an obviously frustrated teacher tell me all the things my son was doing that he shouldn't be doing. Umm… yeah…I know. I get it. No, really. I super get this. Uh-huh… yeah…right…yes, he does that…and that…and that…STOP TALKING! It was new to her and it is frustrating. However, she just kept rehashing everything he did wrong, repeatedly. We tried to give them some insight into our son but I could tell the frustrations were too raw. It's important to realize that parenting ADHD includes involving others in the process.

By the next meeting my husband and I consciously chose to make sure the team we were meeting with knew all the amazing cool things about my son. He is a whiz in science, he loves helping people, he is hilarious, he is amusingly sarcastic, and so much more! We watched their conversations about our real-life-son, not just the frustrating student, change before our eyes. This frustrated teacher started complimenting my son at school on his science scores and laughing with him. Don't forget: they see hundreds of kids a day. Chances are your ADHD child is getting under their skin. Change their mindset from obnoxious pupil to a real human-child that has feelings and is amazing. Make. Them. See.

3. EMOTIONS RUN DEEP

ADHD kids feel. They feel emotion deep in their soul and sometimes you would never know. Understood.org says, "Kids with ADHD don't have different emotions from most of their peers. They feel hurt, anger, sadness, discouragement, laziness and worry just like everyone else does. What is different for many kids with ADHD is that these feelings seem to be more frequent and intense. They also seem to last longer. And they get in the way of everyday life."

Take the time to ask your child about their feelings, with open-ended questions. Pay attention to their body language and demeanor. Once their emotions overflow, sometimes it is hard to have a logical conversation with them. Have patience and understanding; acknowledge their feelings and try to redirect the negative emotions when possible. Parenting ADHD is about listening and engaging with your child.

4. SHAMING: DON'T DO IT

Most of us in the trenches of ADHD never intend to shame our child. We are overwhelmed and frustrated; our tongues drip a little looser than we'd like. Shaming can be as innocent as saying, "Your 5-year-old little brother has his shoes on, why on earth don't you?". This makes them feel less than and you are essentially comparing their behaviors. Comparison brings nothing but hurt feelings and resentment.

We also had to engage a strict hand with the non-ADHD siblings. We started noticing them saying things like, "You're being so crazy!! Go take your pill!". This will not fly in our house and we put our foot down hard when we hear it. Shaming is never a useful tool in parenting, but when it involves a child

with ADHD, it can make a child already prone to depression and anxiety feel more shamed and inadequate. Parenting ADHD is about awareness of everyone involved: parent, child and siblings.

5. LYING WILL HAPPEN

It is going to happen…a lot. You cannot realistically punish them every single time they lie (yes, it happens that much). Prepare yourself for this quirk and decide how it will be handled. If the lie is significant (depending on any number of factors) a consequence follows. However, if it is a little thing here or there, we express our disappointment that they lied and it is not acceptable and move on. We finally hit a stride where a lie comes out and is quickly followed up with the truth and an apology. It's only taken 4+ years of pulling my hair out. [insert more patience here].

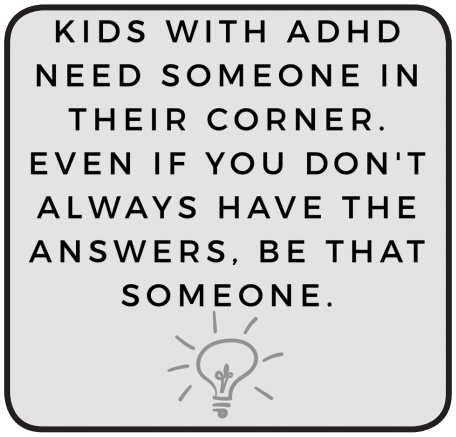
6. GIVE THEM OPPORTUNITIES TO SUCCEED

This is huge!! ADHD kids are insanely intelligent, smart, creative, funny, loveable and the list goes on. Sometimes their impulses get the better of them. If you think you're frustrated, just imagine being them. Take EVERY SINGLE CHANCE to point out their successes and moments that make you proud. Did they hang their backpack up right after school? Make sure you say "Hey…thanks for getting your backpack put away. That was super helpful." The small thank-you will do wonders for their self-esteem and remind you how fantastic your child is. Know they are a great pancake chef? Ask them to make the family breakfast! School and life are hard. They have a lot more hurdles than the average child; give them a chance to do things right and be rewarded.

Parenting ADHD comes with extra trials, but we learn so much if we take the time to understand our ADHD child and how to help them be successful. These six things are the first items I think of when people ask me about parenting ADHD. I wish I would have known these from the start, but I'm learning and still making mistakes too. Hopefully my mistakes can give you a leg up when parenting your child with ADHD. They're some of the raddest people I know.

Reprinted with permission from:

https://familymaven.io/todaysmama/parenting/parenting-adhd-6-things-i-wish-i-had-known-9waVkYYev0CkdwX_Bpm5uw/



NFAPA Support Groups

Have you ever thought about attending a support group? NFAPA offers support groups to foster, adoptive and kinship families! This is your chance to gain understanding and parenting tips through trainings, discussions and networking with fellow foster families.

This is a great way to meet other foster/adoptive families in your area! In-service training is offered at most support groups for those needing credit hours for relicensing. Up to date information with each support group location will be on the calendar page on our website at www.nfapa.org. Support Groups will be cancelled for inclement weather.

Contact a Resource Family Consultant for more information:
Jolie Camden (Panhandle Area): 308-672-3658
Tammy Welker (Columbus): 402-989-2197
Terry Robinson (Central/Southwest Area): 402-460-7296
Robbi Blume (FACES): 402-853-1091
NFAPA Office: 877-257-0176

IN-PERSON SUPPORT GROUPS

- **Alliance Support Group:** Meets the third Thursday of the month.
  Registration is required.
  Contact Jolie Camden to register: 308-672-3658
  Box Butte General Hospital, Alliance Room, 2101 Box Butte Ave.
  6:00-7:30 p.m.
  September 20, October 18, November 15, 2018
- **Scottsbluff Support Group:** Meets the second Tuesday of the month.
  Registration is required.
  Contact Jolie Camden to register: 308-672-3658
  Coke Business Conference Room, 2022 E. 17th Street (building south of the pop machines off of Sugar Factory Road-please do not bring in Pepsi products).
  6:00-7:30 p.m.
  September 11, October 9, November 13, 2018
- **Chadron Support Group:** Registration is required.
  Contact Jolie Camden to register: 308-672-3658
  CHA Daycare and Home School, 237 Morehead
  6:00-7:30 p.m.
  September 17, October 22, November 19, 2018
- **Columbus Support Group:** Meets the second Tuesday of the month (except July and December). Childcare available.
  Contact Tammy Welker at: 402-989-2197
  (Thank you Building Blocks and Behavioral Health Specialists for providing childcare!).
  Peace Lutheran Church, 2720 28th St.
  7:00-8:30 p.m.
  September 11, October 9, November 13, 2018
- **Norfolk Support Group:** Meets quarterly.
  Childcare available by Building Blocks and Behavioral Health Specialists.
  Contact Terry Robinson at 402-460-7296
  Northern Heights Baptist Church, 3000 Harvest View Drive
  6:30-8:00 p.m.
  September 27, October 25, 2018

ONLINE SUPPORT GROUP

- **FACES:** Online Support Group: Every Tuesday 9:00-10:00 p.m. CT Contact Felicia at Felicia@nfapa.org to become a member of this closed group. Meets weekly to discuss issues foster parents are facing. Support only.

TRANSRACIAL SUPPORT GROUP

- **Parenting Across Color Lines:** This group supports and strengthens racial identity in transracial families. Support only. Meets the fourth Monday of the month.
  Children welcome to attend with parents.
  Newman United Methodist Church, 2242 R Street, Lincoln. 6:15-8:00 pm
  Contact the NFAPA office to register for Family Events or any questions.
  402-476-2273
  For more information or to RSVP, contact Laurie Miller at Laurie@nfapa.org
  Meetings: September 24, October 22, 2018

Be sure to mark your calendars! If you have a topic you want discussed, please contact the Resource Family Consultant for that group.

The Trauma Informed Teacher – Silent Front Line

by Anonymous

I hate the first week of school. It fills me with anxiety and dread. I once loved the smell of new crayons and was excited over the new backpacks and folders. Now I worry. I parent children from hard places; children who have experienced trauma. I've been lucky the last two years. I had a teacher that "got it". I had a teacher that listened to me and studied up on trauma and it's effects on the child's brain. She understood that unaddressed trauma generates lifelong impacts that can end in early death.

Sound extreme?
It's not.

Parenting my child is life or death and I decided to write this post to explain. I was once a 3rd grade teacher, so I know that you might be thinking this is all a bit dramatic. However, I am now the mother of 7 and I live with the effects of childhood trauma every day. These are the things that I understand as a mother, a former educator and a nurse.

Trauma impacts the children in your classroom.

We have sanitized trauma in our lives. Opioid crisis. Food insecurity. Sirens and fights in the night. We don't really think about the smallest victims. We don't read about the child hiding in the backroom during a drug bust, or the baby left in an apartment tended by his 11 year old sibling with only ramen and cereal to eat. Instead we protect anonymity to the detriment of these children who end up in the classroom struggling with a story that is never told. We end up treating the traumatized by ignoring the trauma.

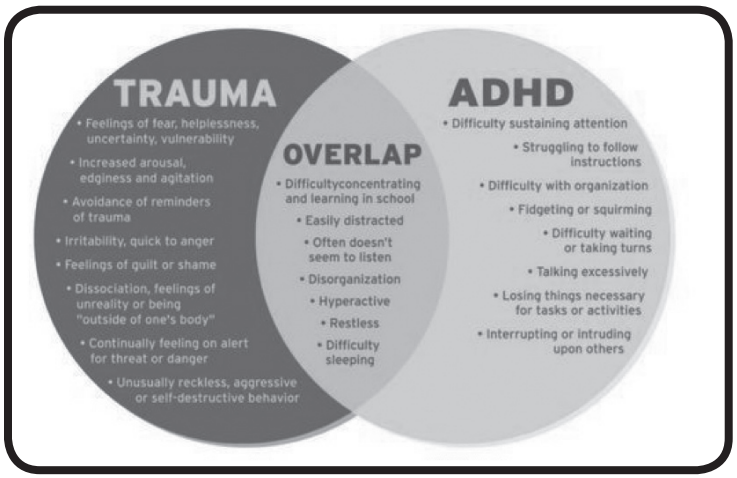
If you are a teacher, you WILL teach children who have been traumatized. The CDC ACE study tells us that more than 50% of students in the classroom have experienced one or more adverse childhood events (ACE). **The time in life when the brain is the most sensitive to experience is infancy and childhood.**

In the CDC's ACE Study, the ten types of childhood adversity measured were:

- physical, sexual, verbal abuse
- physical and emotional neglect
- a parent who's an alcoholic (or addicted to other drugs) or diagnosed with a mental illness
- witnessing a mother who experiences abuse
- losing a parent to abandonment or divorce
- a family member in jail

Trauma Changes the Brain

Studies show chronic stress or unaddressed ACEs can change the chemical and physical structures of the brain. In the classroom, children can display traumatic stress through aggression, anxiety, defiance, perfectionism, and withdrawal. And here's the biggie, signs of trauma often times look very similar to **ADD, ADHD, ODD and autism spectrum disorder**.



Think on this…**inattentive, hyperactive, and impulsive behavior may in fact mirror the effects of trauma or adversity.** Children show their emotions through behavior.

What might seem like random, nonsensical or manipulative behaviors in a child, might actually be rooted in a space called 'FEAR' and pain. The emotional backpack they carry to school each day is one that they cannot set outside your classroom door, and it will remain heavy and forefront in their brain.

It's important to understand that 25% to 50% of the students within your classroom, will be affected by adverse childhood events. Trauma undermines attention, executive functioning and working memory. When trauma causes emotional or psychological damage to children, they may adopt a set of behaviors or patterns of thinking that put them on a path for further trauma. Trauma begets trauma.

1. Set the TONE – you need to use the environment to regulate the brain.

Your students who have experienced trauma in their lives are often operating from a primal state – always ready to fight or flee. They have learned that the world is not a safe place. They are living in a state of hypervigilance; their little minds have been hijacked by their basic instincts and impulses which renders them unable to concentrate.

Your classroom environment and schedule is your greatest weapon. Clear expectations and schedules are everything. You can create a safe environment that actually helps regulate the brain. Think schedules and procedures. If a child can anticipate routine, they can feel safe.

2. Recognize that a child is going into survival mode.

When you notice that a child might be having a difficult time, start by asking yourself, "What's happening here?" rather than "What's wrong with this child?" For example, the student might:

- Get a "deer-in-the-headlights" look
- Looks angry
- Breathes more rapidly
- Becomes fidgety and squirmy
- Bursts into tears or looks about ready to cry

When survival mode occurs, you are not going to be able to talk and correct the child. You need to provide a safe space and help them regulate. This might mean sinking down to eye level and saying, "You are safe." and then simply step away for a while. The cure for trauma is a safe relationship and you are going to give the child space and environment to feel safe.

3. Self-Regulation through Co-Regulation

School is not easy for my children and every year I walk in praying they have a teacher that 'gets it'. A teacher that can see how self-regulation doesn't exist with a child from trauma. Yes, it sounds crazy, but this is important. Regulatory skills live in the highest part of the brain. Dysregulation lives in the lower parts of the brain. Trauma in a child's life causes children to live in the lower part of the brain and this means dysregulation, and this looks like a child who is either hypervigilant or disassociated. As a former teacher, I would have described this as the ADD child or the daydreamer. I would have used stickers, rewards, and consequences to curb this behavior…and it never worked.

What works isn't teaching self-regulation. It's giving children experiences of co-regulation over and over and over again. Until their brains literally take in and imprint the regulated adult. Children from trauma or from hard places, cannot self-regulate because they were never given the experience of co-regulation. They need YOU. Yes, you may be the only co-regulating adult in their life.

4. Relationship not Attachment – See the Goldfish

It is crystal clear that relationships are the counterpoint to traumatic stress in childhood. Dr. Bruce Perry

My children need you to have a teacher relationship with them, not an attachment. Attachment is the bond that develops between a primary caregiver, usually the mother, and her infant. This attachment ensures survival for the infant. My child should not attach to you as the means to survive. However, they should have a relationship with you as a 'secure base' within the school system. My child needs you to navigate the world of school, and to point to me for attachment.

This relationship you have, will help you teach to my child's emotional age and not chronological. It seeks to understand how history can cause learned helplessness and behaviors that you do not understand.

The goldfish shark is how I best describe my child and last week I shared it with a group incarcerated mothers who "got it" when it comes to trauma. Here's the story –

I share the picture below. I began talking about how our children often present with behaviors that look like the shark, but if we look below the water, we will realize they are really just scared goldfish trying to have a need met. Their behaviors might communicate anger and hostility, but below the surface is fear and a hurting child. I further explained that it is our job as parents/teachers to stop parenting the shark fin, and look below the surface and meet the needs of the goldfish.

One of the inmates raised her hand and said, "I'm a lot like that picture. I act all tough and mean, but I'm really just a scared fish. I wish when I was a kid, someone would have thought to look for the goldfish, instead of just seeing me as a shark"

How to SEE the Goldfish –

- Consider all extreme behavior within the context of survival to better understand 'why he keeps doing that?'
- Repetition is important because with every positive experience the impact on the brain grows.
- Traumatized children expect the worst and focus on the negative. If you understand this, you will be better prepared for it.
- Childhood neglect is the most damaging trauma. The child must not have basic needs threatened in any way or survival will be all they think about.
- At the point the child was abused, the brain was focused on survival not learning. The development the child missed due to abuse will need extra attention.
- Traumatized children will often score lower on IQ tests than their true ability. Retest when their environment is helping them heal and watch the scores go up.
- The goal in healing trauma is when the child becomes agitated to help them learn skills to reduce the agitation. This repeated cycle is what most helps the child.
- Promote play with traumatized children. Play is very healing to the brain and the emotions.
- Don't give up hope! The human brain is capable of healing in ways we do not yet understand. It may be a long road to healing and the child may not get there while still in your classroom, but every situation makes a difference. *(excerpts from Traumatic Experience and the Brain, A Handbook for Understanding and Treating Those Traumatized as Children.)*

May we all spend the day looking for the goldfish, instead of punishing the shark!

Reprinted with permission from:

http://www.ransomforisrael.com/the-trauma-informed-teacher-silent-front-line/

Nebraska Child Safety Restraint Law Following Passage of LB 42

Current Law (effective through December 31, 2018)

All children up to age six must ride correctly secured in a federally-approved child safety seat.

Children ages six to eighteen must ride secured in a safety belt or child safety seat.

Childcare providers must transport all children securely in an appropriate child safety seat or safety belt.

Children up to age eighteen are prohibited from riding in cargo areas.

Violation carries a $25 fine plus court costs and 1 point is assessed against the operator's driving record.

New Law Following Passage of LB42 (effective January 1, 2019)

All children up to age eight must ride correctly secured in a federally-approved child safety seat.

Children ride rear-facing until up to age two or until they reach the upper weight or height limit allowed by the car seat's manufacturer.

Children under age eight must ride in the back seat, as long as there is a back seat equipped with a seatbelt and is not already occupied by other children under eight years of age.

Children ages eight to eighteen must ride secured in a safety belt or child safety seat (booster seat).

Childcare providers must transport all children securely in an appropriate federally-approved child safety seat or safety belt.

Children up to age eighteen are prohibited from riding in cargo areas.

Violation carries a $25 fine plus court costs and 1 point is assessed against the operator's driving record.

https://dot.nebraska.gov/media/11226/child-safetyseat-law-2018-2019.pdf

North Platte One Day Conference

Saturday, September 29, North Platte MPCC
1101 Halligan Drive, Room 202 North Platte NE 69101
9:00-4:30PM

Register online: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018NFAPAinservice

Facilitated by the Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association

Sponsored by Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER: MANAGING CHALLENGING CONVERSATIONS

Earn 3 hours of in-service credit

9:15AM-12:15PM

As part of working with families and partners you may face challenging situations and need to have difficult conversations. This training/seminar is to equip you will tools to help handle these situations and work toward a productive outcome.

Elizabeth Troyer-Miller: Elizabeth has worked for Central Mediation Center, Kearney, As a Conflict Specialist since January 2013 and a trainer for the Nebraska Mediation Association since May 2012. Elizabeth is an experienced facilitator and mediator providing direct services to interpersonal and organizational disputes in Nebraska since 2009. Elizabeth earned a B.A. in Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies from Goshen College in 2006, and a M.S. in Negotiation and Dispute Resolution from Creighton University in 2011. Her experience is supported by training in the following areas: Basic Mediation, Family Mediation, Special Education Mediation, Victim Youth Conferencing, Child Welfare Conferencing, Church Mediation.

Farah Greenwald: Farah has worked for Central Mediation Center, Kearney, as the Director of Facilitation and Training since August 2016. Farah coordinates and oversees the Child Welfare Conferencing program at CMC, including Family Group Conferencing. Farah earned a B.A. in Psychology and English from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln in May 2012. Her experience is supported by training in the following areas: Basic Mediation, Family Mediation, Victim Youth Conferencing, Child Welfare Conferencing, and Facilitation.

Lunch 1 hour 15 minutes- Lunch is on your own

TRAUMA SYSTEMS THERAPY (TST)

Earn 3 hours of in-service credit

1:30PM -4:30PM

Trauma Systems Therapy (TST) is a model of care for traumatized children that addresses both the individual child's emotional needs as well as the social environment in which he or she lives. TST is about breaking down barriers between service systems, understanding a child's symptoms in the context of his or her world, and building on a family's strengths and dreams. TST is about leaving a better system.

Jolie Camden – St Francis Foster Care Worker
Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association
Western Service Area Resource Family Coordinator

McCook Workshop

Saturday, September 15, McCook MPCC
1205 East 3rd Street, McMIllian Hall, Room 201 McCook NE 69001

Register online: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018NFAPAinservice

Facilitated by the Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association
Sponsored by Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

TRAUMA SYSTEMS THERAPY (TST)

Earn 3 hours of in-service credit
9:00AM -12:00PM
Trauma Systems Therapy (TST) is a model of care for traumatized children that addresses both the individual child's emotional needs as well as the social environment in which he or she lives. TST is about breaking down barriers between service systems, understanding a child's symptoms in the context of his or her world, and building on a family's strengths and dreams. TST is about leaving a better system.

Jolie Camden – St Francis Foster Care Worker
Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association
Western Service Area Resource Family Coordinator
308-672-3658

Membership Drive

The Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association empowers, supports, and advocates for Nebraska families by promoting safety, permanency, and well-being of our children. Your membership supports the important mission of NFAPA. There are several membership levels to accommodate everyone in the foster care, adoptive care, and child welfare community.

NFAPA offers four annual membership levels; Single Family ($25), Family ($35), Supporting ($75) and Organization ($150). In order to enrich NFAPA's mission, we are offering a new membership program – Friends of NFAPA. This membership level is billed $5 monthly.

To join, simply mail in the membership form included in this newsletter or visit
www.nfapa.org

Your membership will ensure that Nebraska's most vulnerable children will have their greatest chance at success!

Upcoming Training

Facilitated by the Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association

Sponsored by Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

The Kinship Connection

This six hour training will provide Relative & Kinship families with training on the following topics:

- The Legal Process
- RPPS/Respite
- Trauma & Attachment
- Safety
- Behavior Management
- Redefined Roles
- Loss & Grief
- Permanency Options for Children & Youth

Saturday, September 1, 2018
from 9 am – 4 pm: Scottsbluff

Saturday, September 15, 2018
from 9 am – 4 pm: Lincoln

Saturday, September 22, 2018
from 9 am – 4 pm: North Platte

Saturday, September 29, 2018
from 9 am – 4 pm: Omaha

Registration is required.

Register online:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KinshipRegistration2018

These informational classes are for Relative & Kinship families who have not taken pre-service classes to be licensed foster parents.

Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association
N·F·A·P·A

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

Benefits

- Ongoing trainings/conferences at local and state level
- Networking opportunities with other foster families, adoptive families, and relative caregivers
- Opportunity for all foster families, adoptive families and relative caregivers to be actively involved in an association by serving on committees and/or on the Executive Board
- Working to instigate changes by alertness to legislation affecting the child welfare system
- An advocate on your behalf at local, state and national levels
- 25% of membership dues goes toward an NFAPA Scholarship

Thank you for your support!

Please mail membership form to:
NFAPA, 3601 N. 25th Street, Suite D
Lincoln, NE 68521.

Questions? Please call us at 877-257-0176.

NFAPA is a 501c3 non-profit organization comprised of a volunteer Board of Directors and Mentors.

Name(s): _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

I am a Foster/Adoptive Parent. I have fostered for _____ years.
(circle one)

I am with _____ agency.

I wish to join the effort:

- ❑ **Single Family Membership** (a single foster or adoptive parent), $25
- ❑ **Family Membership** (married foster or adoptive parents), $35
- ❑ **Supporting Membership** (individuals wishing to support our efforts), $75
- ❑ **Organization Membership** (organizations wishing to support our efforts), $150
- ❑ **Friends of NFAPA,** $5 billed Monthly

My donation will be acknowledged through Families First newsletters.

- ❑ Gold Donation, $1,000
- ❑ Silver Donation, $750
- ❑ Platinum Donation, $500
- ❑ Bronze Donation, $250
- ❑ Other, $ _____