

Families First

a newsletter for Nebraska Families

May/June 2016

N F A P A

Bickering in the Backseat: How to Cope on the Way to School

It's finally the first day of school. Your children are so excited; they took forever to fall asleep last night. They struggled this morning over what to wear. They barely picked at that healthy breakfast you got up early to make for them. Their excitement is tinged with nervousness, naturally. And who better to take it out on than their brother or sister, sitting next to them in the back seat?

Mason: "I wonder what Mrs. Jones will be like. Is she strict?"

Savannah: "She's mean. All the kids say so."

Mason: "Oh, no! I hope she'll like me."

Savannah: "She won't. Nobody likes you."

Mason: "They do, too! Last year, Mrs. Wright liked me!"

Savannah: "That's because you're a goody two-shoes. And they don't really like you."

Mason: "Mom! Do people like me?"

Mom: "Of course they do, Mason. Savannah, stop being mean to your brother. Let's everybody be nice and have a nice drive to the first day of school."

Savannah: "I'm just telling the truth." (Makes a nasty face at Mason)

Mason: "You meany!" (Shoves at Savannah)

Savannah: "Mooommmmm! He hit me!"

Mom (Yelling): "Okay, that's it! No TV tonight for either of you. And no more talking! If you can't say anything nice, then don't say anything at all!"

Before you know it, you're yelling. By the time they get out of the car, the kids are sullen. Your plans for a peaceful start to the day just evaporated before your eyes. Backseat bickering can completely ruin your morning.

Luckily, there are things you can do to turn the tide when the tone gets tense in your car.

1. Calm yourself.

It's natural to get angry when your children are mean to each other. But indulging your temper just inflames the storm. Instead, remember that your goal is restore a sense of safety for both children. So take a deep breath and remind yourself that there's no emergency. Your tone will be warmer and more soothing, which gives you a chance to calm the storm.



2. Connect with both children, using empathy.

Most of the time, kids bicker when they're worried, bored, or still mad about something that happened previously. If you address the reason, you can stop the fight before it starts.

3. Set limits and enforce family rules about kindness.

Every home needs a few clear rules about how people in the family treat each other, and "We're kind" is one of the most important. Interrupt unkind remarks to set a clear standard for civility. All children will get mad at each other—conflict is a part of every human relationship—but they can be encouraged to express their needs and wants without attacking the other person. Of course, when you set the limit, stay kind yourself. Children learn from our role-modeling how to handle the problems they have with other people. And they're more likely to follow your limits if you can stay connected while you set them.

4. Get your kids laughing by saying something ridiculous.

When kids are anxious, they tend to lash out. Take the edge off their worry by getting them laughing, which transforms their body chemistry, reducing stress hormones and increasing

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Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association

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Attention Foster Parents!

Earn Your Foster Parent Credits While Getting the Chance to win a Great Prize!

Answer these 10 questions from this newsletter 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.

Just answer the following 10 questions and send us your answers! There are a variety of ways to do this. You can email the information to Felicia@nfapa.org, send the questionnaire from the newsletter to the NFAPA office at **2431 Fairfield Street, Suite C, Lincoln, NE**, print off this questionnaire from our website, www.nfapa.org (under newsletters) and fill out/send in by email or mail or you can go to survey monkey and do the questionnaire on line at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/mayjune2016>. 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. True or False. All mammals, when they're in distress, go into fight, flight or freeze. _____
2. List five ways to help your children in blaming situations. _____, _____, _____, _____, _____
3. What are four words that changed the world? _____
4. What are four cheat sheet messages to keep in your car, for bickering children? _____, _____, _____, _____
5. True or False. As a foster Mother, you are asked to speak up for the children, but also to not allow your own feelings to get in the way. _____
6. List three tips to help have a smooth vacation. _____, _____, _____
7. What are three rules to teach children responsibility? _____, _____, _____
8. Fill in the blank. When you find yourself telling your child to do something, phrase it in a _____ instead.
9. List four reasons parenting trauma is incredibly difficult. _____, _____, _____, _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone #: _____

Issue: Families First Newsletter: May/June 2016

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

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(Continued from page 1)

“feel-good” neurotransmitters. Of course, you don’t want them to feel ridiculed, so first empathize with their concerns. And make yourself the object of the humor, so they’re not laughing at each other. This also helps your children work through the universal fear that they themselves might get laughed at.

How to put that all together? Let’s rewind.

Mason: “Mom! Do people like me?”

Mom: (Taking a deep breath and intentionally calming her voice) “Mason, it’s natural to be a little worried on the first day of school. You had a great year last year with Mrs. Wright. She loved having you in her class. You can make it a great year this year in Mrs. Jones’ class, too, even though there will be new things to get used to.”

(Setting the limit and empathizing at the same time) *“Savannah, I hear you saying things that could be hurtful to Mason. I wonder if you might be a little worried, too. The first day of school is hard on everyone. I would love to hear how you’re feeling about starting fourth grade.”*

Savannah: “Mom, I’m just telling the truth. Some of the teachers ARE mean.”

Mom: “I understand that not all the teachers are as nice as Mrs. Brown from last year. But all of them want to help you learn.....Savannah, it sounds like you might be a bit nervous about what YOUR new teacher will be like.”

Savannah: “Mom, fourth grade is hard. They give you lots of homework. That’s what all the kids say.”

Mom: (Empathizing and reassuring, but encouraging Savannah to share more concerns) *“It could be worrisome, to hear that from the other kids. Don’t worry, I will help you to manage your homework. What do you know about your teacher?”*

Savannah: “Mr. Moore? The kids say he’s funny. But mom, what if he’s mean?”

Mom: *“That’s scary to think about....But honey, he could turn out to be great, your favorite teacher of all. We just don’t know yet. It’s okay to be a little worried, but why not hope for the best? I have an idea for both of you. Why don’t we all take three deep breaths, and make a loud ahhh when we let them out? That will calm us down. Then you can go into the school feeling more hopeful.”*

Mason and Savannah (together): “Mom, you’re weird!”

Mom: *“That’s me....the optimistic weird mom! Do you think I should come into the school and sit and do my deep breathing in the front hall? Would that calm everyone’s first day jitters?”*

Mason and Savannah (laughing): “Mom, that’s crazy! Don’t you dare!”

Mom: “Okay, I won’t do that. But let’s do it now... three deep breaths. I want to hear your loud ahhh when you let your breath out, okay? Can you two work together to make a louder noise than me?”

Notice what Mom did here to turn this around? She set a

limit on the mean teasing. She empathized with both children, even the one who was starting the fight. She got them laughing to defuse the tension. She gave her kids a tool to manage the emotions that were otherwise driving them to fight with each other. She even got a little teamwork going!

If you’ve never done this before, you might want to put a short cheat sheet in your car that says:

- **Calm yourself.**
- **Connect with both children using empathy.**
- **Set limits and enforce family rules about kindness.**
- **Get your kids laughing by saying something ridiculous.**

It takes practice, but you’ll see immediate results, and you’ll gain confidence over time. You might even find yourself putting up the same cheat sheet in your kitchen!

<http://www.ahaparenting.com/parenting-tools/siblings/bickering-in-the-backseat>

May is National Foster Care Month

Help us celebrate National Foster Care Month and come to the Proclamation Signing at the Capitol with the Governor on May 4, 2016 at 10:00 am. We had a large turn out last year and hope to see new and returning faces as we raise awareness of the need for foster parents and how they make a difference in the lives of youth in care. We will again have an open house at our office with lunch immediately following the event. RSVP to Felicia@nfapa.org or call the office at 877-257-0176 if you can attend!

Join us at the Proclamation!



heart word cloud courtesy of North Carolina Legislature Rep. Chuck McDowell's office

Why Kids Blame & Lash Out - & How To Help Them

"My 7 year old daughter has started wanting to make other people (mainly her brother) hurt when she is emotionally hurt. So something happens that hurts her feelings and immediately she wants to lash out and try to make others feel like she does. She steps on a toy, her foot really hurts, she's crying and it was my fault or her brother's fault."

Lashing out when we're upset and blaming others for our distress are completely normal human reactions. Most of us gain the ability to refrain from these almost automatic reactions as we get older, but we all know adults who seem to go through their lives with a "chip on their shoulder" blaming others, and reacting angrily to real or imagined slights.

What's this all about, and how can we help our children (and ourselves) grow out of it?

All mammals, when they're in distress, go into fight, flight or freeze. So when your child steps on a toy and it hurts, she's plunged into distress, and she goes into "fight." She lashes out at whoever is closest, or even throws the toy. Or, something happens that hurts her feelings. Again, she's in distress, so she goes into "fight." She lashes out.

It isn't because she wants to make others feel as bad she does. At that moment, she isn't even considering others. In fact, when she's in "fight, flight or freeze" she can't think straight or access her empathy. She's lashing out because she can't bear her own feelings of hurt, fear and sadness. To fend them off, she gets angry. It's an instant, automatic, response. The best defense for her at the moment seems like a good offense.

It's easy to see how universal this is if we look at our own tendency to lash out when we feel fear, disappointment or sadness:

- *We almost run a red light, and yell at our kids for distracting us.*
- *We get a parking ticket and blame it on our partner for taking so long in the store.*
- *Someone we love dies, and we get angry at the doctor.*

Our blaming others when we're upset isn't so different from our child blaming her brother when she's upset. Hopefully, we're able to bite our tongue so we don't go on the attack. We let ourselves feel the distress, but resist the urge to act on it. That allows those emotions to move through us and dissipate. Once we're calm, we often see that our response wasn't fair.

So how can you help your child in these situations?

1. **Stay calm.** She feels like it's an emergency. Your calm attitude communicates that there's no emergency, and she doesn't need to be in "fight" mode.
2. **Empathize.** Whether it's her foot or her heart, she hurts. Acknowledging that will help her feel understood, less alone – and less like it's an emergency. Bypass her anger and respond to the hurt or fear that's driving the

anger, which helps her understand her own emotions better: "Sweetie, that must hurt! Ouch!"

3. **Don't attack back.** Your child is attacking to avoid her own pain. If she can pick a fight, it's a way of dumping the pain elsewhere so she doesn't have to feel it. Don't take the bait. Instead, when she says "It's your fault!" you can respond "You are pretty upset...That must really hurt."

If she's attacking her sibling, you can say "Right now it seems like everyone else's fault, doesn't it? Your foot must really hurt. What can we do to help your poor foot?"

4. **Model taking responsibility.** Your goal in this situation is to help your child assume her share of responsibility for stepping on the toy, instead of blaming someone else. So model taking responsibility in whatever small amount you can. When she "blames" by saying "It's all your fault!" you might respond "You wish that toy hadn't been there. Me too! That really hurt your poor foot. I so wish I could have seen this coming and gotten that toy out of there. I'm so sorry you got hurt."

You aren't blaming yourself. You're helping her to not blame herself, or anyone else. The healing process in children seems to be facilitated when we step into the story and model taking responsibility, which is the opposite of victimization.

5. **Teach repair.** Later, when she's no longer hurting, you can say to your child, "That really hurt your foot...you were pretty upset...When you told your brother it was all his fault, I think that hurt his feelings...I know it's his toy, but he loves you and would never want to hurt you....I wonder how you can make things better with your brother?"

<http://www.ahaparenting.com/blog/why-kids-blame-and-lash-out-and-how-to-help-them>

Aha! Parenting Blog Practical solutions for real parenting problems

Published on Wednesday, April 06, 2016

Come Chat With Us!

Do you find yourself too busy to attend a support group? Are there no support group meetings in your area? After a long day dealing with the kids in your home do you need some adult conversation? If you answered yes to any of these questions, I have the Solution for you! Put you kiddos to bed and on Tuesday nights at 9:00PM join us for some adult support. We laugh, we cry, we lend an ear to whatever your needs are for the week. We offer support with people who are in your shoes. Tune in at 9Pm and join our chat. To get on just contact Terry Robinson at 402-460-7296 or Terry@nfapa.org. Hosted and supported by the Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association.

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 the 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 our calendar page on our website at www.nfapa.org. Support Groups will be cancelled for inclement weather.

Contact your Resource Family Consultants for more information.

Jolie Camden (Panhandle Area): 308-672-3658

Tammy Welker: 402-989-2197

Terry Robinson (Southwest Area & FACES-Online Support Group): 402-460-7296

NFAPA Office: 877-257-0176

NFAPA has Support Groups at the following dates/times/locations. Please check our website for updated information and a list of new support groups being offered throughout the year.

WESTERN AREA

Alliance Support Group: Box Butte Community Hospital, in Alliance Room

6:00-7:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Jolie.

Summer Dates:

May 12 (new date), June 9, July 14 and August 11, 2016

Scottsbluff Support Group: Regional West Medical Center, in South Plaza Room 1204

6:00-7:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Jolie.

Summer Dates:

May 10, June 7, July 12 and August 9 2016

Picnic for those who attend: June 27th at Frank Park from 5-9. RSVP to Jolie.

Kimball Support Group: Kimball Baptist Fellowship Church (507 S. Oak Street)

6:00-7:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Jolie.

Summer Dates:

June 6, July 11 and August 8, 2016

North Platte Support Group: Mid Plains Center (1101 Halligan Drive)

6:00-8:00 p.m. Contact Terry Robinson.

Meets every other month on a Thursday evening
June 2 and August 4, October 6 (this meeting will be at a different location), December 1, 2016

Gothenburg Support Group: American Lutheran Church (1512 Ave G)

6:00-8:00 p.m. Contact Terry Robinson.

Meets the third Thursday of every month (no meeting in June, July or December).

May 19, August 18, September 15, October 20 and November 17, 2016

Lexington Support Group: Parkview Baptist Church (803 West 18th St)

6:00-8:00 p.m. Contact Terry Robinson.

Meets quarterly.

July 26 and October 25, 2016

NORTHERN AREA

Columbus Support Group: Peace Lutheran Church (2720 28th St.)

7:00-8:30 p.m. Childcare available. Contact Tammy Welker.

(Thank you Building Blocks and Behavioral Health Specialists for providing childcare!)

Meets the second Tuesday of the month (except December).

May 10, June 14, July 12, August 9, September 13, October 11 & November 8, 2016

ONLINE SUPPORT GROUP

FACES-Online Support Group: Every Tuesday 9:00-10:00 p.m. Central Time

Contact Terry Robinson 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: Newman United Methodist Church (2242 R Street), Lincoln

6:30 p.m. Contact: Barbara Dewey, LICSW at 402-477-8278, ext. 1 to RSVP.

For more info: colorlineslincoln@gmail.com. Or <https://www.facebook.com/colorlineslincoln>

This group supports and strengthens racial identity in transracial families.

Watch our website for further dates or contact us by email or phone with any questions. Support only.

Helping Your Foster Child During a Time of Questions, Trauma, and Heartbreak

"You're not my Mommy," the eight year old girl said to my wife. With tears streaming down her face, the trembling her, then yelled, "I want my Mommy." Placed into our home only hours earlier in the evening, the child was understandably upset.

"I know you do, Sweetheart," replied my wife. Bending down on her knees, my wife took the frightened and confused girl into her arms. "I know you do," she whispered softly to the little one.

As your foster child will need time to adjust to her new home and environment, she will require time and patience from you. Along with this, she will also need your compassion, and your understanding during what is sure to be a very emotional and traumatic time for her. Remember, she is in a strange home, with strangers; your home and your family. To her, everything is strange and new; a new home, new food, new "parents," and "brothers and sisters", and new rules and expectations for her to follow. Perhaps to compound her confusion even further, a new school, along with students and teachers, as well, if she has moved from another school system. As you can imagine, it is likely that she may act out in a variety of ways as she struggles to understand the severe and sudden changes in her life. Your foster child may exhibit sudden outbursts of anger and aggressive behavior, extreme bouts of sadness and depression or even imaginative stories about his birth family. Indeed, it is not unlikely that she will exhibit all of these. Furthermore, she may even express no emotions, at all, and seem completely shut off to you, in an emotional manner. As foster parents, it is important that you do not take her behavior personally. After all, she is attempting to understand his feelings, and cope the best way she can, and perhaps the only way she knows.

When a child from foster care is placed in my home, I want to know as much about the child as I possibly can. The more information I have, the better I will be prepared to meet her needs, answer her questions, and help him the best way I can. Yet, there have been many times that I have had little to no information about the child. This can be not only challenging to all involved, but frustrating to both you and the child, as well. One of the difficulties that all encounter in the foster care system, whether it be foster parent, child, or caseworker, is the lack of information alongside the many questions that a



placement brings with it. How long will the child remain in the foster home? When will the child see the parents next? How often can she visit with her family members? These are questions that will weigh heavy on your child's mind. To be sure, they may also be questions that you and your own family will have, as well. After all, this is a change to your family household and family dynamics. Make sure you answer each question as honestly as you can, to both your foster child and your own children. If you are unsure of an answer, let him know it, and reassure him that you will attempt to find out and let him know.

When you feel the time is ready, and as soon as possible, take some time to sit down with your new foster child, and discuss the rules of your home, as well as your expectations of him. Explain these rules and expectations in words that he can understand and appreciate. Let him know that he is an important part of the entire family, and that your family will need his help. Listen to him, and encourage him to ask questions, as he is bound to have many. It is likely, though, that he will be too nervous, scared, or embarrassed to ask. Make no mistake; this is an important time for your family, as you begin to form a relationship with your foster child, and he to your family. This may just be the very first family that he has had an opportunity to form a loving and family type bond with. Despite any displays of not wanting you to become interested in him, he will likely want your acceptance, and acceptance from your family. Spend time with him, and try to get to know him; his likes and dislikes, his fears and concerns, his hopes and dreams. If he likes sports, try to get him enrolled on a local team. Make available books that he might enjoy reading. Find out what his favorite meal is, and prepare it for him on occasion. The more you become interested in him, and the more you show that his interests are important, the better he will feel about himself, and his placement into your home.

Author

Dr. John DeGarmo is a foster and adoptive father. He has been a foster parent for 13 years, with over 40 children coming through his home. He is the author of many books, the Brand NEW book Helping Foster Children in School.

<http://drjohndegarmofostercare.weebly.com/blog/helping-your-foster-child-during-a-time-of-questions-trauma-and-heartbreak>

LB 746

Many of you should be aware LB 746, the Nebraska Strengthening Families Act, passed final reading on 4/12/16 with a 48-0 vote and Governor Ricketts signed 4/19/16. The key provisions will go into effect on July 1, 2016. You can read a copy and learn more about it at <http://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/Current/PDF/Final/LB746.pdf>.

You can view other priority bills that passed at <http://nebraskalegislature.gov/session/priority.php>

Etched in Sand

SUMMARY

Regina Calcaterra's memoir, *Etched in Sand*, published by HarperCollins, William Morrow is an inspiring and triumphant coming-of-age story of tenacity and triumph.

Regina Calcaterra is an attorney working for the State of New York. Her painful early life, however, was quite different. Regina and her four siblings persevered an abusive and painful childhood only to find themselves faced with the challenges of the foster-care system and intermittent homelessness in the shadows of Manhattan and the Hamptons.

A gut wrenching and gripping story, *Etched in Sand* chronicles Regina's rising above her past, while fighting to keep her brother and three sisters together through it all.

Beautifully written, with heartbreaking honesty, *Etched in Sand* is an unforgettable reminder that regardless of social status, one can rise above their past if they have the desire and the determination to succeed.



A GLIMPSE INTO ETCHED IN SAND

The middle of five children, Regina, and her siblings, Cherie, Camille, Norman and Rosie were born to the same mentally ill mother but all different fathers. Their mothers mental illness, and fathers abandonment, contributed to the families instability. They would constantly move quickly shifting from houses and apartments to trailers, homeless shelters, cars and the streets. Regardless of where they lived, the older siblings would work to make each place they lived a home for the younger siblings.

As the older girls grew they began transitioning out of the unstable living situation and by the age of twelve, Regina was left with caring for her younger siblings. Through Regina's experiences *Etched in Sand* chronicles how the siblings lived on the fringe of society as they struggled to survive. All the while avoiding the authorities by keeping a pact that it was better to stay together on their own than be separated and again placed at the hands of complete strangers.

After a brutal beating so severe it could not be hidden, a social worker made Regina, not yet fourteen, a promise: tell the truth for the first time about how they have been living in exchange for a guarantee that the system would protect them. But to do so, Regina would be breaking the pact. In a weakened moment she made a decision that she would forever regret.

Through *Etched in Sand* Regina shares the scrappy survival instincts, mishaps, adventures and unbreakable bonds of a group of voiceless parentless siblings.

<http://reginacalcaterra.com/etched-in-sandvideo-summary-themes/>

Four Words That Change The World

"Kelly, our caseworker Susan just called me; the children are going back to live with their mother tomorrow." After leaving the message on my wife's answering machine, I sat back in my chair, disheartened from the conversation I had with the children's caseworker. She had called me at work, informing me that the three children were to move back home with their mother. It was a difficult conversation, one in which I no doubt came across as the bad guy, so to speak. Their mother had gotten a job at a local fast food restaurant, and in the eyes of the state's child welfare system, was now able to appropriately take care of her children. Despite this, I was upset, and protested to the caseworker.

"Susan, when I take foster children into my home, they become my children. I fight for them as if they were my own." I had told her just moments before on the phone. "I wonder if this young mother will be able to provide for them all that they need. How can someone who is so young, and by herself, make sure that Micah, who has severe learning disabilities, and Joshua, who has anger issues, get the resources they need to thrive? Kelly and I have struggled enough by ourselves to provide what these children require. How can she do this, by herself? Besides this, it was just a few months ago that she was beating them with an electrical cord. Are you telling me that because she has a job now, she no longer has these issues?" I was frustrated, and I was concerned. I just didn't want to see these children placed back in an environment where they would take steps backwards, where they would suffer. My phone call did nothing to change the situation, though I did feel better knowing that I at least tried. After all, every child needs someone to fight for them.

Yet, at the same time, I knew that I was being judgmental, that I was judging this lady, whom I had never met. It was terribly unfair and wrong of me, I recognized, and I was ashamed of it. I just had such a difficult time believing that this decision was the best one for these children. In fact, Kelly and I both believed that the children would eventually be returned back into foster care, as so many children often are. With this in mind, I made the request to Susan that we have the opportunity to have them placed in our home again, if only for the sake of consistency for the children.

Two days later, I dropped the children off at their daycare, along with their clothes and belongings. Susan was to pick them up later in the day and return them to their home in what is known in foster care as "Reunification," or the reuniting of a foster child with a biological parent or family member. Like all the rest, this was a difficult time for our family, as we had become quite attached to them, despite the exhaustion we felt. In fact, this was a particular difficult separation for Kelly.

Kelly had grown to love each (Continued on page 10)

Waiting for a Forever HOME!

The following are children available on the Nebraska Heart Gallery.

Names: Krissy, Caitlin, Jaden and Logan

May 2007, June 2008, May 2010 & December 2011

Big sister Krissy is bright and smiley, and loves gymnastics and learning new moves in dance class. She also doesn't mind a little bit of rough and tumble and loves to play kickball and football with her brothers.

She likes to ride her bike around the neighborhood with her friends and enjoys having play dates and sleepovers. Krissy is mature for her age and has a very upbeat personality.

Enthusiastic and inquisitive Caitlin has a passion for learning and loves to ask thoughtful questions. She is in gymnastics and loves doing flips, cartwheels and headstands! She also enjoys running around playing tag and other active games with her friends. In her quiet moments, she expresses her nurturing side with gentle care of her beloved dolls. Caitlin is the life of the party and has a great sense of humor.

Jaden enjoys playing football and catch, and releasing some of his boundless energy in gymnastics class. He also likes to keep his hands and imagination active with blocks, Legos, and cars, and looks forward to playing T-ball. Jaden especially loves to play and hang out with his little brother, Logan.

Youngest child Logan adores being the center of attention and enjoys playing games like Candy Land and cards with his older siblings. He also likes to watch outdoor games like football and catch. (He sometimes tries to join in, but is still learning the rules.) Logan is a Spider Man and Elmo "super fan" and has a lot of their toys. Like his brother and sisters, he loves taking gymnastics class where he is refining some of his coordination skills.



This close-knit young quartet needs a Forever Family that is patient, flexible, active, and willing to help them stay involved with school, family, and friends.

Connections: These children must be adopted together and will need to be supported in their relationship with their other siblings placed in separate homes.

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

What Foster Care Means or Meant to Me?

I've had three different foster mothers through out my life, even after I left the system, only one has kept a place in my heart all these years. When we were children, my little brother and I suffered abuse at the hands of our mother. Through out the abuse I always hoped and prayed for a mother that showered us with love instead of beatings. It wasn't till I met my last foster mom Jan, that I even knew what a mother was. I always said that God gave me the best for last because she really was. In the short time that I was with her she made a huge impact on my life and taught us that we could be more than our circumstance. She showed us what real love is, brought us into her family, and treated us like one of her own. That is what foster care means to me, when a person will go above and beyond for a complete stranger, who will be that child's advocate, but most importantly will step up to the plate and be the parent that a child so desperately needs. I no longer call her my foster mom, just my other mother. It's been almost 14 years since I was last in the foster care system but to this day I still keep in contact with my other mother. She's done so much for my family even after we left her home. I am almost 22 years old, married and I have a baby girl of my own. I graduated high school and I'm a semester away from graduating with my bachelors and she's been there every step of the way. I even shared the most beautiful moment in my life with her, the birth of my daughter! Even though they don't share blood, she happily taken on the role of being a Grammy to my little girl! She is the reason I can raise my child with so much love because she was the first person to show me what that was. Most kids meet their mothers at birth but I was blessed to meet mine when I was 7 years old!

Kiara



How to Survive a Family Vacation

By Dr. Lou Ann Todd Mock

An old Harry Chapin song says "It's got to be the going not the getting there that's good." With preparation and thoughtful travel survival strategies, the journey can be as much fun as the destination.

Whether you're traveling by car, plane or train, here are a few tips to ensure a smooth trip during your next vacation:

- **Keep it FUN!** Car games can make the time fly by for both children and adults. If you're driving, games like car bingo and the license plate game are fun ways to help your child connect with their surroundings. Have a pack with non-messy art supplies for doodling and bring music that everyone in the family can enjoy. It's also a great time to talk to your kids. Find out what's going on in their lives and be an open resource for them too!
- **Make it easy to get some shut-eye.** If you have a longer trip planned, bringing smaller travel pillows and blankets or their special blankie to help your children rest when they get sleepy can help keep everyone happy. If you're taking a long flight, try to book a flight that will run at night so your children can sleep on the plane.
- **Plan quiet time.** Sometimes less is more. When on a vacation it's easy to get wrapped up in the see everything/do everything excitement. Kids can suffer from stimulation overload, so make sure you plan for down time so that the entire family will have the opportunity to recharge.
- **Take breaks.** If you're traveling by car, plan and take plenty of pit stops. Let kids get out and stretch their legs and burn off excess energy. If you're on a train or plane, encourage stretching while seated and walking with you when it is appropriate.
- **Prepare kids first.** Parents may want to prepare kids for travel by describing what it's like to fly. You can use dolls or puppets in a make-believe game for young children. For older kids, talk about how long the trip will take and

when they expect arrival times. Have a clear plan for what you'll be doing on your trip set the expectation before you leave the house.

- **Have food, will travel.** Hunger can turn even the most pleasant people into unpleasant people. Pack food for your trip and remember to keep it easy to eat and healthy. Snacks overloaded with sugar won't help them feel satisfied for long - and sugary snacks can also leave kids with lots of energy and nowhere to burn it off.
- **Keep it clean.** When you have a group especially one with children things get messy quickly. Combat the mess by being prepared. Bring a kit of hand sanitizer, napkins and hand wipes can help keep everyone - including your car - clean during your trip.

Finally, parents shouldn't feel guilty if their kids aren't perfect. Travel can be stressful for all family members, so stay positive and incorporate fun into your trip!

<http://www.depelchin.org/articles/how-to-survive-a-family-vacation/>

BlueCloud Donates Duffle Bags to Foster Children



When foster children enter care and move between placements they often use trash bags to carry their belongings. Recently, BlueCloud - an Omaha based cleaning company, donated 16 duffle bags to ensure foster children can transport their belongings. These duffle bags each contain a blanket, teddy bear, hygiene kit, coloring book and crayons. Check out this video to see other ways BlueCloud is helping foster children - <https://www.youtube.com>

If you have a new placement and need a Kits for Kids Bag, contact the NFAPA Office or the Resource Family Consultant (RFC) for your area (look on page two of this newsletter for contact information). The RFC can meet you at a training or support group in your area to give you a bag.



(Continued from page 7)

child individually, though she had developed a special love for baby Linda. This tiny infant, so very precious and so very helpless, had wrapped herself around Kelly's heart. Perhaps it was Kelly's mothering instinct, perhaps it was the hours and hours of treatment each evening and morning, perhaps it was simply that Kelly, like many mothers, loved babies. Yet, when it was time for Kelly to give the baby one last kiss, she did so, with tears streaming down her face.

The next moment was more difficult, though, for my wife. After placing Joshua down from a farewell kiss and hug, she leaned over to scoop up Micah in her arms. What came from his lips next was nothing less than a miracle, leaving Kelly stunned.

"I love you, Mommy."

Four words; four simple words that Kelly had heard her own children say to her countless times throughout each day. Four words Kelly had heard many other foster children tell her, as well, throughout the past eight years. Yet, from Micah, these very words shook Kelly so emotionally that she could only hug the boy all the harder, drawing him into her chest tightly as she embraced him deeply. Micah, who had only been able to speak no more than two words at a time, spoke volumes to Kelly that moment. The little three year old boy, who had never spoken the words "love" or "Mommy" before, had reassured to Kelly that, despite the difficulties, being a foster parent to these children was not only worth it, but that she had made a positive impact in their lives.

As one who is considering becoming a foster parent, you might struggle when your children from foster care move from your home. There are times when the removal of a foster child from may come suddenly, and without any prior warning. You may only have a few days, or even a few hours, before your foster child is to move. This may be due to a court order, health reasons, or placement into another foster home. Other times, plenty of notice is given to the foster parents beforehand. Whenever you are told, there will sure to be emotions involved, for both you and the foster child.

Keep this in mind, though. When you become a foster parent, you make a difference. You will make a tremendous difference in the life of a child in need. Though you may not be able to recognize it, you will change the life of a child, and have done so for the better. As I write in my latest book *Faith and Foster Care*, years later, after a foster child has left your home, he may not remember your face. He may not remember your name. Yet, that child will remember this; that he was important, and that he was loved. Thank you for loving children in foster care. Thank you for changing the world, one child at a time.

Dr. John DeGarmo has been a foster parent for 13 years, now, and he and his wife have had over 45 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*. He can be contacted at drjohndegarmo@gmail.com, through his Facebook page, Dr. John DeGarmo, or at his [website](#).

A Foster Care Journey

By Tammy Welker

It all started 46 years ago, listening to a radio commercial.



Sandra and Bud Wilwerding heard the ad in which St. James Orphanage in Omaha was closing and they needed families for children. Even though they had children of their own, they decided they still had room for more. So they took in their first placement of a little girl. And thus began their foster care journey. Throughout the years Sandra said they have had way over a hundred children of all ages, with their longest placement lasting 15 years.

Fostering has changed as times change, but the one constant that remained was children in their home. Sandra believes that you should foster more than one child at a time. That way the children in your home have something in common. It makes it easier, when you are not the only child going on visits, having case worker visits as well as having court dates. The children understand they are not set apart from the other children in the home; someone else is in the same boat.

I asked Sandra what they got for a subsidy back then and she explained; when they started she would get about \$60.00 and month (\$2.00 a day). It eventually moved to around \$6.00 a day. Within the past few years it has moved up to \$20.00 a day. She said she doesn't like it when people think foster parents do it for the money. Obviously it costs more than that to raise a child.

I asked Sandra, what are some positive improvements she has seen in the system over the years? She pointed out the 15 to 22 month permanency change. When she first started, she said she would get infants and they would not get terminated or move toward adoption until the children turned four or five. That is a long time for a child to be in limbo. Another positive is Respite Care, they had none for a long time and now it is in policy and her agency is good at making sure they take advantage of it. She also added that the agencies are more open with foster parents than ever before.

We discussed if they could make one change in the system what would it be? Her response, longer transitions times. We seem to move them just as quickly to permanency as we did when they came into the system. We need to make sure the children are comfortable moving on. We also need to give them time for proper goodbyes, to the friends and family they have come to love.

I asked Sandra, what she would miss the most. Her first response was the adrenaline that comes when the phone rings. That phone call means a child needs help. She told me that she could have her home ready in 45 minutes if that phone rings. She has always been stocked up, organized and ready. She has a system that works well for all the paperwork. She joked that fostering is in her blood. It will be hard to see a news story or read the paper and know that out there is a child I could have helped.

She will also miss rocking the babies. I have known Sandra for over 10 years, and during that time she seemed to have always had babies. She was a mentor to me, when I first started fostering babies. I referred to her as the baby whisperer. She could help in any situation. There a lot of foster families in the Omaha area that have had great mentors in the Wilwerdings.

After fostering for so many years for so many kids, Sandra and Bud hear from previous foster children from time to time. A few keep in touch quite a bit. One 17 year old jokes about coming back and living with them again.

My last question was, what is the best advice you can give to foster parents? Sandra said, "Always stay positive", "Have Fun", and "Just do it!" Sandra and Bud are not renewing their license come May; however the two babies in their home will stay on until they are reunited with their parents.

After 46 years of giving of yourselves, NFAPA wishes you the best! Thank You for loving and taking awesome care of Nebraska's children!

Fishing Permit

Once again the Games and Park Commission has issued DHHS a permit to take wards of the state fishing on a group basis for therapeutic purposes

The permit is for wards 16 and over. The person who is accompanying the ward must have their own permit (which we do not provide) if they are actively fishing. The permit is not for wards to go fishing by themselves. If the wards are under 16 they do not need a fishing permit.

The letter can be found on our website at http://nfapa.org/news_publications/newsroom.html. This letter can be printed off and used as the actual permit.

A Letter of Encouragement to Foster Mamas

Has anyone told you lately that what you are doing is incredibly brave?

Caroline Bailey

Psst . . . hey you. Yes, foster mama, you. Has anyone told you lately that what you are doing is incredibly brave? You may not think so, but we all know that the world is in desperate need for more brave women like you. You take in children who have been abused, neglect, abandoned, whose feet have walked a treacherous path. You are there, scooping them up in your warm arms, and carrying them along on a journey that no child should be on.

Each day you get up with the same gumption that caused you to begin your foster parenting journey. You cook breakfast, tend to needs, check backpacks, fix lunches, and wish those kiddos a good day at school. You attend meetings, listen to the professionals describe their goals for the birth parents, hear from the birth parents, and attempt to advocate for the children you are caring for. There is a fine line, though, between pushing too hard, and not enough. You are asked to speak up for the children, but also to not allow your own feelings to get in the way. Wow. What a challenge. What a tremendous request to bestow upon anyone.

Nighttime arrives, and you know the struggle will come. The same children who love the daylight sometimes fear the dark. Their sleep is wrought with dreams. You hear them whimper, cry out, and toss and turn. Still yet, there you are in your own sleep-deprived haze, gently calming them down, and waiting it out until they are fast asleep.

Time passes, and the children who came to you with much sorrow and angst have started to blossom. Their constant questioning if there is enough food to eat, their stiffness when trying to show affection, and their fretful nights have all started to dissipate. They are beginning to show the essence of childhood, and your heart could not be fuller.

Throughout their time in your home, you have remained that steadfast presence they so desperately need. You often hear "I could never foster because I would get too attached."



The truth is that you also get attached, but you, foster mamma, refuse to allow your fear to be an excuse. These children need someone like you to attach to. They need your bravery and your belief in the great and life-impacting cause that is foster parenting.

For some of you, the babies, children, and teenagers that you have loved on will leave. While your mind fills up with concerns for their futures, and as you wipe thick tears from your eyes, you also marvel at the redemptive intervention that has been made in the lives of the birth parents and children.

For others, the babies, children, and teenagers that you have loved on will stay. It is a glorious feeling to move forward with adoption, isn't it? But, on the other hand, it is also a deeply moving and humbling experience that is mixed with sadness for their birth families, and the children that you will soon call your own (at least legally).

Psst . . . hey you. Yes, foster mamma, you. Has anyone told you lately that what you are doing is incredibly brave? You love, and then let go. You hurt, and then push that aside to heal others. You carry on day after day with the understanding that everything you do matters in the lives of children.

Foster parenting requires determination, tender-heartedness, and the belief in a greater purpose for us all. Stay strong, foster mamas. Stay brave. You may never get the recognition you so deserve, but the children you are caring for will remember that you were always there, scooping them up in your warm arms, and carrying them along on a journey that no child should be on.

*Caroline is a mother of three children through adoption and a strong advocate for the needs of children and families involved in the child welfare system in the United States. At the age of eleven (1983), she underwent an emergency hysterectomy in order to save her life. Caroline is the youngest person to have a hysterectomy. Her life has been profoundly affected by infertility. In 2006, Caroline and her husband, Bruce, became licensed foster parents. They were blessed to adopt two of their children through foster care in 2008 and 2010. Their youngest child is a relative of Caroline, and they celebrated his adoption in 2013. Caroline works for a Christian child welfare agency in Missouri. She has been a guest speaker at churches and conferences regarding adoption and is currently working on a memoir about the impact of illness, faith, foster care, and adoption in her life. Caroline is also an avid cyclist and enjoys cheering her children on in their various sporting activities. She shares her experience about foster care, adoption, barrenness, parenting, and faith on her blog. She would love to hear from you! Contact her at barrentoblessed@gmail.com. <https://barrentoblessed.com/2015/11/>
Published on November 20, 2015.*

The Balance Beam: Caring for Yourself While Caring for Your Kids

Valuing the importance of taking care of yourself is an essential component of successful parenting. Life, work, and family commitments take a toll on all of us. We all have responsibilities that pull us in countless directions, making us feel stressed out, short-tempered, and, at times, overwhelmed.

Self-care becomes especially vital when you're an adoptive parent due to the early life experiences that your children may have faced. Finding the rhythm between all of the roles you play will result in a healthier family and a healthier you.

Self Care Essentials

The essential ingredients of self care include admitting it when you're overwhelmed, valuing the process of taking care of yourself and giving yourself time.

First, admit that you are overwhelmed. Some signs include:

- *Feeling that every day seems too hard*
- *Lacking enjoyment in daily activities*
- *Feeling like a small request or new responsibility is more than you can handle.*

It's okay to say you're overwhelmed—it doesn't make you less of a parent. It's a sign of strength in knowing that your needs are important too. What's more, you're teaching your kids that it's good for them to take care of themselves when they're feeling stressed.

Self care also takes time—away from other activities and other people. Though family time is also important, we as parents need to be refreshed to give back to the well being of our families. You can only fulfill the needs of your family when your own emotional and spiritual cup is filled. So find a variety of activities that allow you in small and big ways to “refill your cup.”

Keeping Your Emotional Cup Filled to the Brim

Wisconsin foster and adoptive mother, Peg Cadd and her husband Rick have been providing care for kids for 30 years. Along the way, they have gained a great deal of insights regarding the importance of self-care.

“When parenting a traumatized child with attachment issues, it's easy to be sucked in by them,” says Peg. “At times, it can feel like you are continuing to pour love and caring into a cup that cannot be filled.”

Keeping your cup filled can be challenging but there is hope. Surrounding yourself with a support network of family and friends is helpful and then being willing to reach out to them when you're feeling out of balance is important.



Keys to Self Care

We all have our own preferred ways of caring for ourselves and making this a priority. The following are some tips that have worked for others and might help you find what will work best for you.

- *Honor yourself by acknowledging that fostering and adopting is challenging. If it were easier, more families would be doing it.*
- *Keep your sense of humor. Laugh early and often!*
- *Ask for help when you need it, including talking to a counselor who specializes in foster and adoption issues. Seeking out support is a sign of strength.*
- *Take breaks. Respite care is a valuable resource. Build a support system of caregivers who can step in when you feel that you're at your breaking point.*
- *Join a support group—either in person or online—or network with other foster and/or adoptive families.*
- *Attend training and workshops. Knowledge is power and provides you with additional parenting resources.*
- *Keep it simple. Choose an activity that fits with your lifestyle and your family.*
- *Stop comparing yourself to other people. There is only one you in all of the world and you have no comparison.*
- *Develop healthy habits such as eating well and exercising regularly.*
- *Sleep well, which may even require planning a respite overnight for your children or yourself. Or perhaps just making sure to fit some daily naps in each day.*
- *Let go of the guilt. Parenting is the most rewarding and the most difficult thing you will ever do. There is no reason to feel guilty for needing a break or taking time for yourself.*

Parenting isn't an easy journey. We—and our families—all have our own journey, with our own wants and needs. We want to encourage you to take time for you so when life throws you loops, you are fully charged and ready to face them. Contact us at info@coalitionforcyf.org or at 800-762-8063. We're here to offer ideas and sometimes just to listen.

Resources

What Do You Do to Keep Your Emotional Well from Running Dry?

http://www.fosteringperspectives.org/fp_vol8no2/well.htm

Summer 2010 Partners Newsletter: Caring for Yourself

Wisconsin Foster and Adoptive Parent Association, Inc.

<http://wfapa.org/>

Connecting Bridges Facebook Group

<http://facebook.com/groups/208378199276317/>

Reaching Your Boiling Point Tip Sheet

<http://wiadopt.org/Resources/Tip-Sheets-Old/Taking-Care-of-Yourself/The-Balance-Beam-of-Life-Caring-for-Yourself-While-Caring-for-Your-Kids>

4 Reasons Parenting Trauma is Incredibly Difficult

January 26, 2016

We were well into the third year of our family's new normal, before I had come to the realization that things really were different for us. That no, all kids really don't do this-whatever "this" may mean at the moment-and that we were not imagining the stress. We were not imagining the frustration. It took nearly four years to accept that the challenges we were facing couldn't simply be dealt with by working harder or doing more. It took nearly four years to come to terms with the fact that living in a family with children who have experienced early childhood trauma(s) can be an isolating, lonely, and oddly enough traumatizing endeavor, with very unique and difficult challenges. So few on the outside can understand what it's like to live inside our walls. That is not to suggest whatever is inside our neighbor's walls is more or less difficult, just different perhaps. Below is my imperfect attempt to give words to some of our family's daily struggles.

Invisible Disability. Children who have experienced in utero and/or childhood trauma have disabilities that may not be visible to the untrained eye. Our children can look physically healthy and happy, and yet their physiology has been altered by one or more traumatizing events in their lives. Their biology is different. Their brains are physically different. Because 80% of brain cells grow in the first two years of life, the damage experienced during those first years can and does manifest over the course of one's lifetime. How our children respond to day-to-day stressors is often outside the norm. Our children can and do achieve in school and in other environments. Yet, sometimes they cannot. They can be behaving in socially acceptable ways one moment, and become dysregulated the next. Disability is defined as "a physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities." When children who have experienced past trauma are "triggered," their disability shows its face. And yet, while focusing on the behavior or the child, the disability itself, the underlying causes, often remains invisible to eyes who have been taught that disability needs to look, act or talk in a certain way.

Just because the disability may not be familiar to you, that does not mean it doesn't exist.

There is SO Little Understanding. While I cannot speak from their perspective, I often wonder if trauma parents today may feel in any way similarly to the way parents of children on the autism spectrum felt a decade or so ago. Living with a general diagnosis that doesn't quite hit the mark? Confused about how to advise teachers, coaches and other caregivers? Parental instinct and daily realities constantly tell us something is not quite right, but so few resources are able to help us correctly identify what is going on AND what to do about it. Trauma mamas and papas often find support, comfort and professional resources in private online



groups or through private conversations with others living this reality. One of the most frustrating parts from my perspective is that not one of our countless home-study visits or adoption agency meetings leading up to our adoption(s) consisted of someone telling us, "This will be the hardest thing you have ever done. Line up the therapists and begin counseling immediately. For your kids, for your family, for your marriage." Other than a brief online training about RAD, or reactive attachment disorder, which was presented as an extreme and unlikely reality, trauma and its likely realities, as they would present in our home, wasn't even broached. Perhaps that is because the DSM (Diagnostic Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders) is not even sure how to classify trauma and attachment disorders? There is progress being made, however, and there seems to be chatter about reclassifying PTSD as "a spectrum disorder." This gives me hope, as so many of our children are definitely on trauma and attachment spectrums. Yet, due to lack of understanding in society, or worse, judgement, we often retreat to our safe places and speak nothing of this. We are simply too tired, to be quite honest, to do more than what is essential each day and yet we desperately need more professionals who understand trauma to be vocal advocates for trauma informed awareness and education. We need those who know and understand to help move society from a place of so little understanding to a place that provides knowledge and resources for parents, teachers and caregivers.

Few Integrated Solutions. Because traditional parenting methods do not work on children who have experienced trauma, because consequences have no lasting impact, because reward and punishments systems do not encourage positive behavior, because our kids often lack cause and effect thinking in the moment and because there is so little understanding in society as a whole about how trauma operates, it often feels like our family is David facing Goliath, with the whole world stacked against future healing and wholeness, through no fault of our child. Yet, there are approaches and systems, or more accurately lifestyle modifications, that do show promise for bringing healing to children who have endured trauma. Trust Based Relational Intervention, Connected Parenting and Therapeutic Parenting are amazing approaches that truly understand how trauma has impacted our children, why our kids behave the way(s) that they do, and how we should parent our kids to foster healing. These techniques require consistent effort and focus, and are contrary to way most of today's adults were raised. They are HARD. Personally, I get it wrong more than I get it right. Yet, when I understand that my child is always operating out of fear of the worst case scenario happening again, I can better understand and better respond. Unfortunately, because schools and the greater systems of society do not often operate under these "connected" principles, parents are again alone, either shielding our kids from systems that don't understand or trying to piecemeal a plan together that is not a win-win, but is also not a lose-lose. Again, we need advocates! We need the training and

education to leave academia and enter our educational systems, pediatric offices and our parenting models.

Secondary Trauma. Maybe you, like I, have learned this the hard way? Maybe you, like I, lived in denial for a long time? Maybe you thought you could soldier through or shake it off? Maybe you tried to convince yourself you were imagining things? The truth is, however, I have come to learn the hard way that being the parent and primary caregiver to a traumatized individual or individuals, and constantly being exposed to their trauma, means that there is a high likelihood that I am living with secondary trauma. According to Amy Sugeno, a LCSW and trauma therapist, "Many parents describe feeling burned out, chronically overwhelmed, or fatigued. It can become increasingly difficult to maintain compassion and the desire to nurture, while simultaneously feeling guilty about this. We may shut down and withdraw or be on edge a lot of the time. There can be hopelessness, anxiety, and seemingly unending frustration. Other issues may be more specific to the experiences parents went through during the adoption journey or to the experiences of their adopted children." In short, many adoptive parents are living with secondary trauma. So busy caring for the needs of those around them, that we forgot to remember we need to be cared for too.

If you can relate to anything written above, you are certainly not alone. The pain is real. The struggle is real. The trauma is real. The isolation is real. More so, the hope is real and the healing can be real too. For our children and for us. While it may seem like no one understands and it is true that few actually do, there are professionals who can relate. There are communities of parents you can join who will support and encourage you. There are approaches to loving and raising our kids that show promise.

And while we, as parents, certainly need professionals to advocate for our children and families, to educate the educators, and to help us heal, the truth is that YOU will likely become your child's biggest advocate. I want my child to succeed in school, socially, and in life. Therefore, my choice is to either continue to view myself as minuscule and paralyzed David who is facing a monstrous Goliath, or remember that when David was armed with wisdom and knowledge of a greater plan, he was able to not only face the giant in front of him, but begin to dismantle it. And as daunting as that may seem, perhaps that is exactly where you and I need to begin? By sharing the realities of trauma and the education we have received with everyone who influences and interacts with our children, we can help to begin to move in a new and healing direction.

<http://emergingmama.com/4-reasons-parenting-trauma-is-incredibly-difficult/>

Meet Monica: I am an emerging wife, mama, and pastor. I want to do this thing called life to the best of my abilities and not waste a single second or opportunity. Sometimes I get it right, often I get it wrong. God's grace is enough. God's grace helps me dust off. God's grace helps me emerge. There is so much beauty and pain in the journey.

"Making the Commitment to Adoption"

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

Register online at
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/northplattespaulding>



12 hours in-service credit!

North Platte Fire Station

715 S. Jeffers

North Platte, NE

June 17, 2016: 6:00-9:30 p.m.

June 18, 2016: 8:00-5:30 p.m.

(one hour break for lunch)

The Spaulding program is offered to prospective adoptive families. Spaulding training offers families the tools and information that they need to:

- Explain how adoptive families are different
- Importance of separation, loss, and grief in adoption
- Understand attachment and its importance in adoption
- Anticipate challenges and be able to identify strategies for managing challenges as an adoptive family
- Explore the lifelong commitment to a child that adoption brings

North Platte: June 17, 2016

6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

1) Exploring Expectations—Defining adoption, the process, and the key players. Participant's hopes and fears about the adoption process are recognized and empowerment strategies are identified to assist them in the process. Participant's explore their fantasies about children they might adopt to become aware of the possible influence on their decision about adoption.

North Platte: June 18, 2016

8:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

(with break for lunch)

2) Meeting the Needs of Waiting Children—Assist prospective adoptive parents in focusing on the needs of children awaiting adoption. Explore the issues of separation, loss, grief and attachment. Plus the unique issues related to parenting a child who has been sexually abused.

3) Exploring Adoption Issues—Identify supports within their family and introduce them to common issues that all adoptive families face. Help develop strategies for dealing with these issues; explore crisis periods in adoption; explore their own strengths, needs and challenges as they consider adoption.

4) Making the Commitment—Assist prospective adoptive parents in considering resources they may need, what they need to know, what they need to do, and what they need to explore about themselves as they consider adopting a particular child or children.

Registration Form—Making the Commitment to Adoption

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/Zip _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

You will be notified if Spaulding is cancelled due to low attendance. Please note times of the training.
Mail your registration to: NFAPA, 2431 Fairfield Street, Suite C, Lincoln, NE 68521 402-476-2273 Toll-Free 877-257-0176

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2431 Fairfield Street, Suite C
Lincoln, NE 68521
www.nfapa.org

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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 (resource) families, adoptive families, and relative caregivers
- Opportunity for all foster (resource) 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
- Alertness to legislation affecting the child welfare system
- 25% of membership dues goes toward an NFAPA Scholarship

Thank you for your support!

Please mail membership form to:
**NFAPA, 2431 Fairfield Street, Suite C,
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
- ☐ I wish to join the effort through a donation.

My donation will be acknowledged through Families First newsletters.

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