

# Families First

a newsletter for Nebraska Families

July/August 2017

N F A P A

## 20 Parenting Tools that Connect & Correct

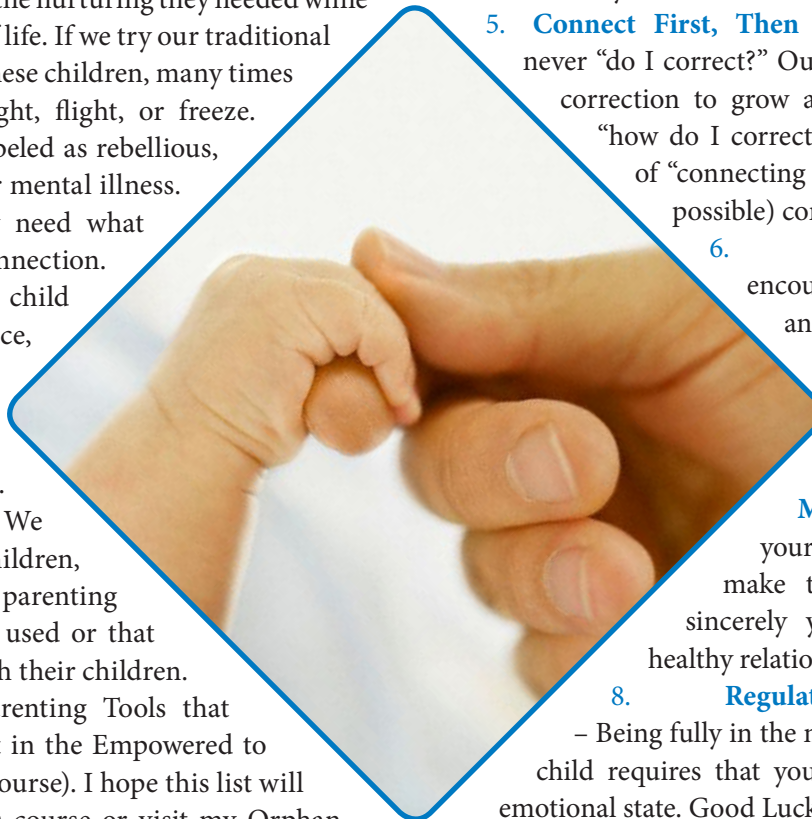
by Kenneth A Camp

Most of our tools in our parenting tool bag for children two-years-old and above focus on correction. This might work with our biological children who received nurture from the moment they were in the womb.

However, for our children from a hard place, they most likely missed out on a lot if not all the nurturing they needed while in utero and the first year of life. If we try our traditional parenting tools to correct these children, many times their response is either fight, flight, or freeze. These children often get labeled as rebellious, ADHD, or with some other mental illness. But these children simply need what they missed out on—Connection. So, if you are parenting a child that came from a hard place, you might need to replace some of the parenting tools that worked with your biological children. I know this can be hard. We never had biological children, but we naturally apply parenting strategies that our parents used or that our circle of friends use with their children.

Here is a list of 20 Parenting Tools that Connect & Correct (taught in the Empowered to Connect Parent Training Course). I hope this list will encourage you to take this course or visit my Orphan Care Resource Page for a free workbook and a list of related, recommended books.

1. **Balance Nurture & Structure** – A key insight to help you “connect while correcting” comes from understanding your child’s need for a high degree of structure and a high degree of nurture. This takes a lot of time.
2. **Embrace the Privilege of Saying “Yes!”** – Think of it this way—Your “yes” generally represent the nurture your child needs, while your “no” generally represent the structure your child needs. Which one do you usually say to your child?



3. **Respond to Fear with Connection** – Instead of asking, “What are you afraid of?”, ask, “What do you need?” Connection that creates trust is the only real cure for fear.
4. **Take Play Seriously** – Play is one of the most effective parenting tools available to help create a sense of “felt safety” in a child. Read Are You in Touch with Your Play Personality to learn more.
5. **Connect First, Then Correct** – The question is never “do I correct?” Our children need structure and correction to grow and succeed. The question is “how do I correct?” And one important aspect of “connecting while correcting” is to (when possible) connect first, then correct.
6. **Own Your Stuff** – When we encounter behavioral challenges and conflict with our children, it is important that we ask this question, “what part of this is really about me?”
7. **Repair Your Mistakes** – When you repair your mistakes (and we will all make them) quickly, humbly, and sincerely you are training your child healthy relational skills.
8. **Regulate Your Emotional State** – Being fully in the moment, or attuned, with your child requires that you learn to regulate your own emotional state. Good Luck!
9. **Practice Total Voice Control** – How you use your voice matters a great deal when responding to fear-driven responses from your child as well as dealing with misbehavior. “T” – Tone; “V” – Volume; “C” – Cadence.
10. **Focus on Nonverbal Communication** – Is your posture relaxed and inviting or rigid and threatening? Are your arms folded; finger pointed; foot tapping? What about your facial expressions—jaw clinched, brow furrowed, eyes warm and inviting?

(Continued on page 3)

## Nebraska Foster &amp; Adoptive Parent Association

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a newsletter for Nebraska Families

**N F A P A**

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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 [nichollette@nfapa.org](mailto:nichollette@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/July\\_August2017newsletter](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/July_August2017newsletter). 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. Name two of the books every foster parent should read.
2. When we encounter behavioral challenges and conflict with our children, it is important that we ask this question.
3. True or False. The primary purpose of time-in is to help your child calm; time-in is not designed as punishment.
4. Name the Book that is a great resource (gem) for foster children.
5. Define Cultural plan.
6. True or False. If you want to take a family vacation, only take long trips with quick access back home. A child with attachment disorder can quickly ruin the fun for everyone on long trips.
7. Fill in the blank. Less than \_\_\_\_\_ of former foster children ever make it to college, let alone graduate with a degree.
8. Fill in the Blanks. One third of youth who age out of care seek \_\_\_\_\_ care.
9. Fill in the Blank. Perhaps more shocking is that youth who age out of foster care are \_\_\_\_\_ as likely to suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.
10. Where can you go to get a copy of the Caregiver Information Form, Youth Court Form and Young Child Court Form?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Families First Newsletter Issue: July/August 2017

(Continued from page 1)

11. **Give Your Child Voice** – Giving choices, offering compromises, encouraging your child to express his feelings, etc. are examples of giving your child voice. This is a primary way to promote healthy attachment. Read this to learn more about attachment styles.
12. **Encourage Feelings** – The key is for you to help your child feel felt—to be attuned to what he is feeling and to feel with him.
13. **Use Time-in (Instead of Time-Out)** – The primary purpose of time-in is to help your child calm; time-in is not designed as punishment. Self-regulation is not self-taught. It is always learned from someone else.
14. **Respond to Sensory Processing Needs** – While most of us have some level of sensory processing deficits, for children from a hard place, these deficits often are much more pronounced. Visit my Orphan Care Resource Page to find several Sensory Processing tools.
15. **Get Your Child Moving** – “Research shows that when we change our physical state—through movement or relaxation—we can change our emotional state.” —The Whole-Brain Child: 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child’s Developing Mind
16. **Focus on Nutrition & Sleep** – This sets up your child for success.
17. **Practice Outside of the Moment** – Help your child to calm in the moment. Turn to other tools to help them learn and grow outside the moment.
18. **Respond Efficiently (Levels of Engagement)** –
  - Redirect with playful engagement
  - Redirect with choice giving
  - Redirect with time in or think it over
  - Redirect through physical interruption of the physical aggression
19. **Use the IDEAL Response**
  - Immediate
  - Direct
  - Efficient
  - Action Based
  - Leveled at behavior not the child

20. **Manage Transitions** – Plan ahead and help your child transition from one activity to the next.

Again, applying any of these parenting tools is harder than learning them. Many days Danielle and I feel defeated, but we keep practicing them trusting that this will make up for the nurture our son missed out on.

*If you want to learn more about any of these, you can either visit [www.EmpoweredtoConnect.org](http://www.EmpoweredtoConnect.org), Check out the free downloadable workbook on my Resource Page, or let me know which one and I will blog about that specific tool.*

## Indian Child Welfare Act

*By Lily E. DeFrank on behalf of the Nebraska Indian Child Welfare Coalition (NICWC)*

In collaboration with Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parents Association, Nebraska Families Collaborative, Nebraska Tribes and South Dakota Tribes present information and resources to caretakers with children protected by the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).

According to the National Indian Child Welfare Association, “ICWA empowers child welfare and adoption systems to follow best practices and treat AI/AN children fairly,” ([www.nicwa.org](http://www.nicwa.org)).



### Cultural Plans

When you are caring for an Indian child, you might ask yourself “what is a cultural plan?” and “how do we develop and execute the plan?” Cultural plans are created in order to foster and nurture an Indian child’s connection to their culture and community. Indian children have the right to fully explore their identity and Tribal communities. Your caseworker will work with you while developing this plan, keeping in mind that input and direction from bio-parents, children, and extended family is highly valued and encouraged whenever possible. You or your caseworker might also reach out to community members within the same Tribe for additional input and guidance regarding what strategies and resources that are appropriate. The plan serves as a foundation and great starting point, but families are not limited to only participating in activities that are listed in the plan. New cultural events and learning opportunities will develop and families are highly encouraged to seek out these experiences for the children in their care! All plans will be unique and specific to each child and unique to each Indian tribe’s culture. Overall the plan will include these main components:



- Maintaining the child's relationship with Tribe, siblings, extended family, and other community members in the child's life.
- Teaching the child about their cultural history, traditions and values.
- How those cultural traditions are integrated into your family and remain a regular part of the child's life.
- Helping the child develop a healthy cultural identity to include preparing to address cultural bias, bullying, and cultural preconceptions.
- Identifying cultural resources such as Native American Associations.

The plan you help create for the child will be very specific and describe how you, as the foster parent, intend to carry out all of these goals, and what resources you will use to help you. The cultural plan is a collaborative effort and can be modified as needed. The following is a list of activities or strategies you might engage in. There are many more child and tribe specific opportunities available other than this list:

- Attending a Powwow as a family
- Visits, FaceTime or Skype video-chats, and/or phone calls with siblings and other family members
- Seminars and summer camps designed for native youth
- Attending and/or learning about harvest season and celebrations
- Museums with exhibits on American Indian history or American Indian art
- Encouraging youth to read books or watch movies that were made by American Indians with positive themes for promoting a healthy self-identity
- Other family friendly events hosted by tribes or Indian communities
- Sharing information with the child about their biological family and family history
- Seeking out services that are culturally sensitive and responsive
- Encouraging child to talk about and explore their cultural identity
- Ensuring your mailing address remains up-to-date with your foster child's tribe, as many tribes publish a newsletter of cultural events and other tribal information

## Cultural Resources

Identifying cultural resources can be challenging, especially in rural areas or for families who live a far distance from their native communities. Communicating with your caseworker and Tribal members will help you locate resources or services that are culturally appropriate. The following are just a few of the resources located in and around Nebraska that can be

helpful when caring for an Indian child.

**TRIBES' WEBSITES** (*many tribes have websites with great information – try a google search!*)

- **Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska**  
<http://iowatribeofkansassandnebraska.com/>
- **Omaha Tribe in Macy** - <http://omaha-nsn.gov/>
- **Ponca Tribe of Nebraska offices in Omaha, Lincoln, Norfolk, Niobrara and Sioux City**  
<https://www.poncatribene.org>
- **Rosebud Sioux Tribe**  
<https://www.rosebudsiouxtribe-nsn.gov/>
- **Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas and Nebraska** - <http://www.sacandfoxks.com/sacfox.nsf>
- **Santee Sioux Nation in Santee/Niobrara**  
<http://santeesioux.com/>
- **Winnebago Tribe in Winnebago**  
<http://www.winnebago-tribe.com/>



## OTHER RESOURCES

- **Nebraska Resource and Referral System**  
<https://nrrs.ne.gov/> (Native American Resources)
- **Society of Care** - <http://societyofcare.org/>
- **Nebraska Urban Indian Health Coalition in Omaha** - <http://nuihc.com/>
- **Indian Center in Lincoln and Omaha**  
<http://indiancenterinc.org/>
- **N.I.C.E Program Omaha Public Schools**  
<https://tinyurl.com/ybadtzsz>
- **Indian Education in Lincoln Public Schools** - <http://home.lps.org/federal/indian-education/>
- **Soaring Over Meth & Suicide Youth Program (SOMS)**  
<https://tinyurl.com/y7kbhqug>
- **Fred Leroy Health & Wellness Center in Omaha** - <https://tinyurl.com/yc6uodu>
- **Ponca Hills Health & Wellness Center in Norfolk** - <https://tinyurl.com/yawv5ttt>
- **Sacred Winds Native Mission Church, United Methodist Church** - <http://www.umc.org/find-a-church/church/151054>
- **Indian Country Today Media Network**  
<https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/>

## Cultural Events

The following events are being held in June and July. Nebraska Families Collaborative maintains a cultural event calendar that is updated often at

<http://nebraskafc.org/resources/calendar>

**11th Annual Greenwood Wacipi\* - Traditional** - June 30-July 2, 2017, Greenwood, South Dakota

- Brunch and Supper Served Daily, Bring you own Dishes, Chairs
- For more info: Jean Drapeau 605-491-6268, Justin Songhawk 605-469-5357

**150th Annual Sisseton-Wahpeton Wacipi** - Traditional - June 30-July 2, 2017

- SWO Ceremonial Grounds - Agency Village, SD
- Registration: Opens Friday - Closes at 12:00pm Saturday
- Grand Entry at 7pm on Friday, 1pm & 7pm on Saturday, 1pm on Sunday
- ADMISSION \$5 - Weekend, 5yrs. and under free, 55 & over free

**Bear Soldier Wacipi - June 30-July 2, 2017** - McLaughlin, South Dakota

- Phone#: 605-823-4519

**Wakpamini Lake Area Communities Traditional Wacipi & Horse Races** - June 30-July 2, 2017

Batesland, SD

- Grand Entry at 7pm on Friday, 7pm on Saturday, and 3pm on Sunday
- Horse Races: Sunday 2pm

**Rosebud Casino 18th Annual Wacipi and Fireworks Display** - July 3-4, 2017 - Valentine, NE

- 30421 US-83, Valentine, NE 69201
- Free admission
- Fireworks at sundown

**Antelope Powwow** - July 7-9, 2017, Antelope Community South Dakota

- Contact: 605-828-6603

**Kenel Wacipi**, July 7-9, 2017 - Kenel, South Dakota

Phone #: 605-823-2024

**Flandreau Pow Wow** - July 14-16 - Flandreau, South Dakota

- 55th Annual Flandreau Santee Sioux Wacipi
- Grand Entry at 7pm on Friday, 1pm & 7pm on Saturday, and 1pm on Sunday
- Free admission, meals will be provided on Friday and Saturday
- Located on pow wow grounds north of Flandreau off Highway 13

Email [freandreauwacipi@fsst.org](mailto:freandreauwacipi@fsst.org) for more information

**Wakpa Waste' Wacipi** - July 14-15, 2017 - Tatanka Numpa Powwow Grounds

- Grand Entry at 7pm on Friday, and 1pm & 5pm on Saturday
- Remembrance Ride 10am on Saturday

**82nd Annual Little Eagle Monument Celebration** - July 21-23, 2017, Running Antelope Community

- Grand Entry at 7pm on Friday, 1pm & 7pm on Saturday and Sunday

**Milks Camp Community Powwow** - July 21-23, 2017 - St. Charles, South Dakota

- Grand Entry at 7pm on Friday, and 1:30pm & 7pm on Saturday and Sunday
- Milks Camp Site, 5 1/2 miles southwest of St. Charles, SD

**Pass Creek District Wacipi** - July 21-23, 2017 Allen, South Dakota

- American Horse School Campus, Allen, SD
- Registration open Friday @ 6:00 pm mst

**Virgin Creek Wacipi** - July 21-23, 2017 - LaPlante, South Dakota

- Contact: Mike Bowker (605) 733-2579, Gene Roberts (605) 733-2227

**Big Bend Annual Powwow** - July 28-30, 2017

- Big Bend Community 32 miles east of Pierre
- Grand entry at 7pm on Friday, and 1pm & 7pm on Saturday and Sunday

## Take Me Out To the Ballgame



Come cheer on the Lincoln Saltdogs during their 17th season. The Saltdogs play their home games at Haymarket Park in Lincoln. With help from corporate sponsors, they have donated a limited number of tickets for the August 5th game! First pitch is at 6:45 PM. If you are interested in tickets, please email Felicia Nelsen at [Felicia@nfapa.org](mailto:Felicia@nfapa.org).

## NFAPA Newsletter Questionnaire Winners!

**Win a gift card! These people did, just fill out our quick questionnaire on survey monkey.**

Congrats to the following winners of a \$10 gift card:

January/February 2016: Anthony Mascarello – Omaha

March/April 2016: Tina Work – Ashland

May/June 2016: Jordan Westengaard – Roseland

July/August 2016: Kassie Austin – Ogallala

September/October 2016: Terra Sasso-Blahak - Lincoln

November/December 2016: Rebecca Owen - Juniata

January/February 2017: Erin Hefner – Plattsmouth

March/April 2017: Jill Domina - Columbus

May/June 2017: Allan Pruter - Stromsburg

# The Start of Hurricane Season:

## Summer Break for Children with Reactive Attachment Disorder

Last week was the official start of hurricane season in many areas of the world. We're facing Hurricanes Arlene, Calvin, and Nate out of the bunch this year. For parents of children with reactive attachment disorder, however, they're bracing themselves for Hurricane Summer Break.

Those raising children with reactive attachment disorder have felt the whirlwind of hurricanes in their home for some time—often for years. Yet, day after day without school creates a whole new kind of disruption. Children with reactive attachment disorder quickly wear out their parents with controlling and disturbing behaviors—all day, every day. The sunny days full of lemonade stands and carefree sprinkler-running often aren't happening for children battling trauma. Their parents are battling long days full of temper tantrums, tears, hair-pulling, stealing, lies, and sneaking.

Just like the rest of the year, children with RAD require constant supervision. But in the summer time, that responsibility is all on parents. Children with RAD aren't often great candidates for summer camps and other organized activities. The program staff isn't usually equipped to handle children with reactive attachment disorder. Kids with reactive attachment disorder wear out summer camp staff quickly. They also come home and expect their parents to constantly entertain them like the camp staff does. That's because these kids don't handle indulgence well and feel entitled (similar to reactive attachment disorder kids during the holidays)

<http://instituteforattachment.org/6-tips-for-a-happier-summer-attachment-disorder-and-all/>

## Here's how to get through "hurricane season" for parents of children with reactive attachment disorder:

1. Create structured activities to keep your child busy. Moms Denise and Dyan gave some great tips to keep your child with attachment disorder busy this summer.
2. Enroll your child in work camps to build skills and boost self-esteem. In our state, Colorado front range counties usually have summer work camps for kids to clear trails and build outdoor facilities. Unlike typical summer camps, your child won't feel entitled to constant entertainment and will stay busy. Most programs require early spring applications. Perhaps you can find a program in your area that still accepts applicants.

3. If you want to take a family vacation, only take short trips with quick access back home. A child with attachment disorder can quickly ruin the fun for everyone on long trips.
4. Take a break for yourself through informal respite care with other parents. Other parents in your situation will understand your child and have the capacity to care for him or her briefly—long enough to give you a chance to rest a bit. And then you can return the favor for other parents.

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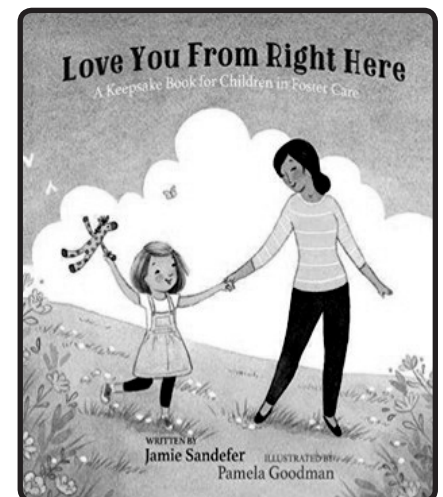
## A little Gem for Foster & Adoptive Parents...

Love You From Right Here: A Keepsake Book for Children in Foster Care is a wonderful little tool that will help fill in the holes so many children who walk through the Foster Care system end up with. What an easy way to truly gift each child their whole story.

However, in addition to children in Foster Care, I think the story itself is wonderful for ANY CHILD trying to navigate the emotional hurdles of joining a new family. It shows the not so pretty side of things as well as eventual comfort and happiness.

I just wanted to be sure you knew this tool was available for you. The little effort it would take to use it to it's full potential would make such a powerful impact on a child's life - useful tool!

Here's a link to save you some time - check it out and share this Love You From Right Here with other families too. Just click here to go directly to the book <http://amzn.to/2qKA29i>



“Every child deserves to know the LOVE of a forever family. Every family deserves the chance to THRIVE”



# The Tragedy of Turning 18: Aging Out of Foster Care

Dr. John DeGarmo

For most teenagers in America, turning 18 years old is an exciting time. High school graduation is right around the corner, and the possibilities of college or an exciting career are on the horizon. A sense of independence often fills the young adult with confidence and enthusiasm. To be sure, it is often seen as a rite of passage into adulthood.

Yet, for roughly 25,000 teens in America each year, turning 18 year of age in many states is a time filled with anxiety, concern, and oftentimes, tragedy. On any given day in America, there are roughly **450,000 children** in foster care, a number that has risen the past several years. To be sure, 25,000 is a disturbing number and percentage of these youth. For so many the end result is a tragic one.

Typically, children from traditional homes have parents who are able to guide them through these changes, providing help and advice as these 18 year olds determine the next stage in their lives. Along with this, most young adults are still able to rely on their parents not only for good advice, but for

**“On any given day in America, there are roughly 450,000 children in foster care, a number that has risen the past several years.”**

help financially, as well. Foster children, though, do not have these resources, these lifelines so to speak, to help out as they try to ease into their own lives of independence. When they are sick, there is no one to take care of them. Struggling in college? Often, there is no one to help them with their studies. Car broken down? Most former foster children have no one to turn to for help.

Foster youth who age out of care often leave the foster system without the necessary skills, experiences, or knowledge they need in order to best adjust to society. Without a family to turn to once they age out, many foster children find themselves in difficult times and situations. According to foster Chris Chmielewski, himself an alumni from foster care, and is now editor and owner of **Foster Focus** magazine, “The lack of life skills being taught before a youth aging out of care is seemingly inadequate.

Even the most basic of tasks; cleaning laundry, setting up a bank account or finding housing, seem to be foreign concepts to youth leaving care. Without those skills, these kids stand very little chance of not ending up on the streets.”



These young adults, who are involuntarily separated from their foster families through the intervention of the government, face higher rates of homelessness, as most have no options for future housing. Unemployment is higher in former foster children, and many struggle financially. This may be due to the fact that roughly **50% of those foster youth who age out** do not complete high school. Rhonda Sciortino, who also is a foster care alumni, business owner, author, and advocate stated, “There are an estimated 12 million former foster kids in the US. These Survivors of abuse need job skills and employment; job skills that so many do not have.”

Even more disturbing is that more these youth are more than twice as likely not to have a high school diploma than those their own age. Less than 6% of former foster children ever make it to college, let alone graduate with a degree. One third of youth who age out of care seek **mental health** care. Perhaps more shocking is the that youth who age out of foster care are **twice as likely to suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder** as U.S. war veterans. Roughly 71% of young women who age out of foster care end up pregnant by age 21, and the cycle of foster care continues for the next generation.

Indeed, I have adopted two children from foster care who are third generation foster care. Third generation. \ Their parents, and their grandparents were also in foster care, a system that failed them.

For so many youth, it is a system that fails them and a time of anxiety. It is a system that does not prepare them for a future, and it is a future of tragedy.

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 consultant to legal firms and foster care agencies, as well as a speaker and trainer on many topics about the foster care system. He is the author of several foster care books, including *Faith and Foster Care: How We Impact God's Kingdom*, and writes for several publications. He can be contacted at [drjohndegarmo@gmail.com](mailto:drjohndegarmo@gmail.com), through his Facebook page, Dr. John DeGarmo, or at The Foster Care Institute.

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## 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/nfapaexiturvey>

# Waiting for a Forever HOME!

The following are children available on the Nebraska Heart Gallery.

## Name: Damarion

**5 years old**

Damarion is a fun loving boy with a smile that will melt your heart! He is active and loves some rough and tumble play. Damarion enjoys lights, music and toys that make sound. He is very affectionate and will seek out and give affection frequently; he often enjoys cuddling and taking naps on the couch. Damarion has some special medical and developmental needs and would do best with a family that is committed to helping him reach his full potential and ensure he can get to his frequent appointments. Damarion will bring lots of joy to his forever family!

**Connections:** Damarion will need support in maintaining relationships with a few important people in his life.



## Name: Denisha

**15 years old**

Happy and helpful, Denisha is a little shy at first, but soon warms up as she gets to know new friends. In the summer months she likes to ride her bike, play outside, and go to the swimming pool. She's recently developed an eye for shopping and fashion, and her favorite store is Justice. Although not a big fan of school, Denisha does enjoy science class and hopes to participate in drill team in the future. Her other favorite things include spaghetti, the color red, visiting the penguins at the zoo, and Halloween. Denisha loves to interact with little kids and would do best if she is the oldest child in the home.

**Connections:** Denisha needs to maintain relationships with her siblings.



## Name: Michael

**15 years old**

Michael is a gamer at heart. He loves playing X-Box with his friends online or by himself. He is also an avid Anime and Marvel fan. Michael loves sports, especially football and basketball, and is a hands-on learner, enthusiastically studying animals and nature. Michael is polite, helpful, and well-mannered, and he enjoys making others happy by doing or saying something positive. He enjoys one-on-one activities and, being a sharp dresser, he doesn't mind at all if one of those activities includes shopping for clothes! Michael dreams of a family that will encourage his success and offer him loving attention and stability.

**Connections:** Michael is close to his current foster parents. He will need support in maintaining this relationship.



For more information on these children or others on the Heart Gallery please contact Sarah at:

Email: [scaldararo@childsaving.org](mailto:scaldararo@childsaving.org)

Phone: 402-504-3673

## 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](http://www.nfapa.org). Your membership will ensure that Nebraska's most vulnerable children will have their greatest chance at success!



# The Kinship Connection

For relative and kinship families who have not taken pre-service training Presented by the Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association



Relatives and friends are the most natural resources there are to help and support bio-parents and children in need of out-of-home care. Therefore, DHHS is required by law to find and contact relatives and other people with close connections to the family when a child enters state custody.

## You have a connection to this family that none of the professionals have.

This connection is real and important, even if you “haven’t talked in ages.”

## Because of your connection to the family, your home may:

- Best meet the child’s needs.
- Maintain better connections to the child’s family.
- Offer the permanency the child might need.

## The Kinship Connection training will provide Relative & Kinship families with training on the following topics:

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

## A Resource Guide will accompany this class with additional information.

- Public Education
- Health Care
- Child care
- Public Benefits

## Upcoming 6 hour training — offered at many locations.

Registration is required. Register online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KinshipConnection>

Saturday, July 8, 2017: Omaha  
 Saturday, July 8, 2017: Beatrice  
 Saturday, July 8, 2017: North Platte  
 Saturday, July 15, 2017: Grand Island  
 Saturday, July 15, 2017: Fremont

Saturday, September 2, 2017: Scottsbluff  
 Saturday, September 9, 2017: Omaha  
 Saturday, September 16, 2017: North Platte  
 Saturday, September 23, 2017: Lincoln  
 Saturday, September 30, 2017: Wayne

Saturday, August 5, 2017: Lincoln  
 Saturday, August 26, 2017: Kearney  
 Monday, August 28, 2017: Omaha

Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association  
 3601 N. 25th Street, Suite D, Lincoln, NE 68521  
 402.476.2273 | 877.257.0176  
 E-mail: [nichollette@nfapa.org](mailto:nichollette@nfapa.org) | [www.nfapa.org](http://www.nfapa.org)



# Natural Remedies for the Gut-Brain Connection

by Lori Mauer

After reading our report *The Gut-Brain Connection and Children with Special Needs*, you are probably wondering what you can do to help balance crucial gut flora. Food will not heal everything, but, what a person consumes can play a role in healing, behavior, and well-being. Here are some ways to improve the gut-brain connection:

1. **Consume Probiotics** Foods rich in probiotics, such as kefir, yogurt, and sauerkraut provide the good bacteria that lines the gut for proper nutrient absorption and immune system support. This is especially important for anyone who takes antibiotics at any time. A good supplemental probiotic is also recommended.
2. **Avoid Processed Foods** From artificial sweeteners to chemicals and fillers, processed foods load the body with unhealthy substances and toxins. Aim for whole, fresh foods, and prepare healthy meals and snacks at home.
3. **Avoid Inflammatory Foods** Wheat, dairy (casein), corn, soy, fish, nuts, and eggs are common allergenic foods. While nuts, fish, and eggs are part of a healthy diet, they should be avoided if an allergy is present.
4. **Consume Healthy Fats** Healthy fats are essential for brain performance. Extra virgin olive oil (EVOO) is high in essential antioxidants that are anti-inflammatory, protect cells from damage, and aid in cognitive functions and memory. Coconut oil, grass fed organic butter, and avocados are also beneficial.
5. **Go Gluten-Free** Going gluten free does not mean giving up bread. Sprouted grains provide numerous benefits, and offer many delicious options. You can purchase many types of gluten-free pasta and baked goods – just watch out for added sugar. It is always best to make your own treats at home.
6. **Consume More Nuts** Whether whole or ground up as nut butter without any additives, nuts increase serotonin levels that help improve mood while



providing healthy fats to the body.

7. **Eat Mushrooms** While many children may not like mushrooms, they will probably never notice that they were ground up and added to hamburgers or meatballs. Shiitake mushrooms are high in vitamin B6, a vitamin crucial for improving mood and reducing stress and depression.
8. **Chew Food Slowly** Maximize digestion by eating slowly, taking small bites, and thoroughly chewing food.
9. **Go Paleo** Consider the Paleo Diet, Specific Carbohydrate Diet (SCD), or the Gut and Psychology Syndrome diet (GAPS diet) as a viable option.
10. **Bone Broth** Bone broth, (whether homemade or

as commercially bought Bone Broth Protein), has incredible healing benefits for the lining of the intestines. Yes, our ancestors knew what they were doing when they sucked the marrow out of the bones.

## Natural Antifungals for Candida Yeast

Antifungals are excellent options for children (and adults) with yeast infections, athlete's foot, or other symptoms of candida yeast. Please see our report *The Gut-Brain Connection and Children with Special Needs* for further information about candida yeast in the gut.

## Natural antifungals include:

- Grapefruit seed extract
- Aged garlic extract
- Natural garlic
- Caprylic acid
- Cat's claw
- Olive leaf extract
- Tea tree oil – topically on the skin
- Oregano oil – topically on the skin

As candida yeast begins to die off, there may be a few days of discomfort. This is natural and will subside on its own. Also – it is crucial to avoid sweets which feed the yeast.

A healthy gut can improve the body and brain in many ways. **Always discuss changes with your doctor before implementing them.**

Reprinted with permission from [www.parentingspecialneeds.org](http://www.parentingspecialneeds.org)

# 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](http://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

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.  
 Famer's State Bank Building, 1320 W. 3rd St, entrance in rear. 6:00-7:30 p.m.  
 July 6, August 17, September 21, October 19, November 16, December 21, 2017
- Scottsbluff Support Group:** Meets the second Tuesday of the month. Registration is required. Contact Jolie Camden to register.  
 Regional West Medical Center, in South Plaza Room 1204. 6:00-7:30 p.m.  
 July 11, August 8, September 12, October 10, November 14, December 12, 2017
- Chadron Support Group:** Registration is required. Contact Jolie Camden to register.  
 Ridgeview Bible Church, 919 East 10th Street. 6:00-7:30 p.m.  
 Contact Jolie for dates.
- North Platte Support Group:** Meets every other month on the first Thursday. Dinner and childcare provided. Registration is required. Contact Terry Robinson to register.  
 Nebraska Children's Home Society, 121 N Dewey St #206. 6:00-8:00 p.m.  
 August 3, October 5 & December 7, 2017
- Columbus Support Group:** Meets the second Tuesday of the month (except July and December). Childcare available. Contact Tammy Welker.  
 (Thank you Building Blocks and Behavioral Health Specialists for providing childcare!).  
 Peace Lutheran Church, 2720 28th St. 7:00-8:30 p.m.  
 August 8, September 12, Oct. 10 & Nov. 14, 2017

## ONLINE SUPPORT GROUP

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

Contact Nicholette at [Nicholette@nfapa.org](mailto:Nicholette@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 (accept August & December). Children welcome to attend with parents.

Newman United Methodist Church, 2242 R Street, Lincoln. 7:00-8:30 pm

June 26, July 24, August 6 (different location), September 25, October 23, November 27 & December 11, 2017.

Family Events on August 6 and December 11, 2017-- RSVP required.

Family pot-luck on October 23, 2017

Contact the NFAPA office to register for Family Events or any questions.

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

## Kits For Kids

When children enter foster care they often have very little and are forced to use trash bags to carry their belongings. Recently, Modern Woodman - a member-owned, fraternal, financial services organization, donated 300 Kits for Kids to ensure foster children can transport



their belongings and have basic necessities. These duffel bags each contain a blanket, teddy bear, hygiene kit and other age appropriate items. Modern Woodmen together with their 750,000 members works to identify local needs and make an impact in communities nationwide. NFAPA is grateful that Modern Woodmen recognized this important need in Nebraska.



# 7 Books Every Foster, Adoptive, And Special-Needs Parent Should Read

by Mike Berry

One of our greatest passions is equipping foster, adoptive, and special needs parents with the best resources available. Recently, I compiled a list of the top 7 books every foster, adoptive, and special needs parents should read.

If any of my middle or high school teachers, or college professors came across this post, they would laugh. That's because I barely read a book through my school days (if you call cramming an hour before a class reading... :-)). Can't recall one time I read an entire book, cover-to-cover throughout my childhood or college career. So, the fact that I later became an author and blogger, and now sharing a post on book recommendations, is irony in it's finest form. Seriously though, in my adult years (the past 10 to be exact), I've found incredible value in reading books, especially in my continuing education as a parent. There are a few titles I believe to be critical-consumption as it relates to our unique journey.

Here are 7 titles every foster, adoptive, and special needs parent should include on their reading list...

1. **The Connected Child** (by Dr. Karyn Purvis). This is our go-to resource for any parent raising children from trauma (which accurately describes most foster and adoptive parents). I can't recommend it enough. This book brought a whole world of enlightenment to our journey. If you're parenting a child with attachment issues, an inability to bond in a healthy way, or one with extreme behavior from FASD or other disorders, this is a MUST-read. That's an all-caps must! It's that important.
2. **Beyond Consequences, Logic, & Control** (by Heather T. Forbes). Speaking of extreme behavior, we are often asked how to discipline children who behave out of their trauma. Billion dollar question, I know! Last week I wrote a post on how traditional parenting does not work with kids from trauma, particularly traditional discipline. So, the question becomes, how? This book answers the "how" question by walking parents through a paradigm shift in parenting children who behave out of their trauma. If you've felt like banging your head into drywall would get you more results than trying to help your out-of-control child learn respect, it's time to pick up this book!
3. **A Different Beautiful** (by Courtney Westlake). In 2011 Courtney's new baby girl was born with a rare skin disorder, and her life was suddenly on a brand new life-path. Through these unexpected circumstances, she and her husband discovered a "different beautiful." This is a must-read for anyone who often finds themselves dwelling on the way life didn't turn out, as opposed to seeing the beauty right before them. Courtney weaves a beautiful story of hope and new beginnings out of unexpected circumstances. I highly recommend this title!
4. **Born Broken: An Adoptive Journey** (by Kristin Berry). This is Kristin's latest book and I can't recommend it enough! Seriously...so...unbelievably...good. She didn't pay me to say that! Through a gut-wrenching personal account, she walks readers through the personal side of parenting a child with Fetal-Alcohol-Spectrum-Disorder. Written as more of a memoir, this book poetically expresses what day-to-day life is like in the trenches of parenting a child from a trauma. It's will bring tears to your eyes, but also hope to your heart. (P.S.- She's also the best looking, and most talented author on this list ;-))
5. **Twenty Things Adopted Kids Wish Their Adoptive Parent's Knew** (by Sherrie Eldridge). I recently had the pleasure of interviewing Sherrie for an upcoming video resource we provide for Oasis Community members and it was awesome. To-date, it's one of my favorite interviews. An adoptee herself, Sherrie has an authentic and first-hand perspective on the thought process of adoptees. Her parents adopted her in an era when resources were scarce and adoption was not a well-known cultural thing. She accurately and authentically expresses the viewpoint, feelings, and thoughts of adoptees in this book.
6. **The Mystery Of Risk** (by Ira J. Chasnoff, M.D.). This is my second favorite book on FASD (behind Kristin's of course). As a world-renowned expert in the field of Fetal-Alcohol-Spectrum-Disorders, Dr. Chasnoff is helping to lead the charge in awareness and advocacy for children and adults who suffer from this disorder. This book is a game-changer in understanding the effects of drugs and alcohol on unborn children. Ira accurately and personally walks readers through the enormous risk (both medically and personally) that alcohol use has on vulnerable children. Plus, I don't feel like an idiot when I listen to Ira talk, or read his work. He makes me feel understood and heard. It's like sitting down to coffee with a close friend!
7. **The Adoptive Parent Toolbox** (by Mike and Kristin Berry). To be honest with you, I felt a little weird putting this on the list. We're not the type of people to toot our own horn (ever!). But, as I thought through valuable resources, I realized, the Toolbox is a big one. The reason is simple. We wrote this book because, back in the day, when we first began the journey, we didn't have a practical how-to guide to show us what to do, and what to expect (before and after we completed the adoption process). So, we wrote this book. It serves as a

simple how-to on just about every aspect of the pre or post-adoptive journey.

There you have it my friend...your summer reading list is complete! You're welcome. Seriously though, I promise you will not be disappointed by any of the titles I listed above. I've chosen them for this list because they speak directly into our journey from an authentic and been-there-done-that point of view. That's precisely the kind of resources I need to help me through this often-lonely and isolating journey!

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<http://confessionsofanadoptiveparent.com/workwithus/>

## Caregiver Information

### Caregiver Information Form

You may submit written information to the court, and you can be heard at review and permanency hearings. You are encouraged to provide information based only on first-hand knowledge. You must submit the form to the Clerk of the Court two weeks in advance of the hearing. You have the right to be present at the hearing and you are encouraged to attend.

To obtain a Caregiver Information Form visit:

<https://supremecourt.nebraska.gov/sites/default/files/jc-14-11-11.pdf>

### Youth Court Form

Updated in 2014, with the input of judges and youth councils, this older-youth questionnaire was designed as a way for young people to inform the judge of what is going on in their lives and to make requests about the case. Completing the form is voluntary, and all parties to the case have the opportunity to review the form.

This form can be found at:

[https://cip.nebraska.gov/sites/cip.nebraska.gov/files/files/34/youth\\_court\\_form\\_june2014\\_0.pdf](https://cip.nebraska.gov/sites/cip.nebraska.gov/files/files/34/youth_court_form_june2014_0.pdf)

### Young Child Court Form:

Children in the child welfare system typically want to talk to their judge and let him or her know what is going on in their life. Attending court hearings is a great way for the child to be involved and express his or her opinions. If that is not possible, the Young Child Court Form is a great alternative. The Young Child Court Form is intended for children around the developmental ages of 6 to 10. We encourage that a trusted person known to the child assist him or her in filling out the form.

The form can be found here:

[https://cip.nebraska.gov/sites/cip.nebraska.gov/files/young\\_child\\_court\\_form.pdf](https://cip.nebraska.gov/sites/cip.nebraska.gov/files/young_child_court_form.pdf)

## Letter of Encouragement

### Letter of Encouragement from Separate Juvenile Court Judge Lawrence Gendler

Dear Foster Parent or Caregiver,

As a caregiver of a child in the child welfare court system, you may have information about the child that is useful to the judge and other parties involved in the case. The Nebraska Legislature recognized this and in 2007 enacted a law that provides caregivers with the opportunity to inform the court about the welfare of the child in your care through a written form called "The Caregiver Information Form."

The document may be downloaded and printed from the Supreme Court website at <https://supremecourt.nebraska.gov/sites/default/files/jc-14-11-11.pdf>, or you may ask the caseworker to provide you a copy. You are not required to submit this voluntary form and may choose which sections to complete. Because circumstances change you are encouraged to submit a Caregiver Information Form for every review hearing.

Please send it to the court at least 2 weeks prior to the hearing to ensure that all parties have the chance to review it. Attached is a list of Nebraska's courthouse addresses where you can find the court that has your child's case and mailing address. These are also available on the Nebraska Supreme Court website.

Please know that your efforts on behalf of your child and their families are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Lawrence D. Gendler  
Separate Juvenile Court Judge

cc: Chief Justice Michael Heavican  
Corey Steel, state court administrator  
All judges with juvenile cases

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<http://confessionsofanadoptiveparent.com/workwithus/>

# 2017 NFAPA Scholarship Recipient

Khadiya Mengelkamp is the recipient of the 2017 NFAPA scholarship. Khadiya graduated from Northeast High School in Lincoln. She attended The Career Academy her last two years of high school and has earned her Med Aide, Certified Nursing Assistant and Phlebotomy certifications. During her time at Lincoln Northeast she was nominated to attend a leadership conference at Hastings College. She also volunteered at the Peoples City Mission and Center for People in Need. Khadiya will be attending the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. She will pursue a degree in Biology and hopes to one day be a Physical Therapist.

Khadiya, moved from Sierra Leone at the age of 7 for a chance at an advanced education. As a foster child, she worked hard to learn English as her second language. Khadiya was adopted by a loving and stable family. Khadiya states that her relationship with her adoptive mother has helped her "have faith in women again." Her journey through foster care and adoption has helped her develop healthy relationships and allowed her to pursue her dream of helping others.

NFAPA awards scholarships to youth who have received foster care, adoption or guardianship services and wish to further their education beyond high school or GED. If you are interested in donating to the NFAPA Scholarship fund, become a member of NFAPA, 25% of all dues go the scholarship fund! An enrollment form is on the last page of the newsletter. You can also donate on our website at [www.nfapa.org](http://www.nfapa.org).



*"never let the odds keep  
you from doing what  
you know  
in your heart  
you were meant to do."*

- H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

## NFAPA Board Position Openings

The following positions are vacant on the Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association (NFAPA) Board of Directors.

- Western Service Area Representative (Southwest & Panhandle)
- Northern Service Area Representative

If you are a current or former foster and/or adoptive parent and have a desire to serve an organization that empowers, supports and advocates for Nebraska families please submit your bio to Felicia Nelsen, Executive Director, at [Felicia@nfapa.org](mailto:Felicia@nfapa.org). Please contact Felicia at 402-476-2273 with questions.

## In-service Training Youth Mental Health First Aid

Presented by Phil Darley, Assistant Executive Director at Panhandle Health Group

Saturday, September 30, 2017 | 9:00 AM–4:00 PM

Regional West Medical Center, Scottsbluff

Register online:

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Lexington\\_in-service](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Lexington_in-service)

Earn 6 hours of in-service credit

"Youth Mental Health First Aid reviews the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents ages 12-18. It emphasizes the importance of early intervention and covers how to help an adolescent in crisis or experiencing a mental health challenge. The facilitator, Phil Darley, Assistant Executive Director at Panhandle Health Group has taught over 350 people throughout western Nebraska and Pine Ridge, South Dakota including educators, administrators, correctional officers, human service agency employees and parents. This non-clinical course will help folks better understand typical adolescence, how to address basic suicide ideations and verbalizations, understand and use the MHFA Action Plan. The training Saturday, September 30, 2017 will include a brief lunch which will allow us to work through this interactive course."

**"Children don't need more things. The best toys a child can have is a parent who gets down on the floor and plays with them."**

**- Bruce Perry**





## Upcoming In-service Training – Two Locations!

### Spaulding – Making the Commitment to Adoption

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

September 15, 2017: 6:00 PM -9:30 PM & September 16, 2017: 8:00 AM -5:30 PM  
Regional West Medical Center, Scottsbluff

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

Earn 12 hours of in-service credit

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

### Effective Strategies for Children with Developmental Trauma

Presented by Kay Glidden, Assistant Director of Region 3 Behavioral Health Services

Saturday, August 5, 2017 | 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM Parkview Baptist Church Youth Center

1105 Park Street, West Entrance Lexington

Register online: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Lexington\\_in-service](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Lexington_in-service)

Earn 3 hours of in-service credit

We often underestimate the impact of early life experiences on a child's development. Trauma can impact children's ability to learn, social interactions and self-regulation skills. Toxic stress or trauma can involve events such as physical abuse and/or emotional abuse and neglect, divorce, bullying, domestic violence, car accidents and a death in the family. Emotional trauma occurs when an external threat overwhelms a person's internal and external positive coping resources (SAMHSA).

Professionals who work with children, parents and foster parents can benefit from education about how trauma affects children in their care and how to create safe environments. This training will discuss how trauma impacts children, the Adverse Childhood Survey (ACE's), how to create a safe environment, self-regulation tools and ways to avoid re-traumatizing practices. Specific tools and resources will be discussed to help professionals and parents begin the healing process for children.

# WHAT IS INSIDE

20 Parenting Tools that Connect & Correct .....	1
NFAPA Staff / Board of Directors .....	2
Attention Foster Parents! .....	2
Indian Child Welfare Act .....	3
Take Me Out To the Ballgame.....	5
NFAPA Newsletter Questionnaire Winners! .....	5
The Start of Hurricane Season: .....	6
A little Gem for Foster & Adoptive Parents.....	6
The Tragedy of Turning 18: Aging Out of Foster Care .....	7
No Longer Fostering? .....	7
Waiting for a Forever HOME! .....	8
Membership Drive .....	8
The Kinship Connection .....	9
Natural Remedies for the Gut-Brain Connection .....	10
NFAPA Support Groups .....	11
Kits For Kids .....	11
7 Books Every Foster, Adoptive, And Special-Needs Parent Should Read.....	12
Caregiver Information .....	13
Letter of Encouragement .....	13
2017 NFAPA Scholarship Recipient .....	14
NFAPA Board Position Openings.....	14
In-service Training.....	14
Upcoming In-service Training – Two Locations!.....	15
JOIN NFAPA .....	16



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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, \$ \_\_\_\_\_