

# Families First

a newsletter for Nebraska Families

October/November 2014

N F A P A

## Four Attachment Types To Know Before Becoming a Parent

By PENELOPE in  
ADOPTION, FOSTER CARE, PARENTING

Attachment can be defined in a number of ways, but can be simply defined as the connection that is developed between a child and caregiver. There are 4 patterns of attachment that a child can develop while being parented, but first...

### How is attachment developed?

Attachment is developed through repeated and consistent interactions between a child and caregiver. If this cycle is repeatedly met (doesn't have to be perfectly met, thank goodness), a child will develop a secure attachment.

When is attachment formed?

Attachment patterns are developed during the first 12 months of life!

Attachment patterns are usually stable over a person's

lifetime! (The attachment style a person develops as an infant will remain their attachment style as an adult UNLESS the person DELIBERATELY attempts to change that attachment style)

### 4 ATTACHMENT PARENTING TYPES

1. Secure
2. Insecure – Avoidant (Organized)
3. Insecure – Ambivalent (Organized)
4. Insecure – Disorganized

### 1. SECURE ATTACHMENT TYPE

#### How is Secure Attachment Developed?

- Touch, closeness, eye contact – Think of how you hold an infant and look into his face
- Emotional attunement – Tuning into the internal state of another
- Secure environment (Feeling safe and cared for)
- Shared pleasure, play, and FUN!

#### Characteristics of Secure Attachment Type

- Seeks out caregiver when in need of physical or emotional support or comfort
- Ability to talk about a wide range of feelings, both positive and negative
- Feels comfortable exploring new environments while continuing to use their caregiver as a "secure base"
- Enjoys and is comfortable with physical and emotional closeness
- Positive beliefs about themselves, others, and the world
- Emotionally stable (emotional regulation)

### 2. INSECURE-AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT TYPE

#### How is Insecure-Avoidant Attachment Developed?

- The infant is repeatedly NOT soothed
- The attachment cycle is broken, and the distressed infant stops asking for help
- The infant is left unattended, in neglectful families or orphanages

*Continued on page 2*



Continued from page 1

- Sadly, the infant still produces stress hormones, yet doesn't act stressed
- The infant learns not to depend on anyone to soothe or meet his needs

#### Characteristics of Insecure(Avoidant Attachment Type)

- Emotionally distant and aloof
- Limited tolerance for feelings
- Inflated self-reliance to minimize need for connection
- Independent or inappropriately mature
- Lacks empathy
- The child's solution is limited dependence on relationships.
- Take care of self.
- Deny or avoid feelings or emotions.

### 3. INSECURE-AMBIVALENT ATTACHMENT TYPE

#### How is Insecure-Ambivalent Attachment Developed?

- The distressed infant sometimes has his needs met
- The caregiver is inconsistent (due to their own unresolved attachment histories, or could be due to substance abuse or mental illness)
- Disruptions in care due to inconsistent or chaotic caregiving (also displacements via foster care)

#### Characteristics of Insecure-Ambivalent Attachment Type

- Crave attachment yet pushes away (push/pull behaviors)
- Clinginess (bottomless pit)
- Unable to self-soothe (as they get older) and need all soothing from an outside source
- Fear of abandonment
- The child's solution is to keep caregivers in constant proximity

### 4. DISORGANIZED ATTACHMENT TYPE

#### How is Disorganized Attachment Developed?

- Caregiver is frightening, dangerous, or causes terror
- Child needs the caregiver for survival but is terrified of the caregiver
- Child cannot find a solution which results in disorganized attachment

#### Characteristics of Disorganized Attachment Type

- Significant difficulty with behavior, emotions, attention, and relationships
- Attempts to control their caregiver in order to make them more predictable
- Prone to dissociation
- 80% of abused children have disorganized attachment (Siegel)

To learn more about attachment and how your parenting can affect your child's attachment, you can read *Parenting from the Inside Out: How a Deeper Self-Understanding Can Help You Raise Children Who Thrive*, by Dan Siegel

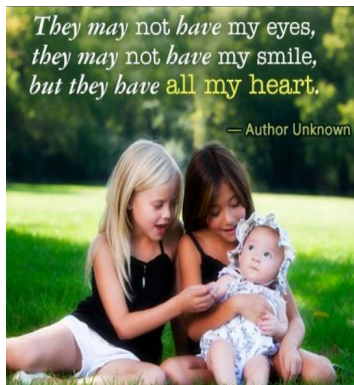
## How can state law support school continuity and success for students in foster care?

### State Policy Advocacy & Reform Center

We would like to share a new SPARC brief with you, *How Can State Law Support School Continuity and Success for Students in Foster Care?* This brief is authored by The Legal Center for Foster Care and Education, a collaboration between the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law, Education Law Center (PA) and Juvenile Law Center.

The federal Fostering Connections Act of 2008 and the McKinney-Vento Act both provide education stability for children in foster care, especially children "awaiting foster care placement." Many state laws address improving education opportunities for children in care. Some expand the number of children entitled to McKinney-Vento protections by defining which children in care meet the definition of "awaiting foster care placement." Some states imbed the Fostering Connections and McKinney-Vento requirements relating to school stability and seamless transitions in their state laws. Other states expand upon these federal protections. This brief examines what states are already doing to ensure the educational needs of children in care are met and makes recommendations on how states can improve their laws.

To read the brief: <http://childwelfare.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/How-Can-State-Law-Support-School-Continuity-and-Success-for-Students-in-Foster-Care.pdf>



## ATTENTION FOSTER PARENTS!

*Earn your foster parent credits while getting the chance to win GREAT Prizes!*

Answer these 9 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 book, *The Foster Parenting Toolbox*, a practical, hands-on approach to parenting children in Foster Care. Just answer the following 9 questions and send us your answers! There are a variety of ways to do this. You can email the information to [Felicia@nfapa.org](mailto: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](http://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/s/7BD28MH>. 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. T or F: 4980 provides children 14 and up the opportunity to participate in their case planning process.

2. Name three of the six struggles foster parents face.

3. Give one example of parenting guts.

4. The Education and training voucher program provides support services to whom?

5. What are the 3 areas identified in the pals program contract?

6. T or F: In moderation, television can be beneficial.

7. Children who watch more than \_\_\_ hours a day on a consistent basis tend to be .

8. Issues from anxiety can manifest themselves in a number of ways. Name three of them.

9. Name three strategies a foster parent can use when supervising your foster child's television viewing habits.

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

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

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

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

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Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association

## Families First

a newsletter for Nebraska Families

N F A P A

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Questions? Call NFAPA at 877-257-0176 or 402-476-2273. This publication is supported by Grant #93.566 under a sub-grant from HHS Administration for Children and Families and Nebraska

# Separation Anxiety

Many times, children placed into foster care suffer from mental health issues. A placement disruption may be so severe to the child that it feels as if their entire world is falling apart. Children in foster care often struggle to best deal with and survive these traumatic events, as they struggle to adjust to a new home and new family. To be sure, the losses in their life, along with the lack of a permanent home, often times prevent these children from forming a secure and healthy attachment with a primary caregiver.

Issues from anxiety can manifest themselves in a number of ways. Perhaps the one that foster children face the most is separation anxiety, an excessive concern that children struggle with concerning the separation from their home, family, and to those they are attached to the most. Indeed, the more a child is moved, from home to home, from foster placement to another foster placement, or multiple displacements, the bigger the concern becomes. Those children who undergo many multiple displacements often times create walls to separate themselves in an attempt to not let others into their lives. In attempting to do so, many foster children end up lying to their foster families, as they try to keep their new family at a distance, and at the same time, give the child a sense of personal control.

The loss of a family may result in a foster child spiraling into depression. These feelings of depression may intrude into all areas of a foster child's life; from their capability to act and function in the home to their school environment and the interaction with those their own age. Children who suffer from a depressive disorder may show strong and continuous signs of sadness. They may also have great difficulty in focusing on school work or life around them, and may instead concentrate on death or feelings of suicide. Loss of appetite or severe changes in eating habits may also be a result of a depressive disorder. Feelings of guilt over the placement may also overwhelm a foster child. Finally, a child who suffers from a depressive disorder may lack energy in day to day tasks, or may have difficulty sleeping.

Dealing with separation and loss is difficult for anybody. As an adult, you have had experience with this, and know who and where to reach out to when in need of help. Foster children, though, generally do not know how to handle these feelings and emotions. Yet, these feelings must be released, in some fashion.

One way of expressing these feelings of isolation is to lash out in anger and frustration to those around them. Though foster children do not necessarily blame you, the foster parent, or the caseworker, the feelings of frustration and loss are strong within them, and you may be the only one they can release them to. Anger may also result in destruction of property or items within your foster home, as the child lashes out.

Other anxiety disorders include *obsessive-compulsive disorder*, where a child repeats unwanted thoughts, actions, and/or behavior out of a feeling of need. *Panic disorders* find a child experiencing intense bouts of fear for reasons that may not be apparent. These attacks may be sudden, and unexpected, as well as repetitive in their nature. Panic disorders also may coincide with strong physical symptoms, such as shortness of breath, dizziness, throbbing heart beats, or chest pains. Another anxiety disorder that foster children may face includes *social phobias*, or the fear of being embarrassed or face the criticism of others.

To be sure, there are high levels of mental health problems with children under foster care. The majority of foster children face the reality that most mental health problems are not being addressed as needed. Furthermore, psychological and emotional issues that challenge foster children may even worsen and increase, rather than improve and decrease, while under placement in foster homes and care. Foster children, in many cases, do not receive adequate services in regard to mental health and developmental issues and will not likely do so in the near future, due to lack of government funding and lack of resources, as well as the simple matter that child welfare caseworkers are understaffed and overworked, in most states across the country.

*Dr. John DeGarmo has been a foster parent for 12 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 books, including the book Keeping Foster Children Safe Online, The Foster Parenting Manual: A Practical Guide to Creating a Loving, Safe and Stable Home, and the foster care children's book A Different Home: A New Foster Child's Story. Dr. DeGarmo is the host of the weekly radio program Foster Talk with Dr. John. He can be contacted at drjohndegarmo@gmail, through his Facebook page, Dr. John DeGarmo, or at his website, http://drjohndegarmofostercare.weebly.com.*

Family is not defined  
by our genes...  
it is built & maintained  
through Love





## Education and Training Voucher Program

Central Plains Center for Services, through a contracted partnership with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human

Services, administers the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program. This program provides financial assistance for tuition, fees and books, as well as one-on-one support, for current and former state wards to attend college.

The following information highlights many new and exciting elements of Nebraska's Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program. However none are more important than the voices of the former state wards that are currently moving their lives forward due to the support of the ETV program. On the right are selected comments from some of the students:



The ETV program continues to provide financial, as well as supportive services, to current and former ward youth. We currently provide \$3000.00 per year to each student for tuition, fees and books. A hallmark of our ETV program is the direct support each youth receives.

We continue to have regular in-person, phone or email contact with 100% of the youth to discuss whatever needs the youth identifies. This could include class scheduling, funding, housing, relationships, etc, however in many cases our main purpose is providing ongoing encouragement in recognizing what the youth has already accomplished and what they can accomplish. These contacts are provided not only by Andra White and Michele Taylor, the two ETV Coordinators, but by the Central Plains

Center for Services staff located across the state. In Omaha we have 6 staff, 3 staff in Lincoln, 2 in Kearney, 2 in North Platte, 2 in Scottsbluff, 1 in Norfolk and 1 in Columbus that support, problem-solve, encourage and assist the youth in addressing the many obstacles they face that challenge their ability to be successful in school.

100% of the ETV youth have a support system in place. The ETV staff has worked hard to link the ETV youth to the campus support services. All of the schools have excellent services and many of our students receive tremendous support through them.

Examples of this include: Pell Grant – Since the program started every youth has applied for this federal needs based grant. For a fulltime youth the payment is \$5500.00 per year. This amount is prorated based on the number of hours being taken.

SEOG – This Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant is also a federally funded needs based grant and is on a first come first served basis. As the year progresses available funds become less and the later a youth applies the less money may be available.

Nebraska State Grant – This is a state funded needs based grant. Youth can receive up to \$3000.00 per year.

University of Nebraska Tuition Assistance Program (formerly known as TAP) – The Tuition Assistance Program is University funded and is needs based. This program is available through the Nebraska Universities. If a youth is pell eligible and has applied for their pell grant and applied to the University of their choice before March of the current academic year their tuition and fees, above the pell amount, are waived.

Scholarships including Susan Buffet Scholarship, EducationQuest, Orphan Foundation, as well as many local, state and national scholarships. How do I know if I have been accepted into the ETV Program?

Once your application is received at our office, our Youth Education Specialists, Andra White or Michele Taylor, will contact you by phone to review the application as well as review with you the services ETV will be able to provide.

For questions please contact Central Plains Center for Services at (308) 872-6176 or by email [centralplains6176@msn.com](mailto:centralplains6176@msn.com).

As well the Central Plains Center for Services staff has done a tremendous job on increasing the use of other funds for the ETV youth college expenses.

# Laughter and Kids

Why help a child develop their sense of humor? There are ten main advantages of a well-developed sense of humor in children, which are certain to enhance your understanding of how important this quality can be.

1. Kids who are able to laugh at the funny side of life can be described as internally happy.
2. Psychological research has linked a keen sense of humor in children to a greater degrees of intelligence, more extensive creative abilities, more flexible thought process, greater sociability, higher self-esteem, better-developed self control skills, and many other attractive personality traits.
3. Kids who have a sense of humor exhibit other desirable emotions, such as a concern for others and their feelings, love displayed through jesting.
4. Kids with a good sense of humor tend to be well liked by others who get to know them.
5. A humorous perspective increases a child's overall enjoyment of life and day-to-day experiences.
6. A sense of humor can help children cope with both environmental and physical stressors and may even increase their lifespan.
7. The use of humor can help children cope with a whole variety of adverse circumstances that are typical of a youngster's life: confrontations with schoolyard bullies; dealing with potentially embarrassing situations, such as spilling soda on themselves etc.
8. Kids who have a well developed sense of humor make their parents feel good.
9. Kids with a good sense of humor help society by being joyful citizens.
10. A sense of humor is especially relevant when kids grow up and choose their life partners.

As you can see, there are many advantages to having a good sense of humor - the most outstanding of which is being a happy person in general. This quality will be with youth as he/she grows and enters adulthood. Get ready to help youth take advantage of the funny side of life - and everyone will benefit.

Exercises for ages 9-12 year olds to increase humor.

1. Cartoons and captions- create captions for cartoons.
2. Comedy show- help the youth put on a comedy show for family and friends.
3. Greeting card humor- read some humorous greeting cards together, and then try to make up a punch line.
4. Halloween in July- dress up in Halloween costumes along with the youth and go around to friends' houses and knock on their doors.
5. Out-of-season holiday songs- Sing Christmas carols or other out-of-season holiday songs around the barbecue grill on the Fourth of July.

For more information contact LaDonna Werth University  
Nebraska Lincoln - Holt County 402-336-2760

Resource: Kids Who Laugh, by Louis R. Franzini, PhD.

## National Foster Parent Association 2015 National Convention

June 25 through June 28, 2015  
Sheraton Waterfront,  
Norfolk, VA

### *All Aboard: Setting Sail for Brighter Tomorrows!*

The National Foster Parent Association and FACES of Virginia Families: Foster, Adoption, and Kinship Association are pleased to present a combined national and state convention.

#### Convention Highlights:

June 25, 2015: A Brain Research Academy geared to parents and service professionals will set the stage for the Convention.

June 26-28, 2015: A fresh delivery approach to learning that includes sessions on advocacy, health, systems, education, nutrition, and more!

June 25-28, 2015: Our first National Walk and a Grand Gala with a youth talent show will be hallmark events to celebrate children!

On line registration will begin January 15. Go to <http://nfpaonline.org/convention2015> to learn more.

## H.R. 4980 Becomes Law

On September 29, President Obama signed the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act. Among other things, this bipartisan legislation will:

- Require states to better track children at risk of being victims of sex trafficking (including children who run away from foster care) and report any children who are victims of trafficking
- Require states to develop a process by which foster parents and other caregivers have permission to grant children and youth in care the opportunity to participate in the normal activities of childhood
- Limit the use of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) for children under 16
  - Provide children 14 and up the opportunity to participate in their case planning process
  - Fund Family Connections Grants for one more year
  - Renew and enhance the Adoption Incentive program, creating a guardianship incentive and, over time, transitioning to an incentive system based on the rate of adoptions, rather than a baseline number
  - Require states to spend 30 percent of the funds they save as a result of the Fostering Connections Act's expansion of federal adoption assistance eligibility on post-adoption, post-guardianship, and other family support services

## PREPARATION, TRANSITION & INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES (PALS)

Program Purpose: The purpose of the PALS Program is to provide Independent Living and Preparation for Independent Living and Transitional Living Services to current and former foster youth in the Central, Northern and Western Services Areas, as identified by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. The contract identifies the three areas as:

- **PREPARATION:** A process to assess and assist the youth in preparing for self-sufficient adulthood, obtainable through formal and informal modeling and teaching of skills, recognizing values and establishing achievable goals.
- **TRANSITION:** The process to assess, support, practice and monitor the youth's ability to successfully apply learned skills in a semi-supervised site or congregate living arrangement.
- **INDEPENDENCE:** The act of applying learned skills and demonstrating self-sufficiency with the community and having connection to a natural support network.
- **PREPARATION:** For state wards 15 and older that are in traditional foster care or relative placement (including parents) we provide the following services:
  - o Complete the Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment with the youth.
  - o Review the Assessment with the youth and care provider.
  - o Assist the youth and care provider with completing the Preparation for Adult Living Life Skills Plan. Provide the plan to the case manager.
  - o Provide and review the workbook, *Making It On Your Own*, to the youth and care provider.
  - o Check in with the youth and care provider every other month until the youth is within the transitional age stage.
  - o Provide quarterly report to the case manager.



### A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Pamela Allen

People ask me "Why do you do what you do?" When I stop and think about the children that have come into our lives through foster care, I can't imagine never having fostered. Every child that has come to us, has come because they needed a safe place to be, someone to help them. Their families needed someone to believe in them and help them heal. It is very rewarding to know that we have helped a family come back together. Children want and need to be with their birth families whenever possible, and I am excited to say that I think the state is doing a much better job of leaving children in their homes rather than removing them unnecessarily. I constantly have to remind, especially new foster parents, that children love their parents and that I have never met a birth parent who didn't love their children. Some folks just need a little extra help. Just because more children are staying home, however, does not mean that the need for foster parents has gone away. The need is still great, especially for families willing to take older children. I often tell people that are only interested in fostering babies or very young children that if you take an older child in, at least you know what you are getting! Older children need families too! IF EACH foster parent in our state would recruit ONE family...how amazing that would be! There would truly be an opportunity to "match" children with families rather than just finding the first open bed to place them in. Please picture one of your own biological children with no one to care for when they are teenagers simply because they are teens. Children don't stay little forever, but children, no matter what age need adults in their lives forever.

Holidays...they happen every year and yet...many of the calls we receive at the office in November and December, are from Resource Parents who are frustrated and often times angry with trying to figure out a time for the children in their care to spend time with their Birth Parents. I have to say, I have a real problem with this! "Why should we have to rearrange our holidays to accommodate the families the children were removed from?" Well, because the children love their families and want to be able to spend time with them. Because every family has traditions. Because, it is the right thing to do! Picture yourself (or your own children for that matter) as a child that has been removed from everything they knew as "normal and right" in their world; their birth parents (whom they love), their home and their things...possibly their siblings and a pet. Would you want to see your parents during the holidays? I can remember many Thanksgivings and Christmases that we made room in our plans to either include birth family into our home, or take children to see their parents. We all know that it is a rare worker that will work on Thanksgiving or Christmas, so that leaves the supervision if there has to be supervised visits to you. Inconvenient? Yes, but well worth it if we are truly looking at best interest of the child. I want to take this opportunity to say THANK YOU for all you do for children. THANK YOU for shopping for gifts for that child that is placed with you the day before Christmas. THANKYOU for answering the call to help children and families heal. THANK YOU for living the Christmas spirit all year long as you continually say, "YES!" Please take the time to take care of you during this busy, often times stressful season. Utilize respite, spend a few snatched minutes soaking in a bubble bath or reading a book. Take the time to tell the people that you love that they are special, and soak in every precious moment, every joy and blessing (including extra children) that is sent your way. Again, THANK YOU!

# WAITING CHILDREN

# Parenting Guts

Emily is an exceptionally good student and is extremely intelligent. She enjoys music and spending time with friends. Emily is also an avid writer and is extremely talented with her poetry. She likes to use poetry to express herself. Emily does very well with academic structure but has struggled with day programs, such as YMCA youth programs, as she becomes very self-conscious and anxious about interacting with peers her own age. It is important that family support/relationship building is supported and encouraged, as well as family living skills developed. Emily's family wishes to be part of her treatment and strongly wants family therapy in order to develop more positive relationships with Emily so that they are able to support her.



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## ALEX



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## KayLonda



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is an artistic, passionate, and friendly young lady. She can often be found sketching, painting, and creating works of art. She likes to take her time and pay attention to the details of her creations. KayLonda states that she likes to eat "anything and everything" and enjoys trying new types of food. KayLonda also loves music and her favorite artist is Michael Jackson. She's a very active teenager and likes to be outside, but also enjoys reading and watching movies. KayLonda would like to be a family doctor when she grows up because she has a desire to help families stay healthy.

My wife and I were talking about some friends the other day. At issue was their inability to hold their kids accountable to respectable behavior. Whenever their kids acted rudely or didn't listen, one of the parents would offer a lame excuse and essentially the child was let off the hook. With the kid's face buried in a screen, the parents were effectively dismissed.

My wife surmised that one or both parents were afraid of their kids' push-back. Technically I refer to this as protest behavior – the behavior of the child seeking to undo the directive or expectation of the parent. The push-back or protest behavior can come in the form of a tantrum, an escalation of out of control behavior, violence, withdrawal, talking back, incessant arguing or emotional manipulation (you don't love me... you are hurting me... my friend's dad let them do...).

As the parent acquiesces to the protest behavior, the child feels emboldened and learns that such behavior works to undo the parental expectation. The untoward behavior thus continues. My wife, not a social worker, just cut to the chase and said, "That parent has no parenting guts". Parenting guts.

What a concept.

Alex is very active young man. He enjoys being outside, riding his bike, bowling, and going to the YMCA. Alex also really enjoys going out to eat and like a typical boy, he just really likes food in general; he even enjoys grocery shopping and cooking. Alex is eager to learn how to swim and will soon begin swimming lessons. He enjoys visiting the library and prefers reading a variety of books including science fiction and comic books. Alex has a close and consistent relationship with his older brother and grandmother and it is important to him to maintain these relationships.

In today's multi-screen universe where kids whine for increased connectivity to the Internet and portability of devices, so many more kids are getting into trouble and accessing information far beyond their maturity to handle. As we seem to be developing an increasingly spoiled

generation of kids whose manners or help around the house appears to be a diminishing capacity, maybe it is time to think in terms of parenting guts. Parenting guts. As your child whines about the access to technology their friends have and seek to have you pick up the tab for their premium cell plan, maybe it's time for parental push-back.

Really? You think a cell phone makes them safer? Think again. It just may offer them up as a target for theft, on-line bullying or worse, exploitation!

Since when is the rantings of the child, holding the parent hostage by comparisons to the trappings of other spoiled kids a rationale for giving in? So what if your kid doesn't like the



parental expectation (assuming reasonable) and they whine? Would any of those strategies work for you at your place of employment for getting a raise or advancement? I like my wife's new term.

In today's world, more parents need parenting guts. If the child's behavior wouldn't be acceptable at your place of employment, it shouldn't be acceptable from your kids at home. Now this is not permission for abusive parenting, but permission for parents to withstand the push-back of their children and teaching them the value of respect, listening, working for their own things and giving back to others. As these parents develop their parenting guts, then their kids can grow to be the healthy, moral and reasonable adults they would want them to be.

Turn off the Internet at dinner time; have time for chores; make sure the homework gets done; limit the video games;

address rude or disrespectful behavior; enjoy some family time.

As your kids are now is how they will likely be come adulthood. Would anyone in the outside world tolerate such attitudes and behavior? Would their behavior be acceptable in an intimate adult relationship? Just what kind of adult do you want your child to be? The alternative? Spoiled brats who grow into narcissistic adults. You choose. I think my wife got this right. Have some parenting guts.

Gary Drenfeld, MSW, RSW  
(905) 628-4847

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[www.yoursocialworker.com](http://www.yoursocialworker.com)

## Job Corps Opportunity

**Looking for a good option for your foster youth preparing to transition out of care? The U.S. Department of Labor's Job Corps program offers free career training, education, housing, meals and basic medical care to eligible 16- to 24-year-olds. Call 800-733-JOBS (5627) or email [jcfostercare@mpf.com](mailto:jcfostercare@mpf.com) for more information.**

Here's one foster youth's story of success at Job Corps.

After being in and out of 24 foster care placements in just 14 years, Slade Martin found a stable environment in Job Corps.

*"I learned a lot about myself," the 25-year-old graduate said of his time as a Job Corps student. "I was able to focus on my future."*

The structure of the program and the safety Slade felt on campus contributed to his success. *"People are there who care about you," he said.*

Before coming to Job Corps, Slade flunked out of college, dropped out of cosmetology school and lived on various friends' couches. He eventually concluded that he was *"doing a whole lot of nothing with [his] life."*

After a nudge from a cousin who had successfully completed the Job Corps program, Slade decided to learn more. One month after researching Job Corps online, Slade found himself enrolled and in classes at the Alaska Job Corps Center in Palmer, Alaska, focusing on human services. While at the center, Slade took on leadership roles in the student

government association and peer corps. After completing his career training in seven months, he participated in Job Corps' Advanced Career Training program, in which he was able to complete an associate degree in behavioral health at Matanuska-Susitna College while living at Alaska Job Corps Center.

Slade now envisions a stable lifestyle for his future, hoping to create a family of his own and work for a charitable organization to drive his passion.

"It's my dream to do foster care advocacy," he said, noting he hopes to become a foster parent as well. For the past seven years, Slade has volunteered with Facing Foster Care in Alaska. Currently, Slade is working as a security guard and saving money to go back to college. He aspires to be a therapist.



# IF NOT ME THEN...WHO?

By Pamela Allen

Anger, fear, hate mistrust....these are not words we typically think of when we think of children, however, these words that often times describe children that come into the foster care system.

My husband and I began our foster care journey in 1997. We had six biological children and felt the need to help other families. Over the 17 years, we fostered 88 children....most of whom were able to go back home with their birth parents. We adopted three and did guardianship with two.

There is a song that I hear radio called Do Something....The line song that touches my heart is "God why don't you do something?" God said, I did....I made YOU!" Wow...how powerful is that? We can't just sit back and think someone else is going to make a difference....we all need to step up in whatever way we can....and help! If not me....who?

We began fostering to give children that could not live with their birth families for a period of time the opportunity to live in a family setting and learn to "be family". After all, isn't that what we all want for our children--to grow up to be healthy adults and be able to be a part of a loving caring family? THAT is what we do! To love children enough to be able to show them that families can be safe and unconditional. To show them that no matter who they are, where they came from or what they are doing, they are loved. That DOESN'T mean, we need to love all of their behaviors. We love the person.

I am excited to see that there have been positive changes in the foster care system over the past several years! Foster care has evolved from families taking care of children, to families helping families. We all know that ALL children love their birth parents and that birth parents love their children. Ultimately, children want to be at home with their birth families and to help that happen, it is important that foster families be open to working with, mentoring and supporting the birth parent. Our goal to help children and families heal if possible. Mommies and daddies don't set out to hurt their children. Many times children are hurt because parents don't have the parenting skills needed to take care of their children, or there may be mental illness, poverty or addictions.

Sometimes, families just don't know where to go for help and children end up getting hurt.

I believe that God places children into our lives for a reason. I believe that whatever time that particular child is in our home, whether it is a day, a week, a month or several years, we make an impression on that child.....for a reason.....if not me....who?!

Foster care is a place where children can go to help them heal, to help families heal and come back together, to

teach them that being a part of a family does not mean getting hurt and that all day and through the night, in good times and in bad, someone loves them for who they are and who they can become. Is there hope for all children.....is there hope for all families? I believe that if a child is breathing....there has to be hope! We need have faith only as small as a grain of mustard seed to get into the kingdom of heaven. We sometimes are called upon to work with children and families for whom others have abandoned all hope. Perhaps even those of us who are fostering get discouraged and wonder why we are doing what we are doing! If not me....who?! It is at that time if we can find the tiniest scrap of hope; we can turn at the corner, achieve a measurable gain and save someone worth saving!



I so often hear, "If you just love them enough, everything will be alright". I believe that ALL the children that come to us through the child welfare system, come to us with grief and loss issues and that everything is not always going to be "alright". The term we often hear now is trauma I also believe that ALL children need and deserve a family they can call their own, that can offer that unconditional love that only a family can.

Our children are like butterflies. They may come to us as caterpillars, which, at best, can be considered fairly unattractive. Many of our children exhibit behaviors that can make them appear to be unlovable and unattractive just like the caterpillar. They can be angry and closed off....afraid to love and attach. Society looks at our children like that.....ugly and unattractive. How many of you have ever stepped on a caterpillar because you thought it was ugly? Slowly though, with a lot of work and patience, that caterpillar forms a cocoon.....a means of sustaining life so he can grow and change into a beautiful butterfly. Now, some butterflies are obviously more attractive than others, but none the less, they are beautiful.

IF not YOU....who? Are you ready to help caterpillars turn into beautiful butterflies?

I TRULY BELIEVE THAT WHATEVER TIME A CHILD IS IN A FOSTER CARE HOME, WHETHER IT IS A DAY, A WEEK, A MONTH OR SEVERAL YEARS, WE MAKE AN IMPRESSION ON THAT CHILD....FOR A REASON....FOR A PURPOSE! I BELIEVE THAT IT TRULY TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE CHILDREN AND THE CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES THAT BECOME PART OF THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM NEED ALL OF US TO HELP THEM HEAL, TO HELP THEM COME BACK TOGETHER AS FAMILY. I BELIEVE THEY NEED ALL OF US TO BE THERE FOR SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO HELP THEM BE SUCCESSFUL. Can you help a family? IF NOT YOU....WHO? IF you are interested in helping a child...helping a family, please call your local Foster and Adoptive Parent Association....or in Nebraska call Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association at 1-877-257-0176 or 1-800-7PARENT

# A Letter

Dear Foster Parent,

I am the child in your home. I am the child who says and does things that melt your heart in one moment, but, I am also the child who amazes you with the ways I "act out" in the very next moment. I am the kid who arrived at your door with only the emotional baggage I carry on the inside and the trash bag, in my hand, holding a few key items. I am the teenager who makes decisions you don't understand, says things that hurt, and has an attitude beyond measure. I am the young person you drive all over to take me to my countless appointments that fill your calendar each week. I am the child who requires extra supervision and who can't be left with just anyone. I am the kid who struggles to trust adults and who doesn't play well with others, unless they're bad for me. I am the kid who makes the principal call you so much and the one the teacher emails about every other day. I am the child, the kid, the teenager who breaks your heart and takes you on this emotional roller coaster ride. I am also the child you were told would come when you took those classes. I am the kid who was left to fend for myself, who wasn't kept clean, fed and sheltered the way I should have been. I am the one who got sick and didn't have a doctor to give me medicine. I am the one who learned how to mix a drink. I am the one who saw my mom get beaten up. I am the one who was someone else's punching bag. I'm the kid someone else touched in a bad way – over and over again. I am the child who took care of my little brothers and sisters. I am the child who tried my best to be good, but just couldn't keep my parents happy. I am the one who was born addicted to something. I am the one who watched my dad get arrested. I am the one who doesn't know my dad and hasn't seen my mom in months. I am the one who has lived with each of my relatives, and heard each of them say they didn't want me, either. I am the child you were told would come when you took those classes.

I am the child who was taken away from all that I knew by strangers. I am the one who has lost everything I thought made me who I am. I am the one who hears that where I come from isn't good enough. I am the one who hears people talk about my "best interest", but I'm also the one who hears about everything after the decision has already been made. I am the one everyone writes things about, but I never get to see it. I am the one you all have meetings about. I am the one waiting to see what direction my life will take. I am the one who had to leave all my stuff at home. I am the one who had to leave all my friends and my teachers. I am the one everyone talks about. I am the one that everyone tells me matters most. I am the one everyone says they're trying to help. I am the one who has to move. I am the one who has to leave and lose everything when things change. I am the one who isn't allowed to be myself. I am the one who has to change everything I know, everything I know to be, and everything I know to do. I am the one who has to do the most work and I'm the one who has to live under

the weight of all this...yesterday, today, and tomorrow. I am the one who will carry this load with me for the rest of my life. I am the one this story is being written about and I am the only one who will be in the story from the first page to the last. Others will come and go and the characters will change, but it is my story. I am the main character. Everything that happens along the way will impact and change me, in some way. It is my story. So, I want to ask you something. Why did you become a foster parent? Why did you take all those classes and jump through all those hoops?

My guess is that you "wanted to make a difference" or that you "had extra love to give" and you "knew there were kids out there who needed good homes". I know your intentions were good and your motivations were incredible and admirable. I imagine you sat in those classes with a broken heart and a renewed conviction that this was exactly what you were supposed to do.

So, what happened?

Did my load get too heavy for you to carry? Did I do something that made you lose hope? Did I say something that hurt your feelings or caused you to question yourself? Did I make you feel like you weren't good enough? Did I misbehave or get angry at you and break something? Did I forget to be good or to handle myself in the right way? Did I forget to carry my emotional baggage on the inside?

What happened to make you want to give up on me? You see, I really want to know because I don't want my next home to give up on me. I try to so hard to be the person that you want me to be. I try to be good and act the right way and to control my feelings. I try to say the right things and do everything that everyone tells me to do. I try to be the "good kid" everyone says they know I can be. I try to make good choices all the time. I try.

Sometimes, though, I just can't do it. It's like some switch in me flips and this other side of me takes over. The side that crumbles under the weight of the load I carry. It's like my legs and arms (and heart) get weak and I fall. I stumble. I make mistakes. I fail. I don't know what happens to cause this and it all happens so fast. You say, sometimes, I choose to do this or that...but I, honestly, don't remember making that choice...it happens so fast. I don't mean to hurt you, or those you really love, and I don't mean to make you scared or worried. I really don't.

Other times, and it's hard for me to admit this to you, I do choose to fight – and to fight hard. I choose to fight back and I allow my anger, hurt, sadness, and pain at all of the twists and turns in my story to get to me. And, I'll tell you why I choose to fight hard.

*Continued on page 12*

*Continued from page 11*

It's way easier for me to hate you than to let you love me, even though I know you're trying. I have lost so much already. I have heard so many people say they don't want me, they give up, and that who I am isn't good enough that I'm tired of hearing it. It's easier for me to push you away than it is for me to let you in, because the pain of you giving up, too, would be too big a blow. I've had so much pain in my life already. I really don't want to feel that anymore because I really don't know how much more I can take.

Remember, I am the main character of this story and I am the one who will live in this story from start to finish. I am the child they told you would come. I have the potential to change – in time. It took a lot of time for me to become this person you see. It will probably take a little longer for me to be the person you say you need me to be – the person you say you believe I can be. It will take a lot more work.

I'll take that challenge but I'll need help. I need people who won't give up on me. I need people who won't blame me. I need people who can be patient with me. I need people to understand that I don't always choose the things I do. I need people who are committed to being a part of my story. I need people to listen to me – what I say and to what I say with my behavior. I need people who can forgive me. I need people who can remember none of this was my fault. I need people who will refuse to allow their frustration to outweigh their love for me. I need people who will believe that my story can end well. I want you to know I love you and I am grateful for all that you do, even if I don't know how to say it. I need you.

I am the one who needs YOU.

Sincerely,

Your Foster Child

Posted by [Serena Hanson](#)

<http://serenahanson-whenfostercaregoesright.blogspot.com/2014/11/a-letter.html>

“There are  
no unwanted  
children.  
Just unfound  
families.”

—NATIONAL ADOPTION CENTER

# Foster Parenting Manual Tips for Television Viewing

Television can be a place where children can be exposed to nudity, profanity, and violence, on a grand scale. With the advent of cable and satellite television, there is an endless supply of harmful shows for children. This is not to say that all television is harmful. Indeed, in moderation, television can be beneficial. Small children can get a head start in school by learning simple alphabetical and counting skills on children's programs. Older children can learn facts about history, geography, politics, and other information by viewing educational programs. Children who watch more than four hours a day, on a consistent basis, tend to be overweight. Those children who watch programs that show acts of violence carried out tend to display their own violent tendencies. As a result, many children become desensitized to violence and violent behavior. Along with this, children who are subject to violence on television also may become frightened by the world around them.

There are a number of strategies you can use, as a foster parent, when supervising your foster child's television viewing habits.

- Setting a good example with your own viewing habits. Your child is watching you watch television.
- Make sure you limit the amount of time your child watches television each day, and each week, and encourage your foster child to find other alternatives to entertainment.
- Make sure the television is turned off while you sit down to eat, preferably as a family together, and ensure that your foster child is not distracted with his homework with the television on in the background. In fact, there is no reason why your foster child should have a television in his room. No matter how much he asks or pleads, keep the television out of his bedroom.
- Previewing what your child watches beforehand. If he enjoys watching a favorite program every day, or every week, find out what it is, and watch it to determine if it is appropriate for him.
- Look for shows that your entire household can watch, and invite your foster child to sit down with you and spend some family time together.
- Make sure that all homework and afterschool chores are attended to first before the television goes on. Perhaps a ban on all television during the weekdays is necessary.
- Talk to other parents, foster parents, friends, and teachers about their television habits and rules, and find out what shows they recommend.
- Most importantly, let your foster child know what your own beliefs are in regards to what is on the television, and discuss with them about what they are watching.

*For more, purchase [The Foster Parenting Manual](#).*

*Contact Dr. John at <http://drjohndegarmofostercare.weebly.com>.*

# Reactive Attachment Disorders

Reactive Attachment Disorder (R.A.D.) is a condition in which children have great difficulty in forming healthy attachments with others. Along with this, these children also struggle mightily with connecting with others on any type of social level. Children who are diagnosed with R.A.D. also find it very difficult to keep their emotions in control. Though often undiagnosed, many children in foster care suffer from R.A.D.; a condition that their foster parents and caseworkers may not be familiar with.

Children in foster care may develop R.A.D. for a number of reasons. To begin with, as the disorder is one that results in children having a difficult time socially interacting with others, those children in foster care who experience multiple displacements are more likely to develop R.A.D. Multiple displacement is the term used when a foster child moves from one foster home to another, and so forth, on a regular basis. Each move, each displacement, is another traumatic experience for the child. Indeed, each time a child is displaced, it is more difficult for the child to form a healthy, loving bond with another.

Sadly, a large number of children in foster care have suffered from extreme neglect from a biological family member or caregiver. These children have not had the opportunity to form the healthy attachment they sorely need as an infant. Other causes of Reactive Attachment Disorder stem from physical, emotional, or sexual abuse at an early age; living in a home that is stricken with high levels of poverty; parental inexperience or abandonment; household alcohol or drug abuse; separation from a birth parent; prolonged periods of hospitalization, emotional instability, depression, or prolonged illness from a parent, or simple lack of daily engagement.

R.A.D. can begin when a child is an infant. Thus, signs of the disorder can sadly begin to show up in a child quite early in his life. For those babies who suffer from Reactive Attachment Disorder, they may appear to be withdrawn or sad. Not only do babies with Reactive Attachment Disorder often withdraw from others, they are often unable to engage in any activity where another adult is attempting to pacify or soothe the infant, such as with stroking the child's head, or whispering to the baby in soothing words and calming voice. Many babies with R.A.D. seldom, if ever, smile, despite the most persistent attempt from another. Along with this, lack of eye contact is another indication that the baby is suffering from the disorder, and the child will most likely not even have the inclination to follow others with his eyes as they walk across the room or pass in front of him. Another trait to those who suffer with the disorder is the failure to respond to interactive games with others, such as Peek-a-boo and other games that engage the small child.

As a child with Reactive Attachment Disorder grows older, his symptoms may grow more troublesome and difficult

to manage. Anger issues may begin to develop, as the child might lash out in tantrums and/or uncontrolled rage, or act in a passive aggressive manner. While most with R.A.D. will endeavor to remain in control in an attempt to avoid a feeling of helplessness, many times, these children will instead act defiant and disobedient, and will be quick to argue with another. Indeed, those who have problems with anger and control issues may be more likely to act in an aggressive manner towards their peers. Feelings of remorse or guilt for their negative actions and behavior are also often missing with those who are diagnosed with R.A.D.

While some children with R.A.D. may exhibit anger problems, others with the same disorder may withdraw from others, like they had in infancy. These children will seek to avoid interaction with others, including their peers, and act in an awkward and uncomfortable fashion while around others. Some children will strive to distance themselves from any type of physical contact with another, as they may perceive this interaction as a threat of some sort. Furthermore, these children will be more likely to seek out an affectionate relationship that is inappropriate with another, even those they do not know, yet display little or no affection towards their parents or caretakers.

Children with Reactive Attachment Disorder may display two different signs and patterns of their malady. Inhibited behavior is that in which the child will shun or discourage relationships and attachments with others. As noted above, these are the children who are withdrawn or emotionally detached from others and from their surroundings. Disinhibited behavior occurs in those children who attempt to seek out attention from any and all that may be near, including that of strangers. This child will seek out comfort and attention from virtually anyone, yet at the same time, will try to act very dependent of others. Along with this, he will very likely refuse to ask for help or support from his peers. At times, the child with Disinhibited behavior will act much younger than his actual age, and appear to be filled with high levels of anxiety, as well.

*Dr. John DeGarmo has been a foster parent for 12 years, now, 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 books, including the new book *Keeping Foster Children Safe Online, The Foster Parenting Manual: A Practical Guide to Creating a Loving, Safe and Stable Home, and the Foster care children's book A Different Home: A New Foster Child's Story*. Dr. DeGarmo is the host of the weekly radio program *Foster Talk with Dr. John*. He can be contacted at [drjohndegarmo@gmail.com](mailto:drjohndegarmo@gmail.com), through his Facebook page, Dr. John DeGarmo, or at his website, <http://drjohndegarmofostercare.weebly.com>.*



# 6 Struggles Every Foster Parent Faces

By Mike Berry

My wife, Kristin, and I spent a decade serving as foster parents. In that time we had the privilege of taking in more than 30 children, 6 of whom never left our care and became a permanent part of our family. Over the course of our career we experienced some of the highest highs and some of the lowest lows. This post is an honest explanation of some of those struggles and what we learned from them. It became apparent that we were on our own when our case manager failed to call us back for the tenth time, and then rushed out, after a hearing, to her next appointment without saying a word. We stood in the middle of a crowded courtroom lobby trying to figure out what we were supposed to do next. We had only been foster parents for a month. This was all new. We felt like babies seeing the world for the first time but having no idea how to walk or even crawl. Little did we know that we would experience this hundreds of times over the next 8 years. Foster parenting is one of the most rewarding but exhausting journeys you can experience in life. There is such a deep and satisfying reward in knowing that you're providing a safe and loving place for a child to live in. But, there is also a lot of exhaustion and frustration over a system that is flawed! As I think back over the last decade, I realize how blessed we were in our journey. We grew so much and we also learned a ton. Because of this, our heart is to help future foster parents or people who are currently serving as foster parents, navigate some of the struggles that we faced. Here are 6 of them and a little bit of what we learned:

## 1. The struggle to be heard.

Have you ever had a conversation with someone and it became clear they had tuned out or their attention was now on something else? We felt this way many times over the years. Trying to be heard on everything from, *'This child has some deep wounds and we need direction,'* to *'I am exhausted, and sad, and I need some help.'* In the sometimes un-ending vortex of foster parenting, it's easy to feel like you're standing in the middle of the New York Stock Exchange trying to be heard. The most important thing we did was develop a support system of understanding people who were separate from the system. I'll explain the importance of this in #6.

## 2. The struggle to let go.

As it is with every warm-blooded human being, once a child is placed in your home, it becomes very difficult to let go of them if, or when, they return to their birth parents. You love them so you become attached. It is inevitable. And, that's normal. We faced this a lot. The way we learned to release was to envision the healing that we hoped and prayed would happen if the child returned to their home. We kept our minds focused on the positive and we equated it to how we would feel if we were in the birth parents situation. If we had had our children removed we would commit to doing everything we could to improve our situation and get them back into our care.

## 3. The struggle to keep going.

How many days did we feel like quitting? Many! In fact, they often outnumbered the good days. Sometimes our frustration came from bad case managers, and other times it was an interaction with a birth parent or the decision a judge made. We know what it's like to want to throw your hands up and quit. But remember why you got into this in the first place. Take heart in knowing that you are making an impact in the children lives you've been entrusted with.

## 4. The struggle to speak up.

Early on, mostly because we were in our 20s, we couldn't find our voice. We even wondered if we had one to begin with. We did. And when we found it, we made up a lot of ground. We started making phone calls and speaking directly to our case managers about the issues at hand. My wife had the majority of these conversations. We came at it from the perspective of firsthand experience. We were living with the child. We saw their deep emotions spill out. We started speaking up and speaking out! It starts by recognizing that you have been placed in a position of great care and that your opinion is valuable. I recommend picking up the book *Crucial Conversations* by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzler.

## 5. The struggle to stay positive.

There is so much negativity surrounding foster care at times. Between frustrations with the system, birth parents, and even the children at times, it exists. We ran into this many times. As hard as it was to do, we had to stay positive. Especially in front of the children. We had to keep in mind that they came from very difficult places and they were struggling to comprehend what was going on. For their sake, as well as yours, you have to remain positive. Find a close-knit group to dump your truck with, but choose to be positive in every other situation, especially in front of the children.

## 6. The struggle to find community.

This has become one of the greatest blessings in the world for us. It took some time to develop and grow into, but when we finally found a support system and a community to be authentic with, our lives changed and so did our parenting. You need community on this journey. You were never meant to do this alone. You need other people in your life who have the same wounds and struggles. In the beginning of our journey, support groups and one-on-one mentoring for foster and adoptive parents really didn't exist. Fortunately today, there are many. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of developing a solid support system. It is a game-changer in foster parenting, as well as adoption. The last thing I intend to do with this post is discourage potential foster parents. In fact, it's just the opposite. I want to encourage, but through reality and authenticity. I have met many foster parents who were nearing the point of collapse because they entered foster care with their eyes shut instead of open. *I want to help open eyes and set up potential foster parents for success* <http://www.confessionsofaparent.com/6-struggles-every-foster-parent-faces/>

## A Season of Giving

The holiday season is fast approaching. People are busy getting ready to start their holiday traditions. Decorations are being hung, special treats are being baked, holiday music is being played and shopping ads are being looked at by young and old alike. But let's not forget that this is also a time for giving. #GivingTuesday (the Tuesday after Thanksgiving) was created as a national day of giving to kick off the giving season. This is the day people come together to celebrate and encourage charitable activities that support non-profit organizations.



The Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent Association (NFAPA) participated in #GivingTuesday this year but we accept donations year around! NFAPA is a non-profit organization that helps support and advocate for foster families who open their hearts and home to Nebraska children.

Your donations help sustain the programs we provide like support groups, peer to peer support, kits for kids and in-service training. We would love your support. Just click on this link [http://www.razoo.com/story/Nebraska-Foster-And-Adoptive-Parent-Association?referral\\_code=share](http://www.razoo.com/story/Nebraska-Foster-And-Adoptive-Parent-Association?referral_code=share) to schedule your donation. Please consider making a donation today. A donation of \$10-\$20 makes a big difference! You can also help by becoming a supporting member of NFAPA. Fill out the membership form on the back of the newsletter and send it in.

Thank you for your support.  
NFAPA Executive Director



## NFAPA Support Groups 2014

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 the website. Support Groups will be cancelled for inclement weather. Contact your Resource Family Consultants for more information.

**Jolie Camden (Panhandle Area): 308-641-0624**

**Dee Nicholson: 402-853-1090**

**Tammy Welker: 402-989-2197**

NFAPA has Support Groups at the following dates/times/ locations in December.

North Platte Support Group: Harvest Christian Fellowship  
(1501 S. Dewy) 2:00-3:30 p.m. Childcare provided.  
**December 14, 2014**

Lexington Support Group: Parkview Baptist Church  
(803 West 18th St.) 6:30-8:00 p.m. Child care provided for 10 and under with advanced notice. Contact Dee.  
**December 11, 2014** (this is in Gothenburg)

Gothenburg Support Group: American Lutheran Church  
(1512 Ave. G) 6:30-8:00 p.m. No Childcare  
**December 11, 2014**

NFAPA is looking to have support groups in the following locations next year. Please watch our website and the next newsletter for more information

Alliance Support Group: Box Butte Community Hospital  
6:00-7:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Jolie

Scottsbluff Support Group: St. Francis Community Center  
(1605 2nd Ave) 6:00-7:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Jolie

North Platte Support Group: Harvest Christian Fellowship  
(1501 S. Dewy) 2:00-3:30 p.m. Childcare provided.

Lexington Support Group: Parkview Baptist Church  
(803 West 18th St.) 6:30-8:00 p.m. Child care provided for 10 and under with advanced notice. Contact Dee.

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

McCook Support Group: Community Hospital  
(1301 East H Street) 6:30-8:00 p.m. No Childcare

Columbus Support Group: Peace Lutheran Church  
(2720 28th) 7:00-8:30 p.m. Childcare available

Gretna Support Group: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
(11204 South 204th St) 6:30-8:00 p.m. No Childcare



2431 Fairfield Street,  
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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

### *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 501(c)3 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, \$ \_\_\_\_\_