



Resource Family Connection

News, Events, and Information Benefiting
the Children of Waukesha County
November / December, 2016



Managing Holiday Stress By: Child First Foster Family Agency

Wrapped up with the enthusiasm of holiday fun, excitement, busyness, activities, and celebration is the grinding buzz of S-T-R-E-S-S! Children experiencing stress may exhibit an escalation of undesirable behaviors or yet exhibit behaviors never before seen. Adults experiencing stress may exhibit decreased patience and tolerance! When the stress behaviors of children and adults mix ... it can be a recipe for chaos!

To sail through the holidays with decreased turbulence, choose and implement some options from the list below and see how enjoyable and smooth your holidays can be:

- * Develop a simple and easy to follow "holiday – school vacation" schedule. Include the children so that they have a sense of ownership and say over the schedule. It also helps foster children to create a sense of belonging with their foster family.
- * Provide art and craft supplies and encourage your children to make holiday decorations/ornaments for the home as well as to give to others (birth family, social workers, foster family) as a sentiment of the holidays.
- * Search the internet for free online printable holiday coloring pages and activity ideas.
- * Gather the family for a fun-filled afternoon of cookie baking or candy cottage building! To include younger children in baking activities, let them pour premeasured ingredients into a mixing bowl. Older children can participate in more difficult tasks such as cracking eggs or measuring ingredients. You will find the candy cottage guidelines in our December 2013 newsletter.
- * The holiday season is a great time for putting together a "scrap book" or "life book" of photos, school work, drawings, stories, poems, report cards and any other items of information the child wishes to include in this self-celebration book.
- * Stick with your home's existing and established chore list! Routine and predictability are very important to children during low-stress, no-stress and high-stress times.
- * Secure an opportunity for you and your children to volunteer in your community (churches, nursing homes, social service agencies and food collection events provide such opportunities). This can be rewarding to children as it provides a framework for what it looks like to help others in need, and it will provide a great story to share with classmates upon return to school. It also can create a sense a sense of inclusiveness as it relates to belonging to a group who's focus is on needs greater than one's own.
- * Keep your children updated with family, schedule, routine and agenda changes. To decrease stressful reactions to transitions, give notice of upcoming transitions and pending schedule changes as far in advance as possible. Make changes fun! Use the "once upon a time" story telling technique to introduce changes.

- * When setting out to do some holiday shopping, limit the number of stores in which you take your child. Most children will reach their maximum shopping potential at around 1-3 stores; this is generally due to the stimulation of noise, smells, people and chaos bombarding their senses. The over-stimulated child can manifest his/her behavior in a variety of ways, which may include: crying, whining, verbal aggression, physical aggression, and self-soothing repetitive behaviors.
- * Include your children in the decorating of the home! Some children are easily over-stimulated so it may be necessary to break the decorating into sections (tree, inside, outside) and times (morning, evening) and in some instances it may need to take place over several days.
- * Blinking lights can be over-stimulating for many children and adults; you may want to consider non-blinking lights and even lights of one color to encourage a less stimulating environment.
- * Some fragrances can be over-stimulating for many children and adults. You may want to limit your experimentation with seasonal fragrances and stick with those known to have calming effects such as vanilla, chamomile and lavender.
- * An observable abundance of wrapped gifts can be over-stimulating and lead to undesirable behaviors such as peeking, name searching, and comparing number of gifts between family members and quite possibly meltdowns.
- * Do not hesitate to say "no" to requests, invitations, or anything else that may cause unnecessary stress to you or your family during the holidays.

Foster Children – Understanding Emotions and Tips for Coping during the Holidays

For various reasons, the holidays can be a difficult season for many children and adults to navigate. Many of us experience intensified feelings of loss, separation, stress, obligation, financial burden, and grief. For children who were removed from their birth families, the holidays can be an emotional time that is unconsciously associated with negative experiences and such things as disappointment, trauma, or violence. The following tips may be effective in helping a child cope with holiday stress.

- * Recognize the child's feelings; let the child know that it is alright for him to feel the way he is feeling;
- * Resist pushing the child into talking about his feelings but let him know that you are there to listen;
- * Identify with the child and share a time in your life when you experienced feelings similar to theirs.
- * Increase involvement in outside activities to ward off sadness.
- * To increase the child's sense of pride and feelings of self worth, explore and implement one or more positive traditions that stand as positive memories from the child's birth family. Perhaps you will learn of and keep a new tradition for your own family.
- * Have a family conversation about increased/decreased holiday visits with the biological family as soon as you become aware. In addition, gather the family to review attendance and behavioral expectations at holiday and foster family events prior to occurrence. By keeping all family members "in-the-loop", stress and disappointment can be minimized.



Holidays With Children In Your Care By: Libby Sinclair

The holiday season is fast approaching. For some of us, we may be feeling excited and are looking forward to spending time with our families. But our foster children may not be experiencing the same joy. They may be feeling nervous, anxious or sad that they can't spend the holidays with their own families. Here are some tips for celebrating the holidays with children in your care.

- ✧ Family Traditions – Ask your foster child if they have a holiday tradition(s) within their own family. Can you incorporate their tradition(s) into your own celebration? It may be as simple as making hot chocolate or watching a favorite movie.
- ✧ Encourage Communication with Birth Families – If possible, encourage communication between your foster child and their birth family over the holidays. This could include communication between the child and their parent(s), sibling(s), grandparent(s) and other extended family. Will your foster child have a holiday visit scheduled with their birth family? If a visit with parents and relatives is not an option, can you organize phone contact?
- ✧ Make holiday cards with your foster child to distribute to their family or take your foster child shopping and let them pick out a gift for their parent(s) and sibling(s). Be creative!
- ✧ Christmas Gifts – If you celebrate the holidays by opening gifts on Christmas day, make sure you have gifts for your foster child out. Assistance is available through the Christmas Clearing Council to assist foster families with gifts. It is important to make your foster child feel like they are part of your family.
- ✧ Spend Some Time Talking – Ask your foster child how they are feeling about the holidays. Allow them to talk about their emotions. Chances are they feel sad, angry and maybe lonely about not being with their family. Let them know it is OK to feel this way.

The holidays can still be an exciting, happy time for children in your care. Just remember to ask them ahead of time about their own culture and traditions, include them in all of your family activities and have them reach out to their own families. Most importantly, have fun!

Christmas Clearing Council

This year, the Christmas Clearing Council has graciously agreed to assist children in out-of-home care receive a gift at Christmas. You will need to complete and submit an application to the Christmas Clearing Council for any foster child placed in your home. The application deadline is November 23, 2016. You can get an application from your social worker.

Area Holiday Parades

Milwaukee
Saturday, November 19, 2016
9:30 AM
<http://milwaukeeparade.com/>

City of Waukesha
Sunday, November 20, 2016
4:00 PM
<http://www.waukeshacitychamber.org/christmas-parade.htm>

Oconomowoc
Saturday, December 3, 2016
5:00 PM
<http://www.oconomowoc.org/events/?view=EVENT&ID=5400>



7 Tips For Self Care By: Libby Sinclair

An important part of fostering is taking care of yourself. The holidays can be a stressful time of the year...preparing meals, having guests over, doing holiday shopping, etc. Often times as caregivers, you tend to focus on everyone else and forget to take care of yourself. But you have to take care of yourself so you don't burn out! Set aside some time just for yourself. Take the time to rest, relax and re-energize!

- ✧ **Take a bubble bath** - After the kids are in bed, spend 15 minutes soaking in a warm bubble bath.
- ✧ **Go for a walk** - Whether you take a walk over your lunch hour at work or sneak one in between your appointments, nature is good for the soul.
- ✧ **Read A book** - Take a break from reality and lose yourself in a good book.
- ✧ **Practice a hobby** - Whether it is knitting, sewing, drawing or painting...do something fun & creative for you!
- ✧ **Gardening** - You are never too old to play in the dirt
- ✧ **Aromatherapy** - Pick up some uplifting scents from your local health food store.
- ✧ **Laugh** - Rent a funny movie and laugh out loud.

Thank you for everything that you do and remember to take some time for you!

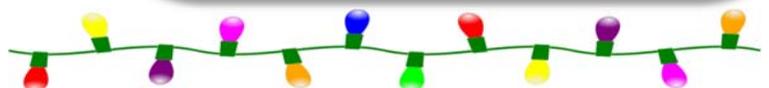
ATTENTION FOSTER FAMILIES!!

**PLEASE SAVE THE
DATE FOR OUR FIRST
ANNUAL HOLIDAY
CELEBRATION!
DECEMBER 15TH, 2016
6 TO 8 PM**



Waukesha County will be combining our event with Dayspring Baptist Church's annual event to create one large holiday celebration for our foster youth. Please watch for emails and fliers to come for registration information.

Included in the event: A visit from Santa himself (bring your camera), a GIFT for each youth from Santa, arts and crafts, and more.



Training and Events

Required Training

Required Training For All Relative Care Providers, Level 1 and Level 2 Foster Homes

Prudent Parenting – The Federal Legislation referred to as the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014 required the State of Wisconsin to move towards requiring a “Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard” for children placed in Out-of-home care. This requires the use of the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard (RPPS) be used to allow a child placed in out of home care to be able to participate in age and developmentally appropriate activities. As a part of this standard, it requires that Out of Home Care providers have specific mandatory RPPS training. **All out of home care providers MUST be trained in Prudent Parenting. Any current foster parents who are not trained in Prudent Parenting will have their license put on hold.**

Required Training For All Level 1 and Level 2 Foster Homes

Foster Parent Orientation – The Foster Parent Orientation is open to anyone interested in becoming a foster parent. **If you are currently in the process of becoming a licensed foster parent, you are required to attend this Orientation class prior to the approval of your foster care license.** Please complete the on-line Pre-Placement training prior to attending the Orientation session. The online Pre-Placement training is located at <http://wcpds.wisc.edu/Pre-Placement.htm>

Please save the certificates after you have completed each Module. These are required to become licensed.

Training Dates – To make it more convenient for all of our foster parents and care providers, we will be offering the Prudent Parenting and Foster Parent Orientation together.

WHEN: November 8 or December 13

TIME: 6:00 - 8:00pm

WHERE: Waukesha County Human Services, 514 Riverview Ave., Waukesha, WI 53188

RSVP to Libby Sinclair at esinclair@waukeshacounty.gov or 262-548-7277 (There is no childcare available.)

Required Training For Level 2 Foster Homes

As a Level 2 foster home, you are required to complete 32 hours of Foundation Training within your first 2 years of being licensed. Foundation training is offered twice a year; once in the spring and once in the fall. You must sign up for each Module of Foundation training at <http://pdsonline.csod.com> If you need assistance, you can email mcwp@uwm.edu or call 414-964-7400.

After your first 2 years, then Level 2 foster homes must complete 10 hours of on-going training each year. Additional trainings are listed on the last page of this newsletter.

Just a reminder...

- Waukesha County is closed on Friday, December 23, 2016 and Monday, December 26, 2016 in observance of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.
- Waukesha County is closed on Friday, December 30, 2016 and Monday, January 2, 2017 in observance of New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

Training Sponsored by Parents United Consortium (additional information available at <http://parentsunitedwi.org>)

Daytime Programs

Be the Difference: Start Engaging by Listening: The Impact of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Will Be the Difference

November 9, 2016

9:00 - 11:30 AM

Country Springs Hotel & Conference Center
2810 Golf Rd, Pewaukee, WI

Anxiety

December 6, 2016

9:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Richard T. Anderson Education Center

Waukesha County Technical College - Pewaukee Campus

Childhood & Adolescent Depression

February 8, 2017

9:00 - 11:30 AM

Country Springs Hotel & Conference Center
2810 Golf Rd, Pewaukee, WI

ADHD Interventions for Home and School

March 8, 2017

9:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Grand Salon in Country Springs Hotel & Conference Center
2810 Golf Rd, Pewaukee, WI

Mental Health Troubled Waters: Navigating Child & Adolescent Mental Health

April 26, 2017

9:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Richard T. Anderson Education Center

Waukesha County Technical College - Pewaukee Campus

Understanding the Impact of Trauma in Children and Adolescents

May 10, 2017

9:00 - 11:30 AM

Country Springs Hotel & Conference Center
2810 Golf Rd, Pewaukee, WI

Evening Programs

Academic Career Planning for All Students

November 1, 2016

6:00 - 8:30 PM

Country Springs Hotel & Conference Center
2810 Golf Rd, Pewaukee, WI

Preparing for Life's Storms: Building Resiliency at Home and School

April 4, 2017

6:00 - 8:30 PM

Country Springs Hotel & Conference Center
2810 Golf Rd, Pewaukee, WI

Parenting with Love and Logic

May 2, 2017

6:00 - 8:30 PM

Country Springs Hotel & Conference Center
2810 Golf Rd, Pewaukee, WI



Additional Training and Events



Training Offered By Waukesha County

Parent Café

Parent Café's are an educational opportunity for parents to come together and deal with the stressors, worries and challenges of parenting in a supportive environment.

December 6, 2016

5:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Center for Excellence

N4W22000 Bluemound Road, Waukesha

To register for childcare, RSVP or for questions call, 262-521-0317.

Support Group For Dads

This is a new group to enhance group members' experience as fathers. Topics of discussion will include coping with stress; developing a better relationship with partner/spouse/child's mother; identifying positive role models in your life; identifying how you are a positive role model for your child(ren); discussing your role as a father and what you would like to change or improve.

Fourth Tuesday of each month

November 22, 2016

December 27, 2016

6:00PM - 7:30PM

Parents Place

1570 E. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha, WI

262-549-5575

Foster Parent Support Group

First Wednesday of each month

November 2, 2016

December 7, 2016

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Parents Place

1570 E. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha, WI

262-549-5575

On-sight daycare is available, but you must register in advance to secure a slot as there may be a cut-off depending on the number of children.

Future Foster Parent Training Dates and Topics

Center for Excellence

N4W22000 Bluemound Road, Waukesha

A light dinner and daycare will be provided.

CANS - What Is It? What Does It Mean?

Learn More About The CANS Assessment Tool

November 17, 2016

6:00 - 8:00 pm

RSVP at any time for all future monthly

trainings at: [http://](http://waukeshafostercaretraining.eventbrite.com)

waukeshafostercaretraining.eventbrite.com

If it is a Waukesha County organized training, you will always be able to use this link moving forward.



Training

Parents Place Programs

262-549-5575 www.ppacinc.org

- **The Nurturing Program**
Tuesdays, November 1 - 22; 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **Kids Managing Anger (Parent and Child Class)**
Mondays, November 7 - 28; 5:30 - 7:30 PM
- **Adult Anger**
Mondays, December 5 & 12; 5:30 - 7:30 PM
- **Co-Parenting**
Wednesdays, December 7 - 21; 6:00 - 7:30 PM

Coalition for Children

www.coalitionforcyf.org

For other training opportunities, see the Coalition for Children, Youth & Families website:

www.coalitionforcyf.org. They offer interactive webinars that count toward the required face to face training hours.

Contact Numbers:

Waukesha County
Health & Human Services
262-548-7212

Vickie Smith, Foster Care
Licensing Supervisor
262-970-4761

Susan Peck, Foster Care Level 2
Coordinator
262-896-8574

Libby Sinclair, Relative Foster
Care Level 1 Coordinator
262-548-7277

Megan Quandt, Kinship & Foster
Care Coordinator
262-548-7373

Jessica Morris, Kinship & Foster
Care Coordinator
262-548-7256

Eve Altizer, Ongoing Social Work
Supervisor
262-548-7272

Rebecca Hollister, Ongoing Social
Work Supervisor
262-548-7271

Social Workers:

Tracy Clark..... 262-548-7270

Megan Fishler 262-896-8570

Abbey Girman 262-548-7695

Sharon Godwin 262-548-7684

Danita Graham 262-548-7341

Laura Jahnke..... 262-548-7359

Jamie Kasten..... 262-548-7265

Jessica Larsen 262-548-7346

Maria Maurer 262-548-7345

Chelsey Nisbet..... 262-896-6896

Rachel O'Sullivan..... 262-548-7639

Stacy Pawlak 262-548-7262

Elizabeth Russo 262-548-7349

Kim Sampson..... 262-548-7273

Linda Senger 262-548-7698

Traci Sobstad..... 262-896-6857

Sara Waldron..... 262-548-7371

Children's Mental Health Outreach
262-548-7666

Medical Emergency: 911
Family Emergency: 211 or
262-547-3388

Foster Parent Mentors
David & Jen Mersfelder
262-542-2926

If an Allegation of Abuse or
Neglect has been made
against you, please call:

FASPP
Norma Schoenberg
920-922-9627

Fun and Free Holiday Activities

Canadian Pacific Holiday Train

1,000 feet in length with 14 rail cars decorated with hundreds of thousands of technology-leading LED lights and a modified boxcar that has been turned into a traveling stage for performers! <http://www.cpr.ca/holiday-train/united-states>

Train Arrival Times:

Sturtevant - Monday, December 5 - 5:25 pm

Milwaukee - Monday, December 5 - 6:50pm

Wauwatosa - Tuesday, December 6 - 4:45 pm

Hartland - Tuesday, December 6 - 6:15pm

Watertown - Tuesday, December 6 - 7:45 pm

Breakfast with the Reindeer

Saturday, December 3, 8am - Noon

Meet Santa's amazing flying friends while enjoying a sweet treat of complimentary doughnut-holes, milk, and hot cocoa! Guests are encouraged to bring their camera to photograph loved ones with Santa, live reindeer, and a magical elf or two!

<http://www.visitdelafield.org/event-calendar/>





National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI Waukesha

Loving & Living

**with a child or young
adult who has a mental
health condition?**



This support group is designed for parents and caregivers who have a child under the age of 18 affected by a mental health condition. Parent peer facilitators guide the group and provide information about local resources and share emotional support to alleviate isolation.

Parent Peer Support Group

DATES: First and third Wednesday of Every Month starting October 19, 2016

TIME: 6:30 pm– 8:30 pm

LOCATION: NAMI Waukesha Offices
217 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 300
Waukesha
(Parking behind the building)

QUESTIONS: Contact Barb or Denise at 262-409-2743 or
denise@namiwaukesha.org or barb@namiwaukesha.org

FACILITATORS: Angie Lucier and Erika Trawitzki, trained NAMI Parent Peer Support Group Facilitators.

Please note: There is no need to pre-register for attendance at this support group.