



# Resource Family Connection

News, Events and Information Benefiting  
the Children of Waukesha County

February 2013



## The 411 on Social Media, Networking and Texting!

By: Adoption Resources of Wisconsin/The Foster Care and Adoption Resource Center

"I get frustrated when my niece and nephew are tappity tap tapping away in their own worlds," says Johnnie, a relative caregiver and foster parent. "I feel left out, until I remember that I really wasn't so different when I was that age. We didn't have cell phones and computers, but we still had our own worlds and, above all, we wanted our privacy."

### What Exactly Is Social Media, Anyhow?

Social media is any form of communication between people and the internet. It's a large list of online activities that include:

- Talking (using Voice Over Internet Protocol or VOIP)
- Sharing media files like pictures and videos
- Social networking
- Video gaming
- Web logs or "blogs"

While many of us are familiar with *Facebook* or *YouTube*, in reality, there are too many social media outlets to mention. Focus on the popular websites for now, but know that what's popular can change quickly, and you always want to stay a little ahead of your kids if possible. (Or okay, not *too* many steps behind.)

### Popular Social Technology Definitions and Destinations

**Social Networking** websites like *Facebook* and *MySpace* are used as ways to communicate, share pictures, music and videos. *Facebook* has become increasingly popular over the past five years and has millions of users worldwide. It requires users to have an individual e-mail account and be above the age of 13.

Once a person has a *Facebook* account, he or she can "friend" people by accepting requests. The site has several security settings that may hide or not hide each user's information.

For example, in the Spring of 2010, *Facebook* changed its default settings to make it much easier for people to see other people's information, but a lot of people weren't aware of the change that took place. It's crucial to know how to set and check account settings.

**Blogs** are basically online journaling websites. A blog is similar to *Facebook* and *MySpace*, but is more focused. Think of a blog as an online diary or an extended holiday newsletter. There are privacy settings for blogs so you can control who can view them. Blogs can display pictures, text, videos and links to other sites.

**MMOGs (Video Gaming)** stands for Massively Multiplayer Online Game. Some of the popular games are *Crossfire*, *World of Warcraft*, *Doom* and *SimCity*. Today's MMOGs can have thoughts of users worldwide playing one specific game online at a time. Often MMOGs are played on computers, cell phones and with video game units like the Xbox, Wii and PlayStation.

Johnnie says she didn't realize at first that when her kids started to play online video games, they were also "chatting" with other players. That "chat" led to her niece talking (on her cell phone) to a person claiming to be a 24-year-old man in Texas (or possibly a 45-year-old woman in Arizona since no one really knows anything about anyone online). This person ultimately told Johnnie to butt out—he was going to marry her niece as soon as she turned 18. "And this," says Johnnie, "is how today's world is not at *all* like the world I grew up in as a teen!"

**Instant Messaging (IMing)** is a way to communicate with others online. The cool thing about IMing is that you can have online real time text chats (private conversations) with one or more people. IMing can be done within browsers such as Yahoo or with services like Twitter or AOL.



Certain websites like *Skype* let users have conversations using video calling technology, as well, if you have a video camera. There is a specific IM text language known as SMS language, which stands for Short Message Service. If you understand what LOL means, then you've already encountered this language. BTW (by the way) LOL means "laughing out loud."



**Text messaging or texting** is a form of communication between cell phones over cell phone networks. Texting also uses SMS language and is extremely popular. Many people find texting quicker and more effective than talking.



**Video and picture sharing websites like YouTube, Flickr and Photobucket** let account users upload videos and pictures from various electronic devices like cell phones, cameras and video recorders. *YouTube* is a public website, and users are allowed to watch videos without having an account. To post something on *YouTube*, however you need to set up an account, and that allows you to control privacy settings. *YouTube* videos can also be shared and cross-posted on other websites.

**Twitter** is a social networking service that allows users to provide small updates, messages or entries using less than 140 characters using the SMS text language. The messages, once posted, are called "tweets." Twitter also allows users to cross-post and share on other websites.

**Forums and message boards** provide places on the internet for people to discuss, meet or ask questions, usually about one main subject. There are thousands of message boards and forums. Some require that you become a member and have a user name and password before joining. Forums and message boards are not done in real time, meaning users have to wait for others to read their message and respond.

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## Level Two Foster Parent Training Requirements By: Shari Rather

Just wanted to remind all of our Level Two Foster Parents of their training requirements.

During the first two years of being licensed you need to complete Foundation Training. This training is offered twice a year in Waukesha County by the Southern Partnership. To register and look at date please visit their website at <http://wcwpds.wisc.edu/pds-online/>. The next series in Waukesha County will start February 26, 2013 starting at 5:30 pm.

As far as ongoing training goes after your first renewal you need to complete ten hours of on-going training per year per foster parent. Eight hours of your training needs to be interactive and two hours can come from reading articles that would be helpful in your roles as a foster parent. I just received several one hour trainings from the Foster Care Support Network on a wide number of topics. Please call me for details.

We are planning to offer a Court Process Training, Trauma Informed Parenting, Shared Parenting, and Parent Café Host Training this first half of the year. Please note that hosting at Parent Cafes is worth 3 training hours as is the Annual Meeting in May.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding training.

### Outside Fun for Winter Weather

#### On-going Events

##### Public Skating Hours

(Check website for holiday hours)

##### Eble Park Ice Arena

Monday - Friday...Noon - 3 PM

Sat. & Sun...2 - 4 PM



##### Naga-Waukee Park Ice Arena

Monday - Friday...Noon - 2 PM

Sat. & Sun...3 - 5 PM

##### Snow shoe rentals available at Retzer Nature Center

Everyday from 8 AM to 4:30 PM

#### Sledding Hills

- Menomonee
- Minooka
- Mukwonago
- Nashotah



#### Cross-Country Ski Trails (packed and tracked)

- Menomonee
- Minooka
- Nashotah

#### Winter Hiking and Snowshoe Trails (packed)

- Fox River
- Muskego
- Retzer Nature Center



#### Save the date:

**Retzer's Wild Winter Night** - February 2, 6 to 9 PM

## Discovery Club At the Waukesha County Museum

The Discovery Club is an exciting program specifically designed for children 3 - 5 years old. From 10 - 11 AM, families will be led by the Education Department staff through several interactive activities, with a new theme offered each month!

#### February 21 - Fabulous Five Senses

Discover the wonders of our five senses! Participants will play the smelly smell challenge, try the mystery box game, play I-Spy and the optical illusion challenge, and create musical instruments.

#### March 21 - Outer Space Exploration

Put on your space suit and join them for a journey into outer space! Participants will create moon rocks, play the astronaut challenge game, make star constellations that glow, and maybe even spot an alien or two!



#### April 18 - Silly Science

Join them for an exploration into the world of science! They will be performing wacky experiments, including slimy worms, magical rainbows, bubbly balloons, and much more!



#### May 16 - Fairy Tale Adventure

Saddle up your horse and join them for a journey to fairy tale village. Participants will hear stories that will inspire games like the prince/princess and the pea pillow challenge, and crafts like magical mirrors.



**Fee:** \$3 per child, \$3 per adult (museum member adults are free), museum admission is included. Registration is required by the Wednesday before each program, please call (262) 521-2859 or email [khoeker@wchsm.org](mailto:khoeker@wchsm.org) to reserve your spot. Check out all other family programming at [www.waukeshacountymuseum.org](http://www.waukeshacountymuseum.org)!

#### Waukesha County Museum

101 W. Main St.

Waukesha, WI 53186

### ATTENTION: NEW WAY TO REGISTER FOR TRAINING!

There is a new way of registering for Resource Family trainings. You will now need to go to the Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development System (WCWPDS) PDS Online system located at [www.wcwpds.wisc.edu](http://www.wcwpds.wisc.edu). All registration and training compliance will be recorded within the new PDS Online system.

#### To Create and Account:

To create an account, you will select the "guest user" account option located on the WCWPDS website. You will be required to include a first name, last name, email address, division (Partnerships), and password for the initial login. Subsequent logins by guest users will be accomplished using the email address and password used initially.

Look for more information in the very near future!

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One message board you might want to encourage your child to go to is <http://fyi3.com/>, which is run by FosterClub. There's also a message board on the same site for foster parents.

### Safety

When talking about social technology or media, safety is a valid concern. Check out our tipsheet, *Internet Safety Tips for Caregivers*, that addresses safety-related issues and discusses *Family Internet Agreements*. <http://wifostercareandadoption.org/site/indexer/561/library/392/internetsafety.pdf>

### Social Media Agreements

Social media agreements are a great way for foster families, social workers, birth families and youth to talk about how youth will use social media. Here are links to media agreements for certain ages.

Kindergarten to 5th Grade:

<http://commonsensemedia.org/common-sense-family-media-agreement-grades-k-5>

6th to 8th Grade:

<http://commonsensemedia.org/common-sense-family-media-agreement-grades-6-8>

High School

<http://commonsensemedia.org/common-sense-family-media-agreement-high-school>

### Foster Care and Social Media Questions

Many foster parents have asked if there are any specific things that they should know about social media, networking and texting. While these topics are not specifically written in the Wisconsin Foster Care Handbook or Chapter 56 Foster Home Care for Children, there are a few basic principles that foster families should apply. Here are a few frequently asked questions:

#### How should I maintain confidentiality about the youth placed in my home on social networking websites like Facebook?

As a licensed foster parent, you must always maintain confidentiality about any youth placed in your home and their family. This means that pictures and any information about the youth placed in your home and their family should never be posted or written anywhere others have access to that information. This is especially important online for social media and social networking sites like *Facebook*. (For more about confidentiality, refer to the Wisconsin Foster Parent Handbook in Chapter 2 page 8 at: <http://wifostercareandadoption.org/library/511/chapter2.pdf>)

#### If a youth in care owns a cell phone and/or portable gaming device before they came to my home, can they use those items all the time in my home?

If a youth in care owns a cell phone and/or portable gaming device before they came to my home, can they use those items belong to the youth and may not be damaged or destroyed.

The Wisconsin Foster Parent Handbook (<http://wifostercareandadoption.org/library/511/chapter3.pdf>) says, "If foster parents have concerns about a child's choice in music, clothing or other recreational or personal items, they should discuss the situation with the child's caseworker."

#### Are youth in care allowed to have e-mail, Facebook accounts, blogs or YouTube accounts?

Yes, youth in care are able to have online accounts as long as they meet the minimum guidelines for the website. However, foster parents don't have to provide accessibility to the internet in their home. Many parents have opted to set up specific rules and guidelines about internet access for youth in their home.

#### A youth placed in my home is posting pictures and information about himself on a social networking website. Is this allowed?

Yes, youth in care are allowed to post pictures and information about themselves anywhere and anytime they want. Youth in care do not have to follow the confidentiality guidelines that licensed foster parents need to, except when it pertains to other youth in care in the home.

#### Am I allowed to develop or use a "Family Internet Safety Agreement" as a foster parent?

Yes! Parents need to stay educated about social media and have some household rules or guidelines for family members. Ideally, members of the youth's team will be part of the agreement, so that everyone is clear about what's allowed and what isn't.

#### The Advantage of Social Technology

Social technology has provided many of us the ability to be more connected to each other than ever before. For most of our youth, this technology has become a part of their daily culture, and social media plays a big role in their life as they learn how to develop relationships and their identity.

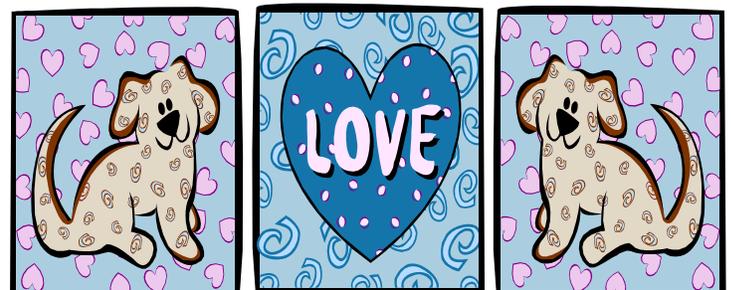
Johnnie says, "When my niece got into some mischief while on *CrossFire*, my gut reaction was to restrict all internet and cell phone use. But her social skills aren't very good, and I actually found myself encouraging her to go on *Facebook* so that she could be 'friends' with the people at school and not be so isolated. They tend to ignore her at school, but *Facebook* is a kinder environment in some respects."

Johnnie goes on to say that she was able to use the *CrossFire* incident as a "teachable moment."

Some foster parents say a surprising bonus is being able to connect with their kids' birth parents. "It's been great!" says one parent. "They didn't respond to voice mail and e-mails, but they always text me right back. I use AOL's instant messenger for my computer to text their phones, and I get the texts back on my computer."

Even though we adults may not "get it," the technology available today will be the building blocks for future applications and social media interfaces.

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Happy Valentines Day!

# Training and Events



## Contact Numbers:

Waukesha H & HS  
262-548-7212

Children's Mental Health Outreach  
262-548-7666

Medical Emergency: 911  
Family Emergency: 211

Foster Parent Mentor  
Jen Barcus.....262-542-2926  
David Mersfelder.....262-542-2926  
Nikki Mertens.....262-246-6180

Rebecca Hollister, Supervisor  
262-548-7271

Mary Alice Grosser, Supervisor  
262-548-7272

Kathy Mullooly, Supervisor  
262-896-6832

Shari Rather, Foster Care Coord.  
262-548-7267

Libby Sinclair, Relative Licensing  
262-548-7277

## Social Workers:

Jennifer Adler.....262-548-7265

Bob Alioto.....262-548-7262

Suzanne Arnold.....262-548-7348

Megan Fishler.....262-896-8570

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

Becca Kuester.....262-896-6857

Maria Maurer.....262-548-7345

Susan Peck.....262-896-8574

Madeline Prange.....262-548-7394

Janis Ramos.....262-896-8069

Michael Reed.....262-548-7347

Cindie Remshek.....262-548-7639

Greg Rewolinski.....262-548-7270

Elizabeth Russo.....262-548-7349

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

Mark Sasso.....262-548-7346

Linda Senger.....262-548-7698

## Kinship Workers:

Linda Finn.....262-548-7254

Deb Fosberg.....262-548-7256

## Training Offered By Waukesha County

### Parent Café February 28, 2013 5:30 PM Center for Excellence

N4W22000 Bluemound Road  
Waukesha

To register for childcare, RSVP or for questions call, 262-548-8080.



### Waukesha County Foster Parent Required Pre-Placement Training Prospective Foster Parents need to do Part 1 of the training on the following website: <http://www.wcwcs.wisc.edu/foster-parent-training> (Please bring your training certificates to the class)

We will then meet to discuss the learning points and answer your questions.

February 11, 2013  
6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Waukesha County Human Services  
500 Riverview Ave.

Brookfield Room G137  
Enter Door 6.

Call Shari Rather to register at 262-548-7267.

### Relative Caregivers Support/Education Group

Third Tuesday of each month.

February 19, 2013  
6:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Parents Place

1570 E. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha, WI  
262-549-5575

Free childcare available. Please call Parents Place to reserve your spot.

Waukesha County Relative Resource Families  
Please RSVP to Janis (262-896-8069) or Libby (262-548-7277)

### Foundation Training Required for Level 2 Foster Home

2/26/13 Partners in Permanency  
3/5/13 Cultural Issues in Placement  
3/12/13 Maintaining Family Connectiveness  
3/19/13 Child Abuse & Neglect - A  
3/26/13 Child Abuse & Neglect - B  
4/2/13 Impact of Trauma on Child Development  
4/9/13 Attachment  
4/16/13 Placement and Separation  
4/23/13 Positive Guidance and Discipline  
4/30/13 Effects of Fostering on the Family

All classes are in the Brookfield Room at Waukesha County Human Services. Enter Door 6.  
All classes are from 5:30 to 8:30 PM.

Register at <http://wcpds.wisc.edu/pds-online/>

## Training

Parents Place Programs  
262-549-5575  
[www.ppacinc.org](http://www.ppacinc.org)

### Love and Logic

Tuesday, February 5 - February 26  
5:30 - 7:30 PM

### Parenting: The Early Years/Born Learning

Wednesday, March 6 - 20  
5:30 - 7:00 PM

### Teens Managing Anger

Monday, March 4 & 11  
5:30 - 7:00 PM

### Kids Managing Anger

Tuesday, March 5 - 26  
5:30 - 7:00 PM

### Effective Discipline for the Challenging Child

Monday, March 4 - 25  
6:00 - 7:30 PM

## ARW Adoption Resources of Wisconsin 800-762-8063

### Introduction to Life Books

February 12, 2013  
6:00 - 8:00 PM  
Register online at: <http://lifebooks.eventbrite.com>

### Life Book Workshop

February 23, 2013  
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Register online at: <http://lifebookworkshop.eventbrite.com>

### Our Home, Our Family

February 23, 2013 - Kick-off Saturday  
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM - Breakfast & Lunch included  
Thursdays, February 28 through March 21 & April 4 through April 18  
6:00 - 9:00 PM  
Fee: \$55 per couple for nine modules with a workbook for each person/  
Register online at:  
<http://ohofspring2013.eventbrite.com/>  
Or call 414-475-1246

## December 2012 Placements

|                                     |                                       |                                   |  |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Regular Foster Care:<br>37 Children | Treatment Foster Care:<br>10 Children | Group Homes:<br>3 Children        | Residential Care Facilities:<br>10 Children      |
| Relative Placements:<br>46 Children | Level 2 Foster Homes:<br>117 Homes    | Level 1 Foster Homes:<br>40 Homes | Total Homes Assisting Other Counties<br>14 Homes |

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

FASPP  
Norma Schoenberg  
920-922-9627

