



Resource Family Connection

News, Events and Information Benefiting
the Children of Waukesha County

November 2013



Celebrating Holidays with Children you Foster By: Adoption Resources of Wisconsin

Conflicting loyalties and lost dreams often make the holidays a difficult time for children in foster care. Just as studies show that holidays are stressful times for most of us, these reactions are compounded for youth placed in your home. Here are some suggestions for managing the holidays.

How can my family make it easier for the children in foster care while they are in our home?

- Talk about the season ahead of time. Talk about how your family celebrates the holidays. Tell children which of the traditional holidays your house recognizes. Is it Thanksgiving? St. Nick's Day? Kwanzaa? Hanukah? Christmas? New Year? Or all of the above? Talking about the holidays gives children time to anticipate the upcoming activities and ask questions.
- Help children in foster care imagine what to expect in your home. Much of what we assume to be commonplace can be new to the children you foster.
- Share the religious meanings the holidays may have for your family. Talk about your family's specific customs and activities.
- Use this time of sharing to learn especially about the religious beliefs, customs, and activities of the children you foster.
- Try to incorporate at least some of their traditions into your traditions.
- Some parents try to keep the holidays low key in order to help minimize some of the stress.

How can we work with birth families during the holidays?

- Again, ask children about their experiences and try to incorporate some of their traditions. The children placed in your home may miss some activities that they experienced with their family or in a previous placement.
- If possible, ask your child's family members about their holiday traditions and customs. Ask about their beliefs and observances. Although you may feel stretched at the holidays, try to coordinate schedules with the birth families. This gives the children a chance to share what is familiar while experiencing new traditions.
- This is a good time for the youth in your home to make small gifts and send cards to their birth families or old neighbors and friends.
- This is a time when many children feel conflicted feelings about their birth families and worry about them to be safe and cared for even if their family struggles. Reassure them if you can, about the safety and care of their birth family.

What are some of the ways I can help the children who I foster get through the holidays? What are some signs of grief or sadness that I can look for?

- Be prepared for the sadness and grief. Talk about your child's feelings throughout the season.
- Give your children time and space to grieve. Grief takes many forms and may be exhibited in lots of ways, including:
- Reverting back to younger behaviors developmentally
 - Soiling themselves or bedwetting

- Becoming withdrawn and isolated
- Having temper tantrums
- Being rebellious
- Complaining more than usual
- Try to remember the developmental age of the children you foster. It will also help you to stay patient if you keep in mind the challenges of the season for your child before you react.

What are some things we can do to make family get-togethers easier?

- Talk about upcoming events and the people who will be there. If you cannot get together before the big event, introduce your children to family and friends who will be at the celebration by going through pictures.
- Prepare them for the "characters" in your family and also tell them about other children who might be there.
- Tell them if your celebrations are quiet or loud, sacred or silly, big or small.
- Describe the home or place where the event will be held, and tell how it usually proceeds.
- Be realistic about it—do not make your celebrations seem perfect, but do not stress the challenges that are part of all family events.
- Give your children a camera so that they can record the celebration, and also give them one for holiday visits with their birth families.

Continued on Page 2



Celebrating Holidays with Children You Foster Continued from Page 1

What can I do to help my children learn what is expected of them at family celebrations?

- This is an opportunity to teach the behaviors and manners that you would like the youth you foster to learn. Go over basic manners such as “please” and “thank you.”
- Explain the expectations of children prior to family get-togethers, and practice those behaviors ahead of time.
- Use role playing at home so that they can practice.
- Make sure you and your family/friends are on the same page regarding gifts from and to your children. Perhaps try to have your child bring a small hostess gift to the get together: baked goods, nuts, candles, ornament, etc.
- Tell family and friends about your children, and try to introduce them before the holidays. It’s a good time to remind others about the confidentiality you honor concerning the children you foster, and it might be a good time to practice some polite but firm answers to some questions.
- Remember especially to ask your children what they would like to have shared about them.

Resources

Utah Division of Child and Family Services brochure, *The Holidays in Foster Care*

<http://www.hsdcs.utah.gov/PDF/Weekly%20Updates/The%20Holidays%20In%20Foster%20Care%20Brochure.pdf>

Expect Weird Responses from Foster Kids Towards the Holidays

<http://library.adoption.com/foster-parentingandadoption/expect-weird-responses-fromfoster-kids-toward-the-holidays/article/1652/1.html>

Before You Celebrate the Holidays in Foster Care by Carrie Craft

<http://adoption.about.com/od/fostering/bb/fosterholidays.htm>

When A Child Cant be Home For Christmas

<http://www.sfgate.com/opinion/article/When-a-child-can-t-be-home-for-Christmas-3299859.php>

Holiday Stress in Foster Children

<http://suite101.com/article/holiday-stress-in-foster-children-a36753>

Foster Club: Holidays

<http://www.fosterclub.com/topics/holidays>

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Religious Differences & the Holidays

The holidays can be tough for foster families. Children in care miss their families and their traditions, while at the same time they may want to be part of the activities of the foster family. When there’s a religious difference between the child’s family and the foster family, things can become even more complicated.



Religion can be a sensitive issue. Legally, birth parents have the right to choose their children’s religion or lack of religion. Placement of their child in foster care does not take away this right.

Of course, most foster parents try to respect the culture and religious customs of the children in their care. But what does this mean when it comes to religion?

The answer lies in establishing open lines of communication among foster parents, DSS, and the birth family. If your agency knows how you feel about religious issues (for example, if prayer makes you feel uncomfortable, or if you feel compelled to convert children and their families), it will make informed placement decision. If you haven’t already done so, consider talking with your social worker about how religion affects your role as a foster parent.

This communication works both ways. The more you know about the religion, traditions, and preferences of birth families, the easier it will be for you to act in a way that honors their beliefs.

The Waukesha Hispanic Collaborative Network Fundraiser Celebration

The Waukesha Hispanic Collaborative Network is pleased to invite you to take part of its 10 year anniversary celebration and 501 c3 status achievement. The Waukesha Hispanic Collaborative Network is a non-profit grassroots organization that is focused on providing quality of services to the Waukesha Hispanic community. In 2013 the network achieved 501c3 status, we would like you to take part of this celebration.

WCDHHS is a member Waukesha Hispanic Collaborative Network.

Friday, November 8th
from 2013 5:30 - 8:00 pm

Ketzer Nature Center
S14 W28167 Madison St
Waukesha, WI 53188

Live music, salsa lessons, planetarium shows, bon fire, food, refreshments

Donation \$25.00
For ticket purchase in advance, please contact Carlos Manriquez at 262-548-7378 or cmanriquez@waukeshacounty.gov

You can also buy your tickets at the door!

Visit us at:
www.waukeshahispaniccollaborativenetwork.org

**Waukesha County
Department of
Health and Human
Services**

Has Moved To As of 10/21/13:
514 Riverview Avenue
Waukesha, WI 53188
Phone: (262) 548-7212
Fax: (262) 970-6697

Annual Cap and Mitten Collection

The staff at WCTC, as part of an annual cap and mitten collection, would like to provide area foster kids with new caps and mittens for the winter. If you would like to participate, please e-mail the following by December 1st:

Child's first name, gender, age, along with color preference. Please also include the foster family last name and phone number.

Please email this to bwinkler@wctc.edu and include "giving tree" in the subject area. These items will be ready for pick-up the week before Christmas.



Clothing Closet to Open November 1, 2013



We have relocated to our new building and are in the process of settling into our new location. As of November 1, 2013, the Foster Parent Clothing Closet will reopen to the public and we will be able to accept donations. Thank you to everyone who has made donations in the past.

Thank You

Thank you to the Oconomowoc Junior Women's Club for their generosity. They donated many children's clothing and toys for the Clothing Closet.



Happy Thanksgiving!

Local Activities

51st Annual Waukesha Christmas Parade

Historic Downtown Waukesha

November 24, 2013

Winding through the downtown the parade features marching bands, floats and a special appearance from Santa; kids should bring letters to Santa and come early to enjoy other festivities <http://visitwaukesha.org/event/51st-annual-waukesha-christmas-parade/>

WAUKESHA YMCA
320 E. BROADWAY
WAUKESHA, WI 53186
262-542-2557
www.ymcacwc.org

Kids' Gym

- Children 5-9 years during staff supervised times.
- Children 4 years of age and under may use the Kids' Gym during staff supervised times, but must be actively supervised by a parent/adult at all times.

KIDS' GYM HOURS

Monday - Thursday 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Saturday 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM

VIRTUAL VAULT

- 1st-8th Grades
- Have fun while getting fit with Xbox Kinect, Virtual Reality Bikes, Climbing Wall, Makoto and the Wii.
- The Virtual Vault may be rented out on select Friday nights from 7:00-9:00 PM. Contact the Y for details.

VIRTUAL VAULT HOURS

School Year Hours

Monday - Friday 4:00 - 8:00 PM

Saturday 8:30-11:30 AM & 1:30-4:30 PM

Sunday 1:30 - 4:30 PM (Family Day)**

*Additional hours available on all Waukesha Public School District days off from 9:00-11:00 AM.

** Family Day - Parents are encouraged to exercise in the Virtual Vault with their children.

DROP & SHOP AGES 4-12

Enjoy your holiday shopping or gift wrapping while the kids enjoy a day at the Y participating in activities, crafts, swimming and gym games. Pizza and snacks will be served. Bring your swimsuit, towel and bag. Register by Friday at noon.

Saturday, December 7 1:00-4:00 PM

MEMBER \$15 PROGRAM PARTICIPANT \$20

Foster Family Christmas Party!

Thursday Evening December 19, 6:00pm

- FREE Event for all Foster Families and Children!
- A Great Way to Celebrate Christmas!
 - Delicious BBQ Dinner Served!
 - Lots of Presents for all Children!
 - Huge Puppet Play and Caroling!
 - Fun for the Whole Family!

Please RSVP Today:

www.dayspringbaptist.com
 or call: 262-404-5092



DAYSPRING
 BAPTIST CHURCH

This event is hosted by DaySpring Church
 Event is at the Excellence Center,
 Across from Sams Club in Waukesha.

Training and Events



Training Offered By Waukesha County

Parent Café

November 14, 2013
5:30 PM

Center for Excellence

N4W22000 Bluemound Road
Waukesha

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



- **Effective Discipline for the Challenging Child**
Mondays, Dec. 2 - 23 from 6:00 - 7:30 PM
- **New Ideas for Parenting Children and Adolescents with ADHD/ADD**
Tuesdays, Dec. 3 - 17 from 5:30 - 7:30 PM
- **Love and Logic®**
Tuesdays, January 7 - 28 from 5:30 - 7:30 PM

**Coalition for Children, Youth & Families
Formerly Adoption Resource of Wisconsin
800-762-8063**

Waukesha County Foster Parent Information Session

Do you know someone who is interested in becoming a foster parent? We are holding an information session to provide more information about foster parenting in Waukesha County. Please pass on this information to other's who want to know more. We suggest reviewing the online pre-placement training prior to attending an information session. Pre-placement training is available at <http://www.wcwp.wisc.edu/foster-parent-training>

November 4, 2013

6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Waukesha County Human Services

514 Riverview Ave. (Please note this is the new building.)

Room to be determined.

RSVP: Madeline Prange - 262-548-7267

Relative Caregivers Support/Education Group

Third Tuesday of each month.

November 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)

Training

Parents Place Programs

262-549-5575 www.ppacinc.org

- **Adult Anger**
Mondays, Nov. 11 - 25 from 5:30 - 7:30 PM
- **Kids Managing Anger**
Tuesdays, Nov. 5 - 26 from 5:30 - 7:00 PM
- **The Nurturing Program**
Mondays, Nov. 4 - 25 from 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Three-Part Child Development Series

When: Thu, December 5, 6pm – 8pm

\$20/participant \$80/agency group

*You may still attend this 3rd part of the series even if you did not attend the first two.

Attend via webinar from home or from the Coalition offices

Register online at

www.cyfdevelopment.eventbrite.com or contact info@coalitionforcyf.org or call 414-475-1246

The series is divided by three age groups: infant thru toddler, school-aged, and teenager. Parents and professionals will have the choice to attend individual session of the most interest to them, or all three sessions for a reduced rate. Understanding how children develop is critical to effective parenting, especially for children who have experienced abuse, neglect, or any type of trauma. These sessions will assume that participants have a basic understanding of typical development stages, as these sessions will focus on the impact of abuse and neglect, as well as separation from primary families on a child's development. Parenting tips and strategies will be offered, as well as an opportunity for questions and shared responses. If you have a specific situation you are looking for support with, please submit it to rgoeden@coalitionforcyf.org one week prior to the training so we can be sure to address it during the session. About the Trainer Toni Chambers, MS Ex. Ed has a background in special education which has served her well as an adoptive and foster parent! She began as a special education teacher for students with severe disabilities, teaching grades K-12 in inner-city and suburban schools. Toni is also a former adjunct instructor and supervisor of special education interns and independent educational consultant. As a full-time parent of four sons, ages 6-23, who joined family by both birth and adoption, Toni is also a proud foster parent for St. Croix County. Her passion has led her to serve on the state Foster Parent Training Committee, the Advisory Committee to the Foster Care and Adoption Resource Center, and the Coordinated Family Services Board for St. Croix County. She is also co-author the larger Child Development curricula for which she will be presenting.

Contact Numbers:

Waukesha County
Health & Human Services
262-548-7212

Eve Altizer, Supervisor
262-548-7272

Rebecca Hollister, Supervisor
262-548-7271

Kathy Mullooly, Supervisor
262-896-6832

Madeline Prange, Foster Care Coord.
262-548-7267

Libby Sinclair, Relative Licensing
262-548-7277

Social Workers:

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

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

Samantha Comaris ... 262-548-7394

Megan Fishler 262-896-8570

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

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

Stacy Kurkiewicz..... 262-548-7262

Maria Maurer 262-548-7345

Jessica McDonald 262-548-7639

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

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

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

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

Children's Mental Health Outreach
262-548-7666

Medical Emergency: 911
Family Emergency: 211

Foster Parent Mentor

Jen Mersfelder..... 262-542-2926
David Mersfelder..... 262-542-2926

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

FASPP
Norma Schoenberg
920-922-9627

September 2013 Placements

Level 2 Placement:
34 Children

Juvenile Corrections:
2 Children

Group Homes:
1 Children

Residential Care Facilities:
11 Children

Level 1 Placements:
54 Children

Level 2 Foster Homes:
116 Homes

Level 1 Foster Homes:
109 Homes

Total Children in OHC:
105 Children

