

Why You Shouldn't Join FAPA

The Rock County Foster and Adoptive Parents Association has been around for quite a few years now. The names and faces may have changed over recent years, but the mission remains the same: to support Rock County foster and adoptive parents, and those interested in or concerned with foster care. Members have come....members have gone, but the mission always remains the same.

FAPA is always accepting and recruiting new members. Our numbers are relatively small, but our passion is great. We're always looking for new members who can add their own flavor to our mix. We enjoy getting out in the community and raising awareness on the behalf of our foster families and children in care.

But that's not what I'm going to talk about here. Nope, no more raves or accolades for FAPA. I'm going to tell you why you shouldn't join FAPA. The reasons you should join FAPA are many and great, but the reasons why you shouldn't are much more succinct.

No Changes Need To Be Made

You think the system is flawless. You think the workers have just enough work to keep their day interesting, but not so much that they're overwhelmed. You truly believe that the best interest of every child is taken into consideration with every decision and action, and that every child in care receives the perfect amount of attention and devotion from the team. You think there are enough resources for foster families, adoptive families, foster children and birth parents, and that they're easy enough to find. You think that the fact Rock County foster parents receive one of the lowest rates in the state is awesome. When your week of respite was taken away due to budget cuts, you thought it was a brilliant move on the county's part. Nothing needs to be changed about foster care so there's really no need for you to be involved. And we're not just talking about Rock County, but rather the foster care system throughout the state and country.

Foster Parents Don't Need Support

The monthly visits (well, in an ideal world...) with our social workers and consultants gives you plenty of support. Your team is able to answer every question, no matter how insignificant or trivial, instantly. When something goes wrong or you need additional support or answers, your team is able to drop everything and be at your door in a matter of minutes to have a cup of coffee and discuss the problem. You don't feel a need to question the actions or inaction of anyone involved in your team because they would never lie to you, mislead you, or turn you away in your hour of need. Foster care is pretty perfect the way it's already set up so there's no need for additional support from other foster families who have quite literally "been there, done that". You already have all the answers (or can get them within minutes from your team). And that whole thing with the county refusing to provide foster families with tax information? That was so cool!

Workers Are Always Available and Informed

The social workers and consultants you work with are far from overworked, underpaid, and overwhelmed. Your rate settings are always done on time and you think your rate is always fair. The paperwork for your placements is always delivered on time with a smile and batch of freshly baked cookies. Your home visits are often three or four hours long because your team has all the time in the world to hear your concerns, questions, complaints, raves and everything in between. Your questions are answered instantly and correctly. Your team members are practically family because they spend so much time at your house. You get the same answer from every person you talk to, and the answers are always right-you don't get five different answers from five different people. You never have a problem getting the information you need, like medical cards, WIC vouchers, therapy for your kids, or anything like that.

Continued on next page...

Why You Shouldn't Join FAPA continued

Kids In Your Care Came With Instructions

You know how different African American hair can be, and know how to style it up in a way that Mom will love. You don't need advice or guidance on discipline because the kids in your care are never troublesome. They don't have underlying issues that make them prone to behavioral problems. When you say "jump", the kids in your care ask how high with a smile on their faces. You don't need to know anything about After Hours or additional respite or anything that could even remotely suggest the kids in your care aren't perfect angels. You don't need to know how other people deal with temper tantrums, breaking curfew, running away, being physically aggressive, extremely emotional, fire-starters, poop-spreaders, habitual liars, sexually active or anything like that because your kids don't have those problems. You don't need advice on problem solving because there are no problems.

Kids Are Always Returned to Loving, Healthy, Safe, Caring Birth Parents

Because the birth parents you work with are so cooperative, you don't need to know anything about resolving conflict with them, scheduling doctor's appointments and therapy sessions (you don't need recommendations on doctors or therapists, either) or anything like that. You simply pick up the phone and give Mom or Dad a call, and it's all worked out in minutes. Because your observations and opinions are respected and valued and you always agree 100% with all the decisions your case worker makes regarding the children in your care, you don't need to know how to file a grievance or how to appeal a removal. When the kids leave your care, you are absolutely certain they will never be put in care again, or abused or neglected, or otherwise harmed once they leave your home. Mom and Dad have got it covered so your job is done!

Children Don't Need A Voice

The kids in your care are completely able to speak for themselves and don't need a representative in you. Or any foster home for that matter! They are always able to convey how they feel, what they need, what they're afraid of, what they want, what they don't want much better than you could. They are truthful 100% with you, the case workers, their biological family, their teachers, etc. Adjusting to foster care isn't hard or traumatic. Being shuffled from home to home is more like a vacation than anything. The process of reunification is far from scary and confusing-it's a blast! Just because your 8 year old is suddenly wetting the bed again doesn't mean anything is wrong. The temper tantrums your 12 year old is throwing before every parent visit? Nothing to worry about! If they were scared or confused, they'd certainly tell the case worker themselves.

So those are a few reasons I think you should NOT join Rock County FAPA. But just in case you want to learn more about FAPA and how it supports the fostering and adoptive community in Rock County, feel free to stop by our next meeting on Monday, October 5 at 6:30 p.m. At Road Dawgs in Janesville, or contact FAPA President Kathie Long wikathie@aol.com or 608 868-5553. You can also check out our website at <http://rockcountyFAPA.org>

Just in case.



FAPA News

Brought to you by the Rock County Foster and Adoptive Parents Association

Providing quality resources for Rock County foster homes

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FAPA is the Foster and Adoptive Parents Association. We're located in Rock County, and service the entire community. We are a non-profit, volunteer organization that assists foster families and adoptive families obtain the services and resources they need to be successful.

FAPA organizes and hosts trainings, seminars, workshops, and family events throughout the year. We help foster parents stay current on their license, and help the community at large with detailed workshops that cover a variety of topics, such as ADD and ADHD, Drug Affected Infants and Children, African American Hair and Skin Care, and much more.

In addition to the more serious side of FAPA, we also offer a lot of fun family events, such as trips to the zoo, our annual FAPA picnic, bowling, pizza night, movie night, Halloween party, and much more.

While 2009 has really been a year of organizing and preparing, we anticipate having one training and one family event each month in 2010. That's not to say there haven't been or won't be events in 2009! Already we've had great responses to our FAPA activities, and look forward to continued success.

More than anything, FAPA serves as a support system, especially for those families involved in foster care. No one knows better than a foster parent the trials and tribulations we deal with on a daily basis. No one can offer better advice or lend an ear to listen than a foster parent who has been there, and done that.

We are always happy to welcome new FAPA members! To get more information, or ask questions about FAPA, please feel free to contact one of our FAPA members at any time! You can find our phone numbers and email addresses on the left side of this page, and in every newsletter. We hold meetings every month—one is an actual FAPA meeting where we discuss upcoming events, how to fill a need in the community and anything else that finds its way onto our agenda. They're held on "even months" in Janesville.

We also hold a FAPA social meeting during the months in between. This is a great opportunity to just chat, vent and get to know other foster parents in the area. They're held on the "odd months" in Beloit.

We offer a variety of committees that are always open to more volunteers. You can be as active as you choose in FAPA....every voice and every opinion matters to us. Our number one objective as foster parents is the safety and well-being of our children currently in our care. Fortunately you can never have too many people that care about our kids so the more the merrier!

With all the changes made to Rock County CPS lately, FAPA has become more necessary, especially to all the new homes.

To learn more about upcoming events, trainings and activities, make sure to visit our website. RockCountyFAPA.org will always have more information than we can fit in our newsletter! We also offer a PDF file of our newsletter on the website. Help us save postage by having it emailed to you!

We hope to see you at our next meeting!

More About FAPA

What can I expect from a FAPA meeting?

Our FAPA meetings (held on the first Monday evening of "even" months at 6:30pm) are the core of FAPA. We discuss committee needs and events, as well as making plans for future trainings, workshops and events. The meeting starts promptly at 6:30pm and we go through the agenda before ordering food.

The FAPA socials (held on the first Monday evening of "odd" months at 6:30pm) are more relaxed. While we do tend to discuss FAPA business, it's more of an opportunity to discuss foster care at length. We share hints and tips, success stories, and more. We typically eat while we chat.

At both meetings you can expect to be greeted warmly by our members. We were all new once, too, and remember how it feels to walk into a room without knowing a soul. If it makes you more comfortable, give Kathie (608-868-5553) or Kelley (608-314-9720) a call before the meeting to let us know you're coming so we can keep a watch for you.

At both meetings, you are not required to order anything to eat or drink, but each person is responsible for his or her own bill.

When is the next FAPA meeting?

Monday, October 5th at 6:30pm at Road Dawg in Janesville. The address for the restaurant is 3502 Milton Ave, Janesville, WI 53545, 756-2131. It's directly across the street from the new Menard's.

What's on the agenda for the next meeting?

We'll be discussing the last quarter training events and workshops, as well as discussing upcoming opportunities and ideas for training, seminars and events. We also plan on redistributing some committee responsibilities to get our new members more involved. You can be as active as you want in FAPA, and we always welcome more hands in any project.

What if I can't make the next meeting but am interested in joining FAPA?

You can always look at past minutes and discussions on our message board and website (rockcountyfapa.org). If you have any questions about what took place, or have suggestions to make, the message board is a great place to do that!

You will need to register to use the message board, but it's fast and painless. Once you've created your account, send Kelley an email (kelleybo@gmail.com) to gain access to the Restricted Area (which is for Rock County foster and adoptive parents only). We do have a variety of members from all over the world sharing experiences, and would love to have you on board!

You may ask why you need to register, and the answer is simple: The message board was designed to be a positive source of support. It's easy to make rude or unkind comments when there's no accountability attached to what you're saying. Having to register makes us all think twice about what we post, which isn't a bad thing. It's also for your privacy. By requiring registration, we're able to weed out bots and spammers who would otherwise harvest email addresses.

We will never sell, rent or otherwise distribute your email address.

Please RSVP for all training to the person holding it. If no one RSVP's, the class will not be held. And in case of emergency or bad weather, we will be able to call you if the class is canceled. If you lose this schedule, it is posted on the FAPA website: RockCountyFAPA.org

FAPA Training...Sept '09 - Dec '09

Tuesday, October 13 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Stress Management and Burnout

Lynda Naatz Richter, MA, LPC, SAC
Licensed Professional Counselor
3809 Ruger Avenue, Janesville WI, 755-0014

Being a (foster, biological, adoptive) parent is a high burnout job! If we burn out, get complacent, don't give our all, we can cause life altering damage. We are the role models. If we don't care for us, how are we to teach them? Come to this class, and refresh yourself and your coping skills! Learn a new one or remember an old one!

Linda has a large fenced in yard for those with preschoolers. The class will be 3 hours with ½ hour for lunch. Linda will provide sandwiches. Please bring a dish to pass and whatever you'd like to drink.

Saturday, October 17 10 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Love and Logic's Grief, Trauma and Loss

Kathie Long
238 Larch Lane, Milton WI, 608 868-5553

We're running this class back to back with Love and Logic's Parenting Doesn't Have to Be Rocket Science, so we'll be eating lunch at 12:30. Would everyone please bring a dish to pass and whatever you'd like to drink. You are welcome to come for just the Grief, Trauma and Loss class or stay for both. It's a nice way to get 6 hours done in one day.

I do not have available space at this time for children to play, so this needs to be adults only.

GRIEF, TRAUMA, AND LOSS: HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH FOSTER CLINE

It's always heartbreaking to see a child suffering. The information of this audio will give adults:

- Specific techniques on how to handle situations with the child
- Skills to help comfort the child
- The ability to help children cope with death, senseless violence, suicide

Saturday, October 17 1:00 p.m. To 4 p.m.

Parenting Doesn't Have to be Rocket Science

Kathie Long
238 Larch Lane, Milton WI, 608 868-5553
Milton WI

Again, this is back to back with Grief, Trauma and Loss. You can come to one of them or both. Bring a dish to pass and your drink. This is adults only.

Join Dr. Cline in this live presentation as he demonstrates how, by using Love and Logic, parenting can be fun and rewarding. With humor, compassion, common sense, and delightful clarity, Dr. Cline models reaching children.

Continued on next page

Calendar at a glance:

FAPA Training...Sept '09 - Dec '09

Monday, October 5
6:30pm - 8:00pm
FAPA Meeting

Tuesday, October 13
10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Stress Management and
Burnout

Saturday, October 17
10 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Love and Logic's Grief,
Trauma and Loss

Saturday, October 17
1:00 p.m. To 4 p.m.
Parenting Doesn't Have to
be Rocket Science

Saturday, November 7
1 a.m. To 3 p.m.
Juvenile Diabetes

Saturday, December 5
2:00 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Love and Logic's Painless
Parenting for the Pre-
school Years

Saturday, December 12
Time: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Nancy Thomas: Healing
Trust

Be sure to check out our
website and message
board for even more
trainings, seminars and
workshops offered all over
Wisconsin.

LSS homes: Please
remember to RSVP with
Emily ASAP to receive
reimbursement or paid
registration. There are a
couple great trainings
coming up in addition to
FAPA sponsored events.

Saturday, November 7 1 p.m. To 3 p.m.

Juvenile Diabetes

Karen and Scott VanWyhe
907 E. 2nd Avenue, Brodhead WI, 608 897-4340

Our 10 year old son has been a diabetic since he was 1 year old. We'll be discussing our personal experience, diagnoses, treatment, how to plan meals, and daily living with a diabetic. Each diabetic is different and there are different responses to juvenile diabetes.

Saturday, December 5 2:00 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Love and Logic's Painless Parenting for the Preschool Years

Mandie Roehl
4075 S. Hamilton Dr., Beloit WI, 608 201-4027

Parents of preschoolers have lots of questions....Charles Fay has the answers. With wisdom and humor, he addresses:

- Bedtime – and how to keep the child in his or her bed
- Potty training – when and how
- Time-out – really can work for toddlers
- How to get to work on time – and NOT be stressed
- Temper tantrums – they can be avoided...no matter where you are
- And many other everyday challenges

You are welcome to bring your children to Mandie's home. Please bring whatever you'd like to drink.

Saturday, December 12 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Nancy Thomas: Healing Trust

Karen and Cliff Hall
4244 North Newville Road, Janesville WI, 758-8573

HEALING TRUST BY NANCY THOMAS: REBUILDING THE BROKEN BOND FOR THE CHILD WITH REACTIVE ATTACHMENT DISORDER

This audio helps ease the feeling of hopelessness for birth parents, foster and adoptive parents, and professionals who work with children who have Reactive Attachment Disorder.

Understand the definitions of RAD children

Learn five ways to bond with these kids

Discover how to handle potentially violent situations

Learn how to get support in raising RAD kids..and see how you can take care of yourself in the process.

This is 3 hours PLUS discussion time. It is well worth your time. Anyone working with a child affected by RADS needs to hear this one.

Karen and Cliff will provide hot ham sandwiches, so please bring a dish to pass and whatever you would like to drink.

**STAY UP-TO-DATE ON MORE TRAININGS, SEMINARS AND
WORKSHOPS BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE AND MESSAGE
BOARD!**

CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB!
ROCKCOUNTYFAPA.ORG
SEPTEMBER 2009

Fun facts:

It only takes 1-2 weeks for a louse to reach maturity.

Pets CANNOT catch or pass on head lice.

An adult female can lay 6 eggs per day. So in one week, you could have 42 maturing adults just waiting to lay their 6 eggs per day. Scary thought.

Expect an itchy scalp as soon as you read that note from school.

You can use tea tree oil as a “repellent” for head lice. Put 20 drops of tea tree oil into 8 oz of ANY conditioner. Use when you suspect head lice is going around.

Whenever you get a new placement, check for head lice. It’s so much easier to nip it at the beginning.

The following information is from the “Kidshealth from Nemours” website.

If your child is 2 years old or under, you should not use medicated lice treatments. You’ll need to remove the nits and lice by hand.

Keep in mind that head lice don’t survive long once they fall off a person. So it’s unnecessary to spend a great deal of time and money trying to rid the house of lice.

Here are some simple ways to get rid of the lice and their eggs, and help prevent a lice re infestation:

-Wash all bed linens and clothing that’s been recently worn by anyone in your home who’s infested in very hot water, then put them in the hot cycle of the dryer for at least 20 minutes.

-Dry clean any clothing that isn’t machine washable.

-Have bed linens, clothing, and stuffed animals and plush toys that can’t be washed dry-cleaned. Or, put them in airtight bags for 2 weeks.

-Vacuum carpets and any upholstered furniture (in your home or car).

-Soak hair-care items in rubbing alcohol or medicated shampoo for 1 hour. You can also wash them in hot water or just throw them away.

Because lice are easily passed from person to person in the same house, bed mates and infested family members will also need treatment to prevent the lice from coming back.

Head Lice

It’s that time of the year again. You get those notes home from school saying someone in your child’s classroom has head lice. Reality is KIDS SHARE: hats, brushes, combs. It’s a myth that only dirty kids get head lice. The truth is the cleaner your child’s hair is, the more likely they are to get the lice and the more difficult it is to get rid of them. Eggs won’t stick in oily hair.

If your child is African American and the hair is well oiled, he/she should not get lice. It never hurts to check though.

If your child has dark hair, the eggs will be easier to spot. If your child has light hair, the actual bugs will be easier to find. Unfortunately, the eggs don’t detach once it’s hatched so you may be seeing empty eggs. Sometimes you can see a “shadow” in the egg and that means there is a bug inside. You need to have excellent eyesight for this.

So, you see what you think MIGHT be eggs and/or bugs in your child’s hair. Rid and Nix, called medicated shampoos, are pretty pricey (especially if you’re doing the entire household) and they are pesticides. AND they don’t always work very well. They will kill some of the bugs and some of the eggs, but it doesn’t get all of them. Even the prescription treatments don’t always kill ALL of them. You can treat every 7-10 days. The bad thing about this is that during that 7-10 days, eggs will hatch, some bugs will mature and lay MORE eggs. So you treat again and during that 7-10 days, more eggs will hatch, the bugs will mature and lay even more eggs. It’s a vicious circle. NEVER use the medicated shampoos more often than the directions say. Again, these are actually pesticides and could be very harmful to use incorrectly. Always follow the directions to the letter.

There are other treatments that are gentler on your child. Mayonnaise is a common one. I find that mayo tangles the hair and it’s difficult to comb through. Some say that the oil in mayo actually kills the bugs. I find hair conditioner is easier on your child, combs through beautifully, kills about as many bugs as the Rid and Nix do, and leaves the hair nice and shiny. Lol

You’re going to use a lot of it, but you can buy the cheapest stuff out there. Put enough on that it coats the WET hair very well – so you can actually see conditioner. You want to get it all the way down to the scalp because that’s where the bugs like to hide (and where the eggs are laid). If you’re treating a child, put a shower cap on. If you’re treating an adult, saran wrap will do. Leave it on at least 20 minutes (the longer the better – even overnight if they’ll keep it on). Comb through the hair with a wide tooth comb to get the snarls out. After each swipe of the comb, wipe it on white paper napkins or white paper towel and look for bugs. When hair is pretty well snarl free, section it out and comb through very small sections with a metal nit comb (purchased at Walmart or any other department store) Again, after EACH swipe of the comb, wipe the comb on a napkin. Fold the napkin before it gets full. You don’t want to “overlap” your swipes. Keep a garbage can right there and throw away as you fill them up. Make sure you start at the scalp and go all the way through the hair. Pay special attention to behind the ears. Some of the bugs will be dead, but you may see some moving around sluggishly in the conditioner. Throw them away as quickly as possible.

This takes no longer than it does with the Rid or Nix and less time than with the mayo. The beauty of it is because it’s not harmful to your child, you can do it as often as you want. Daily is NOT necessary, but I would do it every 3 or 4 days AFTER you see the last live bug. Remember that one unhatched egg left behind can produce hundreds of the little buggers in no time at all.

If you happen to do this on a Friday night, you could actually rinse hair after combing and recondition and leave the conditioner in all weekend. If it’s summer, or if your child is not in school, you could leave it in even longer. If the hair is greasy, the eggs will not be able to attach and will die.

Written by Kathie Long

Three Important Parts to Giving Consequences

The boss of a big company needed to call one of his employees about an urgent problem with one of the main computers. He dialed the employee's home phone number and was greeted with a child's whispered, "Hello?"

Feeling put out at the inconvenience of having to talk to a youngster the boss asked, "Is your Daddy home?"

"Yes", whispered the small voice. "May I talk with him?" the man asked. To the surprise of the boss, the small voice whispered, "No."

Wanting to talk with an adult, the boss asked, "Is your Mommy there?"

"Yes", came the answer. "May I talk with her?" Again the small voice whispered, "no".

Knowing that it was not likely that a young child would be left home alone, the boss decided he would just leave a message with the person who should be there watching over the child. "Is there anyone there besides you?" the boss asked the child.

"Yes" whispered the child, "A policeman". Wondering what a cop would be doing at his employee's home, the boss asked "May I speak with the policeman?"

"No, he's busy", whispered the child. "Busy doing what?" asked the boss. "Talking to Daddy and Mommy and the Fireman", came the whispered answer.

Growing concerned and even worried as he heard what sounded like a helicopter through the ear piece on the phone the boss asked, "What is that noise?"

"A hello-copper", answered the whispering voice. "What is going on there?", asked the boss, now alarmed.

In an awed whispering voice the child answered, "The search team just landed the hello-copper"

Alarmed, concerned and more than just a little frustrated the boss asked, "Why are they there?"

Still whispering, the young voice replied along with a muffled giggle: "They're looking for me"

Whenever a parent tells me that their child just does not seem to respond to their discipline, I begin to study the parent when they give the consequence to find out what it is that they actually do when they are disciplining their child. In almost every case, the parent is less effective because they are skipping over two very important parts to giving consequences to misbehaving children.

Most parents give the child a warning of some type, and then give the consequence. Many times, the consequence given is too large and too long (see "Stacked Consequences"). The child then "serves" their time in "grounding", and that's the end of the disciplinary action. The problem with this approach is, it rarely works in the long run. At it's worse, it teaches children simply how to avoid getting caught in misbehavior to avoid the penalty.

So what was skipped?

1. The administration of a clear relational consequence.
2. Assurances following the "hard" consequence.

The "hard" consequence is the privilege removal: being sent to their room, having the television removed for twenty four hours, etc. But just giving these "hard" consequences on a regular basis usually becomes ineffective over time. By adding the above two steps, you triple your discipline effectiveness.

A "clear relational consequence" for most people means anger. It's fine to let the child know that you may be angry at their behavior, but this does not go far enough. Anger is a "secondary" emotion. Under all anger is a different emotion. This may be disappointment, frustration, or feeling of being violated. Expressing these to the child (once you are calmed down) is what is needed.

Besides the "hard" consequence, the child needs to hear that their behavior has damaged their relationship with you (or others as well). They need to hear specifically how they damaged the relationship(s). This may include trust issues, being insulted or emotionally hurt, disrespected, unappreciated, ignored, etc. If more than one person is hurt, the relationship with each person needs to be covered. This part of the process can be done before or after the "hard consequence", but in most cases, everyone is calmer by then end of the "hard" consequence.

"Assurances following the hard consequence" means that the child is assured of: another round of consequences for repeat misbehavior, your willingness to help them in avoiding repeat misbehavior, your forgiveness, and your positive regard for them ("I love you", accompanied with a hug). This wipes the slate clean.

If this three part approach to discipline is consistently followed, it becomes a small ritual. This set routine is actually comforting to the child, because of it's predictability. Perhaps most importantly, the method offers specific teaching about how our behavior can negatively impact our relationships. Just as important, perhaps, is that this method offers reassurances to the child that while we reject their misbehavior, we do not reject them.

*Permission to use this article granted by W.E.Krill, Jr. M.S.P.C.
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Hints and Tips to Make Respite Easier

Respite can be a foster parent's best friend at times. It's a great way to get a much needed break, and also a wonderful way to meet other foster parents and foster children. The following are some tips and ideas to help you get the most out of your respite time, either taking it or providing it.

1. Make sure to send needed paperwork with the kids. This will eliminate the respite provider having to call you while you're out to dinner just to ask you a simple question.
2. Send games, books, movies or other enjoyable play things. Going to respite can be a scary experience, especially if the kids don't know the people they're going to be staying with for a couple nights. Sending along some special play things will help make the weekend more enjoyable for the kids.
3. Keep to the 24 hour rule. If you drop your kids off at 8am, plan on picking them up at 8am the day your respite ends. We all know respite is paid in 24 shifts, and it's unfair to the respite provider to have the kids from 8am Friday morning to 7pm on Sunday night. They aren't paid for that extra time.

Providing respite is a favor. Foster parents are not obligated to provide respite, and that's something everyone needs to keep in mind. If you know you're going to be late, simply talk to the home providing respite and work something out directly. Emergencies happen, and we're all aware of that, but keeping to the schedule may ensure that respite provider will provide respite again.

4. Send all medications or treatments along in a clearly marked bag or container. There's nothing more frustrating to a respite provider to have to pack up all the kids in their care and head to Walgreen's to get a refill because the foster parent ran out or forgot to include it. Show the respite provider the same courtesy you would like to be shown. This would also include sun screen.
5. Send weather appropriate clothes. You don't need to send 6 suitcases for a weekend stay, but make sure the kids have clothes to be comfortable in depending on the weather. Even in warm weather, pack a pair of jeans and sweat shirt in case the weather gets chilly in the evening. Ask your respite provider if you should send along a bathing suit, or a nice outfit in case that home has something special planned like Sunday morning church, or play clothes that can get down and dirty.
6. There's a respite form available on the FAPA website to be downloaded and used.
7. Make sure the home has all necessary information if there's to be a home visit, counseling, or anything out of the ordinary. When possible, try to schedule events such as doctor's appointments and therapy appointments for a time when the kids won't be at respite. Make sure the home has an address, contact person (for the birth family and case worker in the instance of a home visit, or doctor/therapist), complete address and phone number of where the appointment is, and a clear schedule of drop off and pick up times (and what's expected of the foster parent-are they required to stay during the visit? Will someone else pick up or drop off the children?).

Respite can be a fun and enjoyable experience for everyone involved if a few precautionary steps are taken from the get-go. Most of all, just talk to the home providing respite! Most homes are more than happy to accommodate any schedule as long as advance notice is given.

Visit us at RockCountyFAPA.org!

Join us for the next FAPA meeting!
Monday October 5th
6:30pm
Road Dawg (Janesville)

In this issue:

Why You Shouldn't Join FAPA

Hints and Tips to Make Respite Easier

Head Lice

What To Expect From Your First FAPA Meeting

Three Important Parts To Giving Consequences

Recipes

FAPA Quarterly Training

And More!

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