



Strengthening Families Newsletter June 2010

Welcome to Strengthening Families!

As a part of the Strengthening Families Program, you will receive a short monthly newsletter. This newsletter will offer special tips and information, geared specifically toward helping new foster parents tackle their new role. In addition, we'll include a calendar of upcoming events, reminders about the services we offer at MFCAA, and any other special information we'd like to share with our Strengthening Families participants!

ATTENTION: FOSTER/ADOPTIVE/KINSHIP FAMILIES AND GRANDPARENTS

FOSTER PARENTS BILL OF RIGHTS

This training is another opportunity for foster parents, with the Division Staff to learn about our rights and responsibilities. The Bill of Rights was passed into law in 2008 and we are anxious to make everyone aware of its content, bringing respect to our common mission of helping heal and finding permanency for the abused and neglected children we care for everyday. A joint training session have been designed to bring workers and foster parents together to become aware of these laws and to put them into practice here in Jackson County.

June 4th MFCAA, 9-11 and 1-3.



In This Issue

Special Invitation

Calendar - June



June 4th

First Friday Training/6:30p
How to Structure for safety
when kids act out sexually

June 8th

Dental Van at MFCAA
For appointments:
Bobbie, at 816-889-3512

June 18th

Third Friday Training/6:30
RSVP for dinner
How to Harness the rage of
out of control toddlers.

June 26th

Nancy Run/Jay Walk

July 16th

Working with GLBTA
children in foster care

August 6

Lifebooks

August 20

Sibling connections

SUMMER FUN

Are you ready for some fun this summer with your children home all day? The days can seem long if you hear constantly, "I'm bored!", "There's nothing to do!", "All my friends are....", etc. You get the picture.

If you haven't signed them up for daily summer camp, I hope you are at least signed on to the foster parent loop at JCFAP@yahoogroups.com. Janet Richardson is the moderator of the email loop and does a fabulous job of posting lots of great activities for the whole family. Some are free but many are at a reduced rate for foster/adopt/kinship and grandparents that are a part of our MFCAA community. Besides activities there is valuable information posted daily that keeps us up to date on the latest training, policies and available children for respite or for placement.

So have a wonderful summer and enjoy getting together with other families that are sharing your same mission in life! We can all learn valuable strategies from each other.

PLEASE RISE...THE COURT IS NOW IN SESSION....

Do you get nervous when you hear these words at court? Do you feel anxious or prepared for what is going to happen?

Whether this is your first time at court or your 21st time, it can be exciting yet fearful. This is where the decisions are made that will shape the future of these children, so we always want to be able to share, with everyone, exactly how the child is feeling about being placed away from his biological parents. They all react differently and because you are with them 24/7, you probably are the most "in tune" with how they are feeling.

Several years ago foster parents came up with a way we could share our information to court, insuring that the judge was well informed. Some of the judges will ask for your opinion in court and some will not, but if you file a court report, several days prior to the hearing, you can be assured that the judge will know how you feel and hear what information you have regarding your children. You need to be aware that it will also be shared with the parents' attorney and the rest of the child welfare team. Keeping your comments on it factual will help in getting the child's needs met.

To access the report go to... <http://www.family-court.org/forms.htm> and click on Amended Foster Parent' report. Copy the form, fill it out and follow the instructions for submitting it to court on time. If you have any questions contact any advocate at MFCAA and we will help you access it.

MEDICATION...DOES MY CHILD REALLY NEED THIS???

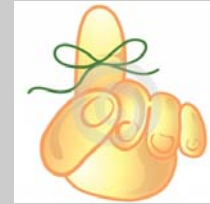
When my biological daughters were growing up, the most medication I gave them and was familiar with was baby Tylenol, Triaminic for colds, etc. Over the counter meds were all they ever needed. Over the last 20 years, psychotropic medication has become very familiar to me. We generally took in "Career" level children that had many different behaviors and just about all of them had a psychiatrist.

One of my first foster children that came to me was prescribed Ritalin for ADD. I had worked with him for hours on learning to

[Get more info](#) on all events.

Looking Ahead... [get more info](#) check out our website

Reminders



Website

You can get full information on all MFCAA services and programs on our website: mfcaa.org.

MFCAA Directions

3210 S Lee's Summit Rd/
Independence, MO/64055
· From I-70, take the Lee's Summit Rd Exit and go North
· Drive for a little over a mile, (the last intersection you'll go through is for Kiger Rd-we are just past that)
· We are on the left side of the road (across from a park), on the Drumm Farm campus...The sign where you turn in says Drumm Farm. We are part of a collection of "houses" set back from the road. Stay to the right of the drive; MFCAA is the 2nd building on the RIGHT.

Trainings are held in the Dining Hall/Gardner Hall - the 2nd building on the far LEFT drive. On Training nights, please park in the gravel lot (just past the MFCAA offices, on the RIGHT drive)

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write his name in order. He was 7 years old and was so far behind children his age; I was willing to listen to whatever advice I could get to help him learn. It was amazing because after about 5 months of trying the shaving cream, the sand, the dry erase board...anything I could think of (and lots of ideas from teacher friends), I took him to the psychiatrist who put him on Ritalin and his 2nd day of summer school he came home having written his name in order!!! I actually cried! His youngest brother was extremely hyper but because he was 3 years old, they didn't put him on anything. The other two siblings were just fine.

Over the years, I have had children come on medication to my home from another home that I didn't believe they needed.

Because these children are in State Custody, we may not pick and choose who we are giving medication to or not. If you ever question whether a child needs it, document what you see each day so you are prepared to describe, in detail, the child's behaviors when you see a psychiatrist. We must not just stop a medication because some medications need to be tapered down. Always contact the child's psychiatrist or doctor, the one that prescribed the meds, before you change the dosage.

Sometimes it takes a while to get the correct med and dosage for the child...be patient. Trying to wean a child off a medication, you can see the child's temperament go haywire, let the doctor know and they will try to adjust it over the phone. The most important thing to remember is: It is our job to keep the child healthy and moving in the right direction with help from a team of people. When it comes to meds, the psychiatrists are the professionals, when it comes to parenting, we are the professionals. Happy Parenting.

[READ MORE](#)

For Strengthening Families Participants Only!

PICNIC WAS WET...BUT FUN!

Those that braved the picnic on April 24th seemed to all have a great time. At 9am that morning I was suppose to make a decision on whether to hold it at the park or in the gym at MFCAA. I listened to the weather channel from about 7am and by 9am they said, while it would be cloudy, there was a 30% chance of rain. So....

When we arrived at the park it was cool, but dry. By the time we started to get the hot dogs on the grill it started to rain...then pour...then the wind blew and so we had a cold, wet day to deal with. Everyone that came was huddled under the shelter and it truly was a blessing in disguise. We all got to share experiences, put names with faces and the children were able to play with others. We had a \$50, HyVee gift card that was won by a lucky parent and all the children that attended played a few games and went home with a nice prize of their choice.

I did hear from several families that they would like to do this again in sunshine...so I will try to get another day set in the late summer, early fall. We will pray for sunshine and hope for the best. Dana and Ashley, from Longview, chose a great park to hold the picnic at and worked hard to provide us with a rewarding experience. I'd like to express my gratitude to them and to all the families that did show up!

Watch the newsletters for a new date and time!

Mary



MFCAA Services

Reminder

We'd like to remind you all that as new foster parents you may need some extra help, and we are here to support you! MFCAA Services are available from 8a-5p, Mon-Fri (and you can always contact

us after hours in an emergency).

Clothes Closet -

gently used clothes available Tues & Fri, 10a-2p (or by appointment) - [contact Becky](#)

Food Pantry -

basic items available every Tues & Fri, 9a-2p (or by appointment)/ extended items (such as canned goods and frozen items) available once each month - [contact Becky](#)

Advocacy -

experienced foster and adoptive parents are on staff at MFCAA, and can answer questions, address concerns, accompany you to meetings/court dates or help in any other way necessary - call us at 816-350-0215

Training -

as foster parents, you will have to complete training hours each year to maintain your license - we offer training on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of each month - [get more info](#)

Special Events -

several times each year we hold Family Events, such as our annual Christmas party, at little or no charge to our members - please join us!

Respite -

MFCAA has a list of Respite providers that we will contact when you need respite care - [contact Jennifer](#)

Special Programs -

we offer programs to help with School Supplies, Christmas and other seasonal needs - watch the website and newsletters for announcements

Licensing Workers - please feel free to forward this newsletter to your new foster parents. All foster parents who have been licensed

for five years or less are eligible to be part of the Strengthening Families program.

[Get more info](#) (including a registration form).

Midwest Foster Care and Adoption Association
3210 S Lee's Summit Rd . 816-350-0215 . mfcaa.org