



FAPAC-FOSTER & ADOPTIVE PARENT ADVOCACY CENTER

advocacy news

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Healing Children by Empowering Families  WWW.DCFAPAC.ORG

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FAPAC news!

The Return of Clinical Rap Groups

This spring, FAPAC and the Post-Permanency Family Center (PPFC) partnered to bring back our support group model known as Clinical Rap Groups (CRG). This fall, we are delighted to be once again partnering with PPFC to host an exciting fall CRG specifically for lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered foster, kinship and adoptive parents who currently have a CFSA child (ren) in their homes, or who have had children in the last year. This group will run on Wednesday nights from September 21 - November 9th, 2011. To register, please contact Toni Carr at 202-269-9441 or by email at mtonicarr@gmail.com.

FAPAC Foster Parent/Birth Parent Partnership Initiative

It is critical for foster parents and birth parents to learn (CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

kudos & thumbs up

We acknowledge: In-home trainings for foster parents now available!

We applaud: Tonya Logan, Founder and CEO of Kayla's village (for more information as to how to access this service see Information from our Partners, page 3)

We acknowledge: Newly improved CFSA Relationship with Resource Parents Policy

We applaud: Pamela White, Julie Swaby, Virginia Monteiro and Andrea Guy, CFSA Office of Policy, Planning and Program Support (OPPPS) (for more information see Advocacy Update/Policy Corner, page 2)

in this issue

ADVOCACY UPDATE & POLICY CORNER (PG 2) • CFSA NEWS (PG 3)
INFORMATION FROM OUR PARTNERS (PG 3) • SAVE THE DATE (PG 4)



advocacy update & policy corner

Updated Policy from CFSA: Relationship with Resource Parents

On May 31, 2011, CFSA published a revised policy that clarifies the relationship between foster, kinship, and adoptive (resource) parents and their agencies. FAPAC applauds CFSA for the commitment to partnership that is demonstrated in this policy. Although we have learned that good policy may only be the first step to changing practice, it is definitely a significant first step! This policy clearly delineates the expectation of teamwork. **Please note that references to CFSA apply to the private agencies also.** Some of the highlights of the Relationship with Resource Parents Policy are:

- The relationship between CFSA and its resource parents requires mutual trust and respect, cooperative planning, and team-based strategies for shortening the length of time a child stays in foster care. Accordingly, CFSA **and its contracted agency partners** are committed to ensuring both capacity and access to quality services and resources to support the efforts of all resource parents.
- CFSA highly values the contribution of resource parents for the care of children placed in out-of-home care. Therefore, the Agency is committed to maintaining positive working partnerships and will respond to any concerns with respect and a sense of urgency.
- CFSA shall be available and receptive to any concerns, suggestions, and/or recommendations provided by resource parents.
- CFSA shall provide resource parents and children in care with necessary supportive services to avoid placement disruption.

CFSA shall protect the following rights of resource parents:

- a. To review written information related to the medical, educational, psychological, and social history of the child being considered for placement.
- b. To receive documentation that identifies the name and contact information for the Guardian ad Litem (GAL), social worker, private agency monitor, educational advocate, and birth parents for each child in

their care.

- c. To receive a Placement Passport Packet at the time of placement.
- d. To be considered as the priority placement option (when appropriate, based on the circumstances) when there is a significant relationship with the child or when the resource parent previously provided care for a child who has re-entered foster care, or when a child becomes available for adoption.
- e. Access to professional support 24 hours/day, 7 days/week to address medical, mental health, or other emergency situations related to the child in care.
- f. To receive, at least 10 days in advance, formal notification for all administrative and court review hearings, including the date, time, location, name of judge or hearing officer, and docket number of the case.
- g. To participate fully in court proceedings, in accordance with DC law.
- h. To receive a copy of the court's plan for the child, including a copy of the social worker's report, at least five days prior to the court hearing.
- i. To receive notification of and actively participate in family team meetings, treatment team meetings, educational team meetings, and any other meetings that would help the resource parent to serve the needs of the child.
- j. To receive supportive services in a timely manner, including but not limited to mental health intervention and services, respite care, and assistance with transportation for family therapy and medical visits.

FAPAC encourages foster parents to access CFSA policies through the online policy manual at <http://cfsa.dc.gov/DC/CFSA/About+CFSA/Policy/CFSA+Policy+Manual+Table+of+Contents>.

If you do not have access to the online manual, call FAPAC and we will send you a hard copy of the policy you are interested in. **An informed community is a strong community!**



CFSA News

Farewell

At the end of May, Dr. Roque Gerald resigned as CFSA Director. Prior to becoming the CFSA Director, Dr. Gerald held the role at CFSA of Deputy Director of the Office of Clinical Practice. He was instrumental in bringing Family Team Meetings (FTM's) to the District. He also led CFSA's successful efforts to bring down the CPS backlog resulting from the Jacks-Fogle tragedy in 2008. Dr. Gerald's other accomplishments included creating the position of CFSA Ombudsman, initiating a Director's Youth Advisory Board, and deepening the agency's commitment to permanency. FAPAC also appreciates Dr. Gerald for his open door policy for families and youth.

And Hello

At the request of B.B. Otero, DC Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services, Debra Porchia-Usher, currently CFSA's Deputy Director of Agency Programs, has stepped in as Interim CFSA Director. Ms. Porchia-Usher, originally from Michigan, has a long history in serving children and families, including having worked at CFSA as Deputy Director under the earlier administration of Dr. Olivia Golden. Ms. Porchia-Usher holds a master's degree in organizational management and is a candidate for her doctorate in leadership and organizational development. FAPAC looks forward to working with Ms. Porchia-Usher to further the work of partnership between families and agencies.

information from our partners

Kayla's Village now offers training in your own home.

Kayla's village is now providing in-home trainings for foster parents. A creative option to support DC's foster parents, a trainer will come to your home in DC or Maryland to provide individual or small group training for you and other foster parents you invite. Topics for in-home trainings are: Child Abuse/Neglect; Discipline/Punishment; Domestic Violence; Preventing Teen Suicide; Stress Management & Teen Pregnancy. This service in your home is available to you for \$50 per training. FAPAC applauds Tonya Logan and Kayla's Village for bringing families this new training opportunity. To register, contact Tonya Logan at <kaylasvillage@aol.com> or 202- 608-1266.

For other training opportunities through the **Resource Parent Training Coalition** (RPTC) check out www.dcrptc.org.



FAPAC news! (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

to work together as co-parents. FAPAC has been working to build the components of a DC foster parent/ birth parent partnership initiative. Some prior activities have included joint training, dialogue groups, and combined advocacy efforts in partnership with the Parent Advocate Project (PAP). This summer, we are excited to announce FAPAC and CFSA's new pilot Shared Parenting Project, during which FAPAC will work intensively with a small group of families to build strong relationships between foster and birth parents immediately upon children coming into care.

We are thrilled about the potential of this project to strengthen families and help children, and grateful to CFSA for this opportunity.

FAPAC Peer Advocacy Training Program (P.A.T)

We have received calls from parents asking why we did not host our 19 -hour P.A.T. training this year. Unfortunately, finances have been very hard these past few years. Although P.A.T. is a very valuable and informative weekend, it is also expensive to run. It is definitely one of our priorities to bring it back. If you have any ideas for potential funding that could help us to renew this critical program, please let us know! We are particularly interested in forming partnerships with local businesses and would appreciate any leads from our foster parent and colleague communities. If you are interested in making a donation to FAPAC to go toward hosting P.A.T., or if you would be willing to pay a small fee for the training, please contact us. Thanks!

save the date!

SAVE THE DATE: Feb 14, 2012 for FAPAC's third annual Valentine's Day Event. Dinner, dancing and silent auction.

To contact FAPAC call: 202-269-9441; email info@fapac.org or visit our website at www.dcfapac.org.



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