

News You Can Use

From the Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition

March/April 2007

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TRAINING EXTRAVAGANZA!!! Register TODAY!!!

Thanks to the Daughters of Charity Healthcare Foundation of St. Louis, FACC will host the next Training Extravaganza on Saturday, May 19th, from 8:30 AM—4:00 PM. The Training Extravaganza is an all-day training that allows foster/adoptive/relative caregivers to receive 7.5 in-service training hours in one day, and you can bring the kids, too. As an added bonus, youth ages 13–18 who attend will participate in support groups that focus on teenage issues. In order for you and your child(ren) to participate, **you must agree to attend all workshops, complete the registration form (on page 4), return it, and receive verification from FACC that you are registered.** Space is limited to 200 adults and 100 children.

May 19, 2007 Training Extravaganza Agenda Theme: Positive Parenting

Positive Behavior Support: Anna Rich, M.Ed., will introduce and present parents to positive behavior support, which is a proactive approach that teaches skills to prevent behaviors before they occur. This successful program includes: how to target and define the behavior, how to determine what happened before the behavior occurred, and how to determine the message of the behavior. Parents will have the ability to focus on changes and techniques that result in new, innovative skills for parents and children.

Understanding Family Dynamics: The family plays a significant role in how each person thinks, acts, develops, and perceives the world. This training applies the four main characteristics of Systems Theory (power/control, structure, repeating patterns, and equilibrium) to help understand the family impact on individual development. Keith Neuber, M.S., founder and lead presenter of I K.A.N. PRESENTATIONS will help participants find application for their life and learn how to better understand and work with others.

12:30-1:30 Lunch & Resource Tables: The resource area will: 1) provide caregivers useful community information; and 2) create an opportunity for parents to network with each other. Lunch will be provided. **If you have special dietary needs please bring a sack lunch.**

Did You Hear What I Said? Part 2: You may have missed part 1, but you certainly don't want to miss part 2 of this presentation. Aaron Layton, one of our most frequently requested presenters is back again. In March, Aaron talked about what is communication and why it is so important in developing and strengthening relationships. During this workshop, he will focus on how to communicate. Parents will learn how to effectively use words, non-verbal behaviors, and listening skills to enhance and improve communication.

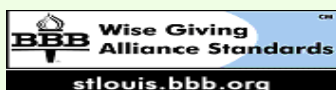
Children's Agenda: Thanks to Citigroup, registered children ages 6—18 will participate in a financial literacy training, where they learn about needs vs. wants, the importance of saving, and good credit vs. bad credit. Other activities will include Spring arts and crafts, outdoor play, and their very own nature walk that will focus on the importance of recycling. Plus, the teenagers will participate in their own support groups which will also focus on effective communication. So, no need to worry about the kids, they will definitely have a great time while the parents receive some great information.

It's a Lottery . . .

Spaces for the Training Extravaganza are limited to 200 adults and 100 children. We have always been able to accommodate adults but our child care **ALWAYS** fills up in the first couple of days. Because of your feedback, we are going to try something new to "level the playing field." We're going to play the lottery!

Here's how it will work. Registration forms must be received at FACC by Monday, May 7th to be included in the childcare lottery. It does not matter if we receive you form by mail or fax, on the 1st or the 7th—**ALL** requests for childcare received by May 7th will be put into the same lottery pool. Registrations forms will be drawn at random until the 100 childcare slots are filled. All families who register will be notified by mail.

So, are you feeling lucky? To register for the Training Extravaganza, complete the form on page 4 of this newsletter and send it to Attn: Training Extravaganza, 111 N. 7th Street, Suite 402, St. Louis, MO 63101 or fax it to 314-241-0715. Remember, if you are requesting childcare, registration forms **must** be received by FACC on or before Monday, May 7th.



Summer Camps

Below are some camps to consider to keep your youngsters busy this summer. If you would like additional information on a specific opportunity, please use the contact information provided below for each camp.

Note to Foster Parents: If you are considering an overnight camp, make sure to consult with the child's case manager.

Camp Skullbone-in-the-Woods

314-231-1147; www.theyfc.org

Boys and girls ages 8-12 years old; girls and boys sessions are separate from each other. The first camp session starts June 18. Each session is one week long. Camp is located in Cedar Hills, MO. Registration is due 1 week before leaving. Fee: \$25 for entire week.

Sherwood Forest Camp

314-644-3322;

www.sherwoodforestcamp.com

Residential camp for youth Boys and girls (7-10 years old), 6 day sessions. Fee: \$65/camper. Boys and girls (10-13 years old), 12 day sessions. Fee: \$110/camper. Registration fee is \$25 and parents can set up a payment schedule.

Salvation Army P.A.L. Camp (Positive Attitude for Life)

314-646-3000

This is an overnight camp that runs from July 16-July 20. The camp is located in Bourban, MO. The program serves boys and girls ages 9-11. Fee: \$5/child.

Youth and Family Center's Summer Day Camp

314-231-1147; www.theyfc.org

Dates for camp are unknown at this time and usually runs from 7:30 AM - 5:30 PM Monday—Friday. Fee: \$25/week.

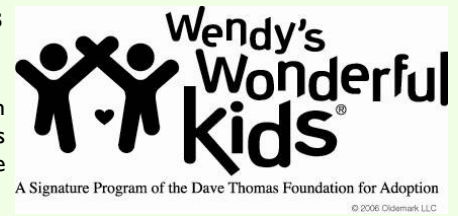
The Children's Division is not able to fund summer camps for children in foster care or those who have an adoption subsidy. However, there are some summer programs that are Children's Division registered/licensed child care programs—funds are provided/approved as daycare.

Contact your child's casemanager/adoption subsidy worker for more information. Questions may also be directed to Denise Kelley at 314-FOSTER-3 or denisekelley@foster-adopt.org.

FACC has not evaluated these camp programs and makes no recommendations concerning them. Families should make an independent assessment before enrolling a child.

FACC Chosen as Wendy's Wonderful Kids Agency in Eastern Missouri

Each day without a family feels like forever to a child in foster care. The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption is committed to ending the wait through its signature program, *Wendy's Wonderful Kids*.



WWK provides child welfare agencies with funding to hire a recruiter focused solely and aggressively on placing foster care children with adoptive families.

In Missouri, grants were awarded in December 2006 to Cornerstones of Care in Kansas City and the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition in St. Louis, helping WWK reach an important milestone: the program is now in all 50 states across the nation.

Each Missouri agency has hired a recruiter who will collaborate with the Children's Division and its private agency partners to find homes for our most difficult-to-place children, older youth and sibling groups. Each WWK recruiter will dedicate 100% of her workday to conducting a child-specific recruitment program for each of the 15-25 children on her caseload.

In only two years, WWK recruiters in other states have helped more than 1,000 children in foster care be matched with or adopted by their permanent families.

WWK is made possible by the extraordinary efforts of the Wendy's restaurants. Additionally, Wendy's customers support the "Change a Child's Life" campaign by dropping spare change into the canisters placed on the restaurant counters. Funds raised are dedicated to the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption's signature program, WWK.

As an adopted child and an American success story, Wendy's founder Dave Thomas believed it was unacceptable for any child not to have a safe, loving, and permanent home. That is why he created the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption – to focus on the thousands of waiting children in foster care who deserve to be adopted.

If you are interested in learning more about *Wendy's Wonderful Kids* or the children in our program, contact Liz Johnson at 1-800-FOSTER-3.

Meet Christopher

Christopher is a friendly, curious, affectionate, and energetic 8 year old little boy who is in need of a forever family.

Christopher loves coloring, fishing, and riding his bicycle outside and is currently taking swimming lessons. Christopher also loves to cook and some of his favorite foods are cookies, ice cream, and yogurt. In school Christopher likes science and would love to have a family help him with his homework. Christopher needs a family that can provide structure, consistency, and possess an understanding of emotionally and developmentally delayed children.

For more information on Christopher please contact Liz Johnson, Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter at 314-367-8373 x 31, 800-FOSTER-3, or lizjohnson@foster-adopt.org.



Project Teen Plus



13-year-old Kenny, is a patient teen who has been waiting for a forever family of his own. Kenny's interests include wrestling, and like most boys, playing video games! Kenny does well in school and his favorite subject is history. Kenny is described as easy-going but would like an active and fun-loving family.

For more information on Kenny please call Sheila Suderwalla, Director of Project Teen Plus, at 314-367-8373, 800-FOSTER-3, or sheilasuderwalla@foster-adopt.org.

Photo Courtesy of Jim Balmer

Results of Adoptive Parent Survey

Thank you to the large number of parents who completed the adoption survey in a recent issue of “News You Can Use.” We learned a lot of great information, which we will use to find new ways to support foster/adoptive families.

What adoptive parents said:

Adoptive parents enter this lifelong commitment knowing that their children will likely have special needs. However, 47% of families reported that their children’s needs exceeded their expectations.

Largely, parents reported their children have medical, educational, and behavioral issues.

- 49% have a child with at least one mental or emotional disorder, including:
 - 50% ADHD
 - 12% Bipolar Disorder
 - 10% Oppositional Defiance Disorder
 - 8% Attachment Disorder
 - 7% Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
 - 6% Depression
- 41% have a child with some developmental issues
- 33% have a child who is not performing at their grade level (behind 1-5 years)

Addressing parents’ needs:

Different families have different needs, but overall, adoptive parents reported that their top needs are:

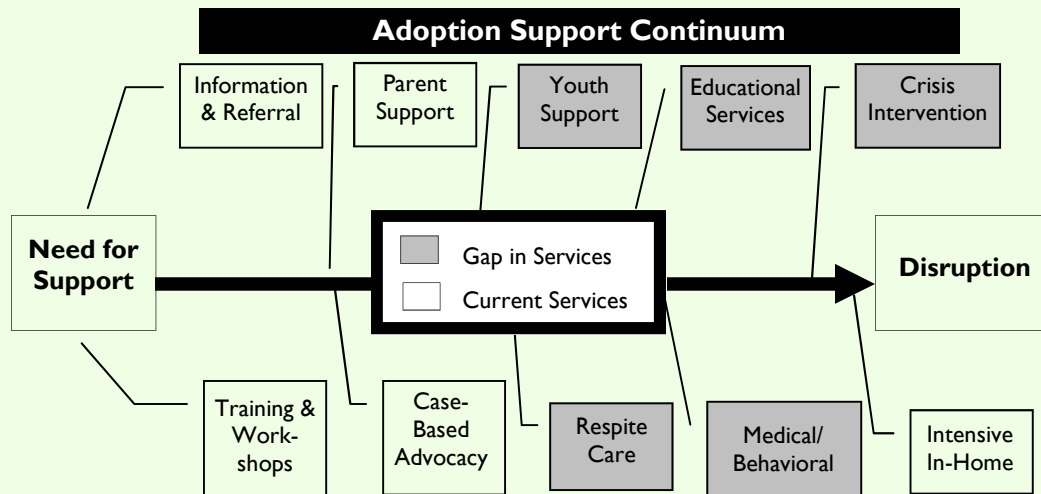
- tutoring (37%)
- family therapy (35%)
- educational advocacy (28%)
- support groups for youth (28%)
- respite care (25%)
- crisis counseling (22%)

To help fill these service gaps, many states have started Adoption Resource Centers. Alabama, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, and Oregon have highly-effective models, with up to a 92% success rate.

The Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition in conjunction with our Kansas City partner, the Midwest Foster Care and Adoption Association, have proposed a model for Missouri.

As outlined in the chart below, an Adoption Resource Center will provide parents with key supports:

1. Support groups for youth
2. Respite care
3. Educational services
4. Medical and Behavioral training for mental health professionals
5. Crisis intervention



We estimate that an Adoption Resource Center will cost approximately \$300,000 per year. Currently, we are working with the Missouri General Assembly, the Governor’s Office, and the Children’s Division to find funding for this program. It may take several legislative sessions to make it happen, but once it is in place, we hope that adoptive parents will have access to top-notch services.

To view the survey in its entirety, go to www.foster-adopt.org, click on “Helpful Links” and scroll down to “Advocacy.” You can keep up to date on our efforts to launch Adoption Resource Centers in Missouri by joining our free e-update service. Contact denisekelley@foster-adopt.org to join.

FACC News:

FACC Advisory Board

The Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition’s Advisory Board is compiled of area foster and adoptive parents. The board meets quarterly during the Training Extravaganza and is always open to new members.

You do not have to attend the Extravaganza to participate in the Advisory Board meetings. Child care and lunch are provided to participants. The next meeting will be held May 19th from 12:30-1:30.

For more information contact Denise Kelley at 314-FOSTER-3, 800-FOSTER-3, or denisekelley@foster-adopt.org.

We need your help!

FACC is currently looking for your feedback/assistance in two areas:

1. New Location for the Training Extravaganzas: the current location for the training is not accessible to those parents who are not able to walk up stairs—there is no lift or elevator at the current facility. It is important that we serve all our parents so we are on the look out for an accessible building to rent. Ideally, the new location will have handicap accessibility, eight classrooms, some of which include toys for the younger children, an equipped nursery, an auditorium for the adult sessions, and a cafeteria. We would also like a central location in Metro St. Louis. If you know of a facility that would fit our needs, please contact Rossi Summers at 314-FOSTER-3 or reshellesummers@foster-adopt.org and we’ll check it out!

2. FACC’s Advisory Board identified a lack of training on attachment issues. If you have attended a training on this topic that you think other parents would benefit from or if you have a contact of a trainer on this topic, please let us know. Contact Rossi Summers at 314-FOSTER-3, 800-FOSTER-3, or reshellesummers@foster-adopt.org.

Check out our on-line calendar!

FACC’s events, our community partner’s events, **AND** training opportunities are listed on-line. Go to www.foster-adopt.org and click on “Calendar” at the top of the toolbar.

FACC News Too:

Majic at the KidStore!

Radio station Majic 104.9 is partnering with FACC to help build community awareness of foster care issues and the various ways individuals can become involved in the life of child.

Join us at the KidStore on Thursday, May 10th when Tony Scott and the Breakfast Crew will broadcast their show live from 5:30 AM—10:00 AM.

You don't want to miss the games, food, fun, and surprises with Tony Scott and the Breakfast Crew. As if that wasn't enough . . . there will be deals galore for foster/adopt parents who come out early to shop at the KidStore!

Look for more information at www.kmjm.com or www.foster-adopt.org.

Spring has sprung at the KidStore!

The racks are full of warm weather clothing. Spring and Summer clothing of all types are available—including Spring jackets.

If you have not visited the KidStore lately, you must get there soon! Not only does the shop have a fresh new look, the quality of clothing (especially for teens) has **greatly** improved.

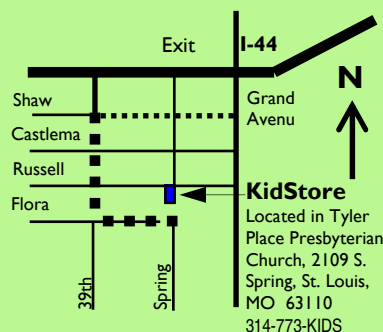
The KidStore is a resale shop open exclusively to foster/adopt, relative/kin caregivers, caseworkers, and GALs/CASAs. The store is open the 1st and 3rd Wednesday and every Saturday (except Holidays) from 9 am—noon. Questions are welcomed by Monyka, KidStore Manager, at 314-FOSTER-3 or 800-FOSTER-3.

The KidStore will be closed on Saturday, May 26th in observance of the Memorial Day weekend.

New shoppers, on your first visit

be sure to bring proof of your foster/adopt parent "status." Forms of identification include: foster parent identification card, copy of your license, a CD check stub, or documentation that you have physical custody of the child(ren). Your information will be kept on file for future visits.

Only 5 minutes from the Poplar Street Bridge!



A Place to Call Home

Below are children featured on KSDK NewsChannel 5's "A Place to Call Home." The segment airs on Tuesdays during the 6 PM news, Thursdays in the 5 AM hour, and Saturdays 9 AM broadcast.



Joseph aired April 24th, 26th, & 28th, 2007



Joseph is an 8-year-old boy in search of his forever family. Joseph is a bright boy with a sharp memory. He proved that at our recent outing at the St. Louis Science Center where he learned all about dinosaurs and fossils.

Joseph is described as "adventurous and creative." He is active in many community and church activities in his foster home and he enjoys scouting. He also loves animals. His foster parents say he is a good student and has made steady progress with love and consistency.

Joseph would do best with a strong, positive dad and a patient, loving mom. He would happily accept new siblings, but he wishes to continue contact with his biological sibs through letters, phone calls, and visits. For more information contact Jennifer Brownfield of Missouri Alliance at 573-338-3796 or jbrownfield@ma-cf.org

Arielle & Brandi airs May 1st, 3rd, & 5th, 2007



This beautiful pair of sisters is sure to steal our heart. Meet Arielle and Brandi. At the tender ages of six and four, these two are friendly and playful. They are described by their care givers as "bright" and "adventurous."

The girls are in need of a two parent family with lots of love and structure that will help them flourish. To learn more about this sweet sibling pair, contact Tonya Ehlert of Bringing Families Together at 314-731-3969 x 303 or tonyae@bringingfamiliesaltogether.com.

A Place to Call Home Fun Fact

Featuring kids on "A Place to Call Home" is FREE! For more information call Karen at 314-367-8373 x 35 or karenmorgan@foster-adopt.org.

May 19th Training Extravaganza Registration Form

PLEASE PRINT	Child's First Name	Age
Date: _____	_____	_____
Name: _____	_____	_____
Name: _____	_____	_____
Address: _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
Zip code: _____	_____	_____
Day Phone #: _____	_____	_____
Home #: _____	_____	_____
E-Mail Address: _____	_____	_____

Send registration form to: **FACC, ATTN: Training Extravaganza, 111 N. 7th Street, Suite 402, St. Louis, MO 63101** or fax it to 314-241-0715. No phone registration accepted.

SAVE THE DATE! 2007 Training Extravaganzas: 08/04 and 10/27.

In the next issue of News You Can Use:

"Dear Denise" is coming back! After a brief hiatus, the popular parent advice column will return in the May/June edition of "News You Can Use." Can't wait until then? View back issues of "Dear Denise" on our website, www.foster-adopt.org, click on "Helpful Links," and scroll down to "Dear Denise."