

Fostering Communications

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

March 2014

Upcoming Conference Information...

ND Family Based
Service Conference
March 25-28, 2014
Fargo, ND

Children's Justice
Symposium
July 21-24, 2014
Bismarck, ND

ND Foster & Adoptive
Family Conference
October 3-4, 2014
Fargo, ND



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Children and Family
Services Training Center
Department of Social Work
University of North Dakota

PRIDE Link

The PRIDE Model we follow highlights the competency of “*Meeting children's developmental needs, and addressing developmental delays*”. The development of a child can be hindered if learning disabilities are not addressed. Executive function deficits are quite common in children with both learning disabilities and ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). “Executive function skills allow us to control our impulses and emotions, be flexible, plan and organize. These cognitive skills are not only crucial for learning but play an important role in in day-to-day behavior. Children who struggle with executive function may have great difficulty behaving appropriately in classrooms, at home, and in other settings”. To better understand and support children when they lack certain executive skills, it helps to know about the underlying brain functions that go awry to create such challenges. Executive skill development is gradual and developmental, so some children need more attention and direction to develop self-control and sensitivity towards their own and other's feelings. The National Center for Learning Disabilities offers a variety of materials that can help one understand Executive function. The first link below is a descriptive video on Executive function. The second link is for an Ebook that is organized in three broad categories where executive skills come into play– learning, behavior and emotions, and social situations/relationships.

<http://www.ncld.org/learning-disability-resources/videos/video-executive-function>
<http://www.ncld.org/images/content/files/executive-function-101-ebook.pdf>

Fostering Self-Esteem

Young children face big challenges every day. Simple items such as getting dressed or picking up their toys can feel like big hurdles to little ones. These are typical milestones through a child's development. Children in foster care have a number of challenges that they have to overcome, which is why it is so important to help them build the skills they need to become resilient. “With self-confidence and the ability to express themselves, little ones will be able to handle whatever may come their way...” Sesame Street has created new resources to provide caregivers with daily activities and positive routines to help children (ages 2-5) build resiliency skills.

<http://www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/toolkits/challenges>

Appreciation Central

March is National Social Work Month. The Children and Family Services Training Center would like to extend our appreciation to the incredible Social Workers who advocate and help secure permanence for all of the youth in Foster Care throughout North Dakota.

Fostering Communications is published by the UND Children and Family Services Training Center under the sponsorship of the Division of Children and Family Services, North Dakota Department of Human Services. It is intended for all foster parents, foster care providers, and child welfare agencies.

Comments should be directed to the Training Center.

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ONE....



One tree can start a forest;
One smile can begin a
friendship;
One hand can lift a soul;
One word can frame a
goal;
One candle can wipe out
darkness;
One laugh can conquer
gloom;
One hope can raise your
spirits;
One touch can show you
care;
One life can make the
difference;
Be that ONE today!!

~Author unknown



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Survey

The CFSTC is once again asking for your input for this coming year's **Foster Parent Trainings** that are held across the state. We ask that you complete the following survey to help indicate what training needs you have. The information you provide will help us offer trainings within your region that are that are more specific to your needs. Please complete this short survey by April 15th.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FPTrainings>

Once the trainings have been scheduled, you can register online within the Training Calendar on the CFTSC website, as noted below:

<http://und.edu/centers/children-and-family-services-trainig-center/calender.php>

Every Kid Needs a Champion

Rita Pierson, a teacher for over 40 years, shares her message about how “every child deserves a champion, an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insist that they become the best they can possibly be”. The following video shares an inspirational message on how you can be that champion for the children in your care.

http://www.ted.com/speakers/rita_f_pierson

Warning Signs

Many teenagers turn to prescription drugs as they perceive them to be less dangerous than illegal drugs. Even in ND, prescription drug abuse is on the rise and the risks can be deadly. The following video highlights this risk through a personal story while offering tools to help one protect teens from entering into prescription drug use.

<http://notinmyhouse.drugfree.org/experts.aspx>

Lengthy information detailing how different types of prescription drugs are abused and examples of the side effects within the following link:

<http://www.drugfreeworld.org/drugfacts/prescription-drugs.html>

One way to keep your teen safe is being aware of the lingo that teens are using today. The following links offer examples today's slang:

<http://www.imom.com/parenting/tweens/parenting/safety/a-guide-to-teen-drug-slang/>

<https://www.baylorhealth.com/PhysiciansLocations/Dallas/About/BaylorDallasNews/Pages/Decoding%20Drug%20Slang.aspx>

Here is a drug guide for parents to learn the facts about a variety of drugs:

<http://theparenttoolkit.org/media/detail/drug-guide-for-parents-learn-the-facts-to-keep-your-teen-safe>



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**North Dakota
Foster &
Adoptive
Association
News...**



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Someday, One of My Children is Going to Invent Faster Than Light Speed Travel

By: Jim Hooge, President of the ND Foster and Adoptive Association

You are probably familiar with the terms: Hyperspace, hyperdrive, warp drive, tesseract, worm holes, even suspended animation. There are probably many others, because every science fiction story that involves travel across the vast distances of the universe must have some technique to shorten the time of the trip. Either the writer shortens the time of travel or lengthens the life span of the protagonists. Someday, one of my kids will invent this. I don't know who, but I hope.

I mentioned this idea to two of my children, who are in their twenty-somethings. One said, "Oh, you aren't really talking about inventing that, you really mean that you hope for your children to have stable jobs, have good relationships, and are able to view themselves as successful?" Another said "So, what will you think if one of your kids really does invent such space travel, but does not have the other stuff, like a stable job, and good relationships, will you still view her as successful?" I was surprised how quickly the focus came to standards and particularly the possibility of missing the standards. How quickly it comes to pleasing or disappointment.

We naturally have a lot of expectations and standards for our children. We measure behavior and accomplishments, we reward some, and we consequence others. We are taught new techniques as parents to achieve the goals we or others set for our kids. We look at the statistics for shooting percentages, or running time around the track. We are delighted when they make their first basket and then turn and look for us in the crowd. We set curfews and remind children to brush their teeth. We hope that their teeth last a long time and don't cause pain. We want them to be polite and yet to be aggressive enough to make their wants and needs known to others. We do genuinely want them to be successful.

But I think there is another job for us as parents, and that is to Hope for our kids. Hope with a capital H. Hope is one of the 'big assignments', but it is something we may not think about much. I hope for my children. I hope for them today, and I hope for them much farther into the future. I think there is a need for this that does not have specific steps or measureable outcomes. It is simply Hope. It is often a challenge to Hope, because there are many difficulties. We can get blocked by those difficulties. The immediacy of those problems can cloud our view. And yet there needs to be an overarching hope in us that is perceived by those in our care. Hope believes all things. I can even hope that one of my children with help us all to travel very fast and go very far. So I will hope for my kids...and I won't be disappointed, because that is something I choose to do for them.

Do Well

Jim (jim43hooge@gmail.com)