

Fostering Communications

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

January 2015

Upcoming
Conferences...

ND Family Based
Services Association
Conference
April 8-10, 2015
Fargo, ND

ND Children & Family
Services Conference
July 27-30, 2015
Bismarck, ND



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PRIDE Link

The PRIDE Model we follow highlights the competency of “*Meeting children’s developmental needs, and addressing developmental delays*”. We understand that when children experience trauma it may impact their overall growth and development. It can be hard at times to comprehend how a child’s physical age is not necessarily a fair way to configure our expectations. We often have behavioral expectations based solely on how old a child may appear. This can be tough for us to grasp personally and even more so for community members whom may not understand the impact of trauma, such as within a child’s school or childcare center. Social Worker and Adoptive Mother, Eileen Mayer's Pasztor offers us a wonderful tool that is often used during the PRIDE Pre-Service training. The “Jigsaw Puzzle Child” tool can be used to fully grasp where to begin with a child. One of the most important pieces to understanding human development is that we progress through certain stages and that no stage can be skipped, thus as caregivers we need to begin caring for the child at their emotional state of development, not simply their chronological age. This can also be a reminder when working with a child’s birth family as the birth parents may have experienced a variety of traumatic events while growing up, impacting their emotional and social development.

[The Jigsaw Puzzle Child](#)

Parent Toolbox

As a caregiver in today’s society, one can never have enough resources. Parenting today takes being active to a whole new level with the wave of technology and risks present. “Parents LEAD” (Listen, Educate, Ask, Discuss) is a wonderful resource that is produced right here in ND. It offers different tips and tools that can be utilized from a caregiver standpoint as well as activities for the entire family. Each of these are broken down by the varying age groups such as toddler/preschool all the way through college/young adult. One of the many great resources offers insight into how we can keep communication open and non-judgmental when talking with the youth we care for.

[Door Openers Vs. Door Slammers](#)

You can search more within Parents LEAD on [Facebook](#) or their main website at: <http://www.parentslead.org/>

Being Present

It is wonderful to have a number of therapeutic tools to have at the tips of our hands when caring for any child, and even more so when caring for a child who has experienced trauma. Sometimes we forget that the best tool we have is simply the tool of “being present”! Adoptive mother of five, Christine Moers reminds us through her self-disclosing video how just being there is enough.

[The Power of Being Present](#)

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 **Regional 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 March 1st.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/fosterparenttraining2015>

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-training-center/calendar.php?sdate=1422856800>

Health 101

"Runny noses. Stomach aches. An itchy rash. These are a few of the typical ailments that occur in children everywhere. But what if something more serious develops, like a fever above 103 degrees or a stiff neck? You may not know whether to rush to the emergency room, call the doctor, or simply wait it out at home." It is hard to honestly know what to do, so the following article from WebMD offer serious symptoms that we can NOT ignore:

5 Serious Symptoms Never to Ignore

Playtime Parenting

"Playful Parenting is a way to enter your child's world, on your child's terms, to enhance closeness and confidence". Play is so much more than just fun for children. Sometimes when your child is challenging you, they just need to release some energy. Hugging, tickling, and running around can help your child release that energy, and you can use that opportunity for play to show your child just how much you love them. When you are engaged and being present in play, it is a "hands-on" way to establish a deeper connection and strengthen the attachment relationship.

Games for Connection and Emotional Intelligence

Strong Foster Families

The decision to become a foster family is incredible to say the least, which after the fact can become a bit overwhelming to balance. The following link by Carrie Craft offers tips to use over the span of four weeks to learn how to become a "strong foster family". These tips fit well for those who are just starting off within their foster care journey as well as those who have are very much experienced at fostering.

4 weeks of Tips



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North Dakota Foster & Adoptive Association News...

If you would like to join the Association or learn more, feel free to contact Jim at: jim43hooge@gmail.com



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“That look”

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

I've long enjoyed watching children's activities when other parents are observing, particularly when it is early in the child's involvement in that type of event; a team game, musical program, or personal performance when the child is very nervous about the possible outcome. There is a point when the child makes a basket, finishes a piano recital song, or leaves the quiz table when they may look furtively at their parents, grandparents or other significant adult in their life. It may be only a quick glance, but it seems most effective when the parent is looking back and there is a momentary connection.

I have always thought that this was representing a bonding moment; that this is a time when the connection between parent and child is built. I think now that I am a little behind.

At the recent NDFAPA conference in Fargo, while listening to Dr. Perry present on brain development and relationships, I was standing in the back of the room. (For those of you who were also there, that was just *after* I got in trouble for being a distraction near the front of the room – I am *sooo* sorry :) In the back, I watched a mother with a child who was perhaps two years old and was exploring her world. The child would walk some distance away and interact briefly with someone else nearby, but then move back to be with the mother for reassurance. Soon, the child would again move away to explore something different. For this child, I now understand this in the terms of regulation and disregulation; the process of learning how the world works while within the safe zone of her parent. The child was able to move out and explore until the newness finally became so unsettling and she was 'disregulated'. She then needed to go back into safety and become 'regulated' again. This really is the same thing that happens when our children accomplish a test and then look to us. This is equally about separation and independence in addition to the bonding process. I remember talking about this with a friend while at a basketball game. His son made a basket and immediately looked at his Dad. I told my friend that interaction is one of the rewards I get from working with children in our home. Those 'looks' are about reward and acknowledgement, but also about the ability of the child to take the next step that may be farther away.

I also discussed this recently with my 28 year old daughter who for many years has alternated between being home on the farm helping with tasks here, and then getting on an airplane to go somewhere in the Middle East. She went at first for archaeology digs and more recently for a civilian job that has her deployed for months at a time into areas that have uncertain political and social situations. I get disregulated. This has been going on for many years, and I remember the times that we would take her to the airport, understanding that she may be on multiple flights and we might not hear from her for a time. I recall having goodbyes, and then just as she was ready to pass through the security area and leave our sight, she would look back at us for one last glance. That was always reassuring. I was regulated.

A couple of weeks ago, I talked with my daughter about a more recent occasion when we had our hugs and farewells, and then as she got to the barrier, she did not look back. I realize that this is just another step in the growing and maturing. She told me now that with all those times of leaving, she always knew that we were back here and ready and willing to help her if and when the need arose.

I wish you all well as you endeavor to be that stabilizing factor in your children's lives.

Do Well-Jim