



# Foster Family Service Newsletter

## Fire in S. Lake Tahoe

Throughout the last week of June our families and staff in S. Lake Tahoe were drastically impacted by a forest fire. Many were evacuated, and one foster family lost their home to the fire. Shockingly, the family that lost their home was evacuated a second time from the home they moved to! Fortunately, no one was injured, and all the families showed remarkable commitment to the children in their care throughout this ordeal.

This disaster tested our agency's staff and families. During the

critical stages of the fire no one could get up to Tahoe to offer assistance to the families, and our Tahoe staff were dealing with their own homes, loved ones and pets. But true to the independent spirit of Tahoe residents, our families and staff pulled together, maintained close communication amongst each other and FFS headquarters.

Each of these families, and both of our Tahoe social workers, must be acknowledged for their commitment to foster care!

**July 2007**

**Wendy Knutson , Editor**

*The Delora Corporation  
dba  
**Foster Family Service**  
&  
**Adoptions by  
Foster Family Service***

***Executive Director  
John Johnson M.S.W.,  
Psy.D***

***Board of Directors***

*Arthur Magaña, Ph.D.  
On Sabbatical*

***Barbara Hoffman***

***Dave Soper, MA***

***Steven Shortes***

***Bill & Kathie Hughes***

## Little Words With a Lot of Meanings

The words listed below are very important to use with children, particularly kids who've experienced lots of negative interactions prior to coming in to foster care. However, with all kids it is equally important to use words that describe good behaviors, rather than using the words to describe the child as a person. **For example**, it is best to say "Spectacular job" rather than saying "You are spectacular." The reason for this distinction is that we not only use words to recognize good behavior, but also to recognize when a child does something bad. So, adult caregivers must practice using words specific to the behavior, rather than using words to describe a child's person or character.

Wow	Way to go	Super	You're special	Outstanding
Excellent	Great	Good	Neat	Well done
Remarkable	Looking good	You're on top of it	Beautiful	Now you're flying
Nice work	Super start	Fantastic	I'm proud of you	I knew you could
Good job	That's incredible	Hot dog	Dynamite	You're beautiful
You're unique	Nothing can stop you now	Good for you	I like you	You're a winner
Remarkable job	Beautiful work	Spectacular	You're terrific	You're darling



## Important Things To Remember



It is important to always keep in mind that fostering children is like being in a fish bowl...kids in foster care are technically wards of the court, their biological parents have the legal right to give permission for lots of things, and people are frequently judging your actions as a foster parent. With this in mind, please remember the following important things with children in your care:

1. Foster parents DO NOT have education rights, so you cannot independently arrange for student study teams, individualized education plans (IEPs), or special educational plans. Foster parents are often the first to identify special learning needs for children, so they SHOULD communicate this to their FFS social worker, who can work with you and the county to arrange for education-related interventions.
2. Foster parents CAN NOT change or cut the hair of foster children. Biological parents usually need to be consulted prior to changing or cutting foster children's hair. Foster parents SHOULD obtain permission from their FFS social worker and the county if a child's hair needs to be cut.
3. Foster parents CAN NOT give foster children over-the-county medications. Prior approval from their FFS social worker, and possibly the county as well SHOULD be obtained first.
4. Foster parents DO NOT have the right to baptize a foster child. Prior approval MUST BE obtained from their FFS social worker, who must first obtain written authorization from the county and court.
5. Foster parents SHOULD NOT initiate contact with placing county social workers. Rather, the FFS social worker SHOULD BE the 'go between' for foster parents to communicate with the county, so that FFS has first-hand information relevant to referrals and for children already in the agency's care. If a county social worker contacts a foster parent, the FFS social worker should be notified as soon as possible.
6. Foster parents SHOULD NOT say negative things about biological parents, even if the foster child seems to be inviting such comments. Such statements can be detrimental to the child's reunification with their family of origin, as well as harmful to the child's emotional health. IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER that children are in our care because their biological family was unable to keep them safe, AND, the purpose of child welfare services is to reunify children with their family whenever possible.
7. DO BE SURE TO TRUST your skills as a Certified Foster Parent! While there is a litany of "don'ts," there are far more "do's." Remember that successful foster parenting is a partnership between foster parents and the FFS agency, based on trust, open communication, and mutual respect

## U.S. Presidents Involved in Foster and Kinship Care

**Andrew Jackson** - 7th President

**Connection:** Adoption, kinship care, unofficial foster care

Jackson and his wife, Rachel, adopted his wife's nephew (Andrew, Jr.) in 1809, and raised three other nephews and an orphaned boy.

**Herbert Hoover** - 31st President

**Connection:** Kinship care

Hoover's father died when he was six and his mother when he was nine. He, his brother, and sister were separated and raised by uncles. Hoover was sent from Iowa to live with an uncle in Oregon

**Ronald W. Reagan** - 40th President

**Connection:** Adoption

Reagan and his first wife, actress Jane Wyman, adopted a son, Michael. In an interview, Michael mentioned that his

father supported his search for his birth family. Reagan's second wife, Nancy, was adopted as a child by her stepfather.

**George H. W. Bush** - 41st President

**Connection:** Adoption

Two of Bush's grandchildren were adopted. His son and daughter-in-law, Marvin and Margaret, have adopted a boy and girl. (Of course, this connection also extends to George W., and sister-in-law Margaret)

**William J. Clinton** - 42nd President

**Connection:** Stepparent adoption

Born William Jefferson Blythe, IV, Clinton's father was killed in a car accident shortly before he was born. His mother remarried in 1950, and he was adopted by his stepfather.



## We Are Proud To Say... We Have Great Kids & Great Parents Too!

We are **happy to hear** that **Maurico R.** in the *Cox CFH* won \$400.00 in an essay contest at Brock Elliot the essay is title "A Great Achievement by a Great American".

**Congratulations** to **Olivia B.** and **Julia B.** of the *Vidal CFH* for maintaining excellent grades throughout the school year.

**Congratulations** to **Jovantae M.** of the *Hills CFH* for

making the most progress this academic year.

**Hooray!** For **Summer R.** and **Brayden F.** for graduating from kindergarten and to **Christina L.** and **Deshawn-tae L.** for graduating from pre-school.

We are all **very impressed** with **James B.** of the *Collins CFH* for **graduating** from the 8th grade on the **honor role.**

A **Special Thank You** to the **Cruz CFH** for transitioning Brian C. to his adoptive home. It takes a **special commitment** to the child to make that transition smooth and we appreciate your flexibility and the love you gave to Brian while he was with you.



### THIRSTY?

Before prolonged physical activity, your child should be well hydrated. During activities, periodic drinking should be enforced. Once they get focused on playing, they may not realize they are thirsty. A good rule is to drink the water even if you aren't' thirsty, about every 20minutes, 5oz of cold tap water for a child of 88lbs and 9oz for an adolescent of 132lbs.

## The Welcome Mat Is Out For...

**The Woods Family Home**  
**The Gillard Family Home**  
**The Manuel Family Home**  
**The McLane Family Home**

# WOW!

We are always interested in certifying new homes. If you know of anyone who may be interested have them call their local office.

Potential Foster Parents can call one of our offices or find a [Pre-Application](#) at our website:

[www.fosterfamilyservice.org](http://www.fosterfamilyservice.org)

### Foster Family Service Office Numbers:

Sacramento (916) 487-2111

Cameron Park (530) 676-6226

Lake Tahoe (530) 544-2111

Stockton (209) 644-8631

Santa Rosa (707) 528-2115

Oroville (530) 533-1576

## Notes From Our Director

*Readers will note that this newsletter is not as full of information as usual. This is due to our relocating the agency headquarters from Placerville to Cameron Park. This move has been more time consuming and difficult than initially anticipated, given that we were in Placerville since the agency's inception in 1989. Lots of stuff accumulates in 18 years of business!!!*

*I also want to let readers know that we will be starting our first-ever formal fundraising efforts in July. I have enlisted the technical expertise of Raj Ram-bob of Lotus Consulting, and he is currently surveying all FFS staff and conducting interviews with business leaders. Our initial fundraising targets will be to augment services for independent living skills and adoptions. Each of these areas are currently not funded adequately to deliver the services we see as important, so fundraising poses an exciting opportunity for the agency.*

*I hope that all our readers have a safe, healthy and happy summer!!!*

*John*

John C. Johnson, M.S.W., Psy.D., Executive Director

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## Training Corner ...Check with your local office for upcoming trainings.

### South Lake Tahoe:

The next training for the South Lake Tahoe office is on July 16<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Al Tahoe Boys and Girls Club. The topic is GLBT Issues in Foster Care and the instructor is Morhian Martin. On-site childcare is provided by Foster Kinship Care Education for potty trained children. See you there!

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## Refer-A-Family

Foster Family Service Foster Parents who successfully recruit new homes or if we conduct a 'meet & greet' with a potential family you referred. This is a great program and many of you have already received **\$300** from a single referral!

**\$35 for the CFH when they refer a potential family and we conduct an initial 'meet & greet.'**

**\$100 for the CFH that refers a new family, and that family takes their first placement.**

**\$200 for the CFH, when the new family they referred has a placement for six months.**

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