



Foster Family Service Newsletter

“Prudent Parent Standard”

...finding a babysitter gets easier.

By Erin Guzman, MA

How it used to be: Anytime you used a babysitter, they had to be a fingerprinted babysitter in your home or a licensed childcare provider.

What's new: CCL has changed their babysitting regulations, in an attempt to help foster children (and foster families) to have more normal lives. When you need a “short term, occasional babysitter”, such as for a DR. appointment or trip to the store, or even if foster parents want to have a date night, fingerprinted and licensed care is not required. You can use a neighbor, friend or family member that you would choose for your own children, and it can be either in their home or yours. It could even be a neighborhood teenager, as long as he or she is able to care for the foster child's special needs

(such as nutritional or behavioral needs), and the babysitter is not one your own foster children.

CCL dictates that you also must give the following information to the short-term babysitter:

1. Information about the child's emotional, behavioral, medical or physical conditions, if any, necessary to provide care for the child during the time the child is being supervised by the babysitter.
2. Any medication that should be given during the time the child is being supervised by the babysitter.
3. Emergency contact information that is valid during the time the child is being supervised by the babysitter

For daily childcare or babysitting that lasts more than 24 hours, you still need to use a licensed childcare provider (i.e. daycare, after-school program, Head Start, or Certified Foster Home).

Once again we would like to send our thoughts to the residents of Paradise and the surrounding areas of Butte County effected by the recent fires. Our hearts go out to you and your neighbors and we wish you the courage and strength to rebuild your communities.



August 2008

Wendy Knutson , Editor

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Parent Project® Being Offered by FFS

In Late January FFS sent Nicole Musil and Sandy Hankins to a extensive training to become certified facilitators to teach the **Parent Project**. We now have a better opportunity to help our foster families as well as families in the community to deal with strong willed and tough children.

Curriculum: This training program requires instructors to be certified, and to have two instructors at each class. Each family unit that attends must have a 216-page parent guide book. Classes progress in sequence, so participants must commit to the entire program up front. Instructors utilize various combinations of written material, video, classroom exercises, homework, lecture, and a significant amount of sharing among the participants to impart knowledge and practical skills.

Note: This is a 10-16 week (1 mtg a week) parent behavior modification training program designed specifically for parents or caregivers of special needs children. The curriculum teaches concrete strategies for the identification, intervention and prevention of the most significant problem behaviors.

Classes have begun at our Cameron Park office and there are more being scheduled for **Cameron Park, So. Lake Tahoe and Amador County**. If you have any further questions or would like more information on the Parent Project please feel free to call Nicole Musil at (530) 676-6226 or Sandy Hankins at (209) 223-3691.

From TADA The Attention Deficit Association- ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER is generally seen as a NEGATIVE thing.... But you can LOVE the strengths that are associated with it...	
Disorder Perspective	ADD as a Natural Adaptive Trait "The Hunter"
Distractible.	Constantly monitoring environment
Attention span is short, but can become intensely focused for long periods of time.	Able to throw themselves into the chase on a moment's notice.
Poor planner, disorganized and impulsive (makes snap decisions).	Flexible; ready to change strategy quickly.
Distorted sense of time: unaware of how long it will take to do something.	Tireless: capable of sustained drives, but only when "hot on the trail" of some goal.
Impatient.	Results oriented. Acutely aware of whether the goal is getting closer <i>now</i> .
Doesn't convert words into concepts adeptly, and vice versa. May or may not have a reading disability.	Visual/concrete thinker, clearly seeing a tangible goal even if there are no words for it.
Has difficulty following instructions.	Independent.
Daydreamer.	Bored by mundane tasks; enjoy new ideas, excitement, "the hunt," being hot on the trail.
Acts without considering consequences.	Willing and able to take risks and face danger.
Lacking in the social graces.	"No time for niceties when there are decisions to be made!"

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



Cynthia and Rudy from the *Dillon CFH* went to Basketball Camp this summer and had a great time.

And **CONGRATULATIONS** to Rudy for winning the 3 on 3 trophy for the entire camp!

YEAH for our Parents!

A big **THANK YOU** to the **Musil** and **Bahr CFH's** for taking in Tahoe children. We appreciate all

the driving you've done!

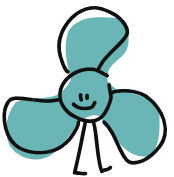
And we appreciate all the families who took **emergency and/or short-term placements** this past month. Just to name a few: **Holguin, Battista, Musil, Bahrs, Dillon, Johnson, Watts, Marin, Wells.**

Thank you all for giving us someone to be proud of!

A special Thank You

To John Hiatt CFH for including several of our foster youth in the "Telos Youth Outpost" campout at Loon Lake. They were instructed on canoeing, water safety, climbing and repelling. John went above and beyond to involve our agency and we appreciate his time and effort.

GOFRC Reaching Out During Fires



Thank goodness none of our Butte County families lost their homes! Two families residing in the town of Palermo had a close call. Shereley Smith, administrator in our Oroville office, was evacuated several times and initially was told her residence was destroyed; this turned out not to be the case, but the majority of her neighborhood was lost.

The fires across the state have been absolutely terrifying. In Butte County the fires hit closer to home than I ever would have expected! And through it all our wonderful foster parents assured that children in their care were safe and nurtured. Moreover, the Family Resource Center we've established in Oroville was availed to the community as both a cooling center and as a Red Cross evacuation site/shelter.

A special thanks goes out to our Oroville team of foster parents and social workers for facilitating these community supports in the face of personal worries and displacement.



The Welcome Mat Is Out For...

The Stewart Family Home

The Goss Family Home

The Johnson Family Home

The Gomez Family Home

The Scherbert Family Home

The Sturgell Family Home

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

Welcome

Foster Family Service Office Numbers:

Sacramento (916) 487-2111

Cameron Park (530) 676-6226

Lake Tahoe (530) 544-2111

Stockton (209) 474-1549

Santa Rosa (707) 576-0522

Oroville (530) 533-1576

Jackson (209) 223-3691

Notes From Our Director

In several prior newsletters I have made it a point to discuss Child Welfare Redesign, as its' implementation has had a dramatic impact on placements for some time. We continue to see the Redesign play out, so I wanted to recap where Foster Family Service stands. As readers will recall, all 58 CA counties were required by the CA Department of Social Services to implement written Redesign improvement plans by 9/04 that described steps targeting their way forward. Statewide all foster care agencies began feeling the caseload and fiscal impact by mid-2005. At FFS we've experienced the impact of redesign ever since 11/05. The sequence of events is as follows:

1. Up until 10/05 the agency had a very strong and steady caseload, averaging about 183 children in care;
2. From 11/05 to 6/06 we began to experience what I'd describe as a transition period, where are caseload began to fluctuate between 164 to 173 children in care;
3. Between the months of 7/06 to 11/07 we saw our caseload steadily drop to a low point of 113 children in care;
4. From 12/07 through 6/08 we've experienced a consistently increasing caseload, up to a high point of 152 children in care—which is the highest it's been since June 2006;
5. By mid-July '08 the agency-wide caseload has increased further to 162 children in care;
6. All indicators demonstrate that our agency-wide caseload will continue to grow from this point forward; &
7. Financially, these volatile caseload changes have negatively impacted the agency's monetary savings.
 - o Ideally, non-profit businesses should have at least three months of savings in order to be prepared for unexpected downturns. Agencies like ours are recommended to maintain such a savings to weather unexpected cash flow problems such as counties not paying us timely for the children in our care.
 - o Between the agency's start in 1989 and June '06 we gradually built up cash savings to cover between two and three months of business.
 - o The CA legislature has refused to provide a cost-of-living increase to foster agencies—the last increase agencies were given was in 2001.
 - o Between July '06 and June '08 this decreased by about half, so that we can cover one month of business. This decrease was largely a result of Foster Family Service's decision to increase clinical services to children in our care, as the common types of behavioral and emotional problems seen in our foster child placement referrals have become dramatically more severe through Redesign.

In spite of the difficulties posed by Child Welfare Redesign, Foster Family Service has weathered the changes and increased our ability to serve special needs children. With our increased clinical services, as well as our adoptions program, we are able to take more referrals for placement than ever.

Thanks to our committed foster parents and staff! Foster Family Service is very fortunate to have such a wonderful team.

John

Upcoming Trainings: + Saturdays!

SATURDAY August 9th, Cameron Park Office, **Understanding & Changing Behavior**

SATURDAY September 27th, Howe Park, **All Day!** Lots of hours. & Childcare

SATURDAY October 18th, Cameron Park Office, **The Terrible Teens** and a teen panel.

Cameron Park	8/9 “Understanding and Changing Behaviors” training ; from 10:00 to 3:00; five hours of training credit, with lunch provided (no child care at this time, but we'll work on it). Please RSVP Nicole 530-676-6226 8/14 Family Picnic in Coloma 4:30-7:30 Invites to come soon!
Sacramento	8/2 Saturday , 10-12pm & 8/5 Tues. 6-8pm 2hr meetings for potential Foster Parents and new applicants. To provide basic information and a Q&A opportunity. Anyone who needs training hours is welcome to attend! No childcare available. RSVP Dr. Magaña, 916.459.6077
Lake Tahoe	8/25 FKCE Training at Al Tahoe Boys & girls Club. “Reactive Attachment Disorder” 5:30 to 8:30pm. Snacks & Childcare provided. Please RSVP.
Stockton	To be announced
Santa Rosa	To be announced
Oroville	August: Resiliency/Kids in Foster Care September: Annual Picnic!