



Foster Family Service Newsletter

Making a Difference is What You Do

An old man walked along a shore littered with thousands of starfish, beached and dying after a storm. A young man was picking them up and flinging them back into the ocean. "Why do you bother?" the old man scoffed. "Surely you cannot expect to save enough to make a difference." The young man picked up another starfish and sent it spinning back to the water.

"I made a difference to that one".



Summer Heat and Your Car



*Even on a mild day at **73 degrees** outside, an SUV can heat up to **100 degrees in 10 minutes**, to **120 in just 30 minutes**. As the outdoor temperature rises, so does the buildup of heat within a vehicle. **At 90 degrees outside, the vehicle can heat up to 160 degrees within just a few minutes.**

***Cracking the window** to let air in **does very little** to protect kids from the effects of heat buildup in a parked car. When the outside temperature is **93 degrees** with a window down 1 inch, the temperature inside a car may reach **125 degrees in just 20 minutes** and approximately **140 degrees in 40 minutes.**

***Heat exhaustion** can occur at temperatures above 90 degrees and **heat stroke** can occur when temperatures

rise above 105 degrees. If not treated immediately, heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke.

Never leave a child alone in or around cars: Your child can set the car in motion or Your Child Can Be Abducted!

Early in June one of our teen foster youth suffered 2nd degree burns on his face, shoulders and arms as a result of prolonged sun exposure coupled with his ADHD prescription medication. We learned that his prescription, along with several other types of drugs, dramatically increased his susceptibility to sunburn. If you have children in your care that take prescribed medications please read about any side effects, such as susceptibility to sunburn. If you have any questions about this please ask your pharmacist or social worker, and they'll find the information for you.

July 2008

Wendy Knutson, Editor

*The Delora Corporation
dba
Foster Family Service
Lic#097003903
&
**Adoptions by
Foster Family Service**
Lic#347003522*

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

Board of Directors

***Dave Soper, MA
Steven Shortes
Bill Hughes, MA
Kathe Hughes, MS
Margaret Bertschi, MA***

*Foster Parent
Representative:
Nicole Musil*

*Foster/Adoptive Child
Representatives:
**Amy Riffey
Bob Riffey***



Compliance Corner

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

As an important reminder to us all: Please remember that all Agency staff and foster parents are expected, in all situations, to provide the highest level of care and supervision possible to the children in our care. Regardless of a foster child's age, they cannot be left unsupervised at home, at school, or any other location without an authorized adult or child care worker. If a situation were to ever arise where a foster child's whereabouts is unknown—even for a brief period of time—foster parents must immediately notify the Agency, as well as take diligent steps to engage assistance in locating the child.

Settling Arguments

Here are some tips on settling arguments/ disagreements for adults and kids.

- + Identify the problem. Focus on the problem, not the person.
 - + Keep an open mind. Things aren't always the way you think.
 - + Be honest. Tell the other person how you feel.
 - + Listen carefully. Take time to hear what the other person is saying. Put yourself in his or her shoes.
 - + Brainstorm solutions.
- + If you anticipate a difficult situation, plan ahead. Think of alternatives that can peacefully resolve a dispute.
 - + Postpone decisions if possible. Give yourself time to calm down and avoid overreacting
 - + Be open to compromise.
 - + Consider avoiding the conflict. Sometimes it's not worth it to argue.
 - + Ask someone else to listen(a Social Worker or other family member) to both sides and help work out a reasonable, non-violent solution.



18 years old?

It's Your Right To VOTE In The Next Election!

Ask your Social Worker or Foster Parent to help you get a form. Registration forms are available at your local Post Office or Library or online.

You may register to vote in California if:

- *You are a United States citizen
- *You are a resident of California
- *You are at least 18 years of age (or will be by the date of the next election)



To vote in the **November 3rd Presidential Election** you will need to have your registration **postmarked by October 20, 2008.**

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

The **Weldon Family**, including **Joshua C.** were well represented with a cheerful picture in Sacramento Magazine's story on The Northern District Baptist Association Women's Auxiliary's 25th annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Prayer Breakfast.

The **Gilbert CFH** was kind enough to take their whole household on vacation to Maui. They all had a great time and wished they could stay longer. **Thank you for your generosity!**

Congratulations 2008 Graduates !

High School:

Jimmy T.

Christopher W.

Alex R..

Jr. High:

Anthony F.

Rebecca W.

Trey D.

Preschool:

Codye M.

Madison S.

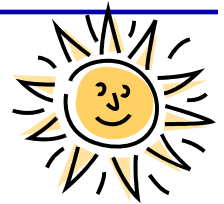


Greater Oroville Family Resource Center (FRC)

*Our Oroville FFS office has been working on this project for quite some time and with the help of FFS and Social Worker and FRC Co- Director, **Kathy Ryon** the doors will be officially open on July 1st, with a ribbon cutting by the Chamber of Commerce on August 6th 5:30-7pm. A community open house is scheduled on August 13th from 11:30 – 2 pm. We are very excited about this endeavor. **Congratulations to ALL Involved!***

Summer Safety Points

- ✓ Apply **sunscreen** at least 30 minutes before going outside, and use sunscreen even on cloudy days. The SPF should be at least 15. Be sure to apply enough sunscreen - about one ounce per sitting for a young adult. Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or after swimming or sweating.
- ✓ Make sure the **life jacket** is the right size for your child. The jacket should not be loose. It should always be worn as instructed with all straps belted. Blow-up water wings, toys, rafts, and air mattresses should never be used as life jackets or life preservers.
- ✓ **Five gallon buckets** pose a drowning hazard for young children, especially those between 7 years and 15 months of age.



The Welcome Mat Is Out For...

The Larson Family Home

The Johnson 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

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

Thanks to all of you who attended our agency-wide training on Saturday, June 7th in Sacramento. It was an informative day, as well as a pleasure to see so many of our families together in one location.

As I'd mentioned in last months' newsletter, thanks to all the families who took the time to complete and submit the surveys sent out with the May checks. Of our approximate 90 families I received 23 completed surveys, which is a 26% response rate. Typical of surveys such as this, 30-40% response is expected, so we are a bit disappointed that more families did not respond. The responses received provide valuable information for us, so I wanted to share the key points. The purpose of the 10-question survey was to check in with our foster parents as to how they rate our level of service according to a rating scale, where 1=lowest negative rating and 10=highest positive rating. Across all offices our average scores ranged from 8.17 to 9.27, which suggests that overall we are providing a good level of service. However, some individual office scores did include very low scores, particularly in the areas of "Consistency of home visits," "Regularity of agency training" and "effectiveness of staff to explore solutions to behavior problems/recommendations/interventions."

We have already begun attending to these negative ratings, with the goal of improving our level of customer service to each of our foster families. We will be surveying our families again this time next year to see if we are really making improvements. Please know that we want to hear from you whenever we fall short of your expectations; without open communication and trust we have little to work with!

John

Keeping Up Those Training Hours!

By FFS Social Work Supervisor, Erin Guzman, MA



I attended the CCL conference this year, and have been updating our agency policies to match up with changes at CCL. If you have any questions after today, I'm usually in the Santa Rosa Office (707)576-0522. We've seen some tightening and loosening in regulations from CCL this year, kind of like the bad news and the good news. Let's start with the tightening-up of rules around foster parent training.

How it used to be: We worked hard to help foster parents complete their annual requirement of **12 foster parent training hours per year**, but there was no consequence for being incomplete. We know our foster parents work very hard, and we don't like to penalize them.

What's new: A consequence for incomplete training hours. We had a "Finding" in our audit from the state in 2006, showing that too many foster families did not complete their **twelve hours** of foster parent training in 2006, and we were directed that we must write up a "Plan of Corrections" for incompleteness of training hours, and levy a consequence for a failure to correct the incompleteness. So, we began announcing at the beginning of last year, at the Town Hall Meetings and in the newsletter, that the **\$200.00** fines would be coming in 2008, for incomplete hours in 2007. We are now in the process of trying to help families correct

Cameron Park	July: 9th 6-8pm Orientation & CCL; 7/23 6-8pm Foster Childs Journey Through the Court System.
Other offices	July TBA/
Lake Tahoe	July 14th, 5:30-8:30pm at the Al Tahoe Boys and Girls Club. Planning for Permanency: Working with the system in El Dorado. Free childcare available
Saturday Trainings	7/12 9:30am-2:30pm Saturday! Early Childhood Development & Grief and Loss.; 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).

their "Plan of Corrections" so that we can avoid levying any fines.

So, come to the trainings, and let us help you get your twelve hours per year! Remember that you can work with your FFS social worker to get credit for hours when you can not get to our trainings (or would like to learn from outside sources) such as trainings at your local Junior College (which are often free), or on-line courses, or reading a book or watching a video.