

NEP-TUNES



A Monthly Newsletter from Nepenthean Homes

A Caring, Full Service Foster Family Agency

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by Richard Farlinger

As I'm sure you are aware, the California budget saga has ended. At least for the 2009/2010 fiscal year. The result to Foster Family Agencies in the stats is a 10% reduction in rate paid to the agencies for care of clients. Our agency plan, as briefed in last month's Newsletter, is to make necessary cuts in administrative costs and bolster the efforts made to seek grants, invest in new programs, recruit qualified foster parents, and increase services to counties. No cuts will be made to our foster parents' monthly care reimbursements, and no cuts will be made on clothing allowances paid by the counties. Be aware, however, that some counties have reported that they will not be paying any clothing allowances to FFAs. License fees will increase by 10% for our two office locations, as well as fees covering each foster home certified by our agency. "Wrap services" (supplemental care services) and Intensive Treatment Foster Care programs are also affected by a 10% cut.

Amazingly, the budget reportedly includes \$6.6 million to follow the new federal legal requirement for county case plans to ensure educational stability for foster children by assuring that a "child remains in the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement," unless determined not

to be in the child's "best interest." It also includes no changes to the KIN-GAP or KINSHIP programs, or Adoption Agency Reimbursement Program budgeted amounts. The Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP) for ages 16-18, and THP-Plus for ages 18-24 programs for youth emancipated from foster care include no changes. Child mental health with increases and reductions reported, has evidently not suffered major cuts.

As we have stated, a letter will be sent to further spell out our operational plan. Thanks to you all for your work and commitment. We will steadfastly move ahead.

KEY OBSERVATION POINTS FOR FOSTER PARENTS

by Michael Quinn, MA, Supervising Social Worker, Fair Oaks office

Often, it is the simplest observations and declarations of foster children that give foster parents—and other child care team members—important information and insight into the child's needs and adjustment to foster placement. Consider the following five key observation points when observing your children adjust to your foster home:

1. Adult Relationships: Describe your observations of the child interacting with adults, including foster parents, teachers, tutors, therapists, and other adult authority figures. What do other

adults observe and hear? Compare notes.

- 2. Peer Relationships:** Describe your observations of the child interacting with peers—in and away from the foster home—including school, neighborhood, and family outings. What do other children and relatives observe and hear?
- 3. Physical and Emotional Health:** Describe the child's self-care, grooming, and personal hygiene skills, including the child's eating, sleeping, and recreation habits. Describe how the child displays emotions. What does the child say about the quality of therapy?
- 4. School:** Collect school reports and the observations of teaching staff. What does the child report about the school environment and homework assignments? Peers?
- 5. Birth Family Contacts:** What are your observations of the interactions between the foster child and birth family members, including parents, siblings, and extended family? What does the child say about birth family contacts and interactions after visits? How does the child respond before and after contacts?
- 6. Summarize:** Prior to the scheduled meetings with the agency or county social workers, review your observations and printed materials. How would you summarize the overall adjustment of the child since the last meeting? Compare notes.

(Continued on page 3)

CPR AND FIRST AID TRAINING

NEVADA COUNTY:

Nevada County offers ongoing training twice a month, which includes Medic First Aid, BasicPlus CPR, AED (Automated External Defibrillator), and First Aid. Committing to additional time, the Medic First Aid Infant and Child Supplement can be included following Adult CPR/First Aid.

Date: **Thursday, August 6, 2009**

Time: 3:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Date: **Saturdays, August 22 or 29 or September 5, 2009**

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Where: Nevada County Superintendent of Schools' conference room
112 Nevada City Highway, Nevada City, CA.

Fee: **\$30.00 (must be prepaid to confirm your reservation).**

Wear comfortable clothes and bring a snack and beverage. Please call Nikki Johnson at (530) 478-6400, x201 for more information.

(Continued from "Key Observation Points" on page 1)

Hints: When discussing your observations with child care team members, it is helpful to avoid technical terms or professional jargon. Simply report the "Four Ws": Who, What, Where, and When. Avoid using terms like, "I feel" or "we believe" when describing or summarizing your observations. Let the important facts speak for themselves.

Finally, the observation points above form the basis of progress reports sent to the court to monitor the foster child's adjustment to care—your frontline observations are very important!

The Child Abuse Prevention Council of Sacramento, Inc., presents:

Topic: "Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect"

Dates: **Wednesdays:**

- **September 16**
- **November 18**

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Where: Child Abuse Prevention Center
4700 Roseville Road
North Highlands, CA

RSVP: **To register, please call Isela Murrieta at (916) 244-1959** or email to imurrieta@thecapcenter.org for more information. Sorry, no childcare is provided.

NOTICE TO BAY AREA FOSTER PARENTS:

Dear Foster Parent(s),

Your Adult, Child, and Infant CPR and First Aid certification may have expired. In order for you to be in compliance with



Title 22 regulations you must renew your card(s) ASAP! You have the option of taking the class online at our office, or if you have a computer you may take the class at home

(www.cprandfirstaid.net) or you can take a class at any other outside source.

You are welcome to use our office computers on Tuesday, August 11; Wednesday, August 12; and Thursday, August 13, 2009. Please call us to RSVP your space.

Thank you for being a part of Nepenthean Homes' community of foster care providers.

Thanking you in advance,

Niasha Dupree
Office Manager

10 WAYS TO HELP BUILD YOUR CHILD'S STUDY SKILLS:

School will be back in session this month. Here are some ways to help your child get back into the "swing of things" at school.

1. Set up a regular study time in a quiet, comfortable place where your child won't have distractions.
2. Encourage daily study, even if there's no homework. Reading and reviewing lessons will get your child in the habit of studying every day.
3. Make sure your child keeps track of assignments, and has all the study tools needed for homework.
4. Allow study breaks every 20 minutes or so, and offer nutritious snacks.
5. Help your child break large tasks into several smaller ones to study more efficiently.
6. Have your child set goals before each assignment and organize study priorities to reach them.
7. Teach your child the value of being organized and keeping homework together.
8. Use study aids, such as quizzes, flash cards, and reading out loud to you.
9. Let your child know it's OK to ask teachers for help and that you're available, too.
10. Consider having your child study with a partner if it helps both of them do better.

REMEMBER always to reward your child's efforts to build study skills. Praise goes a long way!

IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL THIS MONTH...



PLEASE DRIVE CAREFULLY!



Birthdays this month!

FAIR OAKS:

William W. (Tiong home).....18 on 8/7
 Kristina V. (Lopez home).....16 on 8/18
 Jennifer N. (Clavelle home).....15 on 8/23
 Joelisa F. (Tiong home).....18 on 8/23
 Daniel J. (Donahue home).....11 on 8/29



GOOD NEWS!



William W. of the Tiong home has earned some summer cash painting the interior of the Fair Oaks office annex. Way to go, William!

Foster parent, Anita Lopez, reports that she and Kristina V. and Jasmine V. attend Cal Expo's "Raging Waters" Waterslide Park during the heat waves. Sounds like cool fun, Kristina and Jasmine!

Jesse R. of the Hayden home reports that he and Mr. Hayden plan on fishing this summer. All right, Jesse—catch a big one!



FAIR OAKS:

- Play Station I games (new or gently used)
- Digital scale (to weigh children)
- Kids' movies on DVD
- Computer CPU
- Computer software

MODESTO AREA:

- New or gently used laptop computer for Modesto teen

BAY AREA:

- Changing table
- Hand-held electronic games
- VCR

AUBURN AREA:

- Wireless mouse
- Laptop computer

WELCOME NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK:

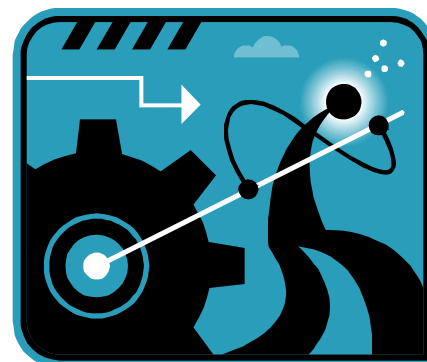
FAIR OAKS:

- * Jaeger B.

BAY AREA:

- * Agnes D.
- * Fanny R.

All Nepenthean Homes offices will be closed on



Monday, September 7, 2009
for the Labor Day holiday

NEPPY'S NOTABLES

August birthdays for staff:

Rich Farlinger, Admin., on August 1
 Tedda Blevins, Fair Oaks, on August 26

Nepenthean Homes is a private, non-profit Foster Family Agency that helps adults become successful foster parents. If you want to improve a needy child's future by becoming a certified foster parent, please telephone:

** in Sacramento area, 1-800-439-8998

** in Foothills area, 1-800-479-8998

** in Modesto area, 1-800-696-0611

** in Bay Area, 1-800-564-2292