

NATIONAL FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION

# All Aboard:

*Setting Sail for Brighter Tomorrows!*

45<sup>h</sup> Annual Convention

Sheraton Waterside in Norfolk, Virginia

June 25-28, 2015

*Convention  
Schedule*



To reach a port we must sail.

*Sail.*

Not lie at anchor.

*Sail!*

Not drift.

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*

**Thursday, June 25, 2015**

*Registration begins at 6:30 AM*

**8:30 AM – 5:00 PM**

## **Science to Parenting Academy**

*Sponsored by Cenpatico*

### **Trauma, Diagnosis, Medications, Loss, and Resilience**

#### **Survival Instincts and Brain Development: Utilizing Theory in Parenting Traumatized Children**

*Stephen Porges, PhD, University of North Carolina*

*Social behaviors and trusting relationships are predicated on how the brain develops. In this session, we will hear a research perspective, Polyvagal Theory, of normal and atypical behavior, mental health, and development. The theory explains how reactions to danger and life threat and experiences of abuse and trauma may retune our nervous system to respond to friends, caregivers, and teachers as if they were enemies. Leaving the child to constantly scan for danger and, thus inhibiting the ability to connect. Specific parenting strategies for building parent-child connections will be discussed in the context of both trauma and autism.*

#### **Associations Between Adverse Childhood Experiences and ADHD: Analysis of the 2011 National Survey of Children's Health**

*Nicole Brown, MD, Albert Einstein University, New York*

*Children exposed to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) often exhibit many of the behaviors that occur in ADHD. Clinicians risk focusing on ADHD as the primary diagnosis and overlooking the possible presence of a trauma history, which may alter the treatment course. Little is known about the prevalence of ACEs among children with ADHD and associations between ACEs score and ADHD severity and medication use. Caregivers and child welfare professionals will be provided strategies ensuring children are receiving the right treatment for the right diagnosis.*

#### **Psychiatric Medications for Children and Adolescents: What we know, what we don't know and why you should care!**

*Chris Bellonci, M.D. Tufts Medical Center, Massachusetts*

*There has been a steady increase in the use of psychiatric medications to treat childhood emotional and behavioral health disorders. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently reported that 7.5% of all youth between the ages of 6-17 years old are now taking a psychiatric medication in the U.S. These rates are even higher for children who receive public insurance (Medicaid) or are in foster care. While these medications can be critically helpful in treating the emotional and behavioral health conditions for which they are prescribed, there is a significant lack of research evidence to support some of the prescribing trends being reported. This session will be an engaging dialogue on the psychiatric medications debate and why it is relevant for resource caregivers.*

### **Lunch**

#### **Shattered Assumptions: Ambiguous Loss and Disenfranchised Grief in Foster Care**

*Monique B. Mitchell, PhD, CT, University of South Carolina*

*As children navigate their way through foster care, their assumptive worlds shatter as they are engulfed in a culture that precipitates loss, ambiguity, and grief. Many children are left alone to cope with their grief because the child welfare system often fails to recognize or acknowledge the losses that children experience while in foster care. This presentation will demonstrate how children in foster care experience loss, grief, and ambiguity and will provide recommendations to enhance cultural competency on loss and grief within the child welfare system.*

## **Building resilience, addressing behavior challenges, and strengthening relationships: Tools for the foster parents' Toolbox**

*Dr. Robin Gurwitch, Duke University, North Carolina*

*At any given moment, there are approximately 400,000 children in the foster care system. Child behavior problems are often cited as one of the primary challenges facing foster families. Understanding how traumatic events impact behaviors can help foster parents as they strive to help these children reach their full potential. Ideas of building resilience in children and information about evidence-based and evidence-informed programs all are important tools in foster parents' toolboxes. Specific tools (e.g., APA Resilience in Children, Parent-Child Interaction Therapy, Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Child-Adult Relationship Enhancement, Resource Parenting Curriculum) will be discussed for addressing resilience, behavior challenges, and enhancing and strengthening the parent-child relationship.*

### **Moderator and Luncheon Speaker**

*Lieutenant Governor of Virginia, Ralph Northam, MD, invited*

**6:00 PM -8:30 PM**

## **National Walk Me Home Event**

Walkers Soirée

Raise funds for the National Foster Parent Association's advocacy and support efforts. This is not only a fundraiser, but also a great chance to get in a little exercise with the family, and enjoy a short walk along the Elizabeth River. Join us by creating a team or just walk with your family. Then after the walk, please join us for a refreshing Walkers Soiree overlooking the river at the Sheraton Norfolk Waterside to celebrate your fundraising efforts for NFPA.

Register at <http://www.firstgiving.com/walkmehome/norfolk2015>.

**Friday, June 26, 2015**

*Registration begins at 6:30 AM*

**7:00-8:00 AM**

*Hotel Bagel and Coffee cart items available for purchase*

**8:00 AM -5:30 PM**

**ALL ABOARD**

*Exhibitors' Hall of Knowledge will be open throughout the day in the Grand Promenade.*

**PLENARY SESSION**

**8:00 AM – 9:30 AM**

**Human Trafficking: The Child Welfare Experience and Response**

*Roy Van Tassell, MS, LPC, Oklahoma*

*William D. Holmes, M.D., Texas*

*Irene Clements, Ex. Director, NFPA, Texas*

*Katarina Rosenblatt, Ph.D. ,*

*Dana Wynn Steele, JD, Parent, Virginia*

*This interactive presentation brings together participants to discuss the complex issues surrounding commercially sex-trafficked children (CSEC) and the disproportionate number of former foster youth who become trafficked victims. Topics will include the role of care homes and schools in grooming and vulnerability, the role of past trauma, education of resource parents, prevention and safety needs while in care and assisting former CSEC youth who come into care. Conducted in the fishbowl style, audience participation/discussion will be encouraged.*

**PLENARY SESSION**

**10:00 AM -11:30 AM**

**Food Security, Nutrition and Behavior**

***Feeding Children with Child Nutrition Programs...Laura Cunliffe, Virginia***

*This session will provide an overview of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) child nutrition programs and demonstrate how these programs directly improve outcomes for children, youth and families. An overview of the role these nutrition programs have in addressing food insecurity and poverty will be provided. In addition the USDA will discuss who is eligible to participate and how families can receive meals for which their children are entitled.*

***Nutrition for Healthy Development***

*Learn strategies for helping our children CHOOSE to eat healthy!*

***The Food and Behavior...Jane Hersey, Feingold, Virginia***

*There are many things that can influence how a child behaves and his ability to focus and learn, including certain food additives, such as dyes made from petroleum. Since 1976 Jane Hersey and her colleagues at the Feingold Association have shown many thousands of families how to turn their child's life around by changing their shopping list. She began volunteering after seeing the dramatic help her family received from the program. A former teacher and Head Start consultant, Jane has given countless workshops to parents and professionals, testified before government agencies and Congress, and is the author of "Why Can't My Child Behave?"*

## **Lunch on Your Own**

*Hotel sandwich cart will be available. See The 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention Guide for other options.*

## **FLIGHT DECK: SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION SESSIONS**

*RUNNING SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH ALL WORKSHOPS ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON and REPEATED DURING SESSION B.*

**1:00 PM – 5:00 PM**

*These discussion group sessions are designed to give registrants an opportunity to engage in small group discussions on relevant topics in foster, adoptive, and kinship caregiving. Each presenter will have material to share at their small group table for registrants to sit and learn, together.*

### **Oklahoma Bridge and Diligent Recruitment...Karen Poteet, MPA, Oklahoma**

*Stop by here to learn about the federally funded recruitment and retention program, The Bridge to the Future. It focused on four key areas within child welfare services: 1) recruitment; 2) retention; 3) process improvement; and 4) customer service. The project provided enhanced support for resource families through training and timely information regarding processes and resources. These activities resulted in an increase in the use and support of kinship placements when children enter a shelter.*

### **Building and Maintaining a Non-Profit...Jason Burdge, MNA, California**

*Learn what is needed to create, govern and grow a nonprofit tax-exempt organization. Presentation will include education and discussion about governing a foster parent association. Topics include: 1) Understanding the difference between a non-profit corporation and having a 501(c)(3) status; 2) How to create your own tax exempt foster parent, or similar, association; 3) Structuring/recruiting an effective board that governs; 4) Tips and best practices for effective goal planning and creating a strategic organization. This serves as a consultation opportunity to learn about best practices, share successes and ask questions about association challenges.*

### **Port of Support: FACES of Virginia Families Ambassador Program...FACES Ambassadors**

*Sail along with "Port of Support: FACES of Virginia Families Ambassadors" to ports of call that explore how the FACES of Virginia Families Ambassadors provide resources and support to strengthen and retain foster; adoptive and kinship families; develop partnerships with child welfare professionals to help children navigate life in the child welfare system; and get **PAID!***

### **Keeping the Ship Afloat: Trauma-informed Parenting...Rosie Mann, Pennsylvania**

*A trauma informed child welfare system immerses children in a healing climate. Learn about "The Trauma Informed Parenting Tools" developed to facilitate sizable, lasting, positive change in the lives of children and families. The tools look at caregivers' beliefs and values in order to support engagement. Cultural issues and generational patterns of relating will be discussed prior to working for behavior change in family systems. The tools are a way to coach parents and children toward healing.*

### **Raising a Child to Thrive...Thomas Rector, California**

*Understanding the development of the brain and dynamics of memory formation gives parents the tools to be teachers. The role of parent is to teach the fundamentals of how to be a productive adult: self-sufficient, honest, responsible, and respectful. This approach, is unique, easily understood, and works with children that have experienced one placement or five or more placements. "Biosocial Cognition," is a paradigm-shifting viewpoint on the day-to-day interactions that guide children through their life's challenges.*

### **NO!...Black Fathers have not Abandoned Ship...Ronnie N. Sidney, II, Virginia**

*Explore the current and historical perceptions of black fathers in America. This presentation seeks to dispel the myth of the absent black father and explore the roles of non-residential and single black fathers. The presentation will explore structural inequalities (e.g. incarceration, unemployment) that destabilize black families and communities. Discussion will highlight the National Fatherhood Initiatives "Inside-Out Dad" program for incarcerated fathers and other programs seeking to change how black fathers are perceived.*

### **Saving my Sanity...Keep on Fostering...Betty Hastings, Tennessee**

*Retention of seasoned and quality foster homes is becoming more challenging. Foster parenting is a tough job, and very discouraging at times. Stress, anger and challenges are constantly coming into the foster parent's everyday life giving a feeling of "Why continue?" This discussion group will explore the reasons you began fostering, steps of encouragement, and working through it all without losing your sanity. A foster/adoptive mom who was a foster child and has had more than 450 placements in her home will present this session. She has been there, done that, and kept on Fostering."*

### **Journeys through Life Books...Donna Foster, North Carolina**

*Children who enter the social service system have been traumatized and may have difficulty holding on to a positive self-concept. Children tend to trust and share more easily with other children and animals. "Shelby and Me" will be introduced in the session. Shelby is a golden retriever who befriends the child and together they work on their life books. Life books create order and fills in the gaps in children's lives. In this session you will learn how therapeutic life books are to children and how to create them.*

### **OH, to make Children's Wishes Come True: One Simple Wish...Danielle Gletow and Kim Kaschak, New Jersey**

*For children who have been victims of abuse, neglect, and/or abandonment, something as small as a video game or an experience like a trip to an amusement park can make a world of difference. One Simple Wish empowers people to support foster children and their families in simple yet meaningful ways. We will cover the many ways in which our wish granting program serves the needs of foster children by delivering the items and experiences they truly value and reminding them there are people everywhere who care. Additionally, this poster session will touch on the full range of support services that One Simple Wish offers and how organizations can become involved and help get grant wishes of children in your community.*

### **Anchoring Youth with Disabilities in Long Term Support Systems...Jennifer Howard, MPP, MSW, District of Columbia**

*The purpose of this presentation is to introduce foster parents and case workers to a broad range of services within the long-term care (LTC) system. As youth with disabilities age out of the foster care system, it is important that the youth's foster parent(s) and case manager are not only aware of supports and services available, but advocate on behalf of the youth in transitioning into LTC. This presentation will provide information on the spectrum/array of LTC supports and services available, such as transportation, housing, and employment, as well as provide insight into how foster parents and case managers can support the transition of a youth with disabilities into the LTC system.*

## **WORKSHOPS A**

**1:00 PM - 2:30 PM**

### **Advocates for Families First Collaborative...Jean Fiorito, Florida; Kim Stevens, Massachusetts; and Jaia Peterson Lent, District of Columbia**

*Advocates for Families First is a collaboration dedicated to the vision that all children and youth receive supported care in a kinship, foster or adoptive family when they cannot remain safely at home. Our mission is to build a unified national movement to support kinship, foster and adoptive families who care for children and youth. We are undertaking efforts in three areas: policy advocacy, capacity building for organizations working with families, and improve the public perception of families who care for children. We will explain the efforts that are ongoing in these areas and provide samples that can be used when attendees return to their homes.*

### **Traditions in Caring and Collaborating in Kinship Care...Eileen Pasztor, DSW, California; Donna Petras, PhD, MSW, Illinois; and Marcus Stallworth, MSW**

*Kinship care often is an emotionally charged experience. This workshop features an evidence-based approach to collaborating with kinship caregivers to document ability, resources, and willingness to care for their younger family members. Assessment issues include legal, financial, child behavior, family relationships, fair and equal treatment, access to community supports, and more. The workshop offers strategies to respectfully address the dynamics of family attachment versus agency authority and will share recommendations from NFPA's Kinship Care Committee.*

### **Building School Strategies for Successful Youth in Foster Care...Marjory Curry, Ohio**

*This workshop is designed to help foster parents, social workers, educators, probation officers, mental health providers, CASAs, and other community professionals to understand how trauma affects educational outcomes for youth in foster care. This training will help service providers utilize trauma-informed approaches to delinquent and unruly behavior and thereby reduce out-of-school suspensions among youth in foster care.*

### **Tangled: Hair, Race, and Identity...Naijean Bernard-Onwere and Easter Spates, Texas**

*For traumatized children, a sense of normalcy in their new placement can be comforting in the midst of chaos. One way that caregivers can promote healing and build a strong racial identity is through hair care. The goal of the presentation is to help participants to gain confidence in taking care of their African American child's hair. A hands-on presentation will also provide participants a chance to see the importance of appropriate hair care for African American children in foster care.*

### **There's an App for that! Enhancing the Well-being of Children in Care...Joy Kelleher, Georgia**

*The presentation will outline how smartphone apps can be used to the daily life space of children and young people in foster care. Participants will learn how that data can highlight trends and patterns in behavior, track placement outcomes and improve the communication between foster and kinship caregivers and the agencies that support them. Global examples including the USA will be highlighted in terms of how technology has impacted positively service delivery and the care of foster children. The workshop will describe the Key Developmental Assets™ (KDA) APP and online platform and its application within foster care and children's services.*

### **Stress Management Techniques for Caregivers...Gregory Canillas, Ph.D., California**

*This workshop is intended to provide strategies for managing stress for foster parents. The workshop will focus on several key areas that will assist foster parents in managing the daily stressors that are involved in fostering children and youth. The key areas will include: self care, skills building, providing structure/boundaries, collaboration with collateral contacts and developing a support system. The discussion will also focus on how to parent and advocate for youth in foster care while maintaining balance that reduces one's stress.*

### **Effective Support Services for Foster/Adoptive/Kinship Families...Diane Martin-Hushman, Minnesota**

*In this session, we will share research results on effective support services for foster, adoptive, and kinship families. To make their dreams of safety and stability come true, these families often need support as they raise children who have experienced trauma. Across the country, many organizations are providing comprehensive services-- including case management, evidence-based/informed therapeutic interventions, peer support, training, mental health care, and respite-that help families meet their children's needs. We will explore themes and commonalities across effective programs and demonstrate how support services can help families.*

### **Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy...Roy Van Tassell, MS, LPC, Oklahoma**

*More than 25% of children will have at least one traumatic experience before age sixteen. For children who come into care this number is even higher and many meet the criteria for PTSD. This clinically focused, informative and interactive presentation provides an overview for caregivers and stakeholders of Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT). TF-CBT is one of 3 interventions selected by the Kauffman Best Practices Project as an empirically proven model for helping children and their caregivers heal from the impact of abuse and trauma.*

### **Bridging the Gap...Chauncey Strong, MSW, Virginia**

*This workshop highlights best practice in child welfare as it relates to building and maintaining relationships and communication between birth parents and foster/adoptive parents involved in a child's life. The workshop will examine the benefits and challenges of "Bridging the Gap". It will explore the respective roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in conducting the initial "Icebreaker" meeting and maintaining positive communication and relationships. In addition, the workshop highlights effective partnership and collaboration between public and private child welfare agencies. This interactive workshop will include; a PowerPoint presentation, handouts, DVD and open discussion.*

### **Navigating the Waters of Psychiatric Care...William D. Holmes, M.D., Texas**

*This presentation is designed for caregivers and other adults who interact with psychiatrists and other psychiatric providers. The information presented will focus on what to expect from psychiatric care as well as guidelines for becoming a better-informed consumer of psychiatric care. Basic principles of informed consent will be covered. In addition, there will be a brief overview of the major types of psychiatric medications and their uses.*

## **Family Engagement Modeling...Hampton Department of Social Services, Virginia**

*Sponsored by the Virginia Children's Services Act Agency, VA*

*Delivered in the Fishbowl style, this workshop will model the effective family engagement planning strategies employed by one of Virginia's model public agencies. Participants will be encouraged to actively participate as a part of the learning process.*

## **WORKSHOPS B**

**2:45 PM - 5:30 PM**

### **Advocacy 101...Josh Krull, Minnesota**

*In this session, participants will explore the tools necessary to advocate for your child and for all children. The session will start with problem identification; move on to laws or rules that cover the problem; and how to find a solution. Those concepts will then be expanded to class advocacy and advocating for all children.*

### **Youth who Identify as LGBTQ: Improving Outcomes through Partnerships...Gregory Canillas, Ph.D., California**

*This workshop is intended to provide strategies for working with foster children who identify as LGBTQ. The workshop will focus on key issues for foster parents and social workers who work with this population in order to improve their outcomes in foster care. The presentation will focus on key issues faced by LGBTQ children/adolescents in foster care. Additionally, the presentation will focus on developing collaborative relationships between foster parents, social workers, teachers, school administrators and other collaterals working with the child/family in order to help children/adolescents who identify as LGBTQ to fulfill their promise.*

### **Making the 1<sup>st</sup> Placement the LAST Placement...Jennifer Surratt, LCSW, and C. Lynne Edwards, LCSW, Virginia**

*Using a trauma-informed and adoption/foster care competent approach to parenting increases the odds that placements will last. This workshop will give an overview of a new training curriculum adapted from Jayne Schooler and the National Child Trauma Stress Network - "Becoming an Adoption & Trauma Competent Healing Caregiver". The curriculum to be discussed is designed for foster or adoptive parents to help better understand the impact trauma has had on their child's brain, behavior and development. The training also provides skills and techniques for parenting more effectively.*

### **Partnering with Children for Academic Success...Gregory Ford, MSW, and Monica Bolton, Virginia**

*The use of imagination sets the stage for a powerful discussion on how to position youths in a place of achievement and service. Coach Ford builds on the need for leadership and how to bring out the leadership trait in youths. Athletic activities dominate American society. Learn how athletics influences our kids and how we can use athletics for positive outcomes. Strategies for partnering with children for academic achievement will be discussed. This presentation uses video clips; discussion; audience engagement; and story telling to convey a positive message and to help parents and providers achieve measurable outcomes and create success stories. Coach Ford has been featured in the Baltimore Sun, USA Today, Orlando Sentinel, and PBS.*

### **Suicide Risk Assessment and Prevention Strategies...Christy Letsom, Virginia**

*QPR...Question, Persuade, and Refer -- 3 simple steps that anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide. Just as people trained in CPR and the Heimlich maneuver help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help. Each year thousands of Americans, like you, are saying, "Yes" to saving the life of a friend, colleague, sibling, or neighbor.*

### **Deflecting Mother Blame...Diane Martin-Hushman, Minnesota**

*Why do traumatized kids often treat the mother figure so badly? Come learn why this happens and understand what is happening from the children's perspective. We'll also talk about you and what happens for you when deflecting this blame. The presenter will help you cultivate skills, rethink expectations, use humor, develop resiliency, and prepare you for a healthier relationship with your children.*

### **Grief and Loss: How Do You Mend a Broken Heart...***John DeGarmo, Ph.D., Georgia*

*This session will focus on emotional challenges, difficulties, and trials that foster parents and kinship caregivers face when a child in care leaves their home. Tools for addressing the sorrow and loss as a foundation for gathering strength and healing the grief will be discussed.*

### **Resiliency Building for Children in Care...***Stan Waddell, LPC, Texas*

*Resiliency is an important factor in healing from past trauma as well as strengthening attachments. Participants will understand how attachment and resiliency are closely related, and how increasing resiliency will in turn strengthen attachment. Participants will be able to identify factors that impact resiliency, as well as identifying human adaptive process and how it impacts resiliency. Steps to build resiliency in times of trauma and after times of trauma will be identified. This workshop will also look at the 12 steps for successful survivors of trauma.*

### **Life in Flux...***Foster Care Alumni with Chauncey Strong, MSW, Virginia*

*Presenting in the Fishbowl model, the workshop will allow participants to hear from foster care alumni about their life in Flux and how the development of the Flux training module can help other youth with their transitions into adulthood.*

## **CALLING ALL TRAINERS Session**

**2:45 PM - 6:00 PM**

### ***Annual Trainers Forum Hosted with CWLA***

*In the 1970s and '80s, foster parent trainers, including peer trainers, from across the country met at annual NFPA conferences to network, share resources and advocate. Then for the 2013 and 2014 conferences in CA and FL, CWLA and NFPA sent a beacon of light to reconvene the "armada" and the training ships docked! This is an opportunity to connect, reconnect and share. Please join us.*

## **DINNER ON YOUR OWN**

*The 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention Guide will include coupons for local eateries.*

## **HEROES GALA**

### **Half Moon Celebration Center-Nauticus Museum**

**7:00 PM - 11:30 PM**

*A Just Desserts Gala to celebrate our everyday heroes...YOU and Your Family!*

*Enjoy a celebration of you and your family. Join us for desserts, sparkling cider fountain, and cash bar. We will take time to honor foster, adoptive, and kinship families through a video of clips submitted by and about our everyday heroes. Then keep those dance shoes on for the DJ! This is a great time for the whole family!*

*We can't wait to celebrate you!*

*Interested in honoring a foster, adoptive, or kinship family member for their heroism? We will provide a link for your submission on the Convention registration page. You will be able to submit a YouTube, selfie, photograph, poem, letter, or artwork for the Heroes Celebration. At the event we will have submissions on display at the Heroes Gala. The videos submitted will become a part of a streaming video presentation at the Gala.*

**Saturday, June 27, 2015**

*Registration begins at 7:00 AM*

**8:00 AM - 5:30 PM**

## **SETTING SAIL**

*A day sponsored by Virginia Department of Social Services and FACES of Virginia Families*

*Exhibitors' Hall of Knowledge will be open throughout the day in the Grand Promenade.*

## **BREAKFAST WITH THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION'S PRESIDENT-ELECT**

**7:30 AM - 10:30 AM**

*Paulette Brown, President-elect, American Bar Association*

## **Navigating the Legal System in Child Welfare: Parent Roles, Rights, and Responsibilities**

*Judge Thomas "Britt" Hammond, Georgia*

*Christopher Church, J.D., South Carolina*

*Dana Wynn Steele, J.D., Virginia*

*Foster and adoptive parents have a legal right to be notified of foster care proceedings for children in their care. Furthermore, they have a right to be heard during those proceedings. This right has existed for some time; however, states are at various stages of implementation. Many have passed comprehensive foster parents' bill of rights. Others have passed laws piecemeal. This plenary session will explore the national landscape of a foster parent's right to be heard, all the while stressing the importance of exercising that right. The presenters will also offer tips for testifying to make sure foster parents, the court, and everyone involved in a child's case gets the most out of foster parents' important testimony.*

## **PLENARY SESSION**

**10:45 AM - 12:30 PM**

## **FACILITATED LEARNING SESSION**

### **Communication Boot Camp for the Child-focused Advocate**

*Jeff Cotton, MFT, California*

Of the many hats parents wear, few are as critical as a being a child-focused advocate. This means we actively listen more than we speak. And, when we do, our words are thoughtful. Our intention is to activate other professionals in the vision and toward the same destination. It takes a village, and a wider net, to help youth get support services they need and respect they deserve.

We accomplish this by consciously 'upping' our game, namely our listening and speaking skills. It means we cultivate assertion over passivity or aggression. Being assertive, being ourselves, being true in what we say and how we live, is a life stance, not some techniques. This training is designed to help 'up' your skills as a child-focused advocate, no matter your level of expertise.

## **LUNCH ON YOUR OWN**

**12:30 PM - 1:45 PM**

**NOTE: Virginia Residents, only...**

**FACES of Virginia Families Annual Luncheon & Meeting**, free for Virginia attendees

*Special Presentation by Virginia's Adoption Champion, Debbie Johnston, CEO, Care Advantage*

## **WORKSHOPS C**

**2:00 PM-3:30 PM**

### **Federal Policy & Child Welfare Advocacy...John Sciamanna, Maryland**

*With a different power structure in Congress and the Administration in its last two years, this promises to be a challenging first session of the 114th Congress. This workshop will provide an update on what is expected for services and funding in child welfare, Medicaid, Home Visiting, and the Social Services Block Grant.*

### **SOS...All Hands on Deck for the Inevitable False Allegation...Lana Freeman, Oklahoma**

*From the perspective of a long-term foster parent, the goal of this training is to provide foster families with information on important issues concerning allegations and the investigation process. It may be used as a resource to network and to raise awareness on this issue. It will also provide steps to protect families from allegations and the resulting nightmare.*

### **Special Education Rules and Challenges...**

*This workshop will outline the rules about special education in the United States. Participants will learn about how to access special education services as well as the federal requirements set forth for school districts regarding special education. This is the workshop for you if you have wondered about the federal I.D.E.A., 507, and other federal programs designed to ensure our children receive the education they are entitled to in the U.S.*

### **Fatherhood: Changing the Game...Rob Rodriguez, Aaron Rodriguez, and John Wistl, Texas**

*Single, Foster/Adoptive Father and Founder of Family 4 Life, Rob R. Rodriguez and two of his 2 sons, Aaron Rodriguez and John Wistl deliver an interactive presentation about the joys and challenges of fatherhood. He will concentrate on ways to stay connected to your children in a fast paced world. Through storytelling and engaging activities, he will provide practical real world applications that can help strengthen a father's bond to his children. This workshop is good for all fathers and those interested in supporting fatherhood; and includes a short Q&A session with John and Aaron.*

### **Marriage and Foster Parenting...John DeGarmo, Ph.D., Georgia**

*This workshop focuses on the difficulties that caring for a foster child can bring to a marriage. During the presentation, participants will come to understand the many challenges that foster parents face in their marriage while foster parenting.*

### **Set Sail: Fostering Attachments through Play and Parent-Child Interactions...Brenda Doremus-Daniel, MSW, LCSW, Virginia**

*This interactive workshop will provide participants with an opportunity to explore attachment parenting interventions and their applications for foster/adoptive parents and the youth they serve. Emphasis will be placed on learning and practicing interaction-based activities that promote attachment; use of the attachment relationship in discipline; and promoting healing for youth and adolescents. Applications designed specifically for both children and teens will be shared and participants will be provided valuable tools to enhance their relationships with the youth they serve. Appropriate for both parents and providers, this workshop will help to enhance relationships, trust, and effective parenting.*

### **Identifying Forms of Sexualized Behavior from Developmental to Predatory...Steven Wolf, Ph.D., Virginia**

*This workshop explores the nature of childhood sexuality, identifying what is considered developmentally usual and expected sexual behavior at each developmental age, and examines the degrees and nature of childhood sexual problems from sexual reactivity to the sexual abuse of others. Those attending will be provided with a set of screening instruments useful in defining the nature of a child's sexual behavior, a bibliography of relevant books and articles, and a list of useful web-based and other resources. During the presentation, attendees will have the opportunity to use the screening instruments to assess examples of childhood sexual behavior.*

## **Preparing Foster Parents to Minimize Trauma and Maximize Teamwork...Donna Petras, Ph.D., Illinois, and Lee White, Washington**

*Sponsored by St. Charles County Social Services, MD*

*This workshop is designed for agency staff and foster parent trainers who are seeking an innovative, cost effective strategy to prepare and assess prospective foster/resource families as team member in child protection and trauma-informed care of children. CWLA and Foster Parent College have developed a model that integrates the strengths of traditional groups, agency staff and family one-on-one meetings, and online training to meet the learning needs of diverse families, and agency and family resources. The model is informed by the latest research in order to achieve child and family safety, well-being and permanency outcomes. The workshop will feature strategies, techniques, vignettes and examples drawn from the model.*

## **Adoption Subsidy (This workshop continues until 4:45 PM) ...Josh Kroll, Minnesota**

*In this workshop, you will learn the basics of adoption assistance for children adopted from foster care. Topics include eligibility, benefits, taxes, and more. Participants will receive state specific information and will come away with concrete information and strategies to better advocate for foster and adopted children with special needs. There will also be an overview of the Federal Adoption Tax Credit.*

## **Effective Post Adoption Services...Rebecca Ricardo, LCSW, and Jennifer Surratt, LCSW, Virginia**

*C2Adopt will share their model for providing post adoption services in Central Virginia. The approach fuses together best practices of trauma informed care, adoption competence and parenting skill building to maximize attachment and meeting a child's emotional needs. A brief review of the assessment process as well as discuss the range of services offered to families. Presenters will highlight what they have found to be most useful to clients as well as identify barriers and gaps in services.*

## **WORKSHOPS D**

**3:45 PM – 5:15 PM**

### **Stop Bullying: Taking a Stand...Jeff Cotton, California**

*Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has potential to be repeated. **One** incident of bullying can have lifelong **implications for youth**. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. This training covers a veritable smorgasbord of what to do and what not to do.*

### **Creating Community: Supporting ALL of the Families of the Foster Child...Myrna McNitt, Michigan**

*Child centered practices in child protection are grounded in creating continuity of care. Often this is missed and children are uprooted from all that is familiar and important to their sense of well-being and social identity. When placed in care the foster child loses family relationships and much of what has been community to them. Foster children benefit from a holistic and wraparound approach to inclusive care. This involves using practice skills of working across disciplines to assure the community meets the needs of the child. This approach requires including all families of the foster child -birth, kinship, and foster families - in the community of caring. This workshop will use a case study to skills of practice.*

### **From Bow to Stern: Community-based Clinician Collaboration for Foster Families...Megan Boyd, LPC, Georgia**

*Becoming a foster parent for a child with behavioral, emotional, or trauma-based concerns can be overwhelming. Because of the continued growth of community-based counseling services as a delivery method for mental health treatment, foster parents often have many unanswered questions regarding how to best partner with clinicians to enhance the child's success in care. This workshop will provide the following information: 1) Common mental health and behavioral concerns associated with children of trauma. 2) Ways to advocate for the child's needs. 3) The process of community-based counseling. Participants will learn how to navigate the collaborative relationship between clinicians, foster parents, and other resources.*

### **Advocating in Special Education...**

*This is the workshop for you, if you want to know more about the laws that entitle parents to have a voice in their child's educational services. Participants will learn their rights to advocate and help plan for services as well as the best methods for getting and keeping educational services.*

**Emancipating Youth: Keys to their Success and Identity...***Gregory Canillas, Ph.D, California*

*There are an estimated 500,000 children in the foster care system. A study was conducted several years ago that looked at the homeless population in Los Angeles and researchers found that approximately 25% of the population had been previously in the foster care system. This workshop is intended to provide strategies for working with youth who will emancipate from the foster care system. The workshop will focus on several key areas that will assist youth in making the transition from foster care into adulthood. The key areas will include: education, employment, mental health, housing, mentorship, skills building and self-care. The discussion will also focus on how to advocate with social workers for youth in foster care.*

**Internet Safety...***National Center for Missing and Exploited Children*

*We are in the electronic age (and have been for awhile). We must take steps to protect children as they participate more and more in social media. In this session, you will learn about the triggers of dangerous interactions from bullying to sexting and how to prevent unsafe Internet and social media usage.*

**What to Expect from Psychiatric Care...***William Holmes, M.D., Texas*

*This workshop is designed for caregivers and other adults who interact with psychiatrists and other psychiatric providers. The information presented will focus on what to expect from psychiatric care as well as guidelines for becoming a better-informed consumer of psychiatric care. Basic principles of informed consent will be covered. In addition, there will be a brief overview of the major types of psychiatric medications and their uses.*

**Parenting from the Whole Brain Perspective...***Sarai Leeb, MSW, Texas*

*The goal of this training is to provide participants with tools and strategies to help youth achieve integrated and healthy brain functioning. This process is discussed in a clear and concise fashion explaining the neurological relationship between the brain, behavioral, emotional and cognitive functioning. It further explains how relationships, experiences, and memory can affect a child's brain development and self-regulation. Strategies to help parents and professionals are explored from a "Whole Brain Perspective". This workshop is adapted from evidence based innovative research in the field of neuroscience, described in a straightforward and clear format.*

**When New Children come Aboard: The Impact of Fostering on the Birth Children of Foster Parents...***Eshele Williams, Ph.D., California*

*This workshop addresses NFPA's commitment to respect the impact of fostering on birth children of foster parents. In June 2014, the Board appointed an ad-hoc committee to explore this issue. The committee chair, Eileen Pasztor, has been reaching out to NFPA members and other colleagues across the country to obtain insight into the challenges that birth children experience as other children come and go, and as relationships and families are created through fostering. This workshop will address the findings of the Ad Hoc Committee, with an emphasis on how to increase supports for birth children as their families engage in the fostering experience.*

**Shared Parenting: Redefining the role of foster parents...***Donna Foster, MSW, North Carolina*

*This workshop will present the concept of foster parents as active, vibrant partners in the reunification effort. There is a need for birth parents and kinship parents to receive not only services that enhance the lives of children, but also mentors to the families so that children receive the best we have to offer.*

**6:30 PM – 10:30 PM**

**Take Me Out to the Ballgame**

Picnic in the Park and the Norfolk Tides game.

*(AAA ball team for Baltimore Orioles)*

*Separate event requiring ticket purchased through the Ballgame link on the convention registration page.*

**Sunday, June 28, 2015**

**8:00 AM -11:00 AM**

## **Brighter Tomorrows**

**National Foster Parent Association Membership Breakfast WITH CLOSING SESSION**

### **I Cried till I Laughed...The Joys of Parenting**

The Comedy Team of Foster Parents... *Matthew Hoffman, Maryland & Claudia Fletcher, Minnesota*

### **NFPA MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**STAY AND LEARN ABOUT YOUR NFPA AND THE ROLE YOU CAN PLAY AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL.**