

**JOHN SMITH**

IFAPA Peer Liaison

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**I UNDERSTAND...
I AM A FOSTER PARENT TOO**

IFAPA recognizes that foster parents often need the perspective of peers during the foster parenting and adoption experience.

I can provide support and assist you with questions regarding:

- Licensing requirements
- Training needs
- Respite care
- Behavior challenges
- Working with birth families
- Confidentiality issues
- And much more!



www.ifapa.org

November Is National Adoption Month

November is National Adoption Month and each of us needs to help raise awareness about the need for adoptive families. Every year, more than 100,000 children and youth in the U.S. foster care system seek permanent families.

National Adoption Month is an initiative sponsored by the Children's Bureau, in partnership with AdoptUSKids and Child Welfare Information Gateway. Each November, National Adoption Month brings awareness to the needs of children and youth seeking and waiting a "forever family." This year, specific attention is being paid to the needs of the thousands of older youth, ages 15–18, which face the challenges of aging out of foster care and beginning their independent, young adult lives. Having permanent family connections are critical for older youth to have legal and emotional support as they transition into adulthood and strive for achievement, growth, and well-being.

As foster/adoptive parents we each know well the needs of children in youth in foster care, the effects of trauma, and the qualities and characteristics needed by families that have successfully fostered and adopted! For these reasons, who is better qualified than us to advocate for these youth? As we advocate, keep in mind the following:

Voice for Adoption, in partnership with Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, has created a guide to Promote Permanency for youth in Foster Care. The following are their four steps with a brief statement.

1. Promote Positive Attitudes Toward Permanency – Believe and set the expectation for others, that every child is adoptable!
2. Ensure That Youth Participate – If the child isn't present, ask why not! In Iowa, we are fortunate to have the one judge rule in court!
3. Limit Group Care, support Family-based Placements – Help others in court think about group homes as an intervention with treatment goals, not a long-term place to live!
4. Check that permanency Planning is being done, well - If you see or hear APPLA (Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement), ask why and what the plan for permanency is!

Site: <http://voice-for-adoption.org/sites/default/files/files/Youth%20Voices%20for%20Permanency%20v7%20single%20page.pdf>

I like to toss around, the following statement by Josh Shipp, "Every kid is one caring adult away from being a success story". **You can be that adult!**

Have a great November!

DATES ON DECK

Nov. 7, 2016 6:30-8:30pm	TOPIC - It's Not About You - Surviving the Holidays 2 hours credit	Storm Lake St. Mark's Lutheran Church - 1614 West 5th Street	Storm Lake Area Foster/Adoptive Support Group Susan Thayer 712-299-4759
Nov. 8, 2016 7:00-9:00	TOPIC – to be determined 2 hours credit	Carroll Pizza Ranch HiWay 30	Carroll Area Support Group John Smith 877-305-3396
Nov. 10, 2016 6:30-8:30pm	TOPIC - To be determined Must RSVP by Nov. 7	Sioux City NW AEA, 1520 Morningside Ave., Floor 2, Room G	Sioux City Support Group Tina Vande Kamp 712-451-6813
Nov. 14, 2016 6:30-8:30pm	TOPIC - It's Not About You - Surviving the Holidays 2 hours credit Support, network and supper (on your own) from 5:30 to 6:30pm, Training starts at 6:30pm Childcare available - if childcare is needed, please alert ahead of time	Denison Pizza Ranch, 510 IA-39	Denison Area Foster/Adoptive Parent Support Group John Smith 877-305-3396
Saturday, Nov. 19, 2016(9am-12:15pm)	Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training		Sioux City Stoney Creek Inn 300 3rd Street Nebraska Room 3 hours
Saturday, Nov. 19, 2016(1:15pm-5:30pm)	CPR and First Aid (Register & Pay Here) To avoid late fees, pay by Sunday, Nov. 6		Sioux City TBA 4 hours

IFAPA will not be offering any additional trainings during the month of December, so please plan accordingly.

FOSTER PARENT MILESTONES

Please join me in thanking the following foster parents for their years of service to Iowa's children as this month marks their renewal anniversary. Thank you for your years of dedication!

- **20+ Years:** Susan Thayer
- **10+ Years:** Lenette Hockett; Merete & Jeffery Klocke
- **5+ Years:** Michelle & Josh Schramm
- **ONE YEAR:** Staci & Michael Struthers

AND REMEMBER: I am just an email/phone call away. I am here for you! If you ever have a question, concern or celebration, give me a call. The conversations which I have with other parents are the best part of my day!

-IFAPA John



From My Side of the Desk!

Following a talk with one of my sons about his adoption and then the shooting of the police officers, I knew this month, I should talk about adoption.

Fifteen years ago we adopted a sibling group of three. Two weeks ago the oldest told Connie and I that because of his age (17) he had fears about ever being adopted. He felt that the only reason he was even being considered was because of his younger brother and sister. Wow!

Shortly after this talk, a young man, adopted at a much younger age and raised in a near-by community was one of the police officers killed in Des Moines.

My heart went right away to that family losing a child they had adopted. Selfishly, I thought if we were to lose one of our adopted children AND then I decided that we have not often enough told the kids how lucky we are to have them and how they have made our lives so much better!

I am certain the Martin family told their son this, AND I know the Smith Family will be too.