



MICHELLE JOHNSON

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



Teaching Your Children about Cultural Diversity

Adapted from Professional Services Group, Community Impact Programs, Foster Care Training

We live in a diverse society that includes people of many races, cultures, and beliefs. Individuals possess different physical and mental characteristics as well. Teaching your child about diversity can help your child grow up to be open-minded, fair, respectful of other's rights and feelings, and aware of people's similarities and differences.

Enjoy Diversity in Daily Life

Toys and games: Avoid toys that encourage stereotypes (cowboy and Indian figures, for example). Don't limit activities based on outdated gender roles. Let boys play with cooking sets. Let girls pretend to be firefighters.

Use a world map or globe to locate countries that you hear about in the news or read about in books. Talk about how people from many cultures share one small planet.

Music: Borrow tapes or CD's of world music from a library or buy your own. Listen to radio programs of ethnic music.

Books: Read fairy tales and fables from other cultures. Talk about common themes, such as love and hate, honesty and hard work. Ask a children's librarian to recommend books with characters from different groups and lands.

TV, newspapers and magazines: Watch shows about different cultures. Discuss any stereotypes or prejudice that you see on TV or in photos. For example, are the doctors usually male? Are the criminals often people of color? Talk about news events that show injustice or poverty at home or abroad.

Foods: Find out where favorite foods come from (lasagna from Italy, stir fry dishes from Asia, etc). With your child, prepare a recipe from a different culture. Serve it with a familiar food to encourage acceptance. Note: kids can be picky about new foods. Tell your child it's okay not to like a food after trying it, but he or she should not make fun of it.

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NEWS FROM YOUR IFAPA PEER LIAISON

Watch what you say and do: Children will follow your example, no matter how often you talk about diversity. Examine your own prejudices and work to overcome them.

Avoid ethnic, racial and sexist humor even about your own race or gender or ethnic heritage. (It only encourages more of the same.) Teach your children to say, "That's not funny!" or "That's not fair!" to racial, ethnic, or sexist jokes.

Avoid general statements, such as "Old people can be like that." General statements can lead to stereotypes.

Think about other messages you may unknowingly send your child: For example: Do you lock your car doors only when you drive through certain neighborhoods?

Examine your work and social life: For example: Do you welcome relationships with people different from you? Do you invite people of other cultures and ethnicities to your home?

Keep in mind that healthy self-esteem allows children to respect others. Children with poor self-esteem are more likely to be prejudiced. They may put others down to feel better about themselves. Help build your child's esteem by letting your child know that he or she is important and special, is respected as an individual, has talents and strengths, and has rights and responsibilities.



Of course the black zebras with white stripes hated the white zebras with black stripes just as much.

COLLEGE PLANNING

<http://www.ifapa.org/resources/college-planning.asp>

If you have or know of youth who are in foster care, or have been (between ages 14-18), and want to go to college, here is an opportunity for \$8,000 towards any Iowa college. There is paid academic tuition, free room and board for a year, and a stipend for textbooks!

<http://www.guardianscholarsfoundation.com>



Anti-Racism Poster Child

Black, White and Asian...

IFAPA SPRING CONFERENCE

Friday & Saturday

April 8 & 9, 2016

Des Moines, Iowa

How to Register:

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(includes mail-in registration)

[Register for the Conference Online](#)

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[PREPARING FOR YOUR TAXES](#)

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