

# NEWS NOVEMBER 2016

## FROM YOUR PEER LIAISON



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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!

### How can we work with birth families during the holidays?

- Ask children about their experiences and try to incorporate some of their traditions. The children placed in your home may miss some activities that they experienced with their family or in a previous placement.
- If possible, ask your child's family members about their holiday traditions and customs. Ask about their beliefs and observances. Although you may feel stretched at the holidays, try to coordinate schedules with the birth families. This gives the children a chance to share what is familiar while experiencing new traditions.
- This is a good time for the youth in your home to make small gifts and send cards to their birth families or old neighbors and friends.
- This is a time when many children feel conflicted feelings about their birth families and worry about them. It is a good time to let the young person know that it is okay for them to be safe and cared for even if their family struggles. Reassure them if you can, about the safety and care of their birth family.

<http://fosteringperspectives.org/fpv15n1/holidays.htm>

### Religious Differences and the Holidays

The holidays can be tough for foster families. Children in care miss their families and their traditions, while at the same time they may want to be part of the activities of the foster family. When there's a religious difference between the child's family and the foster family, things can become even more complicated.

Religion can be a sensitive issue. Legally, birth parents have the right to choose their children's religion or lack of religion. Placement of their child in foster care does not take away this right.

Of course, most foster parents try to respect the culture and religious customs of the children in their care. But what does this mean when it comes to religion?

The answer lies in establishing open lines of communication among foster parents, DHS, and the birth family. If your agency knows how you feel about religious issues (for example, if prayer makes you feel uncomfortable, or if you feel compelled to convert children and their families), it will make informed placement decisions. If you haven't already done so, consider talking with your social worker about how religion affects your role as a foster parent.

This communication works both ways. The more you know about the religion, traditions, and preferences of birth families, the easier it will be for you to act in a way that honors their beliefs.



www.ifapa.org

# NEWS FROM YOUR IFAPA PEER LIAISON

## November is National Adoption Month

### Union County Adoption Event

Tuesday, November 1, 2016 - CRESTON

Crest Baptist Church 1211 North Poplar Street, Creston, Iowa 50801

Tuesday November 1, 2016 6pm to 8:30pm

In celebration of National Adoption Month, Iowa KidsNet is hosting a Disney-themed Carnival. Feel free to dress up as your favorite Disney character, and join us for an evening of games, prizes, and delicious food!

### Gingerbread Run for Adoption

Saturday, November 5, 2016



**Saturday @ 10AM**  
**November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016**  
{Pick up registrations/shirts:  
9-10AM}  
Ankeny DMACC, Ankeny  
Bldg #3W  
.....  
Runners, walkers, families,  
and spectators are welcome  
to celebrate ADOPTION!

**NEW!** Walk at BOTH events by only registering for one. Or, run BOTH events by registering for Ames & pay just \$10 more to run in Ankeny on Nov. 5th.  
• Kids' Gingerbread Person Chase at 10AM - Face painting, too! •  
All participants will receive snacks, beverages and promotional items.

**\$30** **Runner Donation: \$30**  
Includes: 1 long-sleeved shirt, timed event, medals for 1st place in many age/gender categories.

**\$20** **Spectator or Walker Donation: \$20**  
Includes: 1 long-sleeved shirt.

**\$60** **Family Donation for Walkers: \$60**  
Includes: 4 long-sleeved shirts; all additional paid family donations for walkers only = \$10

Walkers who do not wish to have a T-shirt are asked to register online and to sign the consent form. Donations can also be mailed to: **The Gingerbread Run for Adoption**, c/o The National Center for Adoption, PO Box 154, Des Moines, IA 50301

\* Late registrations are those received after **Nov. 1st, 2016**. There will be a **\$5 late fee** per shirt after this date.

**To register, sign up on:**  
**www.getmeregistered.com** • keyword: Ankeny  
Participants can register online and pay by mail or credit card.

**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!**  
Adoption Advocates of Iowa, Iowa KidsNet, AMP-Achieving Maximum Potential, Youth Standing Strong, Lutheran Family Services, Adoption Associates of Iowa, Wicked Soundz, Beauty Amidst the Ashes, ISU Adoption Club, Joyful Colorz, Plumb Supply Company, Princess & Pirates Facepainting, George and Cheryl Humphreys, The Bokhoven Family, The Marchetti Family, and The National Center for Adoption.

### Service Area 5 Adoption Celebration

Friday, November 11, 2016 - DES MOINES

Science Center of Iowa, 401 W Martin Luther King Jr Pkwy, Des Moines, Iowa

Friday, November 11th from 5pm to 8pm

Adoptive families must RSVP to receive free admission for your family. RSVP to Beth Vannevel-Clark [bvannevelclark@fouroaks.org](mailto:bvannevelclark@fouroaks.org) by November 7th. Foster and kinship families (who have not adopted) are welcome to attend this event. The cost for foster and kinship families is \$5 per person.



## National Adoption Month

## Adoption Saturday Celebration

Saturday,  
November 19, 2016

8:30 AM to 12:00 PM

Polk County Justice Center, Des Moines  
222 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue –  
Downtown

Refreshments will be served.  
Event is free and open to the public.  
Please join us.

