

MAY 3, 2016

IFAPA Director Reflects on Foster Care Month

May is National Foster Care Month and with that I have been spending a lot of time thinking about foster care and the impacts not only on our families but the children we care for.



Kaci O'Day-Goldstein
IFAPA Executive Director
& Foster Parent (13 years)

I want to say "THANK YOU" to you, the foster family! There are children within the State of Iowa that you have sheltered, clothed, fed, held their sick bodies, calmed down, reassured and loved when all else has been taken and they are filled with fear.

Thank you for being who you are. Thank you to your immediate family for the sacrifices they also make!

Thank you for showing others what it means to be selfless. Thank you for opening your home and heart to another child who is a stranger and exhibiting what it means to put that child first in your life.

Thank you for planting a seed in a child's life—a seed that you may never see grow, mature or blossom into a productive adult.

Thank you for your endurance on the roller coaster of foster parenting. You encounter experiences that few others outside of our world of fostering can imagine.

Thank you for your patience when anger and pain is outwardly displayed, while they struggle internally with their trauma, sadness and anxiety and you show them unconditional love.

Thank you for showing others that defining the word "family" does not mean you come with the same DNA, background or ethnicity.

Thank you for being that caring and loving adult that every child deserves. I take this time to give you the respect and honor that you have earned and rarely hear, "THANK YOU!" I am thankful there are compassionate, loving and serving families such as yours.

Congratulations to you, one of Iowa's Foster Families, as we recognize National Foster Care Month!

STARTING FIRES FOR SELF-ESTEEM

Source: *Hearding Chickens Blog*

He views himself through a distorted lens, as if he were always looking into a fun house mirror. Carl's sense of self is based on a past history that won't let go of him. He carries with him burdens that no child should have. Many children in foster care feel the same distortion. Self-esteem is elusive. They cannot see the good inside of themselves because their self-image is clouded by the trauma of the past. There isn't much adults can say to help. Foster and adoptive parents can tell them, "You are an amazing kid," or, "People love to be near you," but they don't believe this. After all, adults have spoken words before that held no meaning. Bio parents made promises and didn't follow through. Social workers assured them "soon" they would have a permanent home. Foster homes offered assurances that they wouldn't have to leave. Words don't hold weight with our children.

CONTINUE READING

Have You Read our Latest News & Views?

IFAPA's quarterly newsletter has been posted to our website. Don't miss reading about the new DHS payment schedule, attention-seeking behaviors and the 5 mistakes most grown-ups make with teens [READ NEWSLETTER](#)



Variety AMP Camp 2016

Variety AMP Camp will be held from July 17 – July 23 at the 4H camp in Madrid, IA. Thanks to the generosity of Variety the Children’s Charity, this will mark the fourth year of camp for foster/adoptive youth. Variety AMP Camp has room for 35 teens, ages 15-18, and 10 mentors from Aftercare and PAL programs. The focus will be leadership building and making successful transitions to self-responsibility. All activities will emphasize building healthy, active, and involved AMP leaders. Campers will also participate in camp activities geared toward teens and today’s technology. Campers are encouraged to share their personal story with other campers and staff with the goal of building personal pride and hope for a brighter future. Previous campers rave about AMP Camp! Applications are available on the [AMP website!](#)

IS YOUR TEEN READY?

A Free Training on Preparing Youth for Adult Living, Learning & Working

TRAINING DISCUSSED:

- Permanency issues & resources available for transition age youth in foster & adoptive homes
- Planning for life after high school
- Preparing for work as an adult & how families can help prepare students
- Educational options, resources & tips for students The Special Education transition process, including transition goals and IEP's

CHOOSE FROM ONE OF THREE LOCATIONS:

**Waterloo (June 4); Dubuque (June 11)
Cedar Rapids (June 18)**

[VIEW FLYER FOR MORE DETAILS](#)

My Name is Laura and I'm a (Recovering) Perfectionist

By Dr. Laura Markham ([Aha! Parenting.com](#))

I first went to therapy as a young woman because I hoped that it would make me perfect. Even once I realized that I'd never be perfect, I was still striving towards it, figuring that falling short would at least get me closer.

It wasn't until I became a mother that I realized that perfectionism is always the enemy of love. If you're criticizing yourself all the time, you can't feel good inside. Since we can't act much better than we feel, our lack of compassion for ourselves translates into more criticism towards our kids. (Does criticism help you change? Me neither.)

If you're criticizing your child to make her "better," you're giving a clear message that she isn't good enough yet. Most of us go through our entire lives feeling not good enough, because we never felt quite "good enough" as children.

By definition, perfectionism is judging ourselves, our loved ones, and life as not good enough. We reject the present moment -- peanut butter hands, tear-stained face and all -- because we wish things could be some other way. But that means we hold ourselves back from really loving during so many of our interactions with our child. Because how can you love while you're judging?

[CONTINUE READING](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

IFAPA'S ADVENTURELAND DAY!

SATURDAY, AUGUST 20, 2016 - ALTOONA, IA

IFAPA will be hosting our 2016 Appreciation Event at Adventureland Park on August 20. All foster, adoptive and kinship families are invited to attend. Our discount ticket order form can be found on our website in June.

[VIEW OTHER APPRECIATION EVENTS](#)

WIN AN IFAPA T-SHIRT

KEEP CALM AND FOSTER ON!

To celebrate foster care month, IFAPA is hosting a t-shirt drawing for our families. To be entered into this drawing you must email IFAPA (cthomason@ifapa.org) by May 9th (please specify t-shirt drawing in the subject line of your e-mail). Please be sure to include your full name and mailing address.