

"Alone we can do so little.
Together we can do so much."
— Helen Keller



Montgomery County Foster Parent Association

P.O. Box 10006 • Gaithersburg, MD 20898-0006 • www.mcfpa.com

Fostering Communications

A newsletter for foster and adoptive parents in Montgomery County. Published by DHHS.

April 2002

Please Join!

The Montgomery County Foster Parent Association (MCFPA) is a non-profit organization and is independent from DHHS. All foster and adoptive parents and other interested persons are welcome at our meetings which are held the second Thursday of every month except July, August, and December. Dues are \$10 per year and can be mailed in or paid at the meetings.

The purpose of our organization is to address the needs of the children in care. This purpose is met by supporting foster and adoptive parents, answering questions, finding solutions, presenting helpful speakers at the meetings, and providing camps, tutoring, reduced cost day care, and sports activities.

Another benefit to joining is that you receive 1.5 hours of continuing education credit for each meeting you attend. You are required to complete six (6) hours of credit each year to maintain your license.

Next meeting...

When: April 11, 2002 7:30 - 9:00 pm
Where: Epworth United Methodist Church
9008 Rosemont Dr., Gaithersburg, MD
Topic: Human Growth During the Teen Years:
Development & Depression in Teens

Speaker: Margaret Flagg, Parent Educator

Directions: The church is across from Walnut Hill Shopping Center on Route 355, near Shady Grove Road. There are three churches in a row. *Epworth United Methodist Church is the middle church with the stained glass steeple.* Parking is in the rear lot. Enter through the back doors, turn left, and follow the hallway around to the right to the social hall.

**Thank you for your help in recruiting
new resource families.**

**Our statistics show that your efforts made
a BIG difference in our recruiting
campaign last year.**

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.

24-HOUR HOT-LINE

1-240-777-4417

**Montgomery County Department of Social Services
CHILD WELFARE DIVISION**



Meeting Child Care

is available free of charge.



Many of our topics are unsuitable for young ears, so we ask that no children old enough to comprehend the content be brought in to the meetings.

IMPORTANT: We will be regularly checking in on the children to be sure everything is well and there are no behavior problems. Any child not following the rules or the direction of our provider will be removed from the child care room and returned to the responsible parent(s). Since some of the meeting topics are not appropriate for young ears this may require that you leave the meeting as well. If you are bringing older children to the child care room please have a discussion with them about proper behavior, respect for others and property, and following the rules.

If you need child care during our meetings, call Bobbie Augustine a week before any meeting at (301) 977-0792. Children will not be accepted without a reservation.

Montgomery County Foster Parent Association 301-916-6001

OFFICERS

President:

Carolyn Smith301-208-6582

Vice President:

Gerrie Wright301-916-6001

Secretary:

Dave Brown301-916-6001

Treasurer:

Carol Enders301-948-1197

Steering Committee:

vacant301-916-6001

DHHS Liaison:

Linda Gore(240) 777-3943

Newsletter Editor

Michelle Haggart.....(301) 972-0984

fax: (301) 972-1282

e-mail: EditorFC@aol.com

The MCFPA Executive Board meets the first Monday of each month. Please leave a message at (301) 916-6001 if you have an item that should be discussed.

MARY ALLMAN, with Montgomery County Public Schools Special Education division, will help with any concerns you may have with special education issues. (301) 279-4967.

CAROL FRANCONI, who is an advocate for children, wants feedback on any concerns with **medical assistance or hmos** you may have for your foster children. 410-547-9200 x3006.

Need help with Medical Care?

BRENDA PETERSEN who is a nurse and social worker can help access medical, dental, and mental health services for any child in state-supervised care. Please call her at 240-777-4439 if you need any assistance in obtaining health care or resolving billing issues for the children in your care.

This is **YOUR** newsletter!

All foster and adoptive parents are encouraged to provide articles. These might include finalized adoptions, articles written by the foster child themselves, and scholastic or extra-curricular awards. *The deadline for all contributions to the newsletter is seven days after the monthly meeting.* Please submit your contribution using one of the following methods:

E-mail: EditorFC@aol.com

Mail: Fostering Communications

P.O. Box 10006

Gaithersburg, MD 20898-006

Telephone: (301) 916-6001

CANCELLATION POLICY Meetings will be cancelled if the schools are closed or close early due to inclement weather. The meeting will also be cancelled if Montgomery County Schools cancel evening programs. If you are in doubt call (301) 916-6001 and the recording will tell you if the meeting is on or not. If you prefer to speak to a person, you may call one of the officers. Regardless, do not venture out if driving looks too dangerous.

THE MEDICAL MOMENT:

FOSTER CARE SCREENS: Please make sure all children coming into your care get a brief medical examination within 5 business days. If you need any assistance in getting the screen, please call either Lisa Merkin at 240-777-3547 or Brenda C. Petersen at 240-777-4439. After getting the exam, please send a copy of the medical report or doctor's note to the caseworker so it can be placed in the child's permanent record.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS: Within 60 days of coming under the state's jurisdiction, every child must have a comprehensive medical examination. Please make sure children in your home are receiving the medical care mandated by law. Again send a copy of the doctor's notes to the caseworker so it can be placed in the child's permanent file.



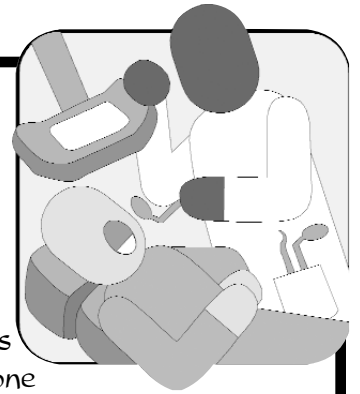
ANNUAL PHYSICAL EXAMS: Every child needs to receive, *at the very least*, a yearly medical examination; however, if they are receiving immunizations or ill, then they need to be seen more frequently.

AT EACH EXAM, ASK THE DOCTOR WHETHER THERE IS ANY FOLLOW-UP THE CHILD NEEDS AND IF SO, PLEASE FOLLOW THROUGH ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE PHYSICIAN. IF YOU NEED ANY ASSISTANCE IN ACCESSING MEDICAL CARE FOR YOUR CHILD, PLEASE CALL BRENDA C. PETERSEN AT 240-777-4439.

DENTAL: Every child coming into care that is at least 2 years old should have a dental screen. Please make sure children see a dentist while they are with you.

PREGNANCY PREVENTION: Talk to children in your care about ways to prevent pregnancy.

Dr. Usa Bunnag wants to provide dental services to our children. She is one of five dentists in the state (the only one in Montgomery County) selected to participate in a new program where the dentist's caseload is comprised of at least 30% Medicaid patients, in exchange for payment of their dental school loans. She will be providing this service for the next three years. Dr. Bunnag is a general dentist experienced with all age groups, as well as, special needs children. She can also perform some root canals and may have someone in her office in the future, who can provide orthodontia. If you have questions about the program, please contact Brenda Petersen at 240-777-4439. (do not call this number to make an appointment--see number below)



6501 Democracy Boulevard, Bethesda, MD 20817
Phone: 301-896-0633 -- Fax: 301-896-0064

Elections for Montgomery County Foster Parent Association Officers will be in June

Please consider running for election.

We also need a volunteer for
Nominating Committee
and volunteers are needed to begin planning
the 2002 Holiday Party.

Contact Carolyn Smith at 301-208-6582
for more information

March 14, 2002

Meeting Minutes

by Dave Brown, Secretary

Attendance: 55!

Carolyn Smith, president, brought the meeting to order at about 7:30 PM. She began by welcoming everyone to the meeting and then short introductions from everyone in attendance. Linda Gore and Angela Secundy of DHHS made a few short announcements. The annual MWCOG conference on Foster and Adoptive Care is the first weekend in April. This has proved to be an excellent conference in the past. Attendance at one day of seminars fulfills the yearly requirement for in-service training, 6.5 hours. Ms. Secundy announced the plans for the May Foster Parent Appreciation reception that is held each year during our May meeting. This is sponsored by the DHHS and staff and is always a very nice evening for all. She also discussed the annual Foster Family Picnic which will be held again this year at the Smokey Glen Farm, on June 17th. Another wonderful event sponsored by the DHHS and staff. Announcements and invitations for these events will be forthcoming.

Dave Brown, secretary, then continued with a few items. The association will again this year reimburse registration fees for any member who attends the MWCOG conference. If anyone attends, obtain a receipt for the registration fees and present at one of the next couple meetings for a full refund. Also, elections will be coming up soon and everyone

was reminded to begin thinking of nominees for the four executive positions. Elections will be held during the June meeting. Officers then serve for a two year term. We will need to form a nominating committee to handle the process. Anyone interested should contact one of the current officers.

One of our foster parents, Mrs. Watson, made a short announcement. She has been researching options for reduced or free tickets to the circus this year. She had contacted someone at a local tv station, WJLA, and received info on possible reduced price tickets (\$10). She also contacted the DC mayors office to see about possible vouchers for admission. Foster parents are encouraged to seek out these alternatives for circus tickets.

After a short refreshment break, Linda Gore, our DHHS liaison, introduced our guest speaker. Ms. Pam Mintz of the Bethesda Youth Services. Ms Mintz is a Parenting Educator at the center and presented a talk on 'Rituals and Routines'. It was an excellent and informative talk on how rituals and routines are incorporated into our lives and the importance they play. The meeting was adjourned at around 9:00 PM. Hope to see you at the April meeting.

**No one recruits
quality foster parents
like other
foster parents!**



**Do you know someone
who would make a
great foster parent?**



We especially need
foster parents for teens
and specialized
foster parents for
our most vulnerable
foster children.

Call Linda Gore at 240-777-1644

Clothing Needs for Children in Foster Care

Many of our children are coming into foster care without clothing. The foster parent's responsibility is to purchase new or almost new items for the child within 30 days of placement.

Your children's clothing items will be checked periodically by one of your workers during a routine visit. It is the foster parents' responsibility to replenish and maintain clothing. When a child leaves your home, those items purchased for him/her should go with

him/her. A suitcase or canvas bag should be used to transport clothing. Large items of clothing such as coats may be "recycled" when a child outgrows the item. It should be clean and in good condition before giving it to another child. Shoes and underwear should not be recycled and should be purchased new.

If you have questions as you plan for your foster child's clothing needs, the child's workers or your home worker will be able to help you.

Listed is a *MINIMUM* list of necessities:

BOYS

- 6 pairs of underwear (briefs or boxer)
- 6 undershirts
- 1 pair dress pants/belt
- 5 pair of school pants or 2 school uniforms
- 3 pairs of play pants or jeans
- 6 pair of socks
- 6 shirts (short or long sleeve as seasons indicate)
- 1 pair of sneakers
- 1 pair of dress shoes
- 1 pair of winter boots
- 3 pairs of pajamas, 1 robe, 1 pair of washable slippers
- Personal pillow
- 1 comb and brush
- 1 toothbrush (replaced as appropriate)
- 1 towel and washcloth
- 1 light jacket and sweater
- 1 cool weather jacket
- 1 pair winter gloves and hat
- 1 rain coat for rainy weather



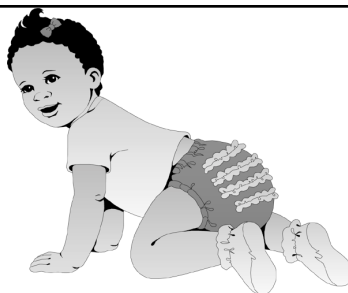
GIRLS

- 6 pairs of underwear
- 6 undershirts or bras as appropriate
- 1 dress and slip
- 5 pair of pants for school, 2 school uniforms
- 3 pairs of play pants or jeans
- 6 pair of socks, stockings or tights as appropriate for size and height
- 6 blouses (short or long sleeve as seasons indicate)
- 1 pair of sneakers
- 1 pair of dress shoes
- 1 pair of winter boots
- 3 pairs of pajamas or gowns, 1 robe, 1 pair of washable slippers
- Personal pillow
- 1 comb and brush
- 1 toothbrush (replaced as appropriate)
- 1 towel and washcloth
- 1 light jacket and sweater
- 1 cool weather jacket
- 1 pair winter gloves and hat
- 1 rain coat for rainy weather



BABIES

- Cloth or disposable diapers as appropriate
- 8 gowns
- 2 receiving blankets
- 2 heavy blankets and 2 crib sheets
- 6 pair socks/booties



- 2 bibs
- 2 washcloths and towels
- 6 individual bottles and nipples
- Appropriate outer garment
- 1 federally approved safety seat for each child who travels in your car who is under 4 years old or 40 lbs.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH NEWS RELEASE

NEW PARENTING BOOKLET PUTS DECADES OF RESEARCH INTO EASY-TO-READ GUIDE

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) today released a valuable new parenting booklet that incorporates three decades of research on effective parenting techniques and healthy child development.

“Adventures in Parenting: How Responding, Preventing, Monitoring, Mentoring, and Modeling Can Help You Be a Successful Parent” highlights many of the toughest challenges that parents face in rearing happy and healthy children and suggests ways to become a more effective, more consistent, and more attentive parent.

“Parenting is the most important job in the world,” said Duane Alexander, M.D., director of the NICHD. “*Adventures in Parenting*’ explains what we have learned from parenting research and shows parents how to put this knowledge into practice in their own lives, to help build strong relationships with their children that will last into adulthood.”

This booklet offers strategies on parenting practices that are based on scientific research that can be used by parents and guardians of children of any age. It also includes stories of how some parents have incorporated these strategies into their own day-to-day parenting activities, as well as insights from parenting experts.

“*Adventures in Parenting*’ gives parents the tools they need to make their own decisions about parenting,” commented Sharon Landesman Ramey, Ph.D., founding director of the Civitan International Research Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and an NICHD grantee. “Most parents work very hard at being good parents, and most of them do an excellent job. Rather than giving a formula for parenting, this booklet gives a framework for making decisions about parenting that is based on scientific evidence.”

Dr. Ramey served as co-chair of the 1999 conference, *“Parenting and the Child’s World: Multiple Influences on Intellectual and Social-emotional Development”*, sponsored by the NICHD and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which served as the basis for *“Adventures in Parenting”*. Dr. Ramey and the other conference co-chairs, John G. Borkowski, Ph.D. and Marie Bristol-Power, Ph.D., were scientific advisors for the booklet.

Putting research-based knowledge about parenting into practice is what *“Adventures in Parenting”* is all about. The booklet encourages parents and others who have active roles in the lives of children to use the “RPM3” approach. RPM3 stands for:

- Responding to your child in an appropriate matter;
- Preventing risky behavior or problems before they arise;
- Monitoring your child’s contact with his or her surrounding world;
- Mentoring your child to support and encourage desired behaviors; and
- Modeling your own behavior to provide a consistent and positive example for children.

This new booklet will be a valuable resource to any parent, grandparent, or other person who is in a position to have a positive influence on the life of a child, from birth to age 14. Using the strategies and stories in *“Adventures in Parenting,”* parents get the information they need and can adapt that information to their own lives, to use with their own children.

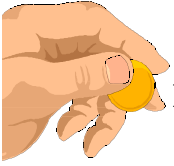
“Not every approach works the same way for every child,” explained Dr. Ramey. “We understood that when we were developing this booklet. *‘Adventures in Parenting’* allows parents to make the decisions, but gives them a number of things to consider when making those decisions.”

***“Adventures in Parenting”* is available free-of-charge by calling the NICHD Information Resource Center at 1-800-370-2943. It also is available online at www.nichd.nih.gov.**

The NICHD is part of the National Institutes of Health, the biomedical research arm of the federal government. The Institute sponsors research on development before and after birth; maternal, child, and family health; reproductive biology and population issues; and medical rehabilitation. NICHD publications, as well as information about the Institute, are available from the NICHD Web site, <http://www.nichd.nih.gov>; the NICHD Information Resource Center, 1-800-370-2943; or by E-mail, NICHDClearinghouse@mail.nih.gov.

MCFPA Membership Form

for July 1, 2001 - June 30, 2002



Please fill out, fold in thirds, place in an envelope, and mail with payment to:
Fostering Communications, P.O. Box 10006, Gaithersburg, MD 20898-006

Amount Due: \$10 per foster family

Date: _____ Check # _____ *(Do not send cash)*

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Work Phone (____) _____

Best time to call _____

E-mail address _____

Topics and/or speakers you would like to see at our meetings: _____

Comments or suggestions: _____



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***Volunteers needed to
organize events!***