

"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.

February 2003

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.

FEBRUARY MEETING...

Understanding ADD/ADHD



When: February 13, 2003
7:30 - 9:00 pm

Topic: "Everything You Always Wanted To Know About ADD/ADHD, But Were Afraid To Ask."

Speaker: Karen Studley, RN
(Ms. Studley leads parent groups about ADD for MCPS.)

Where: Epworth United Methodist Church
9008 Rosemont Dr., Gaithersburg, MD

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.

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 Brown.....301-916-6001

Treasurer:

Beverly Wright301-948-1197

DHHS Liaison:

Linda Gore(240) 777-3943

Newsletter Editor

Michelle Haggart.....(301) 972-0984
e-mail: michelle.haggart@verizon.net

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: michelle.haggart@verizon.net
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.

January 13, 2003

Meeting Minutes

by Dave Brown, Secretary

Attendance: 32

Carolyn Smith, president, brought the meeting to order at about 7:30 PM. The normal format for the evening was rearranged to accommodate the speaker for the evening. We began with a brief refreshment break and social. We then gather to hear the talk for the evening. Linda Gore, the DHHS liaison to the MCFPA, introduced herself and the guest speaker. The talk was CEA Perspective on the Child Welfare Legal System,, as presented by Ms. Elizabeth Evans, the lead County Attorney for DHHS, Child Welfare. Ms. Evans made a very insightful presentation that was especially timely and pertinent to several of the attendees. Many discussion and questions were introduced and I think everyone learned a little more about how the legal system works for the children in our care. Especially in regards to many of the new and proposed laws and policies.

A discussion followed concerning ideas and participation for fund raising activities. Our treasury is in dire need of positive cash flow. We cannot continue to support the level of activities we currently do for much longer. We are in need of funds to support our activities and ideas. We also need some more involvement from some of our new members. The idea of resurrecting the Foster Care Walk-a-thon from years past was suggested. Linda agreed to present the idea to the staff at DHHS and see what their thoughts on this were. This project in the past had involved a great deal of support from the DHHS staff and facilities. Marcia Tivoli, an MCFPA member and a Home Interiors Inc. representative, proposed some ideas for potential fund raising activities

related to sponsoring Home Interior shows and/or group purchases of the products. All good ideas and well worth some serious consideration. Details should follow at future meetings and mailings.

Many useful handouts and free stuff were distributed at the meeting as well. Linda Gore brought a supply of tee-shirts from Freddie Mac and a Guide of „Federal Tax Benefits for Foster and Adoptive Parents and Kinship Caregivers 2002 Tax Year, developed for the Casey family Programs. A very useful reference to have. Carolyn Smith brought a collection of handmade teddy bears which were donated to the association. Beverly Wright , the MCFPA Treasurer, thanked the foster parents who have sent in donations to help with our expenses and encouraged everyone to consider other fund raising ideas.

Many thanks to Mrs. Judy Mathews for providing and setting up the wonderful selection of refreshments for the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned by Carolyn at about 9:00. We hope to see everyone at the next meeting.

Check out our website
www.mcfpa.com

FOR MY SON

The first time I saw you,
You were distant, full of despair.

I didn't know you...but
It was easy to see your sadness.

For such a small child
You had suffered so many losses.
So many people had let you down.
I knew if I chose to enter your life
I could never be one of those people.

It was weeks before I heard
you laugh...or saw you smile.
But I was immediately taken in.

There was a happy child
somewhere deep within.

He just needed to trust again,
to feel loved and secure.

It would take time and patience
But I knew I would win you over.

With hard work and dedication
you would learn to let me in.

A few weeks later you called me Mom.

Soon after you looked in my eyes
and told me you loved me.

I've never looked back.

I've never regretted my decision
and I will never let you down.

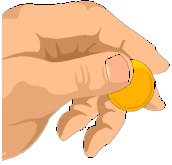
You are stuck with me forever.

— Angela Adkins

*For Tahfari

MCFPA Membership Form

for July 1, 2002 - June 30, 2003



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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Understanding
ADD / ADHD