

"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

JUNE 2004

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

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.

You are invited to our
June meeting
to elect officers and
discuss fundraising ideas
& activities for next year

JUNE 10, 7:30-9:00 pm

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.

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: mhaggart@comcast.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: mhaggart@comcast.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.

May 23, 2004

Meeting Minutes

by Dave Brown, Secretary

Attendance: 28 foster parents 10 DHHS staff

Carolyn Smith, president, brought the meeting to order at about 7:30 PM. Carolyn welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited everyone to introduce themselves and share some personal info. Dave Brown, secretary, mentioned the elections that will be held at the June meeting and offered to run for the office of Treasurer for the 2004-2006 term. No one else has expressed interest in running for one of the other three offices, President, Vice President, and Secretary. We will need a couple folks to step forward in the next month so that we can continue to function. Gerri Wright, vice-president, then spoke a little about an upcoming bus trip to Atlantic City. This is a fund raising event for the association as well as a good time out for everyone. The trip will take place the following Saturday, May 15th and the cost is \$30 per person. Each person will receive a \$10 voucher to use in Atlantic City as well. The bus is full and there is a waiting list for last minute cancellations. Gerri also mentioned an idea she had for a Disco party that maybe could be organized for the fall to help with fundraising. Beverly Wright, treasurer, conducted the DVD Player Raffle, the winner was Mr. Gary Fields. He will be contacted soon the arrange delivery of his prize.

Ms. Susan Berkheimer was then invited to make a short presentation. She has started a foundation called, Wishes, which is intended to benefit the foster children of Montgomery Co. Wishes is sponsoring a benefit concert event to be held June 25th, 2004. The event costs \$100 per person, tickets were available at the meeting and others who have an interest in

attending can contact the Wishes Foundation at 301-370-1489.

Angela Secundy of DHHS then addressed the group. May is Foster Parent Appreciation month and the staff from DHHS again provided a very nice reception in our honor. Many thanks to Ms. Secundy and her dedicated staff, for the wonderful dinner, deserts and gifts. Angela then mentioned the upcoming Foster Family picnic to be held Monday, June 21st, and encouraged everyone to sign up soon so that they can get a good estimate of the attendance. She also passed out a new Foster Parent Handbook that has been recently put together with up to date procedures and information, a useful reference for all foster parents. Those who were not in attendance can obtain a copy through their worker.

The DHHS Foster Care Unit is currently working to become accredited. Part of this process requires foster parents to receive CPR and First Aid training. Announcements have been distributed through the mail for upcoming classes. *All licensed foster families will need this training so sign up soon.*

Everyone was reminded again of the elections to be held at the June meeting and anyone with aspirations to become an officer was encourage to speak with one of the officers present or contact us through email, phone or letter. The meeting was adjourned at about 9:00, hope to see everyone at the next meeting.

MCFPA Membership Form

for July 1, 2003 - June 30, 2004



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: _____



**Montgomery County
Foster Parent Association**

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We need your ideas!