



Family Support Services
OF NORTH FLORIDA INC.
SERVING DUVAL AND NASSAU COUNTIES

Family Connections

MARCH | 2009

(904) 421-5800 | 4057 CARMICHAEL AVENUE • SUITE 101 • JACKSONVILLE, FL 32207

www.fssjax.org

NEWS *briefs*

Save the dates...

Save the date

Family Support Services will offer a special training for foster parents in March: 10 a.m. - Noon, Saturday, March 7, at Evangel Temple Assembly of God, 5755 Ramona Blvd. Learn what's happening with the redesign of the foster care system in Florida. Lunch will follow and school supplies will be available. Please RSVP to Ann Phillips, (904) 421-5800, ext. 851 or email ann.phillips@fssnf.org.

Pre-adoption parent training set

Adoption 101, an 8-hour class covering pre-adoption issues, adoption benefits, core issues and resources will be held Saturday, March 21, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Children's Home Society of Florida, Louise Jackson Regional Adoption Center, 3027 San Diego Rd. There is room for 20 participants. Deadline to register is Friday, March 13. To register, contact Martha Cox, (904) 493-8306 or email Martha.Cox@chsfl.org.

Sexual Awareness Training

Sexual Awareness Training for foster parents will be held at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 24 with Dr. Jim Vallaley, a psychologist with the Florida Department of Health's Child Protection Team. The event will be held at the Department of Children and Families Roberts Building Auditorium.

Free Spring Camp

Registration begins March 2 for Spring Camp March 30-April 3. Sponsored by the City Parks and Recreation Dept., the camp is free to children aged 6-12. For more information, call (904) 630-4100.

Road trip to Tallahassee set



FSS CEO **Jim Adams**, and foster parents **Dee Wilson** and **Lillie Blackshear** at the Capitol for the 2008 Children's Week event.

Family Support Services is chartering buses to Children's Day/Family Advocacy in Tallahassee on March 31. Children aged 7 and up are welcome on the bus. For details or to reserve your seat, contact Candace Monroe at (904) 421-5860.

The bus will depart for Tallahassee at 5:30 a.m. Children and families are encouraged to participate in Children's Week at the Capitol, as there are many activities planned for this event, along with a "meet and greet" with state legislators.

Don't forget to write

The foster children's Ounce of Prevention essays are due on March 13. Don't forget to have them submit their wishes and why. Check with your caseworker for details.

Going electronic

The Family Support Service's newsletters are being combined into one and eventually will be only sent out electronically. So, if you want to continue to receive the newsletter, please send your email address and whether you are a foster or adoptive parent to Mary Hurst, mary.hurst@fssnf.org. We are also compiling an email list for relative caregivers so would appreciate knowing those email addresses as well.

Foster Parent meetings

The Greater Jacksonville Foster and Adoptive Parent Assn. will meet at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, March 26, at DCF Roberts Building auditorium, 5920 Arlington Expressway.

The Northeast Florida Foster and Adoptive Parent Assn. will meet at 6:30 p.m., Monday, March 9, at the Northwest Branch Library on Edgewood Avenue. The Nassau County Foster and Adoptive Parent Assn. will meet at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, March 26, at the Nassau County former commission chambers, 80626 Pages Dairy Road in Yulee.

Foster Care

Q&A

Q I have a foster teen and don't understand normalcy – can she date?

A The term 'normalcy' refers to young adults in foster care being able to take part in activities, which are normal in adolescence. Florida Administrative Code 65C-30.007 (10) gives the authority for teenagers to engage in age and maturity level appropriate social and extracurricular activities to promote the teen's social development and maturity.

Some of these activities include spending the night with friends, going to a friend's house after school, extracurricular activities such as band, sports, school clubs, dating and driving automobiles. Background checks for such activities are not required and the primary decision maker is the caregiver, foster parent or group home director.

The decision maker must use common sense in determining the age level and maturity of the teen and the activity. If allowing the teen to date, then the caregiver should meet the date, confirm the arrangements for the evening, such as who is driving, do they have a license and insurance, and determine the time to return.

Each caregiver should have knowledge of where and with whom the teen is staying and the type of supervision and care the teen shall be receiving before approving any outing or overnight activity. The assigned caseworker should be consulted in the decision making process in difficult cases.

Submit your question to:
mary.hurst@fssnf.org

If your question is answered in an issue of the newsletter, you'll receive a \$10 gift card from Family Support Services.

March is Children's Nutrition Month



Check out www.FamilyFun.com for simple healthy snacks for your children!

Here's one they'll go ape for:

Banana Pops

- ▶ 3 bananas
- ▶ 6 Popsicle sticks
- ▶ ¼ cup peanut butter
- ▶ ¼ cup chopped nuts, granola, crispy rice cereal or sunflower seeds

Peel the bananas. Slice in half, width-wise, and push a Popsicle stick through the cut end of each half. Spread peanut butter on the bananas, and then roll in nuts, cereal or seeds. Wrap in waxed paper and freeze for three hours.

Makes six.

For a healthier drink, try mixing fruit juices like strawberry nectar and pineapple juice, or lemonade and sparkling water.

All things behavioral

There are many online resources now available for foster and adoptive parents to provide help and advice in raising our most vulnerable children.

One such website is www.fosterparentcollege.com. For \$8 per person, participants can take two-hour courses on a variety of behavioral issues:



- Anger Pie
- Child Abuse and Neglect
- Children with Autism
- Stealing
- Running Away
- Sleep Problems
- Childhood Anxiety Disorders
- Sexualized Behavior
- Lying

There is also a section on parenting tips which includes courses on Effective Communications, Positive Parenting, Working with Schools and Kinship Care.



Join us for
National Student Athlete Day
at **UNF** on **Saturday, April 4**

Sign up early to participate in tennis clinics, play day games, free lunch and campus tours. Please call Candace Monroe, (904) 421-5860, for more information or to reserve a spot for your foster child!

