

Between Families

May 2015

It's time to **get moving!**



We all know exercise is good for us, but about 80 percent of Americans don't get the recommended amount of physical activity. For instance, children need 60 minutes of play with moderate to vigorous activity every day! Studies show that kids who believe they are competent and have the skills to be physically active are more likely to be active. Those who feel supported by friends and families to become active, or surrounded by others interested in physical activity, are also more likely to participate. Engaging the entire family in physical activity is a good way to get children and parents exercising together. Incorporating these simple strategies from letsmove.gov will help change your family's habits and improve everyone's health, hearts and waistlines.

- Give children toys that encourage physical activity like balls, kites and jump ropes.
- Encourage children to join a sports team or try a new physical activity like gymnastics or karate.
- Limit TV time and keep the TV out of a child's bedroom.
- Facilitate a safe walk to and from school a few times a week.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Walk around the block after a meal.
- Make a new house rule: no sitting still during television commercials.
- Find time to spend together doing a fun activity: park play day, swim day or bike day.
- Issue a family challenge to see who can be the first to achieve a Presidential Active Lifestyle Award by committing to physical activity five days a week for six weeks. Adults and children can both receive the award!
- Be sure that you and your children get the sleep you need. Adults need an average of eight hours of sleep per day. Most children under age 5 need to sleep for 11 hours or more per day, children ages 5-10 need 10 hours of sleep or more per day and children over age 10 need at least nine hours per day.



Are you still sitting on the couch? Put on your shoes and move your body! Turn on your favorite music and dance around the living room as a family. Today is the day to start on the road to better health. Remember, it's okay to start slowly and build up to your goal.

Source: www.letsmove.gov/active-families

Outstanding care providers

Kansas care providers of the month Brad and Jennifer Stallbaumer

What defines a model foster parent? Merriam-Webster describes a foster parent as someone who provides the care that a parent usually gives to a child to help the child grow and develop. When I look at this definition, I think of Brad and Jennifer Stallbaumer. Brad is an inactive Marine, and they both work in a middle school setting. They give each child who comes into their home parental care. Their main focus is to help them grow and develop into the individuals God created them to be. Brad and Jennifer maintain that “Marine Corps integrity is doing that thing which is right, when no one is looking.” They feel each child who comes into their home deserves a chance, and they don’t give up on them. They exhaust all avenues in meeting the needs of each child. They work hard in maintaining connections for children. The couple incorporates biological family members into their family events and make sure everyone has equal treatment and feels like a part of the family. The most important quality this family has is they don’t take themselves too seriously — they can find humor in every situation! These are just a few details that make them wonderful foster parents. They model the true definition of foster parent.

~Angela Harris, LBSW, foster care worker



Oklahoma care providers of the month Pamela and Lawrence Washington

Pamela and Lawrence Washington have been nothing short of wonderful and dedicated to being the best foster parents to the children in their care. The Washingtons took in two brothers who are rambunctious and fun nonstop. The couple knew they wanted to care for more children eventually so within a week of one of their home visits, they sought out a four bedroom house and called their worker first thing Monday morning to come assess their new home. Shortly thereafter, TFI increased their licensure by one, and within two weeks they had another child placed in their care. The Washingtons now wish to increase their bed space again as they believe they are able to provide more love and help more of our local children. The Washingtons advocate for all three children’s needs and are wonderful to work with. No matter the challenge they may face with the children in their care, they have a “whatever it takes” attitude and have lived up to it every single time!

~Ashley Barker, foster care worker



Oklahoma news

Website upgrades

TFI Connections continues to provide upgrades to our website. We recently added a resources page for foster families, as well as staff contact information and office locations. To find the resources, scroll down to the bottom of the About Us page: tffamilyconnections.org/about-us/.

Foster parent retreat

Mark your calendar for the big event. This year's foster parent retreat will be July 17-18 in Norman, Oklahoma at the luxurious Embassy Suites. Details will be coming in the near future — mark your calendar now!

Collabroshop

This is the third and last Collabroshop ... don't miss this opportunity to attend! It's not just a workshop, but a collaboration between several groups. The Indian Child Welfare Act currently applies for more than 1 in 5 of the children in out-of-home care in Oklahoma. While some children are able to live with relatives, very few approved foster parents are Native American. Too often, Native American children are placed out of preference with non-tribal families. The goal of Collabroshop is to better serve Native American children and families and to ensure that tribal families are available for children and teens who need to be placed away from their parents.

Who is invited?

Indian Child Welfare staff,
Department of Human Services,
private agency foster care staff,
foster care recruiters, foster parents

When?

May 27, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.,
registration opens at 8:30 a.m.

Where?

Chickasaw Nation Community
Center
700 N. Mississippi Ave.,
Ada, Oklahoma

Cost?

It's FREE! We just ask that you
commit the whole day!
(Lunch will be provided.)

RSVP:

Email Constanzia Nizza at
Constanzia.CTR.Nizza@okdhs.org
(Please include your full name and
contact information.)

CEU's available.

Compliance corner

Regulation questions

Have you ever thought you knew an answer to a regulation question then started second guessing yourself? Well, now you don't have to keep guessing. The updated Guidance Handbook for Family Foster Homes is on the Kansas Department of Health and Environment website and can be found here: kdheks.gov/bccfr/download/FFH_Guidance_Material_and_Appendices.pdf

It is helpful in answering some of the regulation interpretation questions you may have regarding family foster home licensing.

Take for instance this frequently asked question: What should I do if I have a 2-3 foot inflatable pool that cannot be drained daily and is only used in the summer? It needs to have a fence per K.A.R. 28-4-824 (b)(2). Each above ground swimming pool shall be at least four feet high or shall be enclosed by a fence at least five feet high with a gate that is kept closed and is self-locking. Steps shall be removed and stored away from the pool when the pool is not in use. This is just one example of how this can be beneficial. Please contact your foster care worker or licensing specialist if you have any questions. Have a fun and safe summer!



Recruitment moment

People often get overwhelmed by the idea of recruitment. The word almost has a negative connotation that sparks images of an enthusiastic sales pitch with half-truths. Fortunately, recruitment for foster parents is different. Dale Carnegie once said “You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.”

The same concept can be applied to recruitment, which is why everyone can play a role! You do not need hours of prep time or millions of dollars in materials. Recruitment starts by taking a genuine interest in those around you.

A few weeks ago, I bumped into a lady from my gym and we began talking. She was discussing the

possibility of doing foster care with her husband the night before. She started asking questions about the process of becoming a foster parent, so I gave her my card. Some might say this was just lucky timing, but if I wouldn't have taken the time to build a connection with her prior to this day, we never would have stopped to have that conversation.

This month I challenge each of you to find one way you can become more connected in your community. Maybe this means having a conversation with someone at church instead of leaving right after service. Maybe it means joining a club that interests you or a volunteer group you are passionate about. Whatever avenue you choose, just remember that building relationships is the key.

~Ali Ardery, recruitment specialist

Foster family living:

May is foster parent appreciation month

On behalf of TFI Family Services, we personally wanted to let you know how much we appreciate your help with caring for children in Kansas. Your partnership with our agency, children and families is invaluable. We are all grateful that you have taken on such a commitment to bring these families back together.

Our sincere thanks goes out to all of you who help us carry out our mission of being devoted to the strength of family. We appreciate your commitment and dedication throughout your years of service! Many fun events are planned to recognize and celebrate each of you. Please ask your local staff and supervisors about the festivities scheduled for your area.

Thank you again!

Pam Richardson,
director of foster care



Happy anniversary



10 years

Tammy Manues

5 years

Edward & Janice Collins

Jackie & Sheryl Crooks

1 year

Michelle Baier & Mandy Fritz

Linda Blakeney

Glen-Henry & Whitney Campbell

Godwin Chinwuba &

Roselyn Awulonu

Barry & Manuela Chronister

DeMarcus Clevel &

Kristina Mayhue

Phillip & Kelli Dantzler

Joseph & Laurendra Ellis

Dell & Katie Harris

Paul & Christine Holz

Mitch & Kathy Mastalsz

Charles & Krystina McCumber

Daniel & Michele Pearl

Shawn & Bethany Raymond

Destry & Amanda Sebring

Dustin & Christina Westbay

James & Leslie Wright

Rhonda Wright



217 SE 4th St

Topeka, KS 66603

800-279-9914 | tfifamilyservices.org

After hour emergencies, please call 877-921-4114.

For the most current calendar for Kansas Children Alliance Training, go to childally.org/training.html

Connect with us:

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