



CHEROKEECOUNTY FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION

From The President

Thanks to everyone that attended our night out last month at Ryan's. We all had a good time socializing and eating.

This month is our full day of training. We are starting to get registrations in, you don't have to be a member of the association to attend. The funds collected are used for administrative cost to maintain the website, printing, office supplies, drinks & paper goods for events, events for the children, volunteer appreciation, incidental items, etc. Your membership would be greatly appreciated.

Those who starting getting donations for Walk Me Home back in October should be able to see all donations on the website. The Walk Me Home committee had to create a 2010 page and move all information over to the new area. If you bookmarked the 2009 page you will have to rebook mark it for 2010.

It's time to start recruiting walkers again and have them register online. We will have live music at our event, food vendors and exhibitors. I encourage all to come and have fun with the kids & hear some great music. Check in for the walk is at 9:30am and the walk starts at 10am the festival will last until 5pm.

Two of our performers are still in High School but are making a name for themselves in Country & Gospel music. Its great to see these young ones coming out to support our children.



David was named Georgia Country and Gospel Music Associations Male Teen Vocalist of the Year, as well as Male Teen Entertainer of the Year. In March of 2009, David was named the North America Country Music Association International's Vocalist of the Year, as well as the North America Country Music Association International's Most Promising Entertainer of the Year.

Jordan Rager is a 2x Entertainer of the Year in Country Music with Georgia Country & Gospel Music Association, 2008 & 2009.

Check out the link to our page as we continue to add vendors www.fosteroradopt.org/walkmehomecherokee.htm.



Cherokee County Foster Adoptive & Parent

February 2010

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Throughout last year monies collect from dues went towards meeting expenses and administrative costs.

Thanks to Marshmallows In The Closet for a great event - we netted \$463
Mommies Day Out in Dec Expenses: \$423

Financial Report for 2010

Expenses for this year: 419.40 (Liability Insurance for Festival and Website)

Operating Account \$ 383.57
Respite Grant \$2,500.00

Featured Event for February 27th All Day Training

Our training day is fast approaching. We hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to get your training hours in. You will find the registration form attached to this email. If you don't want to email it back you can bring it with you to the conference. I will still need a count of how many are coming and how many children you will bring so that we can make sure we have enough volunteers.

Session 1 was changed and we will try to reschedule to our April training date. We will have a different topic that will help you learn how to get involved with your child's school making sure they are getting all the services they need. Those of you that need **CE credits** Session 2 is an approved class and you will earn 2 training hours.

If you plan on taking one of the CPR classes you must RSVP, class size is limited.

Coffee, drinks and light snacks will be provided. We will take a lunch break from 12 - 1pm. We will have a list of local fast food eateries in the area for your convenience.

February Is National Heart Month



Everyone knows that February is for Lover's right? After all it has to do with the heart and everyone knows who the American Heart Association is. They are the ones that tell us to live a healthy life style, to eat right and get plenty of rest so that we don't get stressed out and develop High Blood Pressure or worse have a Heart Attack. Although heart disease is sometimes thought of as a "man's disease," it is the leading cause of death for both women and men in the United States, and women account for nearly 50% of heart disease deaths.

Women are usually the care takers, the ones that keep the home in order, get the kids to where they need to go and make sure they have what they need and sometimes even work a fulltime secular job. Fathers help out where needed and usually work a fulltime job as well.

Foster parents have added stress to add to the every day, taking kids to doctor's appointments, visitations, you name it. Everyone knows that Foster parenting is hard work! The job comes with little pay and even fewer rewards. It's a 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week job working with children who can try even the most seasoned foster parent and leave them frustrated and ready to throw in the towel.



One of the most important things a foster parent can do for the children they care for is to take care of **themselves**: body, soul, and spirit. While foster parenting does require much selflessness and self-sacrificing, neglecting yourself not only contributes to the burn out rate, but also affects the entire family unit. **Don't wait until it's to late.**

When the going gets rough and you find yourself becoming weary, take time for yourself and de-stress. Follow these **6 steps to rejuvenate.**

1. Take time for yourself. Take a candle lit bath, go to the gym, meet up with some friends. Whatever you find relaxing and refreshing - do. Exercise, eat right, take your vitamins. Pray or meditate. Keep yourself healthy.



2. Take care of your marriage. Foster parenting can exact a high price on a marriage. Dealing day in and day out with challenging children, who quickly learn to pit one parent against the other, can make home feel more like a battleground. Give your marriage top priority. Everyone benefits when the marriage is happy and stable: your children, your foster children and yourselves.

3. Take care of your biological and adopted children. They are often forgotten in the whole foster care saga. You can quickly find all your time spent coping with the behaviors of the foster children and then find your own children acting out, trying to re-gain your attention. Go out one-on-one with them, to a movie, out for ice cream or out for a drive. Just be with them and ready to listen. Make it a rule that whenever you are out on your "date" together that they can express any feelings or thoughts to you, even venting to you, and you will just listen to them. They are likely

dealing with much the same emotions and frustrations that you are.

4. Build a support base for yourself: extended family, friends, church family, co-workers, social outlets. Sometimes just having someone to listen to you can make all the difference in your perspective.

5. Connect with other foster parents: There are a few ways of doing this, through outings or association functions, going out to dinner with another family are some ways. Sometimes there are just things that no one can understand except for others who are in the same position as you.

6. Use respite care occasionally. Use this time for your family to recharge their batteries. Everyone will feel better equipped to handle situations as they arise when they have had a little breather.

Foster parenting may be the toughest thing you will ever do. The children may never thank you, and there may be days when you wonder if you are even making a difference, but you are, and some day they will remember that **you never gave up.**

Message from D'Anna



"Other things may change us, but we start and end with family."

~ Anthony Brandt

Happy February, which means Happy Valentine's Day! I hope you and your families have had a good start to the year thus far! As we begin this year, we are remaining focused on family centered practice which means a stronger partnership with you as we work together to achieve permanency for children. You will be hearing and learning more about the concept and philosophy of Partnership Parenting in training sessions designed for you in the coming months. Primarily, you will become role models for birth families and will help to strengthen areas within the lives of birth families that have produced risk to children. Examples of ways you can begin to partner with us is through joint visits, telephone contact with birth parents and a broader outreach to birth families. Of course, all of these ideas should be discussed with your Resource Development Worker; however, I encourage you to begin thinking of ways you can support birth families.

We are also kicking off a statewide campaign later this month aimed to recruit and retain more foster parents, called Each One Recruit One, Each One Retain One, **EORO**, which is an opportunity for our entire agency to take part in recruiting and retention of foster parents. At the beginning of January we had 81 homes. During the month, we opened 2 homes and 4 homes were closed during the month, so at the end of January we had 79 foster homes.

In January, we gained custody of 7 children; 6 girls and 1 boy. 5 of these children were white; 1 was black; and 1 was bi-racial. All of these children were from ages 0-5. 6 of these children were placed in a Cherokee DFCS foster home and 1 was placed with a relative. There were no sibling groups. 6 of these children came from CPS Investigations and 1 came from Family Preservation. None of these children were returned at the 72-hour hearing and 2 were returned at the 10-day hearing. We had a total of 16 children exit foster care in January for reasons of family reunification, emancipation, guardianship to foster parent, custody to relative and adoption. As January came to a close, we had 156 children in foster care in Cherokee County.

We had 2 finalized adoptions in January to Cherokee foster parents. Congratulations to Jack and Debra Goodwin and Kenneth and Heather Neal for becoming forever families to 2 of our children!

We are looking forward to the February 27 Conference date at Antioch Christian Church in Hickory Flat. We will be participating in providing an agency update as part of this conference day. Contact Marie Blackwell, Foster Parent Association President, for more information on the Conference Day. We are also planning another "Roundtable" event so look for information regarding this event from Amy Blanton, Foster Parent Liaison, or contact her at amy.blanton@embracega.org with your suggestions on topics for discussion.

I continue to look forward to many great things to happen for you and for the children and families in Cherokee County. Thank you for all of your love, support and time to our children.

D'Anna Liber
Director
770-720-3629
dkliber@dhr.state.ga.us

Julie's Corner

Child care during school breaks and vacations must go thru CAPS or a waiver from the state office is needed. Accounting told us that we know about these instances in advance, so arrangements need to be made in advance. Please let your permanency case manager know if you need a CAPS form completed for the children in your home!

I know I write about training hours every month, but I want to encourage you to get a jump start on your 2010 training hours. The state is requiring that we report on a quarterly basis how many of our foster and adoptive families have completed training hours. Because we always want our families to look the best and outshine the other counties, I encourage you to begin or continue working on your training hours. Remember, you can do 8 hours online through websites such as www.fosterparentcollege.com or www.fosterparentstest.com. EMBRACE podcasts also count toward the "online hours" total. Webinars are not considered online hours because those trainings are interactive.

Please make plans to attend the Foster/Adopt Association training on the 27th to get 6 hours!

CPR is required and you need to remain current on your certification.

Basic Water Rescue is required if you have a pool, pond, or live on the lake. If you go boating frequently, this would be a good course to attend. The course is offered at the Canton YMCA and the next classes are scheduled for:

Sunday, April 11, 2010 from 4 p.m.- 8 p.m.

Saturday, August 14, 2010, also from 4-8 p.m.

The cost for this training is reimbursed with an original receipt. You have to pay for the class in advance in order for the class to "make". If there aren't enough participants, the course will be canceled. Please contact Peggy Donaldson at the Canton YMCA at 770-345-9622 for more information.

Our current IMPACT class will graduate on 2/25/10 and we will begin another class on 3/11/10.

Remember to RSVP to Amy Blanton at amy.blanton@embracega.org if you want to attend the EMBRACE bowling event on Friday, March 5th from 6-8 p.m.

Julie M. Evans, SSCM
Cherokee County Department
of Family and Children Services
770-720-3650 Office
678-717-6596 Fax

Cherokee County Foster & Adoptive Parents Association
Training Day February 27, 2010



Antioch Christian Church
3595 Sugar Pike Rd.
Canton, GA 30115

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Classification: [] Foster Parent [] Adoptive Parent [] DFCS Staff [] Other

Annual Dues: \$10 (per person) \$ _____ **CPR Class:** \$55 (per person) \$ _____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____ **Will any children be attending:** [] Yes [] No

You do not have to be a member to attend the training. The funds collected are used for administrative cost to maintain the website, printing, office supplies, drinks & paper goods for events, events for the children, volunteer appreciation, incidental items, etc. Your membership would be greatly appreciated.

Training Options:

Session 1 _____ - Advocating for your children in school
9:00am – 10:00 am

Session 2 _____ - 12 Steps to Keeping Your Kids Drug Free (CE Credits)
10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Session 3 _____ - DFCS Updates
1:00 pm - 2:00pm

Session 4 _____ - GA Medicaid Basics and Home & Community-Based Services
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

CPR & First Aid – 1st Session _____ *Additional fee required
9:00 am - 12:00 pm You only have to sign up for one class not both

CPR & First Aid – 2nd Session _____ *Additional fee required
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm You only have to sign up for one class not both

Make Checks Payable to: CCFAPA, 705 Ash Ridge Rd, Waleska, GA 30183 You can mail your check or bring it with you to the conference. Those taking the CPR class **must RSVP** so that we can make sure we don't over book each session.

If you have questions, contact Marie at mblackwell@fosteroradopt.org or call 770-378-0759.

Cherokee County Foster Adoptive & Parent Association



Building The Future with our Foster and Adoptive Parents as they open their hearts & their homes to children.

Check website calendar for upcoming events & training.

www.fosteroradopt.org



If you would like to receive the newsletter via email go to our web site and sign up.

If your email changes let us know so that we can update our records.

Check us out on **Facebook**, many of our foster parents are connecting via the net. Click link below or put "Cherokee County Foster" to find us.

<http://www.facebook.com/event.php?sid=9337e82e1d11a302dc6636ebf8cd44e4&eid=75644102307&ref=search>

2010 Board Members

PRESIDENT

Marie Blackwell

770-378-0759

mblackwell@fosteroraadopt.org

SECRETARY

Shannon Griffis

TREASURER

Becky Borgia

Other Associations or Support Foundations

Foster Care Support Foundation

located at 115 Mansell Place, Roswell, Ga. 30076, 770-641-9591,

<http://www.fostercares.org>

Email: Rachel Ewald rachel@fostercares.org

Embrace Cherokee

Foster Parent Liaison Amy Blanton, amy.blanton@embracega.org

or visit them on the web <http://www.embracega.org>

AFPAG (State Foster Parent Association)

Feel free to contact them at: contactafpag@bellsouth.net

Executive Director

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404-918-1956

sharonlc@juno.com

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478-335-9454

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