



FSFAPA, GAL target Adoption Intervention changes

FSFAPA has teamed up with the statewide GAL in an effort to introduce legislation that would make the adoption intervention statute match the “best interest” standards that are present in dependency proceedings (Chapter 39).

This effort is a response to a rash of cases statewide that the adoption intervention process in Chapter 63 was used to derail long-running dependency cases. This often resulted in children being abruptly pulled out of

long-term, bonded placements that had been identified as possible adoptive placements as bio parents desperately grasped for their last measure of control in the face of imminent termination of their rights.

The proposed legislative changes include a time frame that will limit intervention motions to the first months of a dependency case, and add the “best interest of the child” language that guides decisions in dependency.

This will allow adoption intervention to

remain as an “early exit” from dependency, but curb last minute efforts to circumvent the process or use intervention punitively against caregivers.

If you have had an experience with adoption intervention that you want to share, email Dr. Thomas Croom (tmcroom@gofoster.org). Also, please follow this issue on our website and Facebook page and encourage your local legislators to support foster families and at-risk children by supporting this legislation.

Fostering Success with Nex Gen Band

The statewide effort to recruit foster homes for teens rolled out this summer with the Nex Gen Band appearing at several local events around the state.

We're proud of the work our teens have done representing the best of the system and the importance of the need for quality family foster homes for teens. To see the first PSA for the Fostering Success effort or learn more about the campaign, visit <http://www.qpiflorida.org/pages/TeenRecruitment.html>.

2016 Annual Education Conference Set

The 2016 FSFAPA Annual Education Conference is set for June 6-10 2016 at the Orlando Renaissance Resort. Save the date! More information to come!

Rally in Tally is set for Nov. 30-Dec. 1.

Contact your CBC if you are interested in participating.

Fall Quarterly Mini Conference Set for WPB

Friends of Foster Children of Palm Beach County will host a Triple P Parenting Seminar on Saturday, November 14th from 9 a.m to 2 p.m. The address is: 4100 Okeechobee Blvd. in West Palm Beach.

Friends of Foster Children will also be providing lunch and limited

childcare will be available. Dues paid members of FSFAPA will get priority for childcare slots.

Presidents Council and quarterly meeting schedules will be announced soon (check FloridaFAPA.org or the FSFAPA facebook page). Also check for information about lodging group

rates for members travelling from outside the area.

This will be the last FSFAPA Mini Conference and Quarterly Meeting of 2015 so there are several functions to attend to -- including elections (by acclamation) and details concerning the early legislative session.

Nominations in, no contested positions

The nomination process for Executive Vice President, Director of Programs, Secretary and all Regional Vice President positions has been completed and the nominees verified as eligible by nominations chair David Brown.

There are no positions that are being contested (all only had a single nominee verified as eligible) so, per association bylaws (<http://floridafapa.org/about-fsfapa/bylaws/>) the nominees will be “elected by acclamation by the Board of Directors” at their meeting at the Fall Quarterly Meeting.

The positions will all continue to be held by their current occupants – many of whom were in those positions by prior appointment:

Chris Johnson - Executive Vice President

Orlando Avila - Director of Programs

Charles Parker - Secretary

Kara Jordon - Northwest Region RVP

Thomas Croom - North Central Region RVP

Keith Best - Southern Region RVP

Melanie Stimmel - Central Region RVP

Lillie Blackshear - Northeast Region RVP

Dorothy Alvarez - Southeast Region RVP

Melissa Schol - Suncoast Region RVP

The new terms for each of these positions will be effective January 1, 2016.

Conference Award Winners

Caring Heart/Licensed Foster Parent: Diana Lake (Broward County Childnet)

Diana came to foster care thinking she wanted to foster babies, but after learning about the desperate need for homes for teens, she had a change of heart. Since Diana has become licensed she has fostered more than 20 teen girls.

Forever Heart/Adoptive Parent: Lori and Vance Decker (Polk County Heartland)

Lori and Vance recently finalized their 5th and 6th adoptions for a total of 8 girls! They have two grown biological daughters (one who still lives at home), three adopted daughters from Pennsylvania, and three adopted daughters through Heartland for Children. Lori recently became a GAL for Circuit 10 to further help our children in need.

Rising Star: Kristi Phoenix (Duval County Family Support Services)

Kristi Phoenix is an 18-year-

old, ambitious and strong young lady in Extended Foster Care who graduated on May 7 with her associate of arts degree from Florida State College. Kristi says her greatest achievement in life has been overcoming the struggles of her background and family issues.

Partner in Caring/Case-worker-Licensing Staff: Jill Poole (Devereux, St Lucie, Martin, Okeechobee, and Indian River Counties)

Jill is always available to support parents/caregivers and community partners. She is the QPI lead and she supervises the four foster parent mentors. She covers four counties and over 125 foster families.

Leadership through Example: Community Partnership for Children (Volusia, Flagler, Putnam counties)

This CBC is always working to improve their training and partnerships and have been active in the QPI model for years.

See anything that interested you? Join FSFAPA and become a part of positive change.

Duffels for Kids update; 2016 in Jax

Duffels for Kids started as a vision to help children in foster care by providing free duffel bags when they move from home to home. That vision has led to FSFAPA hosting its third annual Duffels for Kids walk this past May in Port Orange (Volusia County).

Although this year's walk was our lightest turnout yet, FSFAPA is proud of its efforts to continue to provide new duffels to children in foster care throughout the state. As always, FSFAPA's sponsors and donors made a huge difference. Along with the Tourette Syndrome Association, which provided duffels for the children of Volusia and Flagler counties, sponsors and donors included the Community Partnership for Children, Lake Sumter Families, LEGOLAND, Museum of Arts and Sciences Daytona Beach, Publix and the Kinship Parenting Toolbox. To date, more than 700 duffels have been distributed to children.

Duffels for Kids' next walk will be held in Jacksonville in 2016. Hope to see you there!



A Poem of Hope

I prayed and an Angel brought me Hope
The Hope thrust itself into my heart
It became a part of me
I became a part of it

And because the Hope was so strong
I was inspired and I too became strong
Where I was once paralyzed
I could now move

And because the Hope was so beautiful
I smiled and I too became beautiful
Where I was once filled with anger & despair
My compassion overflowed

And Because the Hope always seemed to know the way
I was encouraged and I too knew the way
Where I was once lost
I am now found

And Because the Hope shined so brightly
I was enlightened and I too became an Inspiration
Where there was no Hope
There is now me!

I prayed and an Angel brought me Hope

- George E. Miller II

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Harriett Wynn
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Director of Programs
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