



Newsletter

Winter 2010

A Publication of the Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Association

Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Association Annual Conference May 13th, 14th, and 15th, 2010 Shocco Springs Conference Center



Foster and Adoptive Parents attending all sessions and presentations will be able to receive 15 credit hours. This will be enough credit hours for Traditional Foster Parents for a year.

Thursday May 13th, 2010

Conference begins on Thursday May 13th with lunch served at 12 noon.

Please check in at the Shocco Springs Registration office as you arrive. Bag and conference brochures will be picked up in the Chapel beginning at 12 noon until 4:00PM on Thursday. Early Session opening will be at 1:30PM Thursday in the Chapel with the first workshop will be a presentation on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome by Kari Fletcher from Minnesota. This workshop will be 2-3:30.

Judge Paul Sherling will present a workshop from 4 - 5:30 on you and the court system.

The annex near the chapel will have hospitality snacks 3:30 to 4:00 and 7:00 to 8:00 PM.

Thursday night will be fun night with entertainment and a talent hour show.

Friday May 14th, 2010

Breakfast 7:00 to 8:15

Registration 8:00 to 11:30 and 1:00 to 4:00
Opening Session begins 8:30 AM in the Chapel.

There will be a short business meeting to vote on by law changes for the Association.

A county flag presentation is planned so we will need representation from every county this year.

Commissioner Nancy Buckner will be a special guest speaker

You must be present for the entire program to get credit for all training credit.

Lunch 11:30 to 12:30
Workshops in the afternoon will be 1:00 to 2:30 and 3:00 to 4:30
Dinner 5:30 to 6:30
Awards Program 7:00 to 10:00 PM
Guest Speaker, Awards, and Entertainment

Saturday May 15th, 2010

Breakfast 7:00 to 8:30 • Opening Session 8:45
Workshops 9:00 to 10:30 and 10:45 to 12:00
Lunch 12:00 to 1:00 • Workshop 1:15 to 2:45
Closing session 2:50 to 3:00

See BACK PAGE for Registration information

AFAPA BOARD

- William "Buddy" Hooper,
President
- Mary Smith,
Vice President of Foster Care
- Joe Anthony
Vice President of Adoption
- Gina Nixon,
Acting Treasurer
- Brenda Caudle,
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Regional Reps:

- Deloris Seay - Region 1
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Sharlene Casteel - Region 4
Ida Ellis - Region 5
Debra Crawford - Region 6
Sue Thomas - Region 7
Darla Works - Region 8
John Potts - Region 9



A Message from the President of **AFAPA**

I hope everyone has had a wonderful Winter. I'm not sure but I believe every county in the State got at least a dusting of snow during February. Now it is time to move on to Spring (can I get an AMEN).

February was recruitment month all over the state for new foster and adoptive parents. With the record number of adoptions last year (676) and 90% of them being foster parent adoptions we have seen the number of current foster parents drop. A special thanks to Commissioner Nancy Buckner for all her work in helping to remove some of the road blocks that have hindered adoptions in the past and to all the foster parents who made the decision to give these children a forever family and home. There is a need for more foster parents and more adoptive resources for those children still in foster care who are waiting for a home to call their own. You as a current foster or adoptive parent are the best recruiters we have. You know what a difference fostering or adoption has made in your life, tell others about it. I'm including some ideas to help recruit that you might not have thought of before.

In this edition of the news letter I'm including some articles from past newsletters that have proven to be a help to foster parents. With new foster and adoptive parents being added and new social workers I feel it is important to revisit some of these so we are all on the same page.

I always welcome suggestions for articles for the newsletter so if you have something you think would be important for other foster or adoptive parents just email me or mail it to me and I will try to include it in the next newsletter.

AFAPA has already had 2 very successful training meetings in recent months for foster and adoptive parents. The meeting in Montgomery November was well attended with very good workshops. The meeting in Pell City was one of the best Regional Training meetings we have ever had with almost 100 in attendance. I'm also basing this on the results of the evaluations that were turned in after the meeting. Comments such as "this was great keep up the good work", "thank you so

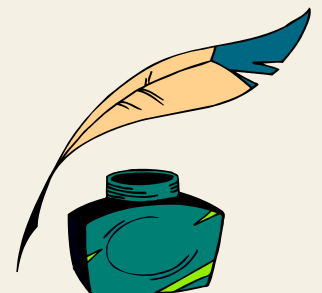
much this was just what I needed", "thank you for making us feel special", "best training I have had since becoming a foster parent", "we need more training like this". We have listened and we are planning more training sessions like these around the state. AFAPA will be in Demopolis March 13th and Enterprise March 27th. You are all invited to attend these meetings. You must check with your local county office to verify if you can receive mileage for attending any of these meetings.

I want to welcome new AFAPA board members at large. Some of these names you will recognize as they have been board members in the past and are willing now to again be part of the AFAPA board to help fulfill the goals of the Association. Those who have been members in the past are Shirley Merrills (past regional rep), Cheryl Anthony (past member at large and current chair of Historical Committee), Grace Wood (past regional rep, and past Vice President of Foster Care), and Linda Williams (Past Vice-President, Past President, and past member at large). New members are Kelley Parris-Barnes, Director of Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention, and District Judge Paul Sherling from Enterprise Alabama.

Almost forgot REGISTER FOR ALABAMA FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT ANNUAL CONFERENCE AT SHOCCO SPRINGS MAY 13TH, 14TH, AND 15TH.

I hope to see you there. There are some awesome speakers scheduled for this conference that you don't want to miss. There will be another newsletter devoted to the conference in about a month. This will have more details about workshops and the schedule for all the activities. See you there...

~ Buddy Hooper



ARE WE ELIGIBLE FOR THE CREDIT?

TAX NEWS FROM NACAC & NFPA

The following was taken from the NACAC.org web site. You can go there to get more information about claiming tax credits. You can also go to the NFPA web site www.nfpaonline.org for more information about claiming a foster child or relative as a dependant. If you have questions you should also consult with a tax preparer. Foster children can be claimed on your taxes under certain conditions and again make sure you consult with a tax preparer to be sure.

To qualify for the credit without documenting expenses, families must:

- have adopted a child with special needs from foster care and
- have a modified adjusted gross income of a certain level.

Then to be able to use the credit, families must also have federal tax liability.

Does my child have special needs?

Children who are harder to place for adoption—older children, children of color, sibling groups, and children with medical conditions or disabilities—are often determined to have special needs. NACAC interprets the IRS instructions to mean that if a child receives adoption subsidy (assistance), the adoption subsidy agreement (or application and agreement) is evidence that the state has determined that child has special needs. (See Line I, Column (d) of the 8839 instructions for the IRS's language.)

If your child does not receive an adoption subsidy, NACAC believes the state has not determined that your child has special needs and you will have to document adoption expenses to claim the credit.

Are we financially eligible for the credit?

How much, if any, of the credit you can use is based on:

- your income — Families with federal modified adjusted gross income above \$214,730 in 2008, or \$222,180 in 2009, cannot claim the credit at all; families with incomes above \$164,730 in 2008 (\$182,180 in 2009) can claim partial credit.
- your total federal tax liability (line 46 of form 1040) — In one year, you can use as much of the credit as the full amount of your federal income tax liability (which is your tax liability less any other credits). Even if you normally get a refund, you may still have tax liability and could increase the amount of your refund.

In 2007, 198 youth in Alabama aged out of foster care without a permanent, legal family.

Research shows that many of these youth will face significant obstacles in the future, including homelessness, unemployment, depression and substance abuse.

The best way to improve these outcomes is to ensure that youth do not age out of care without a family. For those youth who do not find a family, states and counties must provide support to help them make the transition to independent living with the help and support of caring adults.

MEET AUSTIN & ALEX



Austin & Alex are cute boys with contagious smiles. Austin, born May 1998 is in the 5th grade (2009-2010 school year). He makes good grades in school and has friends in his classroom. Outside of school he enjoys participating in local recreational football league and knows a lot about many different sports. He also likes playing video games and drawing.

Alex, born June 1999, is in the 4th grade (2009-2010). He participates in educational services in a self-contained classroom and makes good grades. He is more introverted than his older brother and enjoys playing video games and reading. Alex is polite and

often enjoys helping his foster parents with household chores.

Austin & Alex are legally available and are currently placed together. They will benefit from parents that are consistent, patient and committed to helping them continue to develop and improve their self-esteem. The ideal family for them will have no other children in their home or children that are older than Austin and Alex.

Photograph provided courtesy of www.heartgalleryalabama.com

AFAPA \$1000 STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Frequently asked questions about AFAPA Student Scholarships

Who's eligible?

All graduating seniors & college-age (22 years old or less) children in care as well as birth and adopted children of foster parents are eligible to apply for an AFAPA scholarship.

Could the scholarship be used for trade school?

Most definitely!

Can the funds be used for books?

Yes, the scholarship funds can be used for tuition, books, lab fees, or supplies purchased thorough the school account.

When should I apply?

The deadline for applications is March 1st of each year, applications received after that date may still be considered but will not be given consideration above those received before the March 1st deadline.

Do my grades matter?

AFAPA scholarships are not based on academic achievement. Rather, our review committee will be looking at each individual's needs and goals.

What if I decide not to attend school this year after I am granted the scholarship?

You would not be able to use the scholarship, you would be able to apply for another scholarship when you did start back to school if you are under age 22.

Where can I get an application?

Call the AFAPA office to have one mailed to you 1-888-545-2372. The applications are also on the www.afapa.org web site.

How long has AFAPA been awarding scholarships?

The AFAPA awarded its first two scholarships in the spring of 1999.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT AFAPA SCHOLARSHIPS

If chosen to receive scholarship, provide proof of acceptance into a college/university/trade or vocational school is required.

Submit application with (3) three letters of recommendation. Letters can be from foster parents, case workers, teachers, principals, guidance counselors, employers, pastors ect.

A letter giving permission to publish name and photo if chosen for scholarship must be submitted with application.

On a separate sheet of paper and in your own handwriting, make a brief statement of why you are applying for this scholarship. Include your hopes for the future and what you expect to contribute to society.

Be no older than 22 years of age.

Unused portion or appropriate percentage of funds must be returned if recipient withdraws or does not report to school as scheduled. Applies also if student does not maintain grade point average required by institution to remain in school.

Scholarships funds are paid directly to the college/university or vocational school and are deposited into students account. Funds are not paid directly to student and may not be used for personal items.

Scholarship funds may be used for tuition, maintenance fees, books, and or school supplies.

POLICY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

Information should be place in Connections Newsletter closest to the beginning of the New Year. Deadline to be set by Scholarship Committee.

Scholarship Committee will collect applications and check for correct information. Attempts will be documented to contact students with missing or incorrect information.

Three Judges reflecting diversity will be selected by the Scholarship Committee. Judges will use scoring sheets supplied by the Scholarship Committee to judge each application.

Judges will send scoring sheets back to the Scholarship Chair. Scholarship Committee will then select winners. All applicant names and contact information will be given to AFAPA Secretary. Secretary will send letter of congratulations or regrets to each applicant.

Time permitting winners names and pictures will be printed in the AFAPA conference brochure and Connections Newsletter. Treasurer will send checks to appropriate schools after receiving information from students.

MEET KATIE & JOHN

Katie, born in July of 1994, is a fun, outgoing, and very loving young lady. She has brown hair and brown eyes and is in the 9th grade (09/10 school year). Katie is in some special classes in school, and will need extra help with class work. Her favorite subject is math. Katie enjoys singing and dancing. She is a girly girl. She likes to play with dolls and to watch Hannah Montana on television. She enjoys playing with make up and "dressing up". Katie is very eager to please and needs a lot of love, approval, and attention. She is very trusting of everyone. Katie enjoys the activities at her church. She attends Children's church there. Katie's favorite foods are bacon, shrimp, and fish. She also loves watermelon and chocolate milk. Katie loves life. She laughs often and her smile will warm your heart. She is eager to have a permanent home, and become a part of a family that loves her.



John, born in September of 1998, is a healthy, energetic, and somewhat quiet child. He enjoys finding four leaf clovers. He always finds one and sometimes he gives them away. John is very proud that he so frequently is able to find four leaf clovers. He also enjoys putting together puzzles and working on crossword puzzles. He plays well alone, but needs help interacting with others. John has brown hair and big brown eyes and he is in the 4th grade (2009-2010 school years). John needs help with paying attention at school. He needs to be reminded to follow some of the rules and routines at school, but he typically makes good grades. John enjoys reading chapter books from school. John is very protective of his sister Katie. He helps her read and complete homework. John is temperamental and needs a lot of structure, love, and attention. He can be a very sweet boy, and he will give hugs. John is very polite. He says please and thank you. John loves sweets and peanut butter, and he will put sour cream on everything. John enjoys watching Modern Marvels and SpongeBob Squarepants on television.

Katie and John are wonderful children that need a lot of love and patient persistence. They are quick to become attached to people and trust them. They need a family that is trustworthy and keeps promises. Katie and John love each other, and have a great bond; they need a family that will keep them together. They love to learn new things and get very excited when they achieve goals. Katie and John are both eager to gain approval from others, especially their care givers. They deserve a family that will love them and care for them. They will be a wonderful blessing to a family.

CHANGES PROPOSED FOR BY-LAWS

By-Laws

Proposed Amendments to:

Article IV, Section 2.E.

- (E) Constitution and By-laws committee will propose any changes as needed in the constitution or by-laws. Any member may make proposals to the committee regarding changes. Changes in the constitution and by-laws will first be submitted to the board of directors for its recommendation and then voted on by a majority of members present at the annual **(delete the annual add any regular or special) meeting (add of the association)**. Changes must be submitted to the entire **(add known) membership of the association thirty (30) days prior to the annual (delete the annual add scheduled regular or special) meeting.**

Proposed Amendments to:

Article VII. Amendment

The by-laws of this association may be added to, amended, repealed or revised in whole or in part by majority vote of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the association, provided that written notice of intention to add, amend, repeal or to revise the by-laws in whole or in part has been provided to each **(add known) member at least thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled meeting (by publication in the association's newsletter).**

Proposed Amendment by adding the following article:

Article VIII. Dissolution

"In the case of dissolution of the association, all assets and property of the association will be disbursed with payment being made to creditors and all remaining assets being distributed to other 501(c)(3) non-profit Foster, Kinship or Adoptive Parent organizations in the State of Alabama."

FOSTER PARENT BILL OF RIGHTS

It has been almost 6 years since the Foster Parent Bill of Rights was established by the Alabama State Legislature. Over the past 6 years AFAPA has been around the state training foster parents and DHR workers about the FPBR. In a recent meeting with Commissioner Buckner we discussed the possibilities of revisiting some of this training because there are new foster parents and new DHR workers who have not received the training.

I wanted to ask the question **"Has the Foster Parent Bill of Rights helped you as you take care of foster children in your home"**

The following are questions that might be asked about each one of the foster parent bill of rights.

1. Have you been treated with dignity, respect, trust, value and consideration as a primary provider of foster care and a member of the professional team caring for foster children?
2. Have you received information about the Foster Parent Bill of Rights? Did you receive this information while attending GPS classes?
3. Have you received a concise written explanation of your role as a foster parent?
4. Have you been offered training and support to improve your skills to care for your foster children?
5. Have you received training on foster care policy, foster parent handbook, foster family homes minimum standards, the Therapeutic Foster Care Manual, and the Conflict Resolution Process?
6. Have you had the opportunity to provide input to the department in identifying the types of resources and services that would meet the needs of children in your care and have you been able to advocate for these services without threat of reprisal?
7. Have you been given current and accurate information about the children who are placed with you?
8. Have you been given written explanations of the plan for the placement of the children in your home? Have you been given information that would allow you to determine if this is a proper placement for your family?
9. Do you have a staff person representing the department on call 24 hours a day seven days a week to aid you in receiving departmental assistance?
10. Do you receive a fair and equitable board payment? Are you able to care for the children in your care with the amount of board payment you receive?
11. Have you felt like you could refuse placements in your home without threat of reprisal?
12. Have you received information about meetings and appointments concerning your foster child? Have you been able to give input to the ISP team to be used in the case planning and decision-making process? Does the ISP work for you?
13. Have you had the right to request an advocate to be present with you at all meetings with the department, including, but not limited to , ISP's, administrative hearings, the conflict resolution process, the adoption process, and the allegation process? Have you ever been denied the right to have an advocate present with you?
14. Have you received notice and an opportunity to be heard concerning all court hearings involving the child in your care?
15. Have you had the right to communicate with professionals who work with the foster child in your care?
16. Have you had the right to communicate with the child's birth family, other foster parents of the child, and prospective and finalized adoptive parents of the child with ISP approval and without threat of reprisal?
17. Have you received necessary information relevant to the care or the child in your care?
18. Have you been given the first consideration as a resource as an adoptive parent for the child in your care?
19. Have you been advised of your rights to respite care and have you been given respite when requested as per respite policy?
20. Have you been given information about any allegations of children in your home? Have you been given information about the allegation process? Were you given a written report within 5 days of allegations that were found to be not indicated on the county level?
21. Have you been given the right to copies of all information relative to your family and services contained in the personal foster home record?
22. Have you been offered the right to a mediation process when a conflict has gone unresolved?
23. Have you been given the right to appeal the closing of a foster family home by the department in accordance with the appeal procedure which is also the conflict resolution process and without threat of reprisal?

If you can answer no to any of these questions AFAPA would like to hear from you. You can email afapa@afapa.org or phone 1-888-545-2372. Your calls and emails will be kept confidential and information will not be shared without your permission.

MEET KENDRELL



Kendrell born January 1994 is a very handsome young man. He has a great smile and a charming personality. He is currently in the 10th grade (2009-2010 school year). He has always done well academically, however, as with many teenagers, he has to be prompted at times to complete homework assignments. Kendrell's favorite sports are football, baseball and basket-

ball but he also has a passion for playing in the band. He has played the drums in a high school marching band and likes doing this.

He can be very shy at times and somewhat quite, but is very easy to talk with. It takes a while for him to truly open up and trust new people. He has experienced a great deal of loss in his life. Kendrell has attended counseling to help him deal with issues surrounding loss and his past abuse. He has progressed very well through therapy and has really been able to address the issues and deal with them appropriately.

Kendrell needs an adoptive family who will give him praise, attention and a lot of structure while helping him see how positive life can be. Kendrell has a lot of potential to be very successful in his life and with positive encouragement and dedication, he will achieve great things. He needs positive role models who will offer him love and kindness. His adoptive family should also be patient and understanding and able to set appropriate limits.

Photo provided courtesy of
www.heartgalleryalabama.com

MEET CHRIS



Chris, born June 1998, is in the 6th grade and attends a structured school setting that provides a therapeutic day treatment program for children who have had some behavioral issues in a regular school setting. Chris made As, Bs, and a Cs on his first quarter report card. Chris is a very likable child and enjoys talking. Chris continues

to be very articulate and imaginative. Chris loves playing video games and he likes Spiderman. Chris' forever family needs to be very patient and be able to help Chris with dealing with his past history of abuse and neglect. Chris also has a high energy level and his forever family needs to be flexible and be able to teach Chris boundaries. Chris continues to need a structured environment and he needs to be the only child in the home.

Christopher receives special education in a structured setting, it is likely he will continue to need this level of structure once placed for adoption.

Christopher will probably do best in a two-parent home. Christopher's forever family needs to be patient and demonstrate understanding of high energy level. Christopher is a sensitive and empathetic child who needs a family that can help him deal with the emotional issues associated with his past.

Need for Foster Homes to Support College Students

Many of Alabama's foster youth attend Universities in Alabama and are currently living in the dorm. For some of these youth they do not have places to go during the holidays or semester breaks. The Office of Permanency is interested in identifying a pool of families that would be interested in establishing connections with youth in college or who might be willing to serve as a placement for

these youth during college breaks. Once a list has been created this will be made available to all county offices for consideration should they identify a youth who would benefit from this assistance. If you are interested in identifying your home as a place that could support foster youth in college, please contact Wanda Davidson, ILP Coordinator, 334-243-9500.

SPOTLIGHT ON AFAPA REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE



Mike and Darla Works will be married 27 years in May. They have two biological adult daughters, Amy & Kristie, and two adopted children, Jasmin 9, and Xavier 6. Mike and Darla started GPS class when their youngest daughter was a high school senior. The following

are quotes from Darla. *"We never planned to adopt. We thought we could help more children by fostering. God had a different plan for our lives".* Our second placement was a three year old girl and her six month old brother. God had been dealing with my heart about adopting but I just didn't think we could. We attended the AFAPA State Conference in Montgomery in May of 2004. Jet Williams was the keynote speaker. God used her story to convince me to adopt. We have been fostering for seven years and have had seven foster children. We have a good relationship with the parents of four of the children and have been able to keep in touch with them.

Darla became the Regional Representative for AFAPA Region 8, October 1st, 2009, after being elected at the AFAPA annual conference May, 2009. She didn't wait until October to start working in her region. She has attend foster parent meetings in several of the counties she represents. When asked to coordinate a day of respite for Adoptive and Kinship Parents she was more than willing and within two weeks put together a great event. Darla

is always willing to come to meetings in her region and all the many meetings AFAPA has in Montgomery even though it is about a 3 and 1/2 hour drive for her one way.

Darla has several events she is working on now for her region which may have passed by the time this newsletter gets mailed to AFAPA foster and adoptive parents. She has planned a meeting of the Presidents and Vice-Presidents from each of the counties in her region for February 27th, in the Etowah County and another meeting for March 20th, in Etowah County for training on hair care. Etowah County was chosen because of being central to AFAPA Region 8.



Look for another regional rep to be featured next quarter.

Keep up the good work Darla and congratulations for being our Spotlight Regional Rep for this quarter.

1,820 FOSTER CHILDREN IN ALABAMA ARE WAITING TO BE ADOPTED

Adoption provides children with a lifetime of emotional and legal connections to a family. Foster children who cannot return home risk reaching adulthood without a permanent family of their own. In 2008, Congress passed the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act, which will help more children find permanent families. Despite this progress, thousands of children—especially older children and children of color—still wait for families.

Source NACAC.org web site

ALABAMA'S ILP PROGRAM

Alabama's Independent Living Program is dedicated to providing youth in foster care with the skills that will help them transition successfully into adulthood. One approach is through the State Youth Advisory (D.R.E.A.M.) Council. The Alabama D.R.E.A.M. Council is Dedicated, Responsible, Empowered and Motivated to improving the foster care experience for youth. Many County Offices have a local Youth Advisory Council (YAC). The State D.R.E.A.M. Council should be viewed as an extension of the local YAC. The purpose of the council is to give youth an avenue by which to voice their opinion, to take control of their lives, and to be a positive role model for all youth in foster care. If you are interested in learning more about the State D.R.E.A.M. Council, please contact Wanda Davidson, Independent Living Coordinator at (334) 242-9500 or ILP@dhr.alabama.gov.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENTS

AFAPA Announces Annual Regional Network Training Meetings

Foster, adoptive, kinship parents, and social workers are welcome to attend any of the meetings scheduled. However you should check with you county DHR or your agency to see if you qualify for reimbursement for mileage to attend. While we encourage early registration you will be able to register the day of the event. Lunch will be provided first to those who have pre-registered. Child care will not be provided and you should ask your worker to assist you in finding suitable child care so that you will be able to attend.

- 6 hours of training hours available

The West Training will be March 13th in Demopolis, AL beginning at 9AM at Rooster Hall 217 North Walnut Street. The South East Meeting will be March 27th in Enterprise, AL at the College Avenue Church of Christ located at 211 W. College Ave. Classes will begin at 9AM There will be a \$10 registration fee per person for these network training meetings. Indicate which meeting you are registering for

Check or Money order made out to AFAPA

Send your name, phone number, and address to:

Email: buddy@afapa.org

Or mail to:

AFAPA

1091 Co Rd 1659

Cullman, AL 35058

Phone or fax 1-888-545-2372

Pay online with paypal on afapa.org

MEET KAHLIL



Kahlil, born November 1995 is a very shy child. He goes to school on the campus of the residential program where he lives. He likes making new friends and helping others out. Kahlil likes to read and tries really hard to achieve high marks and good grades in school. Kahlil is loves science and wants to become a meteorologist when he gets older.

Kahlil is interested in video games, basketball, reading and comics. Kahlil loves going on outings and spending time with friends

Kahlil has expressed a desire for being in a loving family where he can call both parents "mom and dad". He longs to be a part of a family with a sibling or an older male that he can look up to. Kahlil is part of a large sibling group, however, due to various circumstances he only has contact with one sister. Kahlil wants to be adopted more than anything else in this world. He longs for the love of a family.

A Special Thank You to our friends at Heart Gallery for suppling us with photos of the children in need of adoption.



WHAT IS AN INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICE PLAN?

DHR must develop ISPs for all children and families for whom it is providing on-going child welfare services and foster care.

Individualized:

The ISP builds on the family's strengths and addresses the family's unique needs.

Service:

The ISP identifies specific services that will be provided to the child and family so the safety and well-being can be achieved.

Plan:

The ISP identifies the goals for the family, identifies the steps to be taken, and identifies who is responsible for each step or service.

Who writes an ISP and who attends?

The ISP is written at an ISP team meeting. The ISP team members should be partners in developing the ISP. The ISP team should include the child if age appropriate usually 10 years old or older, the birth family, foster parents, DHR worker. Others who may be included in an ISP meeting are the child's teacher, family pastor, relatives, therapists, attorneys for the child or family, another DHR staff involved with the child or family, and an advocate requested by the foster parent.

What does the ISP contain?

1. The child's physical and mental health, safety, education, and social needs.
2. Additional assessments needed to help identify the strengths and needs and time frames for obtaining those assessments
3. Immediate steps that are going to be taken to meet the child's safety needs.
4. Visitation for child
5. Outcomes or permanency goals for the child and when it's expected these outcomes will be achieved.

6. Steps to promote a timely return home or placement with relatives, if this is the child's permanency goal.

When is the ISP Written?

An initial ISP meeting must be held within 30 days of when DHR determines that a case will be opened for the child for on-going child welfare services. An ISP must be held within 72 hours of removal from the home followed by an update within the next 30 days.

Where are ISPs held?

Any mutually agreed upon location.

Will I be notified about the ISP meeting?

All team members should be notified of the date, time and location of each ISP meeting to allow time to prepare for and participate in the meeting. Parents, foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers must be provided written notice about any ISP meeting. The remaining team members may receive either verbal or written notice.

What if there are problems with the ISP?

The DHR worker is responsible for addressing concerns about how well the ISP is being implemented. Minor issues that can be resolved without the full team involvement may be dealt with informally. Any issues that are controversial or complex should be handled in a team meeting.

Will I receive a copy of the ISP?

You must be given a written copy of the plan at the end of the meeting. If this is not possible, then you should receive a copy at least within 10 days of the date the meeting was held.

When will the ISP be reviewed?

Can you call an ISP?

An initial ISP must be reviewed within 30 days of the date it was developed. After that, the team must review ISP's at least every 6 months from the date of the initial

ISP and more frequently as needed. Any team member can call for a meeting to review and revise the ISP. Contact the DHR caseworker if you want to have an ISP meeting. ISP's must be reviewed and revised when any of the following occur:

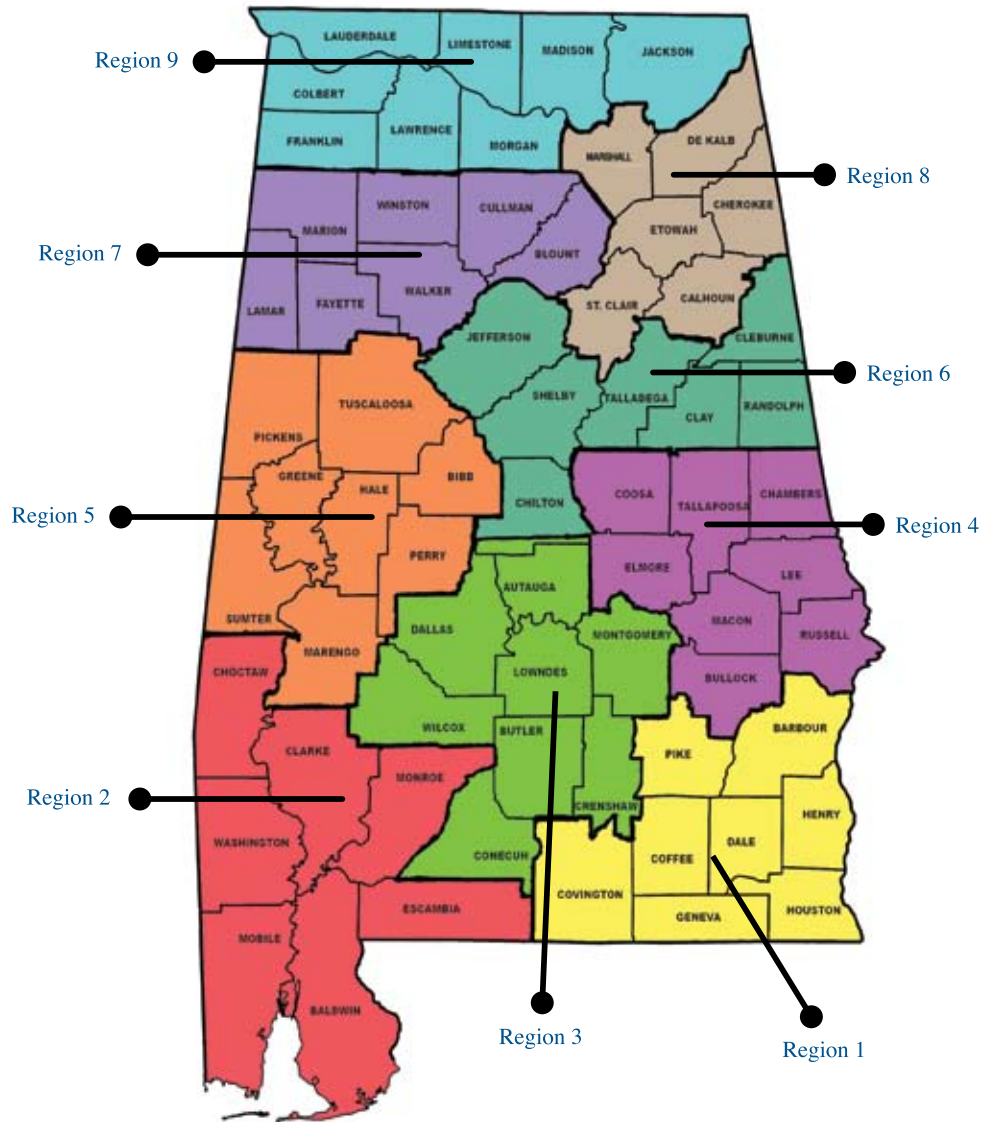
- At your request or at request of other team members
- When there are changes in the families circumstances
- Prior to the decision to remove a child from home
- After an emergency change in a child's out-of-home placement
- When a change in an out-of-home placement is anticipated
- When the ISP is not adequately managing risks or new risks are identified
- When you or another team member feels that the child or family is making little or no progress toward the established goals
- When any judicial or administrative review recommends or direct that changes be made to the ISP
- Within 30 days of the case being closed
- When Medicaid rehabilitation services have been authorized and a treatment plan review is required.

The DHR caseworker and other team members must make good faith efforts to achieve the goals and objectives of the ISP

The ISP must be realistic and appropriate, with goal and steps that fit the child's present placement and level of functioning.

The preceding content was taken from a publication of ADAP. You may view other publications on the ISP process at <http://www.adap.net>

AFAPA REGIONS



Who's Your Regional Rep?

REGION 1

Deloris Seay
334-983-3264 • 334-797-0624
dseay2@sw.rr.com

REGION 4

Sharlene Casteel
334-214-0071
sharlene030@aol.com

REGION 7

Thomas Sue
205-698-9936 • 205-712-6101
suthomas@bamacomm.com

REGION 2

Mims Dollie
251-604-3522 • 251-937-2336
DollBAym@aol.com

REGION 5

Ellis Ida
205-372-0247 • 205-372-7233
afapa@afapa.org

REGION 8

Darla Works
256-659-5313 • 256-601-5631
darlaworks7@aol.com

REGION 3

Keith Aunita
334-874-4176 • 334-419-3817
mario056@charter.net

REGION 6

Debra Crawford
205-954-8420 • 205-807-4897
crawfordt600@bellsouth.net

REGION 9

John Potts
205-993-4317 • 256-412-4811
pottsj29@yahoo.com

Why contact your Regional Representative

- For latest info on where and when Education & Training Meetings will be held
- For assistance on who to call for guidance on specific problems/ issues you are facing
- To invite to your county association meetings to help with training and information.
- To learn more about training opportunities through out the state.



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CONNECTIONS INFO:

Articles can be submitted to Buddy Hooper, Editor. E-mail submissions should be addressed to afapa@afapa.org. Otherwise, mail to AFAPA 1091 County Road 1659 Cullman, AL 35058. Deadline dates fall the first of the month in February, May, August, & November.

Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Association Annual Conference

May 13th, 14th, and 15th, 2010
Shocco Springs Conference Center

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration is free for all foster, adoptive, or kinship parents and all DHR workers

Rooms for Thursday and Friday night are paid for by AFAPA

Rooms are double occupancy guests are responsible for the extra charge of a private room \$20 per night.

All meals are paid for by AFAPA

All Registration is through Shocco Springs there are 3 ways to register

By Phone: Call 1-800-280-1105

By Fax: 1-256-761-1270 with requested information

By Mail: Shocco Springs Conference Center

May AFAPA Conference

1314 Shocco Springs Road, Talladega, Al 35160



Information to include in fax or mail.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Circle all that apply: Foster Parent, Adoptive Parent, Kinship Caregiver, DHR worker, other _____

How many days you will be attending _____. Will you need a room for Thursday night, Friday night or both

Will you be sharing a room or will you require a private room. Include \$20 for each night for private room

Child Care will not be provided and children will not be allowed in workshops.

Reimbursement for mileage must be pre approved by individual county offices.