



# A Publication of the Alabama Foster Adoptive Parent Association

# Connections

Summer 2007

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Contact info on page 7

## PARENT GROUP OF THE YEAR



A group of 11 board members and 5 foster parents who received scholarships from AFAPA were in attendance as NACAC awarded the Parent Support Group of the Year award to The Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Association.

*The following article was printed in the NACAC Adoptalk Newsletter*

Formed in the mid-1970's, the Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parent Association (AFAPA) then the Alabama Foster Parent Association — started out as a foster parent support group. From the start the group emphasized training, and soon began having annual conferences for about 100 people. Since then, the group has grown and become extremely effective at supporting those who foster and adopt children with special needs.

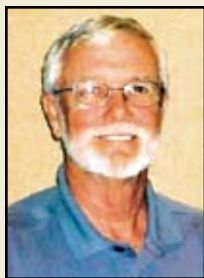
In 2007, AFAPA hosted 472 conference goers, and began training advocates (in partnership with the Department of Human Resources) to help families with foster care and adoption issues. The organization also runs a web site

www.afapa.org and list serv, sends out a quarterly newsletter to more than 4,000 members, and offers enough trainings throughout the year (including the main conference) to help foster parents meet the state's 15 hour training requirement.

Adoptive parents were added to the membership in 2001, the same year the group advocated for a board increase for foster parents and subsidy increases



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## From the President of AFAPA

Just wanted to let all of you see what I have been doing in my spare time for the past 9 months. I have been building a house for my son David near Cullman, Al. It is over 4000 square feet and my son and I have done most of the work ourselves. So for those of you when you called my cell phone and I said I was on a ladder or up on the roof this is the proof.



Now back to the newsletter. I want to use this opportunity to thank NACAC for the Parent Support Group of the Year Award. You can view the video of the award presentation by going to youtube.com and just put in AFAPA.



I also want to thank all of you who attended the annual conference foster parents, adoptive parents, social workers, workshop presenters, and other child advocates. This was by far to largest crowd we have ever had. There were 472 who attended the conference this year. I also wish to thank the foster and adoptive parents who voted for me to continue as president for the next 2 years. I appreciate to vote of confidence.



There are so many people to thank for all the help with our conference, the May Foster Parent Rally in Montgomery, and the shoe and school supply distribution during July and August. We had many foster parents collecting shoes, picking up shoes, putting school supplies together at the Kids to Love Foundation Warehouse. Doris Wise and her husband drove an 18 wheeler to Montgomery several times delivering shoes. Joette Vick had done so much I wouldn't know where to begin to list it all. The entire AFAPA board has been working very hard during the past several months in any way they could to get all the projects done.



AFAPA has formed some great partnerships over the past few months. Voices for Alabama Children was very helpful getting the word out about our Rally and the Shoe drive. Beth Chapman was very instrumental in helping us get the word out an offering space to collect shoes. I know I will probably forget to mention someone and please forgive me if you helped and I didn't mention it.



For those of you who attended the conference and were able to get pajamas for your children we need to thank the folks from the Pajama Program for this donation. You can get more information about the Pajama Program by going to the web site <http://www.pajamaprogram.org/program/program.html>



There is one person that we must not forget. Lee Marshall and the Kids to Love Foundation have done so much for the foster children of this state. For those who don't know her Lee was the guest speaker at our conference last year in Montgomery. She works for Channel 48 News out of Huntsville and she is the founder of the KIDS To Love Foundation.

Lee began helping foster children with school supplies 2 years ago and worked out of her garage and was able to help 750 children. Last year with more help and donations she was able to furnish school supplies to 1500 children. This year the number doubled again and almost 3000 foster children received school supplies from the Kids to Love Foundation. Many of



Can anyone identify these shoes?



our foster parents along with more than 250 volunteers were privileged to be able to help by sorting, packing, and delivering these school supplies along with new shoes in time for the new school year. Lee also took on the task of making sure that all the foster children of the state received shoes that were donated during the May Shoe Rally. She sent out requests to all the County DHR offices requesting shoe sizes and for what gender. The lists were sent to the Warehouse in

Huntsville where the shoes were. Everyone did their best to make sure all the lists were filled. Lee even went so far as to let the DHR offices know that if the shoes didn't fit or if a size was not available at this time that

she would work to make sure that each child did receive the right size shoes. The Kids To Love Foundation does so much more by helping to find permanent homes for children



in foster care. Hundreds of children have found permanent homes because of the efforts of Lee and her foundation. So this is a big big Thank you Lee from the foster parents and children of Alabama.



May 1st Rally on Capitol Steps.

## MEET EVE



Eve, born January 1997 is a bright and engaging young lady. She is a very motherly child, but also longs to have a mother. She may appear shy at first, but then warms up. She thrives on attention and praise. She also does a good job praising others for their acts of kindness. Eve enjoys dressing up and having her hair and nails done. Eve is a young girl who still believes in Santa Clause. She enjoys playing the Polly Pockets®, Bratz®, and Barbie® dolls. Eve enjoys shopping, eating out and spending money. She enjoys reading and reading to others. She can entertain herself.

Eve needs a family that can provide her structure and love, in a balanced way. She needs a home that can help her learn basic living skills. Eve needs a family that is patient and can give her direction. She is a loving child who likes to test her boundaries. Eve would do best in a home where there are no other children, so she can be the center of attention. Eve wants a family who enjoys being together and doing things as a family such as watching movies, going to the park or zoo and just hanging out.

## "So Now You're Going To Court"

This will be the title of the first workshop in the upcoming training meetings September 22<sup>nd</sup> in Cullman, and September 29<sup>th</sup> in Greenville.

This workshop was designed with collaboration from the Administrative Office of Courts and AFAPA. This will be an interactive workshop with room for a question and answer session. The workshop will focus on the foster parents role in court, why foster parents should attend court sessions pertaining to foster children, and foster parents rights and responsibilities in court. Thanks to Judge John Davis, Karen Trussell, and Bob Maddox for their help in making this workshop a reality. Questions about this workshop or other questions about foster parents in court may be sent to Bob Maddox.

Bob Maddox  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
300 Dexter Avenue  
Montgomery, AL 36104-3741  
E-Mail: [bob.maddox@alacourt.gov](mailto:bob.maddox@alacourt.gov)



Buddy Hooper, Grace Wood, Linda Williams AFAPA officers work with Bob Maddox of the Administrative Office of the Courts on foster parent workshop

To learn more about the role of foster parents in court go to the following web sites.  
<http://www.nationalcasa.org/JudgesPage/index.htm> • <http://www.abanet.org/abanet/child/home.cfm>

### MEET SHANTEL



Shantel, born March 1998 is an extremely energetic little girl. She is beautiful and has a winning smile. She is very bright and loves to give hugs. She can be helpful around the house and likes attention.

Shantel likes to ride her bike and race down the road. She also likes to run some and says that track is her favorite sport because she used to run track at another school. She enjoys watching TV and playing games. She really likes the Disney Channel.

Shantel would do best in a home with a very patient family that has a lot of support. She will do best as an only child or at least by being the youngest child in the home. Shantel is ready to move to her forever home and wants to find the permanent place that she can call her own.

### MEET DILLAN



Dillan, born November 1993 is a delightful, personal young man who will make a positive first impression. He is very intelligent, insightful and mature. Those who speak to him forget very quickly that he is an adolescent due to his impressive intellect and wide array of interests. His interests include learning French, playing piano, researching the Rosetta stone and keeping abreast of current events.

Dillan makes wonderful grade and has no behavior problems. He loves to play on the computer, read and talk with friends. He frequently chooses these activities over watching TV.

His goals is to enter the field of diplomacy and he hopes to have the opportunity to travel to foreign countries. Dillan is very spiritual and his hero is Jesus, because he died for him. Dillan is an over-comer, who maintains a positive outlook on life, as well as a healthy self-esteem and confidence level.

Dillan wants a family who will love him unconditionally, accept him for who he is and support his academic and career pursuits.

## Training Opportunities for Foster and Adoptive Parents

AFAPA Announces the first Annual North & South Regional Network Training Meetings

**The North Meeting** will be: September 22nd, 2007. This meeting is for AFAPA Regions 5,6,7,8, and 9. AFAPA will host an all day training meeting in Cullman, AL  
Location — Northbrook Baptist Church  
Located 2 1/2 miles east of I—65 exit 310 on highway 157. Time — 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM  
6 hours of training hours available

**The South Meeting** will be: September 29th, 2007. AFAPA will host an all day training meeting in Greenville, AL. This meeting is for AFAPA Regions 1,2,3,and 4. Location — Walnut Street Church of Christ — located East of I-65 exit 130 at  
306 Walnut Street.  
Time — 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM  
6 hours of training hours available

There will not be a registration fee for these network training meetings however you must register by September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007 to insure that you will have a lunch provided and that you will receive all the material.

Registration for the **North Network Training Meeting**. Send your name phone number and address to  
Email: [suthomas@bamacomm.com](mailto:suthomas@bamacomm.com)  
Or mail to:  
Sue Thomas  
50904 Highway 17  
Sulligent, Al 35586  
Phone 205-698-9936

Registration for the **South Network Training Meeting**. Send your name phone number and address to:  
Email [cny65405@centurytel.net](mailto:cny65405@centurytel.net)  
Or mail to:  
Cheryl Anthony  
1588 N. Morris St.  
Slocomb, Al 36375  
Phone 334-886-2734

## Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Board Training List

**To: Local Foster Parent Association Presidents and Local DHR Resourse Workers**

Need training for your local foster parents. Contact your Regional Representative to arrange for training at your local foster parent meetings.

Many of AFAPA board members are available to doing training for your Local Association meetings. You may send an email to [afapa@afapa.org](mailto:afapa@afapa.org) for a list of the training sessions we have available in your area or you may call 1-888-545-2372.

Attachment Disorders  
Foster Parent Bill of Rights  
What is AFAPA  
Allegations & Documentation  
ISP's  
Health Issues for Foster Families  
Cultural Diversity  
Working with Birth Parents  
Transracial Adoptions  
Adoption Subsidy  
Communicating with children

Legislative Advocacy  
Understanding Cultural Diversities  
Family Dynamics  
Respite Care  
Stress Management  
Strengthening Foster/Adoptive Parent & DHR Partnership  
Behavioral Support  
Hair Technique for All  
IEP for your child  
ILP for your child

# Meet AFAPA Advocates



Over the past 9 months AFAPA in collaboration with SDHR have conducted 4 training sessions for AFAPA advocates. These are volunteers who are here to assist foster and adoptive parents with questions and issues they may have working within the foster care system. These Advocates have had training in several key SDHR policies and some Federal Policies so they can be better prepared to help when the need arises. The following is what is expected from an AFAPA Advocate.



Expectations of an AFAPA foster parent advocate



To be familiar with DHR Policy on Child Protective Services and the CAN investigative process.

To be versed in Alabama adoption policy and the Adoption and Safe Families Act.



To be well versed in the contents of the Foster Parent Handbook

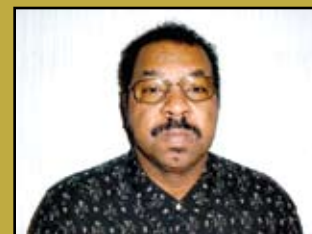


To be knowledgeable of DHR policy and procedures related to foster care and adoption.

To be able to assist parents in obtaining information related to their voiced concerns.



To empower parents to resolve their problems effectively.



To assist parents in interactions with DHR staff and to acquire information.

To complete all Advocate paperwork and maintain records and to forward paperwork to Chair of AFAPA Advocacy committee.



To meet with County Directors to share with them parent concerns and how they have been addressed.



To be aware of all grievances filed across the region and to be familiar with all aspects of the grievance procedure.

To be knowledgeable of all aspects of the Foster Parent Bill of Rights and to be able to train foster parents in FPBR.



To be an objective listener and to assist parents in problem exploration and resolution.



To be available to parents in the assigned region via phone or email.

To maintain confidentiality at all times.



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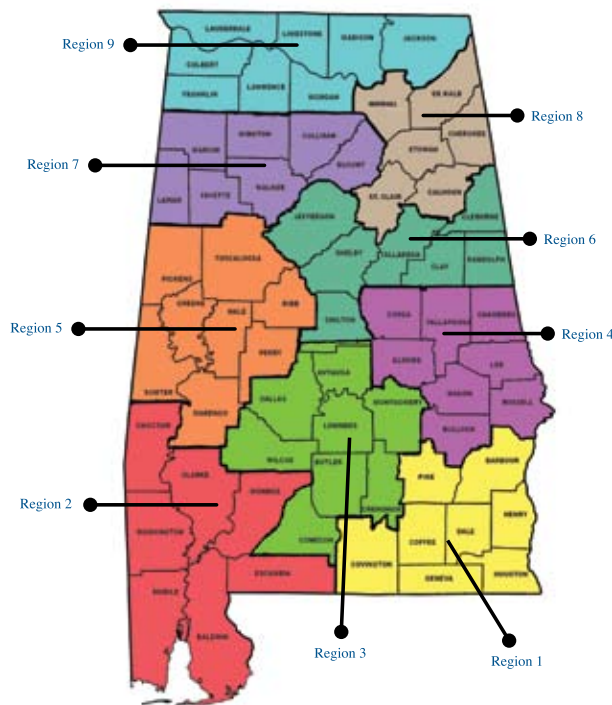
for adoptive parents through its highly successful foster doll campaign. Thanks to the campaign, adoption subsidy rates rose about 67 percent, and a higher rate was formally set to support medically fragile children. In April 2004, the Foster Parent Bill of Rights Act — vocally supported by AFAPA and other groups— became law. AFAPA’s latest crusade is to increase payments to all foster caregivers, including therapeutic foster caregivers, medically fragile caregivers, and kinship caregivers.

Considering that AFAPA has no paid staff, and an all volunteer 20 member board, the group has done an amazing amount of work on behalf of foster/adoptive families and their children. Recognized by the National Foster Parent Association as the State Association of 2005, AFAPA is an obvious choice for our 2007 Parent Support Group of the Year Award.

Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parents who were able to attend the Awards ceremony were Buddy Hooper, Linda Williams, Grace & James Wood, Mary & Leroy Smith, Sue & Roy Thomas, Barbara Lawrence, and Aunita Keith. Scholarship recipients attending were Tracy & Don Larkin, Joette Vick, Lillie Tisdale, and Earnestine Huffman.



### AFAPA REGIONS



## Who's Your Regional Rep?

<p><b>REGION 1</b></p> <p>Joe Anthony 334-886-2734 jandcanthony@centurytel.net</p>	<p><b>REGION 7</b></p> <p>Sue Thomas 205-698-9936 suthomas@bamacomm.com</p>
<p><b>REGION 2</b></p> <p>Dolly Mims 251-604-3522 • 251-937-2336 DollBAym@aol.com</p>	<p><b>REGION 8</b></p> <p>Christy Kendrick 256-504-7481 Cm_kendrick@windstream.net</p>
<p><b>REGION 3</b></p> <p>Aunita Keith 334-874-4176 mario056@charter.net</p>	<p><b>REGION 9</b></p> <p>Doris Wise 256-757-0308 • 256-810-0359 afapa@afapa.org</p>
<p><b>REGION 4</b></p> <p>Mary Smith 334-567-4143 star1000@aol.com</p>	<p><b>Why contact your Regional Representative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For latest info on where and when Education &amp; Training Meetings will be held</li> <li>For assistance on who to call for guidance on specific problems/issues you are facing</li> <li>To invite to your county association meetings to help with training and information.</li> <li>To learn more about training opportunities through out the state.</li> </ul>
<p><b>REGION 5</b></p> <p>Ida Ellis 205-372-0247 • 205-372-7233 afapa@afapa.org</p>	
<p><b>REGION 6</b></p> <p>James Wood 256-488-5567 jandgwood@acs-isp.com</p>	

## MEET KONNER



Konner born June 2006 can light up an entire room with a smile. He does take time to adjust when changes occur. Konner has Pervasive Developmental Disorder which is a form of autism. He receives full-time special education services including speech therapy. Konner needs several different medications to make it easier for him to function.

He is a sweet and loving little boy who works hard to please other. He does typically want to get his way. He sometimes get upset when things do not go in that direction. He needs a family that can develop a routine and try to stick with it.

Konner is fascinated with wheels or anything that spins. He can take anything apart but cannot put it back together. He also loves being outdoors riding his bike or the family go-kart.

## MEET ALEX



Alex born in October 1996 is an intelligent and handsome young man. Alex does very well academically in school. He sometimes rushes to finish his school work which gives him too much free time and occasionally gets him into trouble. Alex is a strong reader and reading is his favorite subject in school. He would rather read a book than watch television. He attends church each week and loves to sing. Alex wants to be the younger brother because he says, "being an older brother is too much responsibility".

Alex enjoys skate boarding and video games. If he could plan his own birthday party it would be a Chuck E. Cheese. His favorite holidays are Christmas and Halloween. He likes Halloween because of the candy. Alex likes to be close to others around him and does not always understand what "personal space" means.

Alex is a very likable child who wants a permanent family to call his own.

## CONNECTIONS INFO:

Articles can be submitted to Buddy Hooper, Editor. E-mail submissions should be addressed to [afapa@afapa.org](mailto: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.



1091 County Road 1659  
Cullman, AL 35058  
1-888-545-2372  
[www.afapa.org](http://www.afapa.org)

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