



A Publication of the Alabama Foster Adoptive Parent Association

Connections

Winter 2007

AFAPA BOARD

William "Buddy" Hooper,
President

Grace Wood,
VP, Foster Care

Linda Williams,
VP, Adoption

Gina Nixon,
Treasurer

Sue Thomas,
Secretary

Members At-Large:

Ed Parr
Patsy Liveoak
Brenda Caudle
Martha Hooper
Julia Ann Hyde
Barbara Lawrence
Leroy Smith
Cheryl Anthony

SDHR Liaisons:

Wanda Davidson
Foster Care

Marie Youngpeter
Adoption

Regional Reps:

Contact info on page 11



Calling all Foster & Adoptive Parents and others involved with fostering and adoption. AFAPA is proud to announce its Annual Foster & Adoptive Parent Training Conference. AFAPA has been presenting this conference annually for more than 30 years. Many changes have taken place over the past few years with attendance continuing to grow. Looking back just a few years ago the attendance in 2000 was just around 100 then in 2001 attendance was up to around 150 which was held in Tuskegee. In 2002 the conference was held in Montgomery at the Guest House Inn with more than 200 attending. We then moved over to the Governors House Inn for 2003 & 2004 where attendance continued to grow to more than 300. In 2005 we moved the conference to Gardendale in Jefferson County and we saw more than 350 attend. Then last year again the conference was held in Montgomery at Frazer Methodist Church and we had our largest crowd ever with

more than 400 people attending. This year we are looking forward to an even larger crowd at Shocco Springs. Shocco is just north of Talladega just off Highway 77. We will have a business meeting this year as we do every 2 years for the purpose of electing new officers for the AFAPA Board. Any foster or adoptive parents who would like to be considered for a position on the AFAPA board should contact a member of the current AFAPA Board for information about submitting their name to the nominating committee. We will have the business meeting on Friday Morning and will follow with 10 hours of training Friday and Saturday. Pat O'Brien will be our opening session speaker. Pat is Founder & Executive Director of "You Gotta Believe" This organization is dedicated to finding permanent homes for teens and pre-teens in the foster care system. For more information go to www.yougottabelieve.org. The next edition of Connections will have more information about workshops and presenters for the conference.

From the President of AFAPA

Hello to all,

As you all recall AFAPA was chosen Association of the year in 2005 by The National Foster Parent Association. AFAPA again has been chosen by a National Group for special recognition. The following is an email I received from NACAC.



I am pleased to report to you that your association is the Parent Support Group of the Year for 2007! You will receive a plaque and recognition at the NACAC conference in Tampa, Florida in July.

A special thank you for all of the things that your group does for and with foster, adoptive and kinship parents. Know that we here at NACAC appreciate you!

Warm Regards,
Diane Martin-Hushman MSW
Parent Group Coordinator
North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC)

This year AFAPA will be looking to do more to offer support to foster & adoptive parents across the state of Alabama. AFAPA is in the process of getting foster parent advocates trained to better assist foster parents when problems arise. Foster parents have the right to choose whom ever they want to be an advocate for them. AFAPA wanted to have a group of advocates trained in policy, foster parent bill of rights, adoption subsidy, and the grievance process so as to better assist foster parents.

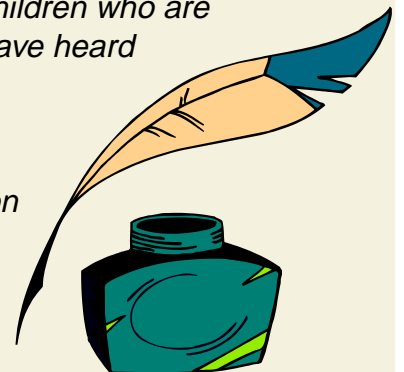
I have been attending foster parent meetings all across the state to explain what AFAPA is and to answer questions foster parents have about what AFAPA is doing to assist them. Any foster parent group that would like for me to come and speak to them please give me a call or email me and I will get it on my schedule.

This issue of connections has forms to apply for scholarships for foster and adoptive parents to attend National conferences. There is also a form for Students to apply for academic scholarships. We are also devoting several pages to feature some of the foster children who are waiting to be adopted. Please share this with your friends and families. I have heard from people who post these at work and church.

If you haven't visited the AFAPA web site please do and look at the links page for information on other web sites devoted to foster care and adoption www.afapa.org.

Wishing you all a very happy New Year.

William "Buddy" Hooper President of AFAPA





**AL Foster & Adoptive
Parent Association
May 18-19th, 2007
Shocco Springs**

Name: _____

Other Guests that will be attending: _____

County _____

Street/P.O. Box _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

E-mail address _____

Telephone: Home: _____

Cell: _____

Please place a check mark by all that apply:

Foster Parent Adoptive Parent

DHR Social Worker Therapeutic Foster Parent

Other _____

Registration Fee:

\$35.00 Pre-registration for Overnight Guests and Commuters (before May 1st)

\$40.00 Late registration (after May 1st)

**This cost is for over night and day only guests

Please check the following that apply:

1 night/3meals (Friday lunch, Sat. breakfast and lunch)

1 night/4meals (including banquet on Friday night)

2days/3meals

2days/4meals (including banquet)

Important Information:

Each person is responsible for making their own reservations by sending in a registration form to Shocco Springs. Rooms are based on a first come first serve basis. Lodging rooms are assigned as double occupancy unless otherwise stated. There is an additional \$20.00 fee for private rooms, which is the individual's responsibility. Reimbursement for mileage must be made through your county DHR or your agency. No childcare will be provided at conference and children will not be allowed to enter workshops.

Send payments to: Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center

AFAPA Retreat

P.O. Box 886

Talladega, AL 35161

Phone: 1-800-280-1105; 256-761-1100

Fax: 256-761-1270

Conference Schedule

About Registration

Room rates are for double occupancy so please make arrangements to share rooms.

The total cost of the conference for Foster Parents, Adoptive Parents, or DHR Social Workers is the \$35 registration fee per person. This covers registration, meals, and overnight stay on May 18th. You can call Shocco to register and use credit card to pay registration fee or you can mail in registration to Shocco along with check for registration fee. Guests other than those listed above will be required to pay registration and cost of meals and overnight stay, call Shocco for cost.

May 18th, 2007

9:00 AM — 1:00 PM	Registration Confirmation & Pick up Packets
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	AFAPA Business Meeting & Election of Officers
11:15 AM – 12:45 PM	Lunch in Dining Room
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	Opening Session with Pat O'Brien
2:15PM – 3:45 PM	Workshops
4:00 PM – 5:30 PM	Workshops
7:00 PM – 9:30 PM	Banquet Dinner and Awards Ceremony

May 19th, 2007

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM	Breakfast
8:00 AM – 8:30 AM	Caucus Meetings Election of Regional Representatives
8:00 AM – 10:00 AM	Registration & Pick Up Packets
8:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Workshops
10:15 AM – 11:45 AM	Workshops
11:45 AM – 12:30 PM	Lunch
1:15 PM – 2:45 PM	Workshops
3:00 PM – 4:30 PM	Workshops
4:30 PM – 5:00 PM	Closing

Training Opportunities

Diversity Training

Alabama CASA Network, Inc is sponsoring a Diversity training workshop entitled "A World of Inclusion" on Monday, March 5, 2007. The training will be held at the Carraway-Davie House just off I-459 in Birmingham from 9:00 am until 1:30 pm with a 45 minute lunch break. The cost is \$10 and includes lunch and all training materials. Foster parents, CASA/CAJA volunteers and staff and social workers have been approved for 3.75 training hours. You may complete the registration form included in this article or download a copy at www.alabamacasa.org. For questions, call 205-833-1135. **Registration is due no later than Friday, February 28.**

The training is designed to develop an awareness of human diversity that focuses on understanding, respecting and valuing that diversity, with the goal of enabling people to communicate effectively and work cooperatively to produce positive outcomes.

Through mini lectures, small group discussions and individual role play, attendees will become more sensitive to ways their personal beliefs, perceptions and behavior affect the comfort, safety and personal freedom of others. We will also examine ways to encourage a spirit of openness and acceptance where cultural differences are acknowledged, respected and valued.

Diversity Training Registration Form

Name: _____ Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Type of payment included: _____

Mail to: Alabama CASA Network, Inc
2806 Ruffner Road, Suite 111
Irondale, AL 35210

Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Board

Many of AFAPA board members are available to doing training for your Local Association meetings. You may send an email to 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
Working with Difficult People
Cultural Diversity
Why Parents Abuse
Working with Birth Parents
Transracial Adoptions

Waiting Children....

"People say kids my age are hard to place and that time is running out for me. Please don't give up on trying. I'm already having trouble holding on to my hope."

Ronnie, Simon, Spencer & Rodney



These four boys are the youngest of a sibling group of seven. All seven children are bonded to one another. These four are to be placed together with an adoptive family that will see to it that the boys have continued contact with their three older siblings.

Ronnie, born October 1994 is an intelligent and sensitive child. He is very helpful at home. He enjoys drawing, art and jumping on the trampoline. For school year 06-07 he is in the 6th grade and is on grade level. His grades range from A's to C's.

Simon, born June 1997, is a quiet and unassuming child. He likes to watch cartoons and play the game, "Connect Four". For school year 06-07 he is in the four grade and he needs help in reading, math and language. He works on a computer in his classroom to help him improve his math skills. He likes to volunteer as a class helper for his teacher.

Spencer, born May 2000, is described as an outgoing little boy who easily meets new people. He is in the first grade (school year 06-07) and he needs extra services to help him be educationally successful. He receives this extra help in a self-contained Special Ed classroom at school. He is reading well and is a quick auditory learner. He plays well alone, but needs help interacting with others.

Rodney, born June 2001, likes to play with cars and toy motorcycles. He has lots of energy and needs parents and teachers that can help direct that energy into productive time. He is in Kindergarten (06-07 school year) and needs additional help with his class work.



More Waiting Children....



Michelle "Nicole", born December 1994, is a shy, lovely young lady. She plays in the band at school, playing percussion. She is currently in the sixth grade (06-07 school year). Nicole is very smart and making good grades comes easy

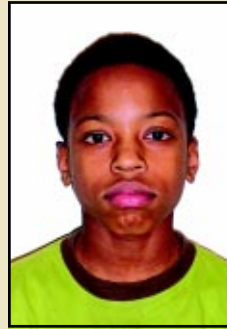
for her. Although she's not very fond of them, she wears glasses. Nicole needs a family that can understand and help her deal with her anxiety and fear of seeing or being around her birth father and help her understand that not all men or parents treat women in the way he did.

Her little brother, **Vann "Isaac"**, born July 1997, is in the third grade (06-07 school year). He is a very active little boy and enjoys reading. He also wears glasses, but this isn't a very big deal to him. Isaac needs a father than can be a good male role model for him, particularly in demonstrating how women are treated and respected.



Both children enjoy playing soccer. Nicole recently discovered a passion for acting, earning a part in a local theater company's play. Everyone has been very proud of her for having the courage to try out in front of the theater leaders.

Both Nicole and Isaac are ready for a family to love and support them through their teen years, helping them become mature productive adults.



Richard (known as **"Sammy"**) born December 1995, is a bright, energetic young man. He brings enthusiasm when he arrives in a room and can easily become the center of attention. He is a very loveable child who is able to form attachments. Sammy

is very smart and has a great deal of academic ability. He has a lot of energy and at times this makes it difficult for him to concentrate on completing assigned tasks. His teacher is impressed with his IQ. Sammy needs a good deal of structure and guidance.

Sammy enjoys sports. He plays basketball and baseball. He likes to play outside and ride his bike. He says he'd like to learn how to fish. He likes playing video games.

When he grows up, Sammy says he'd like to be a policeman. If he could visit any place in the world, he said he'd like to go to Washington, D.C.

When asked what he thinks about adoption, Sammy says he thinks he'd like to have a new family that he can enjoy forever.



More Waiting Children....



Rikki, born August 1994, is an outgoing child with a good sense of humor. She is a real joy to be around. Rikki is very active and enjoys swimming, cheerleading and shopping.

Rikki is in the sixth grade and her favorite subject in school is reading. Rikki wants to be a lawyer when she grows up. She states that the thing she is most proud of is her hair.

Rikki likes small dogs and going on vacations. One day she would really like to visit Disney World, Paris, Hollywood and Japan. Rikki has a great personality and good manners and makes friends easily.

Rikki enjoys Sunday School and in the past has been on the praise team at church. Her favorite holiday is Christmas.

When asked what adoption means to her, Rikki stated, "it means when a family takes you in and raises you as one of their own".



Jakita, born February 1992, has a very friendly personality and is very easy to talk to. She is fun to be with and loves to help out around the house. She is a great cook and enjoys helping others. Jakita is very proud of her hair and

enjoys having special outings to the beauty shop. Jakita enjoys playing the piano, roller-skating, cheering, dancing, riding her bike and going to the movies. As with most teenage girls, she really enjoys shopping and talking on the telephone.

Jakita is a good student and reads on a 12th grade level. She does need extra help with some other areas in school. She wants to attend college and to become a lawyer when she grows up. When asked about adoption she says she wants to find a family that she never has to move from until she goes off to college. She says she'd like to visit Jamaica one day. Her favorite holiday is Christmas.

She needs a loving family that can nurture her and help her achieve her goals.



\$1000 AFAPA Student Scholarship Application

I. Personal Information

Social Security Number: _____

Name (last, first, middle): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Date of Birth: _____

High School: _____ Years Attended: _____

Have you been notified that you will receive any other financial aid? _____

If so, please detail: _____

Do you plan to work part time while attending college/vocational school? _____

II. Family & Worker Information

Foster Parent's or Guardian's Name: _____

Address (if different from above): _____

Case Worker: _____ Phone: _____

III. Academic Record (to be completed by counselor or principal)

High School GPA: _____ Date of Graduation (or GED): _____

Course of study (college prep, vocational): _____

IV. Leadership Activities (please use extra sheet if needed)

V. Applying for (circle one) College, University, or Vocational School

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

VI. Consideration for Scholarship - Requirements

a. Be a child in the state custody whether living in a foster home, group home, independent living placement, etc. Birth and/or adoptive children of foster parents are also eligible.

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

c. Fill out all the questions on this application.

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

e. 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.

f. Be no older than 22 years of age.

VII. For Your Information

a. Unused portion or appropriate percentage of funds must be returned if recipient withdraws from school or does not maintain grade point average required by institution to remain in school.

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

c. Funds will be paid directly to the college/university or vocational school — not to recipient.

All information contained in the above application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of applicant _____ Date _____

Mail completed form to Brenda Caudle, 115 Caudle Road, Eva, AL 35621

Scholarships for Foster & Adoptive Parents
NFPA conference May 23rd—27th
Washington DC and
North American Council on Adoptable
Children Conference July 26th—28th
Tampa Florida

Any member of AFAPA Eligible to submit form

Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parent Association

Deadline for applying for NFPA conference April 1st, 2006 and June 16th for NACAC

Request to Attend Conference or Training

Name _____ Date _____

Conference Title: _____

Sponsored By: _____

Purpose of Attendance: _____

Location: _____

Date(s) _____

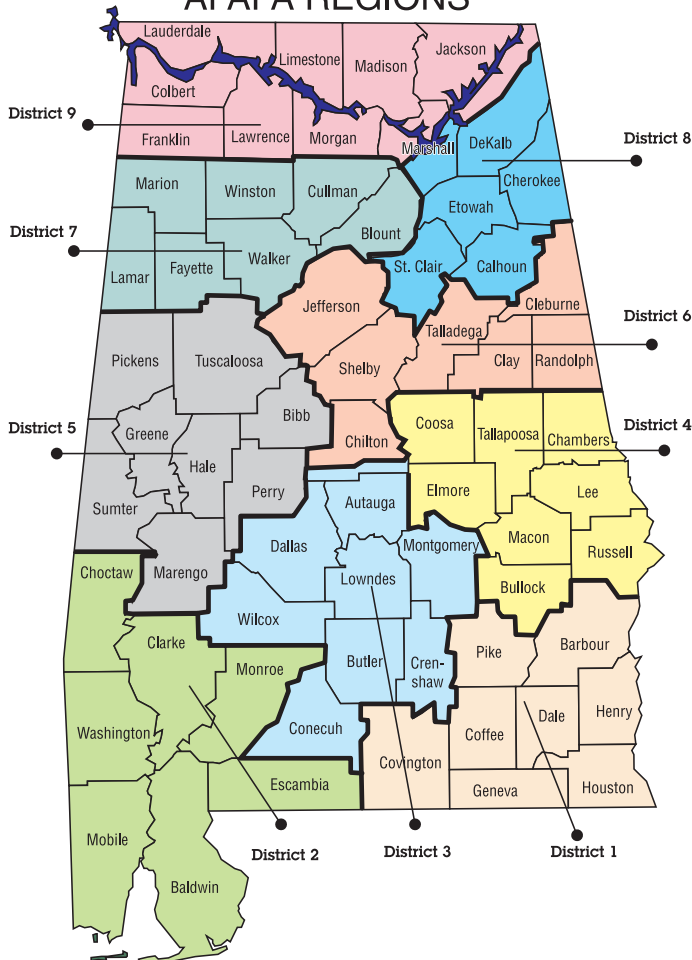
Please write a short summary of why this particular conference or training will be beneficial to you. Also explain how you will take knowledge you gain and use it in support of foster and adoptive families. Examples: Foster/Adoptive Parent-training/ workshops, share with DHR workers etc.

Signature of Foster or Adoptive Parent

Mail completed form to Brenda Caudle, 115 Caudle Road, Eva, AL 35621

The amount of Scholarships will be determined by the number requests and money available. You will be notified if you are selected for a scholarship and the amount of the scholarship.

AFAPA REGIONS



Why Call Your AFAPA Regional Rep:

- For latest info on where and when Regional Network Education Meetings will be held.
- For assistance on who to call for guidance on specific problems/issues you are facing.
- To volunteer your county association or yourself to help with regional functions.
- To learn more about training opportunities through out the state.

Who's Your Regional Rep?

REGION 1

Joe Anthony
334-886-2734
jandcanthony@centurytel.net

REGION 4

Mary Smith
334-567-4143
region4@afapa.org

REGION 7

Contact Sue Thomas
205-698-9936
suthomas@bamacommm.com

REGION 2

Brenda Y. Bivens
251-777-8646
Kenya@millry.net

REGION 5

Contact Buddy Hooper
256-796-0582
yddub84@aol.com

REGION 8

Contact Buddy Hooper
256-796-0582
yddub84@aol.com

REGION 3

Aunita Keith
334-874-4176
akeith4176@charter.net

REGION 6

James Wood
256-488-5567
jandgwood@acs-isp.com

REGION 9

Contact Brenda Caudle
256-796-6618
bbestkids6@aol.com

Items of Interest

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN ADOPTION THROUGH STATE DHR?

County DHR offices may approve families to adopt, only if the family is going to adopt a foster child placed in their home by their county department.

If you have applied to be an adoptive parent and have completed GPS and the home study process, the Office of Adoption can verify that you have an adoption home study on file with the State DHR office. Having a study on file with our office is the only way that you are considered as a possible resource for any/all of Alabama's waiting children. If you want to verify your approval status, you can e-mail Families4ALKids@dhr.state.al.us. Give us your name and birth date (for both parents if a two-parent household) and your county of residence and the name of your county resource worker. If you don't have access to e-mail (preferred method of contact) you may call and leave this information on the Recruitment hotline at 1-866-425-5437 (1-866-4AL-KIDS).

Families 4 Alabama's Kids

Have you ever considered making a difference in the life of a child?

You Can

By becoming an adoptive or foster parent

Call 1-866-425-5437 State DHR

1-888-545-2372 AFAPA

1-888-200-4005 AdoptUSkids

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.



1091 County Road 1659
Cullman, AL 35058
1-888-545-2372
www.afapa.org

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Huntsville, Alabama
Permit #780