



# Connections

A Publication of the Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Association

Summer 2006

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Contact info on page 15



**AFAPA President  
Buddy Hooper  
and  
State DHR Commissioner  
Dr. Page Walley  
Met May 12 to discuss  
Board Rate increases for  
Foster Parents**

After meeting and discussing the need for a foster parent board increase, AFAPA President Hooper and SDHR Commissioner Walley agreed to work together in a collaborative effort to publicize the current need for the increase. The Commissioner will be seeking help from those in the finance department to find funding for the increase. The Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Association will be educating foster parents to use the ISP process to make sure services are being provided to the foster children when there are special needs. The last board increase was 5 years ago and Alabama again ranks among the lowest in Foster Care reimbursement. Currently the board rate for regular foster children is a little over \$400 per month while the board rate for Therapeutic children is around \$240 per month. This is far below what the Department of Agriculture says it takes to raise a child in a middle-income family. According to the Department of Agriculture it takes \$15,000 a year to raise a child yet we are expected to raise a foster child for \$2880 to \$4800 a year. It is time that we (the state of Alabama) treat our foster children with respect and provide them the means to be cared for like other children. We have been told that there might not be an increase this year, it will have to be taken up next year. A year is a long time in the life of a child. For those of you who were at the State Conference you heard Judge Byars speak on looking at things through the eyes of a child. This is one of those times I am asking anyone in a position to help to get an increase in board payments to step forward and help make it a reality now and not a year from now.

## From the President of AFAPA

Hello to all,

It seems I always begin by saying it has been a busy past 3 months well this time is no different. Since the last newsletter we have had our Annual Training Conference. It was good to see each one of you who attended. I hope it was enjoyable and educational to all who attended. We have gotten very good comments from many of you and also some comments on how we might improve for next year.



I along with other members of the AFAPA board were able to attend the National Foster Parent Conference in San Antonio, Texas. In the last newsletter there was an application to submit for a scholarship to attend this conference and we did not have anyone apply. Next year May 23rd to 27th the NFPA conference will be in Washington D. C. hopefully some of you will apply next year.

The North American Council on Adoptable Children Conference will be in Long Beach, California July 26th to 29th and you can also apply for scholarship to attend this conference. For those who don't like to travel so far there will be a Mini conference in Nashville, Tennessee July 7th and 8th. The registration form is included in this newsletter and can also be downloaded from the [www.afapa.org](http://www.afapa.org) web site.

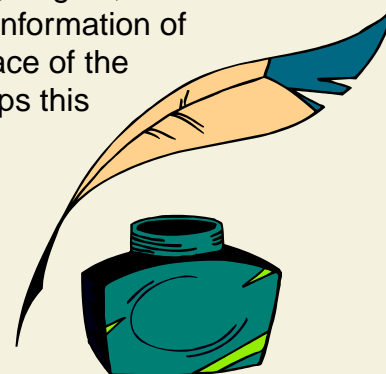
There has been much talk during the last few months about an increase in Foster Care Board payments. Many of our board members have been working hard for you trying to get the increase approved. Linda Williams as Chairperson of the AFAPA Legislative committee has been in Montgomery talking with Legislators trying to convince them of the need for this increase. It seems everyone agrees there needs to be an increase but no one seems to be able to come up with the money. I have recently met with DHR Commissioner Page Walley about this and we have agreed to work together in a collaborative effort to publicize the need for this increase and seek ways to fund it.

Linda Williams Chair of AFAPA Legislative Committee has been working very hard to get support for the foster childrens' board increase. She has circulated a petition and has hundreds and hundreds of signatures on it with plans to get this to the Governor soon. If you would like to participate by signing the petition contact Linda at 205-655-7658 email [alafapa@aol.com](mailto:alafapa@aol.com) or fax 205-853-3880

Regional Network Training meetings will be held during the months of July, August, or September be sure to check on page 11 of this newsletter for the contact information of your regional rep. You can contact them for information on the time and place of the regional meetings. We are looking to have some very informative workshops this Summer.

My quote for today: We can't just complain about what's not working, but we have to go a little further and be a part of the solution.

William "Buddy" Hooper President of AFAPA



## AN INTERVIEW WITH COMMISSIONER PAGE WALLEY



The following are some questions I asked the Commissioner recently. I want to thank the commissioner for taking the time to give us his answers. If you have questions you would like to ask the commissioner send them to me along with your name and email address and we will try to get them answered in the next newsletter. Email me at [buddy@afapa.org](mailto:buddy@afapa.org)

**Q. The retention of good foster family homes and the recruitment of new homes to me is the foundation of a good foster care system as we know it today. First would you agree with that statement and if you were talking to someone about becoming a foster or adoptive parent what would you tell them that would encourage them to start the process.**

### **Commissioner Walley:**

I would wholeheartedly agree that the foster home and family is one of the three legs of a tripod which is the system's foundation. The other two legs are a strong child welfare agency and a committed court system. My encouragement to prospective foster and adoptive parents would be that the blessings received from redeeming a child will be as great as those given by you to the child.

**Q. Much has been said lately about Foster Care Board rates. In your opinion how much is enough, what should the board rate be for foster children.**

### **Commissioner Walley:**

*Personally, I am uncomfortable with labeling of foster children and foster parents as "traditional" or "therapeutic." I believe that rates should be raised...but obtaining the millions of dollars to do so for every foster child has not been accomplished in spite of efforts at getting there in steps. Until we find a way to erase the labels, we will continue to have some foster parents feeling that they are treated inequitably.*

**Q. I read that Alabama in many areas is considered a model for Child Welfare. Is that a fair statement and why?**

### **Commissioner Walley:**

*It is not only a fair statement reported and repeated all over America, but one which has been made on multiple occasions by the Federal Judge presiding over the R.C. agreement....and it has not been disputed even by the plaintiffs. That does not mean the system is perfect or even where we at DHR want it to be. It is like Winston Churchill supposedly said about democracy, "It may be a 'terrible' system...but it is the best system man has developed."*

**Q. This question comes up a lot when we are talking to foster parents about adoption issues. If there are almost 300 children waiting for adoption why are there not more on the adoption web site?**

### **Commissioner Walley:**

*Of the 249 children available for adoption with no identified resource:  
17 have potential resources identified and are in the initial steps of the adoption process.  
21 have plans that are changing to a permanent planned living arrangement, foster parent adoption, etc.*

*That leaves 211. There are 110 registered on the web site as of April, 2006, including 83 children viewable to the public and 27 on hold status due to potential resources being identified. The web site notes the number of entries (49) not the number of children (83) as some entries are sibling groups.*

*The other children not on the web site are local, county managed adoptions at present.*

**Q. In this newsletter there is an article about Washington State Foster Parents joining a Union and the governor of Oregon has said if 51% of Oregon's foster parents sign up he will recognize them as being organized. What would be your feeling if Alabama foster parents decide to organize as a Union?**

### **Commissioner Walley:**

*I would interpret this as something inconsistent with the best traditions and motivations of the foster families of Alabama and not in the best interest of the children in our custody.*

**The Southeastern States Foster Adoptive Coalition  
of the  
National Foster Parent Association, Inc.  
The First Region 4 Mini Conference  
“Advocating for Professional Outcomes”**

**Foster Parents and Staff:**

We invite you to come and enjoy a weekend in beautiful Nashville, Tennessee, while receiving 10 hours of training especially selected for foster and adoptive parents. Take advantage of the networking within our eight South Eastern States. Meet and greet folks with the same sensitive issues and concerns. Participate in workshops designed especially for foster and adoptive parents. Take advantage of great entertainment on Friday evening. Line dancing is on the schedule and since we are in “Music Land” be prepared for a fun filled evening.

**Conference Schedule:**

**Friday -July 7**

Registration	12:00 pm - 12:45 pm
Opening Session	1:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Workshops	2:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Banquet (Sunday Dress)	6:30 pm - 9:00 pm
Entertainment (Line Dancing)	9:00 pm - until closing

**Saturday - July 8**

Registration	7:30 am - 8:00 am
Workshops	8:00 am - 11:00 am
Closing Session	11:15 am - 12:00 pm

If additional information is needed, please contact your state president, or Sharon Carlson, National Foster Parent Association Region 4 Vice President

Phone - 770-531-5278

Betty Hastings, Conference Chair

731-986-5316

**The Radisson Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tenn., sits across the highway from the Opry Land Mall and Grand Ole Opry. Reservations for the hotel can be obtained through 800-664-6835 or the direct hotel number: 615-889-0800**

Cost of hotel is \$75 plus tax. You must make your own reservation but tell them it is for this conference so you will be given the lower rate. Reservations should be made as soon as possible.

**Directions:**

From -I-40 - take Briley Parkway North past the Opry Mills Mall, turn left at Exit 12 on McGavock Pike, go .1 mile, turn right on Music Valley Drive. Free Parking is provided at the hotel.

## Southeastern States Conference July 7th & 8th Nashville, Tennessee

Registration Form  
Dead line June 20th, 2006  
Advocating for Professional Outcomes

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Day time Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Payment:

(Sorry, we do not have provisions to accept credit cards.)

Registration is \$35 per person \$50 after June 20th or on site and includes banquet meal and break refreshments. Breakfast and lunch will be on your own.

Check one:

Check: \_\_\_\_\_ Money Order: \_\_\_\_\_

Best time for you to be called to confirm reservation: AM \_\_\_\_ PM \_\_\_\_

Number to Call: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Roommate (or we may appoint you one)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete and return registration along with check or money order to:

Betty Hastings  
40 Fourst Lane  
Hollow Rock, RTN 38432

The Radisson Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tenn., sits across the highway from the Opry Land Mall and Grand Ole Opry. Cost of hotel is \$75 plus tax. If this hotel books up you may have to stay at a nearby hotel. You should send in your conference registration and your hotel reservations will be made for July 7th. You will be contacted after your registration is received to confirm your hotel reservations.



The conference will offer ten (10) hours of training credit to those staying for the entire conference. Certificates will be distributed at the closing session. Participants will choose workshops according to availability at the conference site. Workshop topics and presenters have been carefully chosen to insure quality instruction for foster and adoptive parents. The presenters are professional trainers, from within the state of Tennessee and from various states across the Nation. Each workshop is designed with foster and adoptive issues in mind.



## Importance of Connections

Do you remember as a child running into your favorite teacher somewhere away from school and how excited you were to go to her and say hi? Or, the sadness you felt when your best friend moved away, even though you could call or write? How about graduation from high school (or college) when the peers, mentors and friends with whom you had been through so much went their own separate way? Or, how you may have felt the comfort of just having a picture by your bed of a lost loved one? These are all types of connections that are important and help to shape one's life. From the home we live in, to the school we attend, to the church we worship in, to the people who make us feel secure, connections are who we are.

This is no different for the children we serve within the child welfare system. Connections for the children in foster care often are lost or severed without notice or choice of the child. When you think about a child who enters the system their experience is often such that they immediately lose connections to their family, friends, and community only to enter a new and unfamiliar environment.

It is important for child welfare professionals and providers, alike, to recognize the importance of connections and safely maintaining them for children and families they serve. From the time children enter the system to the time they are able to move to a permanent living arrangement (i.e., return to family or adoption), healthy connections for the child must be identified and efforts made to find ways to maintain them. We also know that children can develop new connections in their new environment which are also important to maintain.

The child's ISP team has an important role in making this happen. It is through input of team members that the connections of a child will become known and strategies developed to help the child stay connected to his family (real or emotional), community, and culture. This might include such steps as visits, phone calls, letters, videos exchanged, cultural outings, etc.

Staying connected may not always involve direct contact with a person or place, but might be through the expression of a thought or comment to or by a child. Some examples might include:

- Having a child say a prayer which includes his family each night
- Placing a picture of the child's family next to his bed
- Commenting to the child about how proud his parent would be to see a drawing or good grade the child has made.
- Commenting on a strength the child has like his parent.
- Bringing the child's culture into the home through a tradition, meal or activity.
- Developing and reviewing the child's Lifebook to allow opportunity for dialogue.

These are just a few ideas and for those who recognize the importance of connections, I am sure you have your own ideas and practices.

The important thing to remember is that connections represent who we are and when taken away can leave one feeling empty and lost. Unfortunately, sometimes as a way of coping with these feelings unhealthy or negative behaviors may be used to fill the void. Therefore, it would serve all well to have a greater appreciation and understanding of connections and the ways to safely maintain them. So...the next time a child enters or leaves the system through your care, remember what helped you to stay connected to the important things in your life and consider them when helping children to feel connected to their family, community and culture.

Prepared by: Marie Youngpeter  
Program Manager  
Office of Adoption





## AFAPA 2006 Foster Parents of the Year Rickey & Teresa Kidd

Pike County social workers got closely involved with the Kidd family about three years ago. The Kidds live close by in neighboring Coffee County. Three years ago, the Kidds accepted one of our foster children who had some serious health conditions. Our little one was medically fragile requiring numerous

hospitalizations. The Kidds were with her during most of those hospitalizations. In fact, their entire family took turns sitting with her during those hospitalizations. The Kidds, no doubt, love this precious little girl accepting her as part of their own family. This transracial adoption is nearing finality, a happy ending to this child's most unhappy start in life.

Additionally, the Kidds accepted care for a number of Pike County children on an emergency basis. Currently the Kidds have three Pike County foster children in their home, in addition to the one adoptive child from Pike County. We definitely think the Kidds deserve to be the foster parents of the year because of all the help they've been to numerous children of Pike County.

## AFAPA 2006 Adoptive Parent of the year Ms. Ida Lett



Ms. Ida Lett and her late husband Charlie Lett became foster parents in 1979. Mr. Lett passed in 1997. Ms. Lett, 80 years of age, has been a foster parent for nearly 27 years. Ms. Lett has not only grown in age but her spirit transcends her as she compassionately provides a loving and stable home for her foster children. Mr. and Mrs. Lett had a total of 10 children of their own, that were grown and out of the home at the time they became foster parents. Through years of devotion and genuine love for children, Ms. Lett has serviced over 40 children. The majority of these children having special needs and extraordinary circumstances that required a lot of patience and internal nurturing abilities as possessed by Ms. Lett. Ms. Lett is dedicated in that she has always provided a long term foster home for children. Ms. Lett not only maintained the care for the children, but also made them a part of her family. Mrs and Mrs. Lett adopted a child through the agency in 1988 who had been placed in their home as a foster child in 1984. Ms. Lett has continued to provide permanent care for a mentally and physically challenged 21 year old male that came into her home in 1988 as a foster child, and agent out of the system of care. Ms. Lett currently has 3 foster children in her home all who have special needs. Ms. Lett has maintained a great partnership with birth families and is much deserving of the special award.

## Foster Care Worker of the Year Pam Jones and Adoption worker of the Year Wendy Crane both from Morgan County.



# PICTURES FROM AFAPA 2006 CONFERENCE





# PICTURES FROM AFAPA 2006 CONFERENCE



# Foster Parents in Washington State form Union

We, the Board of the Foster Parents Association of Washington State, are writing to inform you that we are taking an important and historic step for our organization and for the Foster Parents and Children of Washington State. We are seeking to organize a collective voice in our relationship with the state. We will work toward a foster care system in which Foster Parents are supported and valued for the important work they do, and in which Foster Children have a future of positive outcomes and productive lives.

The **Foster Parents Association of Washington State (FPAWS)** has been the principal advocate and support group for foster care providers statewide since 1973. **The Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE)** is the largest and strongest union representing state agency employees in our state, with a proud history of advocating effectively in government, organizing for positive change and representing its members interests as employees and citizens. In 2006, our two organizations are coming together - establishing joint membership, coordinating our efforts and combining our strengths.

Why do we feel this is necessary?

Like many Foster Care systems around the country, Washington State's is in crisis. Children placed in the Foster Care system have increasingly serious behavioral issues and turnover among frontline Social Workers and Foster Parents is too high.

Recruitment and retention of Foster Parents has been a focus of state funded programs, but it has remained difficult, at best. Foster Parents leave the system in Washington every day because they feel unprepared and unsupported. A tremendous amount of funding has been put into finding new Foster Parents, and while the system has been able to function and keep its head above water, it is not sustainable. Each year, the state loses almost 50% of its Foster Parents.

The situation has become critical. Without a sufficiently large, stable base of Foster Parents, foster children continue to suffer multiple placements (leading to severe mental health issues), separation from their siblings, and inappropriate placements. If the system does not soon effect positive change, we are concerned that Washington State will suffer the fate of other failed Foster Care systems, including privatization, loss of accountability, and resultant decline of quality care for the state's most vulnerable children.

We feel there is hope if we can change the basic relationship between the State and Foster Parents. There are many highly skilled and highly trained Foster Parents in Washington State who have dedicated their lives to raising the state's most at-risk children. These Foster Parents have been able to improve outcomes for youth whose futures at one time looked bleak. As you likely know, our state's current system of funding for foster children actually offers disincentives for children to learn positive and functional behavior. We feel the state needs to work with Foster Parents to establish a substantial core of highly trained, highly skilled Foster Parents to care for children with serious behavioral issues. Foster Parents must be compensated appropriately and rewarded, not punished, for the positive outcomes of the children in their care.

Furthermore, many important mandates of the Braam Lawsuit settlement which could improve the state system and life for Foster Parents and Foster Children, remain unfulfilled. While we have seen some progress in systemic changes, including current promised increases in staffing levels for frontline social workers, we also see the need to further integrate Foster Parents into the state system. The experience and wisdom Foster Parents could bring to the ongoing reforms would be sure to bring increased possibility for success.

The Foster Children of the State of Washington cannot wait. Foster children quickly grow up to be citizens of our state. Their lives are in all of our hands.

Foster Parents are choosing to work collectively and actively toward a new day for Foster Families in the State of Washington. We hope you will understand our choice and work with us toward a better future.

Sincerely,

The FPAWS Board of Directors

## 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."*



Dahshayela, Jamericqua  
and Robert

**Dahshayela**, born in March 1998, is a very bright and pretty little girl. She is in the second grade and is being tested for the gifted program at school. She wants to be a teacher when she grows up. She is very creative and expresses her thoughts and feelings well in writing. She works hard to do a good job and responds very well to praise. She makes friends easily. She is friendly, yet sometimes shy. She needs a family that will understand her longing for undivided attention. She doesn't like it when her little sister does something better than she.

**Jamericqua**, born in July 1999, a sweet and friendly child. She enjoys being the center of attention and is very affectionate. She is in the first grade and is a very good student. She is quiet by nature and needs a family that understands the mischievousness of a first-grader and who can put her leadership qualities to use. She, too, is very creative; she's an artist and loves to draw. Jameriqua is described as being "quick witted" and has lots of energy.

The girls enjoy playing with make-up and nail polish, so they play dress up. They both enjoy playing with their dolls, coloring and reading.

**Robert**, born September 2000, is a very active outgoing little boy. He is very affectionate and loves to give and receive hugs. He is quite sensitive and like most babies of the family, gets his feelings hurt quite easily. He really looks up to his sisters and tends to copy them in everything they do which can sometimes lead to disaster (as far as the sisters are concerned). He attends Head Start and has lots of pre-K skills. He knows his alphabet, his colors and is learning to count. He is very proud of the job he does around the house and likes helping with chores. He's a typical little boy in that he likes toy cars and trucks and playing outside riding his bike.



**Demonte**, born October 1997, is a young man with lots of energy to burn. He enjoys school and does well in a small environment with lots of structure. He really likes being the teacher's helper. He currently attends his neighborhood school but is in a self-contained classroom.

## More Waiting Children....



**Savannah**, born September 1990 is a loving child who tries hard to please others. She very much wants a forever family. Savannah needs a family that will be persistent in helping her excel academically. With assistance and follow-up by the adults in her live she does good in school.

Savannah gets along well with other children and a home with other brothers and sisters would be just great.

Some of Savannah's favorite things are skating, sleeping, horseback riding, bowling and volleyball. She is especially good at bowling and volleyball. Savannah is described as a "loyal" person who has a great sense of humor.

Savannah says she'd like to be a vet when she grows up. When asked what she is most proud of, she responded, "My life". She'd love to visit Disney World one day. When asked what adoption means, she replied, "If someone would adopt me I would be very happy



**Quincy**, born January 1994, enjoys dancing, playing video games and playing with the family dog. Quincy also likes sports and playing basketball and football. Quincy needs a family who can help motivate him to reach his potential in school. Quincy's

favorite subject in school is reading. He wants to either join the Navy or be a professional football player when he grows up. Quincy is respectful of others and has good manners. He is described as smart and a little "mischievous". He is very helpful and encouraging to others. He gets along well with his sisters. He needs a forever family that can help him with expressing his thoughts and feelings and remembering his responsibilities. When asked what he's most proud of, he responded, "being me".



**Tamara**, born June 1995, wants to be a famous singer when she grows up. Her singing talent is something she is most proud of. In addition to this, she enjoys playing. Some of her favorite fun-time activities include jumping rope, playing kickball, dodge ball and soccer. If she could visit any place in the world, she'd want to go to New York City. Tamara is described as having a sweet spirit. Her foster mother tells us she doesn't think she's ever seen her get mad. Tamara needs a forever family that will encourage her talents and recognize her need to be the center of attention. Tamara needs to be provided opportunities to attend church as her spiritual growth is important to her. Tamara also sings in the children's choir.



**Jasmine**, born March 1998, is the youngest of this sib group of three. She enjoys being the center of attention. She loves giving and receiving hugs and compliments. She is very funny and quick-witted. Jasmine is very help and shows

kindness to others. Jasmine wants to be a teacher when she grows up and hopes to visit Mexico one day. She enjoys playing soccer and skating. She recently began taking dance lessons. Jasmine has a very vivid imagination and loves to tell stories. Jasmine needs a family that can help her deal with things when they don't go her way. She needs a forever family that will love her and listen to her stories.

## More Waiting Children....



**Milton** is a very special, handsome young man who very much wants to be a part of a loving, affectionate family. He is usually quiet and sometime shy and is very polite. He enjoys music, fishing, video games and lots of fried chicken! He has recently begun

participating and really enjoying outdoor sports, like basketball. He's demonstrated a willingness to give new activities a try. Milton is hardworking and tries hard to please his caregivers... sometime even volunteering to do additional tasks around the house.

Those who really know Milton indicate that he has really matured. He now needs a family that can help him continue the great improvement he has made in his behaviors. He needs a special family that can understand his longing for attention and help him understand why he can't always get his way.

Milton has had seizures in the past, however, these are controlled with medication and proper medical supervision.

Milton needs a family and support network that can help him continue to improve in school. His life circumstances have left him a little behind his same-age peers. He tries very hard to make good grades and is doing well during this school year. This child does NOT have to be reminded to complete his homework assignments.

This child has much love to give and has plenty of room in his heart to receive love. Perhaps your family is just the family to give it to him.



"People person" ... the term used to describe **Chavez**. Chavez is also very creative and intelligent. He loves to participate in sports activities and is very musically inclined (he likes music from the 60's & 70's). He can dance very

well and he aspires to be an actor or the first African American President of the United States. Chavez enjoys attending church-related functions. He loves animals and outdoor activities.

Chavez does, from time to time, struggle with a positive attitude. He currently participates in counseling to help him work on the issues related to his abuse and neglect.

Chavez does well in school and reads above his sixth grade level. He enjoys meeting new people and looks forward to building meaningful relationships with new people. He is very interested in being adopted by a loving family and growing up in a safe and stable home environment.

In a letter he wrote to his foster mother, he thanked her for everything she had taught him... saying no to drugs, believing in himself, and for making him laugh and cry and even mad sometimes. He says because of all she's done he knows what he wants to do with his life, "go through college, have job, have kids and even a wife". Perhaps, your family could be the family that helps Chavez meet these goals.



**Kareem**, born January 1993, wants to be a policeman when he grows up. Kareem is described as a child with a warm and caring spirit who gets along well with peers as well as adults. He is outgoing and has great fun playing basketball. Kareem also enjoys

playing video games and taking care of dogs. He is quite good at preparing small meals and helping out around the house.

Kareem attends a school where he gets extra help for reading and English. His favorite subject is math. This active, curious young man is looking for a family to call his forever. Maybe that could be your family.

## Meet Robert



**Robert**, born January 1996, is a blond-haired, blue-eyed, very loving and compassionate child. He has a beautiful smile and big bright eyes.

Robert attends a special year-round school program. When on task, he absorbs information quickly and is very curious and creative. He works well with his hands. He has many friends at school and at church.

The abuse and neglect that Robert experienced has left him with some special emotional and mental challenges. Robert has difficulty staying still and spends a great deal of his time entertaining himself with repetitive motions or tasks. Robert functions best in an environment that has a consistent routine.

As with many children who have experienced severe abuse and/or neglect, Robert tends not to trust people until he's known them for quite some time and they have demonstrated a strong commitment to him. Robert needs a family that is willing to participate in training and learn new therapeutic approaches that are available to help them parent a child who resist attaching to others. He needs a family that can respond to him with an attitude of empathy, curiosity, acceptance, playfulness and love.

This will be especially important early in the relationship between Robert and his new family, until such time that a real bond is established. Once bonded, Robert likes to make those close to him happy and he is very sensitive to others' needs. He is very friendly and will often introduce himself to strangers he encounters while out in the community.

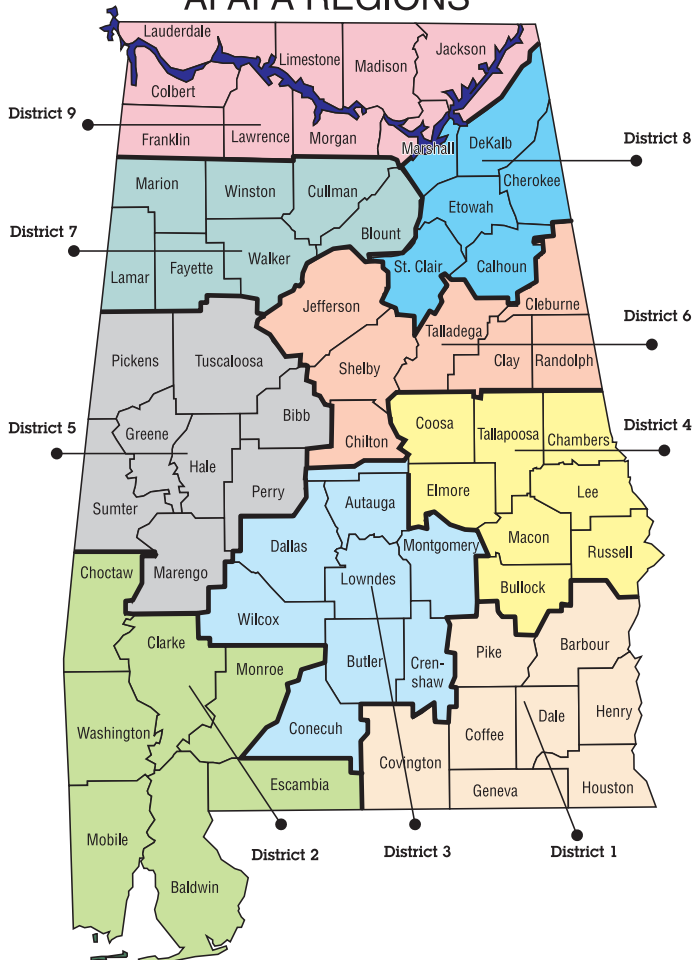
It is expected that as an adult Robert will need some level of support, through vocational rehabilitation or other agencies serving adults with developmental disabilities. Robert needs a family that understands his unique learning and communication needs. A family that has a lot of energy and patience would be ideal for Robert.

### 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](mailto: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).

### 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**

Barbara Blakney  
205-752-5660  
region5@afapa.org

**REGION 8**

Jennifer Feazell-Edwards  
256-892-1605  
edwards10@cableone.net

**REGION 3**

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

**REGION 6**

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

**REGION 9**

Larry Decatur  
256-764-3716  
region9@afapa.org

## Items of Interest

On March 31, the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) announced the publication of the new Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC). The new ICPC was developed by a group that included State human service administrators, child welfare directors, compact administrators, and representatives from national organizations. The text of the ICPC, as well as information about the highlights of the new ICPC, is available on APHSA's website ([www.aphsa.org](http://www.aphsa.org)).

Persons who were adopted as teens needed for new recruitment campaign: AdoptUSkids is looking for kids or adults who were adopted as teens, who are willing to tell their stories. Kat Kirkpatrick will put together types of questions and guidelines for teens to follow to tell their story. Contact Kate Kirkpatrick, [kkirkpatrick@adoptuskids.org](mailto:kkirkpatrick@adoptuskids.org).

**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**

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.

## CONNECTIONS INFO:

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



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