



Newsletter

September 2011

A Publication of the Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Association

ALABAMA FOSTER & ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS 2011 – 2013

In May, 2011 new executive Board members were elected to serve October 1st, 2011 to September 30th, 2013. Those officers are shown here with a brief description of duties.

William Buddy Hooper | President

- Preside at all meetings of the association, the board of directors and state conferences.
- Be responsible for the general management and supervision of the affairs and operations of the association.



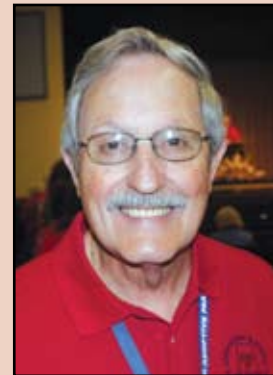
Mary Smith | VP Foster Care

- Act in the stead of the president. Should the presidency be declared vacant, the board of directors shall appoint one (1) vice president to complete the term of office.
- Serve as co-chairpersons of the annual training conference.
- The vice presidents shall coordinate works of all committees and submit quarterly reports on their activities to all board members at each board meeting. Co-ordinate all activities concerning foster care and adoption



Joe Anthony | Vice President Adoption

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Darla Works | Treasurer

- Be responsible for collecting and safeguarding all the funds of the association.
- Be responsible for the timely disbursement of association funds as authorized by the president of the association and the board of directors.
- Provide monthly financial reports to the executive board and quarterly reports to all board members.



Shirley Merrills | Secretary

- Keep all records of the executive board, board of directors and general membership meetings.
- Be responsible for all official association correspondence.
- Serve a chairperson of the membership committee.
- Serve as the official liaison to local associations concerning Chapter Membership.
- Perform other duties as designated by the president or the executive board.





A Message from the President of AFAPA

Greetings to all,

I hope you all have had a good Summer. Things have been busy as usual for AFAPA. We had the pleasure of Hosting the National Foster Parent Conference in Mobile this year. Of the 300 who attended almost half were from Alabama. There were around 100 foster parents and about 40 DHR workers who attended. AFAPA received many compliments on the way the conference was planned and the hospitality shown.

It has been my pleasure to attend many GPS panel night meetings this year. There is still a great need for more foster parents around the state. The total number of foster parents keeps dropping even though we have many new foster parents. Foster parents are the best recruiters for foster and adoptive parents. If you know someone who is interested in becoming a foster parent please have them give us a call.

Plans are to have a mentoring program for foster parents established in the near future. AFAPA representatives have been working with State DHR to plan this program. As we have more information this we will communicate it with you.

Plans are to have more foster parents from around the state involved in programs to assist foster and adoptive parents. One of those mentioned is the Mentoring program another is to have coordinators within the regions to have closer contact with the county associations, these coordinators would work closely with an AFAPA Board members to help with recruitment, training, and other activities. Anyone selected for these positions will receive training to do this volunteer job. If you are interested in volunteering for either of these programs please see the contact sheet in this newsletter and respond by September 26th. I'm also looking for volunteers to assist with submitting articles for this newsletter, the AFAPA website, and the AFAPA facebook page.

Buddy Hooper,
President



*Pictured here is
Barbara Lawrence AFAPA Board member,
Sammy Key husband of Barbara,
and Irene Clements President of AFAPA.*

*Sammy passed away 6 weeks after this
picture was taken at the
National Foster Parent Conference.*

*Sammy was a great supporter of AFAPA and
will be truly missed.*



IT HAS BEEN A GREAT YEAR FOR FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION CONFERENCES

Foster Care "A Journey to Permanency"

This was the theme for the AFAPA annual conference at Shocco Springs May 13th, 14th, and 15th, 2011. With it being so soon after the devastation for the Tornadoes that ripped across Alabama April 27th the numbers were down some from past years. Very few DHR workers were able to attend due to working overtime to assist with those Counties hit hardest by the tornadoes.

It was still a very good conference and for a few days we were able to have fun and attend some very good workshops. 20 scholarships were given out on Friday night and to date AFAPA has awarded another 24 scholarships bringing the total scholarships given out this year to 44. A big thank you to all those who have donated this year by being Chapter members of AFAPA, bidding on the baskets at the conference, and general donations to the scholarship fund. Almost \$8000 was raised from the WalkMeHome Walk in Montgomery May 1st.

Foster Care "The Road to Permanency" National Foster Parent Conference held June 25th – 27th in Mobile, Alabama Southern Hospitality at its best.



The 41st Annual National Foster Parent Conference began with true Southern Hospitality with the Azalea Trail Maids (www.mobileazaleatrail.com) welcoming everyone to the

conference dressed in their Southern Belle dresses.

The Conference began with a powerful opening session speech "The Urgency for Permanency" from Nancy Buckner Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Human Resources detailing how in just a few short years the permanency for children in Alabama through adoption has increased more than 50% over previous years.

One of the highlights of the conference was the keynote address by Derek Clark. Derek is among the top speakers for foster care in this country and is also being sought out to speak internationally.

"NFPA ROCKS! I had an amazing time sharing my story of resilience and redemption with the most wonderful foster parents. I felt so much love and compassion at this wonderful event. It truly touched my soul. I have such admiration and love for foster parents. I would not be who I am today without the unconditional love and dedication of my wonderful foster parents. They simple Never Gave Up on me. They have earned the title mom and dad"

Here is an email Derek received from one of the attendees after the conference. "Derek, We have been listening to a lot of your music online, including God Save That Little Boy. You cannot believe how happy my foster daughter was to get her autographed

copy of your book "I Will Never Give Up". I think she is almost done with it already. You are helping so many people who are hurting in a way that most foster parents cannot. I am so thankful for what you do, yet so sorry that you had to endure such an awful childhood to be in a position to do it.

If you have an extra minute to write my foster daughter a short note, she is a big fan of yours. Her story includes 9 placements in nine years in care, sexual abuse, physical abuse, extreme neglect. She is a 10 on the outside but obviously very confused and angry on the inside. She never let's anyone get close to her, does not return any affection and sees no reason to try. UNTIL YOU Derek! Your music gets through her stoic veneer and the timeliness of your book was unreal. God put you in my path to help this little girl."

"Derek's story makes me realize how important it is for all of us in the Child Welfare arena to not give up on these children no matter what they have been through. Derek is a true inspiration to foster children as well as foster parents".

Workshops presented at this conference were some of the best from all around the US and Canada. Some of the workshops presented were "Strategies for Managing Stress in Foster Parents", "Understanding Basic Psychotropic Medications", "Adoption Subsidy", "Helping Foster Parents Overcome Grief and Loss", "How to Raise Amazing Kinds in Spite of Foster Care", "Parenting a Special Needs Child", "Setting the Stage for Permanency", "Coaching the Hurt Child, and "Understanding the Court System and Foster Care".

One event that always stands out at a National Foster Parent Conference is the networking among foster parents and child welfare attendees. This was very evident on Saturday night during the Meet and Greet Event. This Event was the talk of the Conference and will be remembered as a night of great food and great friends getting together to share stories and laughter. The food was first class, the shrimp and gumbo was given high praise even by the Louisiana folks in attendance. The person who made the Gumbo was even awarded a special prize by the Conference Committee.

The closing session was delivered by Sean Hudson a foster youth attending the University of Alabama. Sean gave a talk that was both emotional and inspirational for foster youth and foster parents. Sean will be graduating next year with a degree in Social Work and any agency will be fortunate to have him work for them.



**THESE ARE A FEW QUOTES FROM
OTHERS WHO ATTENDED THE NFPA
CONFERENCE IN MOBILE**

It was my honor to MC each general session at the conference, lead the General Membership meeting and to present awards to the National Foster Family of the Year, the Orton's from Missouri, and to Dennis Seger, who received the President's Award for his outstanding service to NFPA. Serving as president of NFPA for the past year has been an interesting adventure and one that I will cherish for many years to come. Visiting with foster parents from across this great country while assisting with a very successful conference provided insights and highlights that are important to NFPA as we proudly serve as the "national voice of foster parents." My gratitude to the Alabama foster parents, who worked so hard to make this conference a success. I am already looking forward to our 2012 conference in the Chicago area.

~ Irene Clements
President National Foster Parent Association

"The 2011 NFPA Conference was an excellent experience. As a Child Welfare Administrator, I attend a fair number of meetings, trainings, conferences, etc. This was as well-done as anything I've attended, with great workshops and warm hospitality. I encourage foster or adoptive parents who have attended before and those who have not to make plans to participate in 2012."

~ Freida S. Baker, MSW Deputy Director
Family Services
Alabama State D.H.R.

The Conference site was spectacular. The check-in and member support was well organized. I am a Board Member and State Affiliate Member; I was in many meetings and the rooms were set up just fine.

~ Aubrey Manuel, President
California State Care Providers Assoc
Regional V.P., NFPA

My name is Sue Thomas. I presently serve as secretary for the Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parents Association. It was a pleasure to attend the National Foster Parent Conference in Mobile. This was my first conference and I enjoyed it immensely.

I helped with the Silent Auction for the better part of the conference but also found time to attend classes. The presenters were knowledgeable and passionate about the subjects they spoke on.

I think though, my favorite part of the conference was meeting people from across our great nation. I met new friends who know the joy and tears of loving and letting go of someone else's children. Not everyone can understand why we do what we do like other foster parents.

I encourage all foster parents to attend the 2012 conference in Chicago.

If I speak for registration, (Carl Christman, Tony & Phyllis Hurley) I can say that everything went like clockwork once everything was in place. The actual registration of the NFPA membership couldn't have gone much smoother (thanks to the availability of Dennis and his trusty computer to check a few questions of very few members)

~ Carl Christman from Oregon

"The National Foster Parent Association's annual conference was a huge success. The conference workshops and speakers were most informative and inspiring; and the networking opportunities for foster parents, social workers, and others were extremely beneficial. The many stories shared illustrated the personal commitment that foster families have for the most vulnerable children served across the country. It was indeed an honor for me to speak at the conference and converse with the many foster parents in attendance. May we all continue to strive to work in partnership to ensure that the children served in foster homes receive the resources they need and achieve timely permanency."

~ Nancy Buckner
Alabama Commissioner
Department of Human Resources

Next Year's NFPA's 42nd Annual Conference will be as good or even better.
Make plans now to attend next year's conference in Oak Brook, Illinois just West of Chicago.

The conference theme is **Educate. Advocate. Celebrate!**

Save the DATE June 14th – 17th, 2012

at the beautiful Oak Brook Hills Marriott Resort (www.oakbrookhillsmarriottresort.com)

A special room rate of \$80 per night has already been contracted for this event.

Keep a check on the www.nfpaonline.com website and register as soon as possible.

The 2011 National Foster Parent Association conference was an event that showcased southern hospitality at its finest. The Alabama Foster Parents were incredibly gracious and their participation made the conference a wonderful experience for those in attendance.

~ Pat Llewellyn from Montana

“Fostering Hope.. Together, we can make a difference” International Foster Care Conference held in Victoria, British Columbia Canada July 10th – 15th, 2011.

It was my privilege to attend the IFCO conference this year. This was my first International Conference. IFCO has held conferences for the past 30 years and the last time it was in North America was 2005 in Madison Wisconsin. With more than 30 countries represented it is interesting to note that foster care issues are much the same worldwide. In attendance with me at the conference were Irene Clements President of National Foster Parent Association and Darla Works Treasurer of the Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Association.

During a workshop presented by the Japanese group I learned that 7 years ago some of them also attended the NFPA conference in Orlando Florida. It was at this conference they were inspired to go back to Japan and start programs to help Foster Youth and Foster Parents in Japan.

The theme of this conference “Fostering hope... Together, we can make a difference” speaks to the importance of working together and sharing information. Foster parents take on one of society’s most important jobs by caring for children and youth at a time when they are so vulnerable and need, more than anything, a safe, warm and stable home. Foster parents are the cornerstone of the Child Welfare support services worldwide. This was a tremendous opportunity to learn first-hand from the experiences of foster parents, youth and agencies around the world and to share the goal of creating the best environment for children entrusted to our care.

~ William Buddy Hooper

*President Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Association
Treasurer National Foster Parent Association*

**“Healing Across Systems”
“Interdisciplinary Support for Children and Families”**

**NACAC Conference in Denver, Colorado
August 3rd – 6th, 2011**

Some of the best speakers from all over the country joined over 800 attendees of the 37th Annual North American Council on Adoptable Children’s Conference at the Marriott Tech Center. This year’s NACAC conference featured well know keynote speaker Dr. Bruce Perry. Dr. Perry presented a powerful presentation on “Bonding and Attachment in Maltreated Children”. The presentation covered how trauma affects attachment and what parents can do to nurture their children and fore for themselves. An expert panel was assembled on Friday to share experiences of how child welfare and other systems can collaborate to ensure the best possible outcomes for adopted children who have special needs.

There were more than 80 workshops and institutes to choose from at this conference. Many of the workshops focused on the adoption of special needs children and the support needed to maintain these adoptions. Other workshops presented focused on Kinship Care as a Permanency Option. There were workshops dealing with Post Adoption services, International adoptions, Advocacy and Public Policy, and Recruitment and Pre Adoption Services. The conference ended on Saturday August 6th with an Awards luncheon. The winner for this year’s Parent Support Group of the Year was The Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parent Association. AFAPA received this same award in 2007.

As President of the Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Board of Directors, I want to say what a pleasure it was to host the 41st Annual National Foster Parent Association Conference in Mobile, Alabama June 25th – 27th, 2011. The best quote I heard was this was the best NFPA conference ever. Several quotes about the conference are included in the article. A combined effort from the AFAPA Board of Directors, the NFPA Board of Directors, the Staff of the Renaissance Mobile Hotel, the Mobile Bay Convention and Visitors Center, and a host of volunteers from all over the country made this conference among one of the best ever. Almost 300 attended this year’s conference from more than 30 states, Bermuda, and Canada. The consensus from all the conference evaluations was that this was a very informative and fun filled conference. Attendees were also very generous in their support of the Youth Scholarship Fund by contributing to the Silent Auction and Drawing for the Quilt which was donated by the National Grange to NFPA. The total raised for Youth Scholarships was almost \$4000.

~ William Buddy Hooper

President Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Association

FOSTER PARENT BILL OF RIGHTS (FPBR)

The Foster Parents' Bill of Rights, Act No. 2004-257, was enacted by the Legislature of Alabama. The following rights have been established and the Department of Human Resources shall ensure that each foster parent be afforded the following rights:

- (1) The right to be 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) The right to receive information concerning the rights enumerated in this act.
- (3) The right to a concise written explanation of their role as foster parents in partnership with children and their families, the department, and other providers, the role of the department, and the rights and role of the members of the birth family of a child in foster care. The birth family's rights/roles and responsibilities are defined and should be shared with the birth family and the foster parents to ensure expectations. Refer to the "Rights/Roles and Responsibilities of the Birth Family of a Child in Foster Care" located in the forms section.
- (4) The right to training and support for the purpose of improving skills in providing daily care and meeting the needs of the child in foster care.
- (5) The right to training, consultation, and assistance in evaluating, identifying, and accessing services to meet their needs related to their role as foster care providers. This includes, but is not limited to, all foster care policies, the Foster Parent Handbook, Foster Family Homes Minimum Standards, the Therapeutic Foster Care Manual, and a mediation process.
- (6) The right to provide input to the department in identifying the types of resources and services that would meet the needs of children currently in their care and of their families, and advocate for the same without threat of reprisal.
- (7) The right to information concerning behavioral problems, health history, educational status, cultural and family background, and other issues relative to the child which are known to the department at the time the child is placed in foster care prior to the child's placement with a foster parent or parents. When the department learns such information after placement, the department shall make that information available to the foster parent as soon as practicable.
- (8) The right to a written explanation of the plan concerning the placement of a child in the foster parent's home. For emergency placements where time does not allow prior preparation of the explanation, the department shall provide such explanation within 72 hours. Prior to placement, the department shall allow the foster parent to review a written summary of information concerning the child, including, but not limited to, assessments, evaluations, and case plans, and allow the foster parent to assist in determining whether they can meet the needs of the placement for the prospective foster family. For emergency placements where time does not allow prior review of the information, the department shall provide the information within 72 hours of placement. Confidential information shall be kept confidential by the foster parents, except as determined through the ISP process to promote the health and welfare of the child. Refer to the Form Section for the "Foster Parents Written Explanation Regarding Placement." If a county desires to use its own
- form all the required information must be included. Counties should make two copies of the placement information form, a signed copy for the child's DHR record and a copy for the foster parents to keep.
- (9) The right to a staff person representing the department on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for the purpose of aiding the foster parent in receiving departmental assistance.
- (10) The right to fair and equitable board payments based on a system of daily board rates and other financial reimbursement as specified in a plan adopted by the department after consultation with foster parents, subject to the availability of funds.
- (11) The right to accept or refuse placement within their home, or to request, upon reasonable notice to the department, the removal of a child from their home for good cause without threat of reprisal for acting on such good cause.
- (12) The right to information about scheduled meetings and appointments concerning the foster child and permission for the foster parent to actively participate in and provide input to be used by the Individualized Service Plan team in the case planning and decision-making process regarding the child in foster care, including, but not limited to, individual service planning meetings, foster care reviews, individual educational planning meetings, and medical appointments.
- (13) The right to request that a volunteer advocate be present at all meetings with the department, including, but not limited to, individualized service planning, administrative hearings, the grievance/mediation process,

the adoption process, and the allegation process where the foster parent is present. All communications received by the volunteer advocate shall be in strict confidence.

(14) The right to notice and an opportunity to be heard, including timely information concerning all court hearings. This notification may include, but is not limited to, notice of the date and time of the court hearing, the name of the judge or hearing officer assigned to the case, the guardian ad litem, the location of the hearing, and the court docket number. The notification shall be made upon receipt of this information by the department. Although not a party to the case, the foster parent may attend court hearings at the discretion of the judge.

(15) The right to communication with professionals who work with the foster child, including, but not limited to, therapists, physicians, and teachers who work directly with the child.

(16) 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 Individualized Service Plan Team approval and without the threat of reprisal.

(17) The right to necessary information on an ongoing basis which is relevant to the care of the child, including timely information on changes in the case plan or termination of the placement and reasons for the changes or termination of placement to the foster parent except in the instances of immediate response of child protective service.

(18) The right to first consideration as the resource for a child in a foster parent's home after post TPR and all relatives have been explored.

(19) The right to a period of respite upon the request of a foster parent. The foster parent shall provide reasonable notice of a request for respite.

(20) The right to information, in person and in writing, of any allegations of maltreatment of children in the home of the foster parent alleged to have been perpetrated by a member of the foster parent's household, the process for disposition of these allegations, and any review process for reports of indicated child abuse and neglect upon receipt of the allegations. A written notification of any report in which a finding is not indicated on the county level shall be provided to a foster parent within five days of the findings.

(21) The right to copies of all information relative to their family and services contained in the personal foster home record.

(22) The right to mediation procedures that may be developed and adopted by the department and the Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parent Association Board. The foster parent may request mediation in accordance with any mediation policy adopted by the department and the Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parent Association Board without threat of reprisal.

(23) The right to appeal the revocation of a foster family home by the department in accordance with any appeal procedure adopted by the department and the Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parent Association Board without threat of reprisal.

MEET SCOTT



Scott was born in November 1999. He is quiet and a bit shy until he gets to know people. Because of his shyness he sometimes needs extra encouragement to participate in group activities. He enjoys drawing, art projects, playing board games, riding his bike and playing basketball.

Scott takes medication to treat ADHD. He has difficulty expressing his emotions but is working to improve his peer interactions. Scott needs someone who will encourage him to be a kid while providing him with a loving home in which to thrive. He functions well in a structured environment and will need his forever family to continue to provide him with a structured routine.

Photograph provided
courtesy of
www.heartgalleryalabama.com

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

MEET DE'ANGELA & SHUNTERRIA



D'Angela, born in September, 1997 is in the 7th grade (2010-2011 school year) and enjoys going to school and learning new things. D'Angela likes to be independent and to cheer up others when they are sad. D'Angela is very sensitive, helpful, appreciative and never complains. D'Angela enjoys talking, laughing, dancing, traveling and listening to music. D'Angela has a pet dog and loves animals. D'Angela cares about her appearance and loves dressing up and having her hair styled. D'Angela is not a picky eater, has a great appetite and enjoys eating new things. She is responsible and adjusts well to change. The most important thing to D'Angela is the happiness and well-being of others.

Shunterria is in 6th grade (2010-2011 school year) and is an honor roll student. She is very friendly and kind. Shunterria enjoys watching TV, listening to music and socializing with friends in groups of both boys and girls. Shunterria enjoys eating cereal and all desserts. Shunterria can fit in on any conversation, is very active and enjoys participating in extra curricular activities such as basketball and cheer leading. Shunterria also enjoys writing stories and plays. Shunterria is creative artistic, and has a wonderful imagination. One of the most important things to Shunterria is her physical appearance. Shunterria loves to go places and being noticed. She loves to be the center of attention. Shunterria has a dream of becoming a hair stylist. Shunterria and D'Angela enjoys spending times together and get along well with one another.

Photograph provided by
www.heartgalleryalabama.com

WALK ME HOME TO THE PLACE I BELONG

Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Association Sponsored a 5K Walk for foster care May 1st this year in Montgomery, AL at Huntingdon College. There were around 100 who attended and either did the Walk or just came to enjoy the fun. The Walk was just part of the happenings that day as volunteers had games for the kids to play and even a little music and singing by the Smith Family. This was also in celebration of May as National Foster Care Month. Many from SDHR attended along with foster parents and workers from all over the state. The highlight for me was seeing the kids dressed in their little Walk Me Home shirts playing and having a good time. The plans are for this to be an annual event but local associations don't have to wait, you can plan a walk in your area just about any time of the year. Walk Me Home is Sponsored by the National Foster Parent Association and the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. Money raised from this event helped AFAPA give out 44 youth scholarships this year.



*Darla Works Treasurer AFAPA,
 Buddy Hooper President AFAPA with
 Irene Clements President of National Foster Parent Association
 in Victoria, Canada for the International Foster Care
 Organization Conference.*



*Kristie Works presenting Memorial Scholarship at AFAPA Conference
 in honor of her father Mike Works who passed away July 29th, 2010.
 Also in picture Amy, Darla, and Jasmine Works.*

MEET NAZARIUS



Nazarius was born in March 2000 and is doing well in school, where he maintains an A-B average. Nazarius is the youngest of four siblings but is the only one currently being placed for adoption. Nazarius enjoys playing video games, watching WWE wrestling, drawing, swimming, playing the drums, and reading. He is described by others as a “helper” who is always willing to lend a hand. Nazarius wants to join the US Air Force and become a pilot when he grows up. He is very knowledgeable about airplanes and their functions in the military. Nazarius would benefit from a loving home where he has stability and knows what is expected of him. He will need a family to provide him with structure and consistency but also shower him with affection. Nazarius has been placed in foster homes where he is the only child, but would benefit from an environment where there are other children close to his age.

Photograph provided courtesy of www.heartgalleryalabama.com

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



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!!

If you would like to be a volunteer with the AFAPA Board please submit this brief contact form. Please indicate all areas you are willing to help with.

NAME _____
 County where approved to foster _____
 Phone _____
 Email Address _____
 How long have you been fostering _____
 How many children have you fostered _____

Check all that apply

- Foster Parent Mentor Coordinator
- Regional Coordinator
- Help with Website
- Help with Newsletter
- AFAPA Advocate



Flag ceremony at National Foster Parent Conference in Mobile, Al. David Sharp holding Alabama Flag on far right.

MEET ENDAE



Endae, born September 2007 is a fun and energetic little boy. He enjoys coloring and playing with his toys. Endae enjoys being around other children but has to be reminded to play nicely. This child has serious medical and behavioral needs and will need lifelong care. He is frequently hospitalized and has to attend numerous medical appointments. The perfect family for Endae would be a two-parent family with someone having experience in the medical field. This family will need to be structured but flexible and understanding of this child's many needs. Endae is a very special child with special needs who deserves to have a forever family.

Photograph provided courtesy of
www.heartgalleryalabama.com



NFPA President Irene Clement with State DHR Commissioner Nancy Buckner at National Foster Parent Conference in Mobile

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOSTER, ADOPTIVE AND KINSHIP PARENTS

AFAPA Announces Regional Network Training Meeting
 Holiday Inn (near Huntsville Airport)
 Huntsville-West I-565 exit #8
 9035 Madison Boulevard
 Madison, AL 35758
 (256) 772-7170
 October 29th, 2011
 9:00AM to 3:00PM
 Registration opens at 8:30AM

Foster, adoptive, kinship parents, and social workers are welcome to attend any of the meetings scheduled. 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

Classes that are planned for this meeting are:

- Bullying
- ISP/Foster Parent Bill of Rights/Respite
- Behavior Management

Register for this Meeting by October 25th, 2011 to insure that you will have a lunch provided and that you will receive all the materials.

Each participant will receive a 176 page Daily Journal for Foster Parents along with a very nice bag.

You can register by
 Email: buddy@afapa.org

or by mail to:

AFAPA

1091 Co Rd 1659

Cullman, AL 35058

or Phone 1-888-545-2372

Other Network meetings planned are for January 14th Auburn and February 11th in Mobile. See next Newsletter for more information for other possible dates of training.

ISP

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.



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AFAPA NEWSLETTER 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.



MEET WILLIAM J.

William, born in November of 1998, is a brown-haired, brown-eyed, very loving child always ready to give a hug and meet new friends. He is very friendly and will often introduce himself to strangers he encounters while out in the community. William has a beautiful smile and is always ready to have his picture taken.

William has a very active imagination and loves to play pretend. He loves magic and Super heroes. William also likes maps and treasure maps. He talks about Alaska and going on adventures. William also loves "Land Before Time", Spiderman, and Balto movies.

William has some emotional and mental health challenges that will require a loving, energetic, and patient family to be able to understand his unique learning and communication needs. It is expected that as an adult, William will need some level of support, through vocational rehabilitation or other agencies serving adults with developmental disabilities.

Photograph provided by www.heartgalleryalabama.com