



Tulare County Health and Human Services
Child Welfare Services

Foster Parent Newsletter

Director's Corner

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Happy New Year to all of you! I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and were able to spend time with family and friends. I wanted to first say thank you to all of you who helped make The Tulare County Child Welfare Services (CWS) "Brighten a Child's Winter Sky" Toy Drive such a tremendous success. The County received approximately \$3,500 in monetary donations and 1606 toys benefiting an estimated 1500 children and youth. Numerous businesses, county departments and community agencies supported the toy drive by sponsoring collection boxes at their office sites. It was a heart warming demonstration of how well we as a community rally around the needs of our foster youth. As always, it is my hope that every child felt loved and cared for during the holidays. It's often a very tough time for our kids and I count on each of you to help them as much as possible.

We're off to a good start this calendar year. There are many good things to

look forward to over the next six months. First let me say that the good news is that we will be hiring CWS Social Workers to fill the 17+ vacancies that we have kept vacant while we awaited budget updates. We will be working very hard over these next few months to recruit and fill these positions.

We are currently working on the development of Visitation Centers which would be located in various geographic areas of the county and operated by our community partners. The purpose of these centers would be to provide supervised visitation for parents and children active to the Juvenile Court Dependency system. The hope is that they will be able to serve a large volume of requests so that families can see each other more often and at times that are convenient to the parents and children so that they don't have to miss work or school. It is also hoped that these visitation centers will serve families during evenings, weekends and holidays. We know from the literature that

the more parents can see and spend quality time with their children, the higher likelihood that they will reunify with them. Children *safely* reunifying with their parents and families is a good outcome! We also know that children worry about their parents and when they can see them on a regular basis; this helps to relieve their anxiety, depression and decrease behavioral issues.

We will soon begin the initial planning and development of what we are calling, "Education Case Managers." We are at the very beginning stages of putting together a plan to hire staff who can be housed with our CWS Social Workers with the goal of providing the necessary supports to ensure our out-of-home foster youth are successful in school. Their primary function will be to meet with the child, the child's teacher, the caregiver and assess the child's functioning in school. They will make necessary arrangements for tutoring, special education,



Director's Corner continued....

"I am happy that we are moving in the right direction on behalf of our kids."

~ Renee Smylie



or other special services as needed. They will also help in gathering full/partial school credits for our foster children since they are so often behind in their credits due to numerous placement changes. If this program is successful, we would expect to see an increase in the number of foster youth that pass the high school proficiency exam, graduate from high school, and successfully apply to and enter college. The Juvenile Court and CASA are supportive of the idea and willing to help in its development. There will be more to come on this subject, but I am happy that we are moving in the right direction on behalf of our kids.

Lastly, I wanted to share with you some practice changes that have occurred for our CWS Social Work-

ers (SWs). Effective immediately, the assigned *case carrying* CWS SW will see and visit the children on their caseload every month. The visits will not be delegated to other SWs to complete. We know that there may need to be some exceptions to this practice, for example if a SW is on maternity leave, we would expect another SW to fill in, but these exceptions will be few. We are working on a policy outlining any exceptions and will share this with you when it is completed. The case carrying social worker is the person most knowledgeable about the child (other than the caregiver), parents, family, protective issues, case history, case plan, and all court orders, so it makes sense that the monthly contacts with the

child, parents and caregivers be completed by the case carrying CWS SW. It's important for the SWs to develop relationships with their clients and so this change will further support that. Also, these contacts may not occur during supervised visitations as a meaningful contact cannot be completed when the goal is for the parent and child to have quality time together. Case carrying CWS SW will also make the majority of their contacts with the child and caregiver *in the home*. Starting January 2011, it will be a federal requirement that 90% of all SW/child contacts occur in the home environment.

I continue to be thankful to all of you who nurture and care for our foster children. I will continue to do all I can to support the hard work that you do.

Please continue to share your thoughts and ideas with the Foster Parent Association as I meet with the Executive Board of the Association each month to discuss issues and share ideas. Thanks for listening.

Your CWS Director,

Renee Smylie.

In ancient times, a king had a boulder placed on a roadway. Then he hid himself and watched to see if anyone would remove the huge rock. Some of the king's wealthiest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around it. Many loudly blamed the king for not keeping the roads clear, but none did anything about getting the stone out of the way.

Then a peasant came along carrying a load of vegetables. Upon approaching the boulder, the peasant laid down his burden and tried to move the stone to the side of the road. After much pushing and straining, he finally succeeded.

After the peasant picked up his load of vegetables, he noticed a purse lying in the road where the boulder had been. The purse contained many gold coins and a note from the king indicating that the gold was for the person who removed the boulder from the roadway. The peasant learned what many of us never understand: that every obstacle presents an opportunity to improve our condition.

As we approach springtime, let us remember this story and go about the challenges of working together as a team of professionals whose most important goal is the safety and nurturance of children in foster and adoptive care.

LICENSING CORNER

New Regulations and Audit

In last quarter's newsletter, we mentioned that there may be several changes coming up with the foster care regulations. The state has reported that these changes are still in the works and are expected to be approved by summer 2010. Please watch for a future mailing for more details regarding these changes. Also, we received notice from the state that Tulare County Foster Care Licensing is scheduled to be audited in April 2011. While this may seem

like a long time off, it will be here before we know it! We need your help to make sure our files are up-to-date. Please remember to inform your licensing worker of any changes to your home such as phone number changes and regularly provide your licensing worker with copies of documentation such as training documentation and incident reports. With your help, we will have a positive outcome on the audit.

Paperwork and the "Brown Folders"

Our wish is for all county foster parents to "pass" their annual visits with zero violations! We will provide tips in each newsletter to help you as a foster parent to ensure you are prepared for annual visits which ultimately supports our primary goal of safety and well-being for the children in care.

So you may have heard of something called a "brown folder". If you are lucky, you may actually have one in your possession! Over the years, the importance of the "brown folder" may have gotten lost and we feel it is crucial to ensure both social workers and

foster parents are committed to maintaining consistent records for children in care through the use of the "brown folder". At the time of placement, a folder needs to be provided to the foster parent that includes various documents relating to the child as outlined on the front of the folder. Office assistants in all CWS offices have these folders available which may be brown, green, or gray in color. It is your responsibility as a foster parent to ensure you have a folder on each child placed in your home and to maintain records in the folder for the child that will follow



It is your responsibility as a foster parent to ensure you have a folder on each child placed in your home and to maintain records in the folder for the child that will follow the child should they be moved or returned home to their parents.

the child should they be moved or returned home to their parents. At the time of your annual visit, your licensing worker will be looking specifically for the required forms noted below which should be stored in the folder. If you do not have these forms, please get in touch with the child's social worker to request these documents. CWS SWs have been made aware of this requirement and will assist you with gathering the required paperwork.

REQUIRED –

- Foster Parent Agreement Form – SOC156

Recruitment Assistance – WE NEED YOU!!

We would like to invite foster parents to be present at recruitment events in the community to talk with others that may be interested in becoming foster parents. We will reimburse foster parents \$25 per person, per event. For most events, we invite up to 2 foster parents to attend and spots are open to county foster parents on a first come, first serve basis. If you would like to join our trainer/recruiter, Mary Morton, at a recruitment event, please contact her at 730-2552 x207 to find out upcoming dates and sign up. Also, if you know of additional recruitment events that Tulare County Licensing could be involved with, please let Mary know.

Continued on page 4

RESPIRE

Simply put, respite care is a well-deserved break for parents. The Parenting Network Respite Care Program is offered to all Tulare County Licensed Foster Family Homes and the good news is the referral process is simple. Call Heidi Pearson 730-2552 #235 and she will forward the referral to Parenting Network. We will call and make an appointment for a home visit to introduce you to our staff and meet your family in their home.

It is our goal to make you feel as a parent that your children are in capable, caring and competent hands while you are out of the home. It is our further mission to provide more than babysitting service. The Parenting Network Respite Care Provider is trained to work with the child using educational toys and games that are age appropriate. The respite care

worker strives to encourage outdoor physical play as well.

The program encourages the parent to take advantage of the program for TLC, all appointments, and professional trainings. The program is seven days a week from 8:00AM to 8:00PM. The schedule will try to be as flexible as possible based on time available. I encourage you to make appointments in advance and also to try and secure specific repetitive time slots. We do reserve the weekend times on a first come first serve basis, these times are dear and we make



every effort to serve all requests.

We look forward to meeting you in your home. The PNRCP is well deserved by you the foster parents and are excited that the program is available to you.

Please call:
 Sally Saunders
 Program Manager
 Parenting Network Visalia Family Resource Center
 1900 N. Dinuba Blvd. #C, Visalia, California 93291, (559) 625-0384.

Brown Folders Cont.

- Identification and Emergency Information Form – LIC 601
- Current Health and Education Passport (documenting initial and annual CHDP appointments)
- Copies of Immunization Records
- Dangerous Propensities Form – 818-S
- Authorization for Medical Care Form – 897-S
- Copy of the current case plan
- Personal Rights Form for ALL children placed – LIC 513B (Form is signed by the social worker if the child is not old enough or able to understand and review them with the parent)

PREFERRED –

- Copy of the child’s birth certificate and social security card
- Children’s Clothing and Personal Property Inventory Form

Did you know?!?! – SCIAP Funding for Foster Kids

There is a state funded program called “Specialized Care Incentives and Assistance Program” also known as “SCIAP” that is available for court dependent children placed in county foster homes and relative homes. The funds are provided to support children who require additional care and supervision due to health and/or behavioral problems. Each year the state provides Tulare County with funding specifically for qualifying SCIAP needs.

Some examples of areas these funds may be used:

- Camperships
- Afterschool activities (such as girl scouts, sports teams, clubs)
- Graduation costs
- Senior activities such as prom
- School needs (school supplies, school pictures, class rings)
- Items or services to improve a child’s well being or self esteem



If you have questions or are interested in requesting SCIAP funds for a child placed in your home, please contact the child’s social worker today! The deadline to request funds for this fiscal year is April 30, 2010.

Kudos Korner - *Catch someone doing something well!*

- ◆ Tulare County Foster Parent, **Annette Anderson**, received appreciation from Juvenile Court and CWS Administration for her successful efforts in being a role model to birth parents concerning a child in her home with special needs. Through Annette's support, the children were able to make a smooth transition and reunify with their mother. Great work Annette!
- ◆ Tulare County Foster Parents, **Sharon and Richard Celaya**, were awarded the Tulare County Child Abuse Prevention Council's 2009 Advocacy Award. The Advocacy Award is given to recipi-

ents who have done the most to advocate for the well being of children in Tulare County. This award provides recognition for the "unsung heroes" in the community. They received an engraved plaque, as well as Certificates of Recognition from the California State Assembly and the Tulare County Board of Supervisors. We are proud to have the Celaya's as part of our team!

- ◆ Tulare County Foster Parents, **Delia and Jose Ayon**, were commended by CWS Administration for their work in mentoring birth parents to be actively involved in the care of their children.

Through the Ayon's dedicated efforts, they have increased the likelihood that the children will successfully reunify with their parents. We appreciate you Delia and Jose!

- ◆ The CWS staff would like to thank **Tulare County Foster Parents** for their tremendous support with the Children's Toy Drive this year. Numerous foster parents were behind the scenes slipping donated toys into the drive boxes, assisting with sorting and wrapping toys, and ensuring the delivery of gifts to children in out of home care. We could not have done it without you! Thank you for your dedicated assistance!

Tulare County Foster Parent Association

The Tulare County Foster Parent Association meets on the 4th Thursday of the month at the Adoptions/Hyde building at 3500 W. Mineral King Ave., in Visalia, from 6 – 8 p.m. These meetings are a great time to connect with other foster parents and receive training on topics that will support you as a foster parent. Please see the "Training Corner" for information on upcoming topics. Also, child care is currently provided at each meeting on-site by Parenting Network staff. The Foster Parent Association Board Members also requests that you consider becoming a member of the Association. Membership applications are available at each meeting. If you are already a member, membership dues for this year are now payable to TCFPA.

Foster Parent Association Board Members for 2010

President
Judy Nixon 688-3538

1st Vice President
Darlene Young, 688-7176

2nd Vice President
Cindy Dias (739-0678)

Secretary
Terry Nali, 539-2745

Treasurer
Stephanie Stricklin (635-1349)

Membership/Telephone Chair
Cheryl Perine, 781-6188

Fundraising/Clothes Closet Chair
Sharon Celaya, 733-4981

- ◆ Don't forget that March is **Social Worker Appreciation Month**. Please take a moment in the month of March to share your appreciation for the social workers who make a difference for the families in our community.

If you would like to share positive feedback regarding a Tulare County Foster Parent or Social Worker that may be included in future newsletters, please contact Licensing Teamleader, Heidi Pearson, by telephone (730-2552 x235) or e-mail at warmeh@cws.state.ca.us.



Training Corner

Spring is the time for training! There are numerous trainings that will be offered in the next couple of months that we encourage you to attend. As a reminder, Tulare County Foster Parents need to keep up their annual training hours, which are 20 hours for homes taking regular foster care placements and 40 hours for those homes that receive special rates. In addition, foster parents need to maintain current CPR and First Aid certification. Mailings are done on a regular basis to keep you informed of upcoming trainings. Please take advantage of these upcoming trainings.

Schedule of Events

- First Aid / CPR County Classes

The next tentative dates for CPR and First Aid classes offered by the county at no cost to foster parents are listed below. These classes are typically available twice per month. Please contact a staff member in licensing to register or check for additional dates. Remember, you must maintain annual CPR/First Aid certification to have children placed in your home.

Thursday, March 4, 2010 from 8:00am-4:30pm

Thursday, March 11, 2010 from 8:00am – 4:30pm

Tuesday, March 23, 2010 from 8:00am-4:30pm

Location – Visalia Workforce Investment Building – 4025 W. Noble Ave., Visalia



- California State University Fresno Specialized Foster Parent Training Project

We have partnered again this year with CSUF to provide specialized training to county foster parents. The trainings will be held from 9am-1pm at a location in Visalia and child care will be provided by Parenting Network. Dates of the trainings will be out shortly, so please keep watch for a future mailing. The topics of the trainings will include:

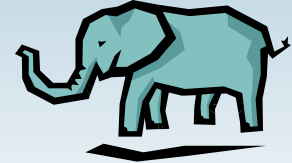
- 1.) Education and SSI including the laws and rights of foster youth and the role of the foster parent in advocating for child needs.
- 2.) Sexual identity for youth in foster care including a discussion on current Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning research/info.
- 3.) The role of technology in the family life including television, internet safety, music, and other forms of media. Focus will be surrounding dangers, safe practices, and the consequences for youth when they become adults and reveal too much personal info on the internet
- 4.) Effective discipline techniques for foster children.
- 5.) Cultural awareness/sensitivity and how to promote and appreciate diversity in the foster children that are placed with you.
- 6.) Placement moves and the impacts of multiple placement moves on foster children. The foster parent and SW's role in ensuring placement stabilization.

- Children's Services Network – Annual Conference

This year the topic for the Children's Services Network (CSN) Conference is "Shedding Light and Love on the Elephant in the Room-Intervening in Child Neglect". We are inviting **ALL** Tulare County Foster Parents to attend this conference with fees covered through CSN and Licensing Training funds. Please RSVP to Mary Morton (730-2552 x207) by 3/11/10 if you are able to attend. Child care may also be arranged in your home through Parenting Network during this training, but you must let Mary know at the time you RSVP. See back page for registration

Thursday, March 25, 2010 from 7:30am – 4:30pm

Location – Holiday Inn, 9000 West Airport Drive Visalia, CA



- Working with People who Hoard Training – Hanford, CA

The Environmental Health Institute and the Kings County Division of Environmental Health Services are hosting a 4-hour workshop for those who encounter people who hoard junk, trash, debris, and/or animals. If you are interested in this topic and would like to attend, please RSVP to Mary Morton (730-2552 x207) by 3/11/10.

Monday, March 29, 2010 from 8:00am – 12:00pm

Location – Kings County Government Center, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd, Hanford

- Trainings offered by Tulare County Office of Education

For further details, please see their website at <http://www.tulareselpa.org/Pages/CalendarOfEvents.html>

To attend these trainings, you must register online by following the directions for each training.

Best Practices for Meeting the Needs of Diverse Preschool Students

March 8, 2010 - 1:30 - 3:30 p.m., TCOE, Elderwood Room, 7000 Doe Ave., Visalia.

This workshop will include a variety of instructional strategies for meeting the needs of all preschool learners.

Parents Guide: Effective Autism Treatments, Part 1

March 23, 2010 - 6:00 - 9:00 p.m., Bright Start Parent/Infant Program, 3600 Mineral King, Visalia.

Information will be provided regarding the need for evidence-based practices, and which treatments have been shown to be effective for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

Parents Guide: Effective Autism Treatments, Part 2

April 22, 2010 - 6:00 - 9:00 p.m., Bright Start Parent/Infant Program, 3600 Mineral King, Visalia.

Information will be provided regarding the need for evidence-based practices, and which treatments have been shown to be effective for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

- The Trevor Project – Tulare Youth Services Bureau (TYSB)

The Trevor Project is a non-profit endeavor established to promote acceptance for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth and to aid in crisis and suicide prevention among that group. See The Trevor Project website for further information at <http://www.thetrevorproject.org/>. TYSB will be hosting a speaker from the Trevor Project to talk to parents, foster parents, and caregivers and you are invited to attend and receive training hours credit for your attendance. For questions and to RSVP, please contact TYSB at (559) 684-1410.

Wednesday, April 7, 2010, from 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Location - Tulare Youth Services Bureau - 327 S. K Street, Tulare, CA 93274

- **Other Training Options**

For those of you who may have a difficult time getting to a training class or are interested in different training options, you may receive credit for up to five (5) of your total annual training hours through the alternative forms of training. For videos/DVD's, after you have watched the video/DVD, you will receive credit for the length of the video. For books, you need to provide verbal or written feedback to the Licensing Team Leader of areas you have learned to receive credit. For websites, the website must be pre-approved by the Licensing Team Leader and include credit hours and a post-test.

The Licensing office has many books, videos, and a few DVDs available for two-week checkout on a variety of topics concerning fostering and adopting. Please contact Mary Morton to inquire or stop by to check out these materials.

The Foster and Kinship Care Education (FKCE) Program through COS also has a Lending Library with wide selection of books, videos, and DVD's that may be checked out by Tulare County Foster Parents. To access a list of their materials, please contact Linda Paradez at (559) 737-4842 or lindap@cos.edu or you may access their website easily through www.cos.edu then type FKCE in the search box to bring you to their site.

Below is a list of website trainings that are currently approved to use for training hours as described above. You will need to submit a certification of completion with a copy of the course description to receive credit. If you would like to recommend other websites to be considered for training credit, please e-mail Licensing Team Leader, Heidi Pearson, at warmeh@cws.state.ca.us with the link to the site.

FosterClub Online Training - *No cost*
<http://64.78.32.155/training/index.cfm>

Foster Care & Adoptive Community Training - *Fees \$4.95 - 16.95 per course*
<http://www.fosterparents.com/>

Foster Parent College - *Fees are typically \$10 per course*
<http://www.fosterparentcollege.com>



Website Access

Tulare County HHSA has a website with a link dedicated to Child Welfare Services at <http://www.tularehhsa.org/index.cfm/human-services/child-welfare/>. This site provides a list of all CWS offices with their contact information and a brief overview of CWS. Look for updates to this site in the future which will include a section specifically for Foster Care Licensing.

This newsletter is also available through the Children's Services Network website at <http://www.tccsn.org/>. This website also provides links and information to various resources within Tulare County.

College Of the Sequoias and Foster Parent Association Meeting Trainings

The Foster and Kinship Care Education (FKCE) Program provides quality education and support activities to the caregivers of children and youth in out-of-home care so that these providers may meet the educational, emotional, behavioral and developmental needs of children and youth. FKCE provides free classes, workshops and conferences in Tulare and Kings Counties in Central California. If you have questions, or would like to pre-register for classes, please contact Linda Paredez, Director, Foster & Kinship Care Education Program, at (559) 737-4842 or lindap@cos.edu. Classes available this quarter are as follows:

Effects of Meth on Children	Thursdays, March 4 & 11 6 to 9 pm	Kings County HSA Room 141 A/B, Hanford
Reactive Attachment Disorder	Mondays, March 8, 15 & 22 6 to 9 pm	Kings County HSA Room 141 A/B, Hanford
Healthy Boundaries	Tuesdays, March 16 & 23 6 to 9 pm	COS Tule 556, Visalia
First Aid & Safety/CPR	Saturday, March 20 9 am to 5 pm	COS Tule 501, Visalia
Don't Give Me That Attitude - Part 2	Thursday, March 25 6 to 8 pm	Foster Parent Association Meeting Tulare County Adoptions, Visalia
Dealing with Bullies	Thursday, April 8 6 to 9 pm	Kings County HSA Room 141 A/B, Hanford
Personality Inventory & Parenting Styles	Mondays, April 12 & 19 6 to 9 pm	Kings County HSA Room 141 A/B, Hanford
Learning Disabilities / IEPs	Tuesdays, April 13, 20 & 27 6 to 9 pm	COS Tule 556, Visalia
Practical Tools for Foster Parents	Thursday, April 22 6 to 8 pm	Foster Parent Association Meeting Tulare County Adoptions, Visalia
Substance Abuse (in Spanish)	Monday, April 26 6 to 9 pm	Kings County HSA Room 141 A/B, Hanford
Memory Books (foster youth 14+ welcome!)	Thursday, April 29 6 to 10 pm	COS Tule 500, Visalia
ADHD	Mondays, May 3, 10 & 17 6 to 9 pm	Kings County HSA Room 141 A/B, Hanford
Building Moral Intelligence	Tuesdays, May 4 & 11 6 to 9 pm	COS Tule 556, Visalia
Building Self-Esteem (In Spanish)	Monday, May 24 6 to 9 pm	Kings County HSA Room 141 A/B, Hanford
Surviving the Rough Seas of Fostering	Tuesday, May 25 6 to 9 pm	COS Tule 556, Visalia
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome	Thursday, May 27 6 to 8 pm	Foster Parent Association Meeting Tulare County Adoptions, Visalia
10 Days to a Less Distracted Child	Tuesdays, June 1 & 8 6 to 9 pm	Kings County HSA Room 141 A/B, Hanford
Child Abuse Forensics	Wednesday, June 2 6 to 9 pm	COS Tule 501, Visalia
Dealing with Differences	Monday, June 7 6 to 9 pm	COS Room Pending, Visalia

Adoptions Corner

Post Adoption Service Program REACH

For those foster families who have adopted or plan to adopt, the REACH program is available to you. Adoption is a life-long process and as such, the needs of children and families do not end when an adoption is finalized. Tulare County Adoptions is pleased to announce that they have partnered with

Aspiranet Adoption Program to provide a new contracted post adoption services program called REACH Tulare County. REACH stands for Resources, Education, Advocacy, Crisis Intervention and Hope. This program has been developed to provide and enrich support to our adoptive families once their adoption has been completed.

Our goal is to strengthen and empower adoptive families, to respond to information inquiries, and to provide information about and access to resources for adoptive families.

The services are provided in a variety of ways including Information and Referral Services, Monthly Parent Retreat/Educational Groups, Post Adoption Crisis Counseling & Case

Management, and Monthly Newsletter. Please contact Marji Peterson at (559) 741-7358, visit their office at: 2436 E. Valley Oaks Drive, Visalia, CA 93292, or access their website at <http://www.reachtularecounty.org/> for further information.

Nurses Corner

DEI babies and Reflux

By Barbara Gross, RN

Anyone who has taken care of DEI babies has experienced the joys of dealing with reflux, so some of this information may be redundant. I wanted to cover a couple of newer areas, and hope it isn't all old hat.

1. CVRC is now recommending Dr. Brown's bottles for babies with

2. Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD). These are available at Walmart/Target and several other stores. They look strange, but do help with the spitting up and gas troubles.
2. Gentle-Ease is a formula that has the proteins partially broken down, so it is easier to digest. WIC **does** cover this, so it may be worth a trial for a

GERD baby before thinking about medications.

3. Many doctors will recommend adding a small amount of rice cereal to formula, hoping thicker liquid in the stomach will be less likely to come back up on your shoulder.

Reglan is the Medi-Cal preferred drug to start for a baby with GERD. It can be a very effective medica-

tion, but in a few babies it may cause hypertonic muscles and irritability. Recently there have been cases of Reglan use in adults causing Parkinson's like symptoms or a movement disorder called tardive dyskinesia, so it isn't just babies. If Reglan is causing these problems for your baby, you should notice within the first day or so.

Please feel free to call any of the CWS nurses if your baby is having trouble with GERD, and you haven't heard from a nurse yet. We are all happy to help you!



SAVE THE DATE – Foster Parent Appreciation Dinner

The Foster Parent Appreciation Dinner is tentatively scheduled for Saturday evening on May 22, 2010 from 5:00pm – 8:00pm. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this wonderful event to celebrate YOU, our dedicated Tulare County foster parents. More information to follow!

Clinician's Corner

Behavior Charting With 3 to 5 year olds

By Alison M. Acton, LMFT

Most young children love stickers and routine rewards, so behavior charting is a simple and effective technique to help children behave. Parenting 3 to 5 year old children can be trying on a good day and exhausting on a bad day. This is a very tough age group. At this stage of development children are normally beginning to assert their independence, test limits, and challenge authority. Many children recovering from child abuse respond well to structure and limits and a simple behavior chart can be a useful tool for parents.

The following guidelines are recommended in creating a simple behavior chart for a

child:

1. Identify 5 good behaviors with your child that you would like to have happen on a daily basis for one week. Give the child something positive to do, for example 'use a quiet voice inside' instead of 'do not scream'.
2. If possible have your child be involved in choosing some of the behaviors that need to be worked on. Acknowledge what they say, redirect them if it is not appropriate to the task.
3. Write the behaviors down on the chart and have a spot to check off each behavior for each day of the week (see sample chart included).
4. At the end of each day of the week go over the chart with your child and have them put a sticker in the box for the behavior if they achieved it. It is a good idea to ask your child for their input on whether or not the behavior was met. Do not expect your child to get all of the stickers each day. For behaviors they did not accomplish, stay positive and use encouraging words such as 'Okay we need to work on this more tomorrow'.
5. Use small stickers that fit in the chart boxes and are specific to what the your child enjoys, i.e. princess stickers, Spiderman stickers, animal stickers, sports stickers, etc.
6. Praise your child for accomplishing behaviors on the chart each day and put the behavior chart in a spot where your child can readily see it.
7. At the end of the week create a new chart, revise the 5 behaviors to what will be worked on the following week, some may stay the same, some may be removed to make room for new good behaviors.



Foster Parent Night Out

Friday, March 19, 2010 from 5:00pm – 8:00pm

Boingo's Bounce and Party House - 7131 W. Pershing Ave., Visalia, CA

CWS social workers and staff will provide supervision for your foster children and children as you enjoy a few hours off. The facility is equipped with bounce houses, a large slide, a climbing wall, a special area for toddlers and other fun equipment. Pizza and drinks will be provided. For infants, please bring a diaper bag and formula. For children with a special diet, please bring food that will meet their needs. This event is open to children 0-17 and there is no cost to the foster parents. We can accommodate up to 50 children, but you must reserve your spot to ensure we plan for enough food and staff supervision. Please contact Mary Morton at 730-2552 x207 to reserve your spot by **Monday, 3/15/10**.

County Foster Parent / Social Worker Collaboration Lunch

Thursday, March 11, 2010 from 12:00pm-1:30pm

Visalia – Hyde/Adoptions Building – 3500 W. Mineral King, Suite B, Visalia

Please join CWS social workers in each district office for lunch and a time of collaboration. Team Leaders Natalie Bolin and Heidi Pearson, will present the "Family Forever" DVD and facilitate discussion on family-focused foster care and the role of foster parents and social workers. If you would like to attend, you must RSVP with Mary Morton at 730-2552 x207 to reserve your spot by **Monday, 3/8/10**. Four additional dates and locations are planned in April and May.



Child Welfare Services
Foster Family Homes / Licensing
3346 W. Mineral King Ave.
Visalia, CA 93291
(559)730-2552
1-800-750-2022 toll-free

Child Abuse Prevention Month – April 2010

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time to raise awareness about child abuse and neglect and encourage individuals and communities to support children and families. In 1989, the Blue Ribbon Campaign to Prevent Child Abuse had its early beginnings as a Virginia grandmother's tribute to her grandson who died as a result of abuse. She tied a blue ribbon to the antenna of her car as a way to remember him and to alert her community to the tragedy of child abuse. The Blue Ribbon Campaign has since expanded across the country, and many wear blue ribbons each April in memory of those who have died as a result of child abuse. We encourage to you wear a blue ribbon in month of April and become involved in community events throughout the month. Blue ribbons and additional materials are available for foster parents to pick up at the Foster Care Licensing Office.



To kick off Child Abuse Prevention Month, there will be "March on Main" in downtown Visalia on **Saturday, March 27, 2010 from 2:00 – 4:00pm**. Please join us for this event for the WHOLE family.