

Foster Parent Quarterly

Happy Summer everyone. DCFS has issued a new policy as of June 9, 2017 titled “Normalcy Parenting and the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard”, Policy Guide 2017.07. You can find a summary of the policy on page 5. Your Licensing Worker will explain more at your monitoring visit. Please contact your Licensing Worker for a copy or find it on the D-net.



Foster Parent of the Quarter:



Meet our latest foster parents of the quarter, Pat and Cal Duffield. They have been nominated by a staff member outside of foster care program for the dedication, hard work, love and commitment, and unconditional love of the children they have either fostered, adopted, or taken guardianship of AND their biological families as well. They have given unconditional support to biological families for almost 20 years. They were licensed on January 1, 1998. This couple likes to fly under the radar so to speak in the work they do. They have made countless financial donations to the Youth Service Bureau over the years. They have taken every child into their home without reservation about the child’s needs. They have just done the work. They don’t look at fostering as work.

They began their journey with their daughter, Rachel, who is now a Pharmacist. They’ve adopted three children and taken guardianship of two. They are currently fostering another young man. I remember long ago, this family taking in a sibling group of five. The children returned home to their parents. Pat and Cal remained a support to this family. I recall Pat buying five pairs of tennis shoes for these kids after they were already home. They have always remained in touch, and have guardianship of one of the five.

This family has always been a very gracious host to staff, other foster families, children, and anyone who is in their lives.

“Like” the agency wide Facebook page or visit our agency website at www.ysbiv.org.

- If you would like to join our Foster Parent Facebook page please contact Kelley Lumpkin for an invite. She can be reached at kelleyl@ysbiv.org

They have never wanted thanks or a pat on the back for their work, but it has never gone unnoticed. In January of next year, they will celebrate 20 years of fostering! We have been blessed with the family!

The Psychological Consequences of Separating Siblings in Foster Care.

by [Waln Brown, Ph.D.](#)

JUNE 3, 2013

The psychological stigma associated with being labeled an “orphan,” “foster child,” “ward of the court” or “at-risk youth” can play havoc with one’s self-esteem. The terms used to describe our lowly social status say that we are less than other kids: less fortunate, less worthy, less good, less capable, less important, less lovable ... less almost everything.

Many of us are so distressed by what happened at home or in the system that we develop behavioral disorders, emotional problems or other mental health issues that compromise our ability to overcome the past and adjust to the future. Still others of us feel ashamed of our youth and spend a lifetime hiding from the past – or struggling to forget it.

At best, the experience of being separated from family and placed in the care of strangers leaves a bloody scab on the psyche that may never quite heal.

Take, for example, the psychological consequences associated with placing siblings in separate settings. On page 95 of *Growing Up in the Care of Strangers*, alumna Dr. Debraha Watson writes:

“Keeping siblings together must be a priority. It is paramount that foster children retain some sense of familial identity. It is difficult enough for us to deal with removal from our parents or other adult family members, but by also separating us from our brothers and sisters, we now are stripped of all sense of family – cut adrift, alone and unconnected to anything or anyone.”



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Indeed, those alumni who lost touch with brothers and sisters in foster care know this fact intuitively. Being left all alone, bereft of parents ... and now siblings ... is often too much emotional pain to bear. That is why foster kids deprived of sibling connections are prone to spurn relationships, act out and endure mental health issues in the care of strangers. Furthermore, their relationships with siblings will likely suffer long after leaving foster care.

On page 115 of her revealing 2011 memoir, *If Not for Dreams: memoir of a foster child*, Dr. Debraha Watson describes her lost connection with her younger sister and brother:

”Graduation day finally arrived. For the first time in our lives Lois, Sandy and I were together. It was both a happy and uncomfortable time. Sandy had never met Lois, and I had not seen Sandy in years. At fourteen, he stood on the edge of manhood. I remembered him as a whiny little boy that I always had to take care of. Our conversation was awkward. It was as if we were all strangers who sensed a connection and were trying to reach out to each other. Unfortunately, time and separation were the barriers. We were no longer what we remembered of each other.”

We certainly realize factors such as the number of siblings, their ages and special needs complicate, and sometimes preclude, placing brothers and sisters under the same roof. However, we also realize siblings that do not live in the same home should be encouraged to maintain their relationship through phone calls, texts, e-mails, cards, letters and especially regular visits.

In a personal communication with us, Dr. Watson encapsulated the essence of why every effort should be made to preserve sibling relationships this way:

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Sustained contact between siblings helps foster kids to maintain the emotional stability and family ties that will benefit them during placement and long after they exit the child welfare system. Often we older siblings experience feelings of guilt and loss. I still deal with survivor's guilt as I have lived beyond my brother. I survive believing that one day we will see each other again and claim our lives anew.”

If you enjoyed this article from “[The Chronicle of Social Change](#)”, by Waln Brown from June 3, 2013 you can find other article on specifics topics.

Workshops

Aurora/Glyn Ellyn:

402 Standards Aug.
23rd at 5:30p-7:00p

Sept. 12th 5:30p-6:30 p
Implementation Plan
feedback meeting

Ottawa:

402 Standards July
26th 5:30p- 7:00p

Sept. 12th 5:30p-6:30 p
Implementation Plan
feedback meeting

Rockford:

402 Standards Sept.
20th 5:30 p-7:00p

Informational Meeting

July 20th, 5:00 pm—
7:30 p

Sept. 12th 5:30p-6:30 p
Implementation Plan
feedback meeting

October: Refresh con-
ference in Naperville

[https://
www.eventbrite.com/e/
refresh-chicago-
conference-2017-tickets-
34121788187](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/refresh-chicago-conference-2017-tickets-34121788187)

Recruiting:

If you know of some-
one who might want to
be a foster parent, call
Kelley at 630-820-
6303 ext 114.

Summertime safety for a fun summer

- 1) Standing water (like in a bucket or baby pool) should be emptied to prevent mosquito infestations
- 2) Look for pools and beaches with life guards – wear life vests while on boats
- 3) Know the SPF level needed for each child to prevent sunburns. Remember to seek medical care for 2nd degree burns and greater.
- 4) Hot water temperatures need to be 115 degrees. A small child can get a 2nd degree burn when water is at 120 de-grees. Again seek medical care for serious burns
- 5) CPR training can be found online at <http://www.cprandfirstaid.net> (don't click certification as you will then need to pay)
- 6) If you have a special needs child and/or water hazard on or near your property, certified CPR training is more af-fordable if your fire department will allow you to join their paramedics, EMTs and firefighters when they renew their certifications - anywhere from free to \$25 depending on the fire department's budget as opposed to \$50 to \$120 elsewhere

Things to remember:

Foster parents need to schedule the annual Well Child Medical exams for their foster children, **a sports physical appointment or other appointments do not count!** They can have the form filled out for the sports physical or other required form at the same time but it needs to be the **full well child exam**. Tell your provider to bill it as a **full well child exam**. DCFS is focusing heavily on this and want all children to be in compliance-

They are also wanting all children to have the **flu vaccine by September 30th**, doctors will not begin administering this until August 1, 2017. If you have any questions, please direct them to your Case Worker. Thank You!

Normalcy of Parenting/New DCFS Policy

DCFS has issued a new policy as of June 9, 2017 titled “Normalcy Parenting and the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard”, Policy Guide 2017.07.

Normalcy parenting is being defined as: “empowering a caregiver to approve and not approve a child’s or youth’s participation in appropriate extracurricular activities based on the caregiver’s own assessment”. The desire is to allow children and youth in care the opportunity for normal growth and development.

Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard is defined as “the standard characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain health, safety and best interests of a child. This is combined with taking into account the individual child’s cognitive, emotional, physical and behavioral development which may or may not be at the same level of other children of the same chronological age or developmental level of maturity. So assessment by the caregiver for appropriateness for that child and/or coaching by the caregiver so the child can succeed in that activity.

The policy refers to an Appendix A. The appendix is a chart with who (DCFS Guardian or caregiver) gives consent for various routine things needed for the children and youth. Listed for the caregiver is consenting for: athletic participation; carry a cell phone; dating; driver’s license/learner’s permit; overnight/sleepovers (for less than 48 hours); routine school activities (enrollment, change of school, field trips, photos/yearbooks, report cards, conferences, other school events); Special education programming (if taken educational advocacy class); social media (please monitor that child/youth is not being labeled/stigmatized with “the foster child”, etc as there is a policy about keeping their privacy and them safe from that); in state travel; out of state travel with you the caregiver that is less than 48 hours (does ask that the caseworker be called to know where you and the child are, i.e., “hey, we’re going shopping at the mall in Merriville IN”).

The policy states that this is not an exhaustive list and that other things may be allowed to be decided on by you the caregiver through the normalcy of parenting policy.



On September 12, 2017, at 5:30pm– 6:30 pm, Youth Service Bureau will be having an Open house in Ottawa, Aurora and Rockford offices for feedback on our Implementation plan for the year. If you would like to be on the Implementation Committee please let your licensing worker know. You may participate by phone.