

FOCUS ON CHILDREN

Foster Care/Adoption Newsletter

January 2014

HALLOWEEN PARTY 2013



Halloween is always a fun time. Last year was no different as many of you came with little ones dressed as superheroes, princesses, ninjas, ghosts and goblins! It was a fun night filled with pizza, crafts, candy and the ever popular piñatas! Looking forward to Halloween 2014!

CHRISTMAS PARTY 2013

Although Halloween is a good time, nothing beats the excitement of a room full of children eagerly waiting for Santa Claus to arrive. This year, the kids welcomed Santa and Mrs. Claus with a chorus of “Santa! Santa! Santa!” as the jolly one arrived. The Christmas party is always a success filled with good food, entertainment (this year we all danced to music provided by a DJ) and a visit from Old Saint Nick himself. The Christmas party is a favorite event and a special moment for our children!



WITH 2013 BEHIND US, LET'S TALK ABOUT 2014...

FOSTER/ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION (FAPA)

The next FAPA meeting is being held on FEBRUARY 25, 2014 at 6:00 PM. The meeting will take place at Victory Lane Assembly of God 7550 Bellflower Road in Mentor. This is a good chance to get involved with planning events for foster children and finding support with others who understand what you are experiencing. We look forward to seeing you there. Looks like a pot luck, so bring your best dish!



CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH



April is Child Abuse Awareness Month and Lake County employees will be at Veteran Park (Painesville Square) on April 9, 2014 at 8:00 A.M. to plant pinwheels that represent the number of abuse referrals received that year. We invite any foster parent who can come to help us with this task. There will also be a ceremony later that day at 12:00 PM at Veteran Park, where the Lake County Commissioners will be on hand to discuss Child Abuse Awareness Month.

You're a vital part of the child welfare team who keeps children safe when they cannot remain in their own homes. We hope to see you there!

MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

When a child is placed into your home, you receive a medical authorization letter whereby this agency gives consent for you to get routine medical care for the children in your home. In some cases, some of you have received bills in your name for the children requesting payment. This form is being updated to read Lake County DJFS will guarantee the payment for the medical services but until that time please inform your pediatricians and other medical personnel of this in hopes that you will stop getting medical bills in your name for foster children.



If you do receive any bills, please continue to send them back Lake County DJFS and we will take of them for you.

E-TRACK: ONGOING TRAINING CERTIFICATES



Over the past year and a half, we as an agency and you as foster parents, have been familiarizing ourselves with the E-Track training systems. I know that E-Track is difficult at times but overall it seems that you have been able to learn and navigate the system to find and enroll yourselves into ongoing training. If you are struggling with this system, please contact your Substitute Care social worker and they will help you with this.

As a gentle reminder, it is very important that you complete your surveys at the end of each training session so that you can get your training certificate for the class. It is equally important that you forward a copy of that training certificate to your substitute care social worker so that the training can be accounted for on your behalf. This is especially important when you attend training at other counties. Without this certificate, we are unable to verify that you went to the training and cannot give you training credit.

AGENCY NEWS



We have welcomed some new staff members to Lake County since the last newsletter: Lauren, Sarah, Amanda, Brandy, Joe and Muneera! Lauren, Amanda and Joe are working in the Ongoing Unit while Sarah, Brandy and Muneera are working in the Intake Department. Welcome to all of you!!

Lake County also has an intern, Alison. She has been learning child welfare work and is beginning to help out with some ongoing cases. Welcome Alison!

Sadly, Megan M. has left her position as an Ongoing Social Worker. We miss her and wish her well in the future!

And, as many of you know, Substitute Care has gone through some changes and many of you have already met Lindsay and Shara. They have been in the unit since October. WELCOME!!

Ongoing Social Worker Megan A. had a baby in December 2013 and is on maternity leave. Congratulations and hurry back, we miss you when you are gone!

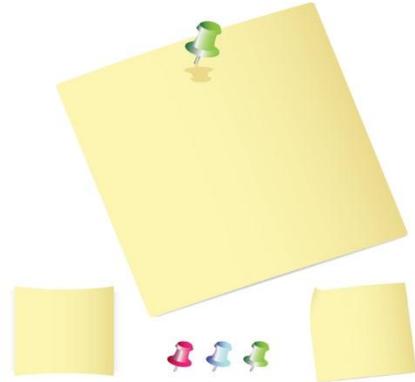
Kelly has joined the Alternative Response (AR) Unit. AR works with families to help them with ongoing issues for a little bit longer than a traditional intake case. Congratulations Kelly, we know you'll do a great job!

SPRING 2014 ONGOING FOSTER CARE TRAINING
OPPORTUNITIES IN LAKE COUNTY

HELPING CHILDREN WITH SELF-ESTEEM (923-40)

April 16, 2014 (WEDNESDAY)

Sister Madeleine Rybicki will discuss self-esteem and identify how the caregivers can nurture the self-esteem of children in their home. Various exercises will be used to empower participants to acquire the tools and skills needed.



INDEPENDENT LIVING ISSUES FOR CAREGIVERS (941-28)

May 12, 2014 (MONDAY)

Bert Nero will talk about why foster caregiver involvement is critical when helping adolescents transition into independence. This training will enhance skills the foster caregiver already possesses in engaging adolescents, diffusing issues and developing strategies of support.

**** IF YOU ARE LICENSED TO CARE FOR CHILDREN 16 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER THIS IS A TRAINING REQUIREMENT ****

MAXIMIZING HONESTY AND HONEST BEHAVIORS IN FOSTER CHILDREN (925-130)

June 19, 2014 (THURSDAY)

Brian Lowery will discuss resources that foster caregivers can use to help increase honesty and honest behaviors. This training will help caregivers shape honest behaviors and advance moral reasoning and problem-solving skills in children.

****All of these trainings take place between 6:00 and 9:00 PM****