California State Foster Parent Association, Inc.

Representing all California Resource Families

"To Touch A Life Forever"

2ND QUARTER 2017 NEWSLETTER

MAY 15, 2017

2nd Quarter Board Meeting

Joyce Hammerich, CSFPA

The California State Foster Parent Association quarterly meeting was held in Sacramento April 21st and 22nd. The training portion of the meeting consisted of presentations/ Q&As with Pete Cervinka, DSS, Chief Deputy Director, Sara Rogers, Chief, Continuum of Care Reform Branch and Kim Wrigley, Manager of RFA Implementation Unit, CCR Branch. There are many changes happening this year (CCR and RFA) and revisions are constantly being made, so hearing from the representatives working on the various new laws/ requirements for foster parents is helpful to try to understand how the changes will affect our jobs as foster parents (resource families).

An important issue brought up by Mr. Cervinka is obtaining insurance for foster parents. Many of us have experienced unpleasant events that involve the children we are caring for that can end up costing us in damages. Mr. Cervinka has committed to bringing this issue to the attention of his co workers in an attempt to determine what can be done to assist foster families.

There was discussion regarding funds each county receives for recruitment and retention of resource families . Another discussion was held regarding the availability of crisis mental health services.

The new CSFPA Legislature Chair, Jennifer Rexroad, shared what is going on in Sacramento related to being a resource family. She talked about moving forward on a bill to provide emergency childcare vouchers for resource families. She also mentioned there are a lot of opportunities to get involved with laws being presented related to providing foster care.

We discussed what would be beneficial services the CSFPA could provide for resource families. Some recommendations included a foster parent hotline to assist with questions regarding the new RFA process and CCR directives in addition to assisting those in the adoption process. Another suggestion was assisting caregivers with expenses above and beyond typical care such as orthodontics or special needs assistance. These, in addition to scholarships, legal advocacy, providing each chapter with insurance and hosting an annual Training Conference are benefits of CSFPA membership.

Campership scholarship applications were submitted and approved. Six children will receive scholarships to attend camp.

The board would like to encourage you to attend these quarterly meetings to not only find out what is going on in the foster care realm and to socialize with others doing what you are doing but also to get involved in assisting with making positive changes. The next quarterly board meeting and training will be held July 21st and 22nd in Sacramento. Please contact me at ham_mom@yahoo.com for more information.

Did You Know?

- There are campership scholarships awarded annually to foster/bio/adopted children of CSFPA members.
- There is a scholarship available to high school seniors or first year college students; bio/foster/adoptive children of CSFPA members.
- CSFPA meetings are held quarterly in Sacramento and are open to everyone!! (Next meeting July 21st).
- There is help available for orthodontic needs of youth; **check out smileschangelives.org** There is an on-line application.
- There is a website to assist you if you've already reported child abuse or neglect and you don't feel appropriate action is being taken; legal tools are available at **ProtectCAchildren.org.**
- There is a free legal advice hotline for anyone concerned or has questions about a child in foster care in California—Advokids 877.ADV4KID (877.238.4543) - legal forms and assistance on the website www.advokids.org.

Membership and Insurance

Mary Haghenbeck, Membership/Insurance Chair

Thank you to the chapters who have turned in their paperwork for 2017. We now have 24 ratified chapters and over 600 members. Please remember, each chapter must submit quarterly financial reports for us to remain in non profit compliance with the IRS. If your chapter has not submitted the first quarter reports, please do so as soon as possible. If your chapter needs assistance setting up your bookkeeping or preparing the reports, Shelly Best (Budget and Finance Committee Chair—shellybest@hotmail.com) or Bob Currey (Treasurer—bobcurrey@comcast.net) would be happy to consult with you at your convenience.

I have taken on the role of Insurance Chair this year, so, if you have any questions regarding the insurance coverage offered by the CSFPA, please contact me at (510) 223-2022 or mhaghenbeck@comcast.net. I'm here for you!

Support the CSFPA by shopping at AmazonSmile

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. To choose CSFPA as your charity, go to https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7334272—or search the available charities using the number in the web address.

Here's What's Happening Around the State....

Valley Region—Fresno

Shirley Bobbitt, Chapter #5 President

Exciting things are happening in Fresno County and in our local Foster Parent Association! Last September, we had our First Town Hall Meeting. It had a good turn out, approx. 150 people were in attendance. It was extremely informative. Plenty of information was given regarding the changes the county and we, as care providers, were going to experience with the upcoming licensing and rate changes. We were also asked to write down questions, concerns and any ideas we may have. Since the meeting, the department has been addressing our questions and concerns. It is refreshing to know that our comments have been given priority consideration.

Big News, the department, has assisted our Association in creating a website and is helping us maintain it at this time. Check us out, our website is at www.FresnoResourceFamilies.org

We truly appreciate all the hard work and tireless efforts of John Dufresne Program Manager, Foster Parent Resources & Licensing and his Team!

Fresno County also now is on Face book, you can find us at Fresno County Resource Families.

Our awesome changes don't stop here, we have even Bigger News! Our county is the first in California to be doing what's called the Mocking Bird Model. This consists of a Hub Home with 5 or 6 satellite homes. The Hub home will provide respite, support and organize group activities for the satellite homes. The Hub home and the satellite homes will function like a small community. It has been an exciting and informative year. We are proud to be partners with Fresno County. We have many changes to look forward to and participate in.

Valley Region

Marylud Baldwin, VP Valley Region

All the chapters in the Valley region are active and working hard to support their members by providing advocacy and direct help to their members. Our region is responsible for putting on the CSFPA statewide conference, October 12-14 of this year. We are busy arranging for speakers and working out the details to make this a great training conference. Spread the word and book your rooms at the Great Wolf Lodge in Garden Grove. You can call or reserve on-line. See details in the Save the Date announcement in this newsletter. If you have any questions or concerns, please call me at 805 471-1660.

Central Region—Alameda County

Gwendolyn McWilliams, Chapter #1 President

MAY is Foster Care Month!

Our county is celebrating by giving all Alameda County Resource Parents and caregivers a Dinner May 19th at the Hilton in Pleasanton.

We held our annual Breaking Down Barriers Conference on May 6th at Chabot College where there were a variety of workshops available for resource families to obtain training hours.

Central Region

Carrie Myles, Central Region VP

We had a very supportive turn out for the 2nd quarterly training and meeting. There was an open forum with suggestions from the attendees. One item of discussion was insurance liability for foster parents when a child causes damage to your home. We need someone from all chapters in attendance at these quarterly meetings. Chief Deputy Director, Pete Cervinka was our main guest speaker.

I am pleased to announce that Chapter 35 and Chapter 13 were awarded campership scholarships sponsored by the CSFPA.

Four members from Chapter 13 will be attending the National Foster Parent Association Training Conference in July.

I plan and look forward to visiting chapters in my region soon. If anyone needs information or materials, please contact me via phone or email.

Legislative & Policy Update

Jenn Rexroad, Legislation Chair

I have been busy keeping up with the various work groups and committees related to the new RFA/CCR legislation as well as new pending legislation relating to foster care. Below is current legislative information. Register for free membership to www.cacaregivers.org for more updates, and an opportunity to engage in statewide legislation and workgroups.

AB – 507 (Rubio) Requires a county welfare agency to work with a resource family to develop a training plan that is based on a youth's goals and needs and requires the training plan to be updated in the event that a placement is disrupted.
AB – 754 (Acosta) Creates the California Foster Youth Enrichment Grant Program to provide grants to foster youth to participate in activities that enhance their skills, abilities, self-esteem, or overall well-being.
AB – 1006 (Maienschein) Seeks to improve long term outcomes for children who are in APPLA or long-term foster care by requiring special efforts to find permanent families for these youth by (1) encouraging specialized permanency services to be provided for children at risk of long-term foster care and mandating that certain services be provided for some youth; and (2) requiring that potential adoptive families and guardians are provided with information to support their hopefully long-term relationship with the foster child. The author states that these highly effective specialized permanency practices will help provide permanency, love and support for children most likely to age-out of foster care without the safety net of a family.
AB – 1164 (Thurmond) Establishes the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children to facilitate access to child care for foster youth and the families with whom they are placed through the provision of child care vouchers and/or payments, navigator services, and trauma-informed training and coaching for child care providers.
SB - 233 – (Beall) Expands access for foster caregivers to view pupil attendance, discipline, grades, online communication, and other school documents, as specified. It clarifies that only a foster parent who has been appointed by the court as the child's educational rights holder is permitted to exercise all parental rights relating to pupil records and decision making, and prohibits a foster parent who has not been appointed as the child's educational rights holder from exercising those rights, as specified. It additionally requires the caregiver to notify the educational rights holder, as specified, of any educational needs requiring consent or participation of the educational rights holder. It makes other changes to clarify the rights and duties of the foster caregiver and educational rights holder to review school records.
ACL 17 – 16 RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL PROGRAM – CONVERSION OF EXISTING APPROVED AND LICENSED FOSTER CAREGIVERS TO RESOURCE FAMILIES
Notification to Families
The W&IC section 16519.5 and Health and Safety Code section 1517.1 requires that all currently licensed foster family homes and approved relative/NREFM caregivers must be approved as RFs no later than December 31, 2019, in order to care or continue to care for a child or NMD.
Additionally, no later than July 1, 2017, each county shall provide the following information to its county-licensed foster family homes and approved relatives and NREFMs:
· A detailed description of the RFA Program; · Notification that in order to care for, or continue to care for, a child or NMD placed by a public or private placement agency, court order, or voluntarily placed by a parent or guardian, RFA is required by December 31, 2019; and
· Notification that a foster family home license or approval of a relative/NREFM shall be forfeited by operation of law on December 31, 2019, except as follows:
-If the caregiver has not had any children or NMDs placed in the home during the calendar year of 2017, their license or approval shall be forfeited by operation of law on January 1, 2018;
-If the conversion to a RF has begun but has not been completed by December 31, 2019, the license or approval will remain in effect until the date of RF approval or on the date of completion of due process for a denied application; and
-A license or approval shall be forfeited upon approval as a RF.
ACIN 1 – 07 – 17 SUBJECT: DISSEMINATION AND USE OF THE "FOSTER YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH BILL OF RIGHTS AND QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT MEDICATIONS" BROCHURE
The purpose of this ACIN is to provide counties with information regarding a youth friendly brochure that is available for dissemination to foster youth and their caregivers about mental health treatment and the use of psychotropic medications. The brochure is listed as PUB 488 on the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) forms list and is a combination of two previously released resource documents, the "Foster Youth Mental Health Bill of Rights" and "Questions to Ask About Medications."

CSFPA OFFICER NOMINATION FORM

For the term of: January 2017 through December 2019

For the office of:

_____**Secretary**

_____**Treasurer**

_____**North Coastal Region Vice President**

Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, and Sonoma

_____**Valley Region Vice President**

Fresno, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Madera, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Tulare, Ventura

Individual Being Nominated:

Name: _____Phone Number: _____

Address: _____ City:_____ Zip: _____

Chapter Name: _____Chapter Number: _____

Region:_____

Number of State CSFPA meetings attended in the last two years? _____

Local county licensing or certifying agency who will verify that the nominee is in good standing and open for placements:

Name: _____Phone Number: _____

Statement of Acceptance: Should I be elected to the position for which I was nominated, I accept the position of _____

_____Date: _____

(Signature of Nominee)

Please attach a resume and an article of introduction on a separate sheet of paper. Note: not all members of the Association in your region will know you. Therefore, it is advisable that you provide additional information about yourself, as you feel appropriate, including your goals for the position and/or the Association. You may want to include such information as:

Number of years as a foster parent and number of children currently in placement
Past/Current positions held in local and state foster parent association(s)
Education (high school, college, special foster parent related training, and awards received)
Past/Current positions held on other associations (social, civil, volunteer, etc.)
Social Achievements
Other information that you think may be important for the voters to know.

Individual making nomination:

Name:_____Phone Number:_____

Address: _____City: _____ Zip: _____

Chapter Name: _____Chapter Number: _____

Region:_____

Signature: _____Date: _____

Nominations must be received by July 1, 2017 by mail

OR

in person by July 20, 2017 at the board meeting

Please make a separate copy for each person you wish to nominate

Please mail nominations to

Nomination Chair Terry Haines

P O Box 1072

Yreka CA 96097

Revised 04/019/2017

Nominations Committee

Terry Haines, Committee Chair

It's that time again—elections. This year, the following positions are up for election: Secretary, Treasurer, North Coastal Region Vice President and Valley Region Vice President. There is a Nomination Form included in this newsletter. If you'd like to nominate someone, please complete the form with the required information and make sure to get it turned in to me no later than the next quarterly meeting (July 20th). If mailing, they should be **received** by July 1st. If you have any questions, you can contact me at tl_haines@sbcglobal.net.

New Engaging Children's Book Aimed For Foster Youth

Keri Vellis, an experienced Foster Parent in Sonoma County, has written an engaging children's book to comfort foster kids who are displaced from their homes. Keri's goal is to help children who are transitioning to another home feel good about themselves, and understand that there can be loving people around them as well as happiness in their lives.

"I always enjoy reading to my kids, but was surprised to find that local bookstores and libraries did not have age appropriate and engaging books focusing on the experience of being displaced and moving to an unfamiliar environment." This is when Keri decided to write *Sometimes*. When she read it to her little ones, they immediately related to the story and encouraged her to make it an actual book.

Keri knew she needed to find an illustrator who could convey the emotions and tone of her story with lively and colorful art. She was introduced to illustrator Jin Lehr, who happened to be a one-time foster child herself. Having aged out of the system, Jin understood the emotions of what Keri had written because she had gone through it as a child. The main character starts the journey timidly clutching a teddy bear in new surroundings. While experiencing positive family activities the child finds happiness and releases the fear, as well as the bear.

As the project took hold, Keri had a website developed and created a "Donate to a Foster Child" option for purchase. "I would love to have this book available in each Blue Bag that goes with the foster child to their new home, so I wanted to offer an option to purchase a book as a donation. I will personally get it to our local agencies that fulfill these bags," Keri stated. Keri is self-publishing the first title. Books will be released in June and are available for pre-order now at her website, www.kerivellis.com.

Keri and her husband are passionate and involved parents of six children: three biological and three adopted through the foster care system. She has three more books in the works all geared to identify with and comfort children who have experienced difficult situations.

For more information and media inquiries please contact Sandy Hernandez at invision-sandy@gmail.com; 707-332-1218

May is National Foster Care Month

May is National Foster Care Month, a month set aside to acknowledge foster parents, family members, volunteers, mentors, policymakers, child welfare professionals, and other members of the community who help children and youth in foster care find permanent homes and connections. During National Foster Care Month, we renew our commitment to ensuring a bright future for the more than 400,000 children and youth in foster care, and we celebrate all those who make a meaningful difference in their lives.

To read President Donald Trump's proclamation of May 2017 being officially declared National Foster Care Month, go to this link: https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/04/28/donald-j-trump-proclaims-may-2017-national-foster-care-month.

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California State Foster Parent Association
c/o Newsletter Editor
272 Devon Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903

We're on the web
Csfpaonline.org

Our main focus is to address issues of foster parents, guardianship and adoptive parents, as well as kinship placements which now includes over 55% of all children in out-of-home placements in California.

3rd Quarter Training and Meeting
41st Annual CSFPA Training Conference

The CSFPA 3rd Quarterly Meeting will be held July 21st and 22nd at the Hilton Hotel in Sacramento. All members are encouraged and welcome to attend. There is also a training offered on the 21st. Please contact Joyce Hammerich, CSFPA Secretary for more information at ham_mom@yahoo.com.

All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

This year's annual CSFPA Training and Conference will be held October 12-14, 2017 at the Great Wolf Lodge in Garden Grove, CA. Mark your calendars now—you won't want to miss it!

If you prefer to receive your newsletter via email, please send an email to Carol Ihlenburg, Newsletter Chair at CSFPANewsletter@gmail.com.
If you have an item you'd like considered for inclusion in the newsletter, please submit to the same email.