

# Family Connections

Volume 10, Issue 3 ~ Summer 2011

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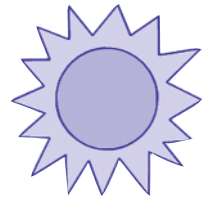
## Missourians Open Their Hearts to Joplin Families

The May tornado in Joplin, Missouri was devastating for the people who lived there—especially those who lost loved ones. Heartbreaking stories from those who lost everything in the disaster were soon followed by uplifting accounts of people overcoming great odds, picking themselves and their families up, and moving forward. There was an unprecedented outpouring of love and support from people and organizations all over the world - especially in Missouri. Help came from everywhere, including the Missouri Department of Social Services, who partnered with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to make food assistance available to Joplin families impacted by the storms. They also helped families at local shelters and social services offices. **(Story continued on page 10...)**

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## Staying Safe on Hot Summer Days

Overheating is dangerous, even deadly, and by the time an overheated person experiences symptoms he may be in trouble. Kids are at special risk because they can get so caught up in playing they don't take time to drink, seek shade, or slow down when the temperature climbs.



To keep yourself and your family safe, follow these precautions:

1. For active kids, **make a game** of staying hydrated by setting a timer for every 20 minutes and teaching the kids, "When the timer dings, drop everything and drink."
2. Drink even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid caffeine or alcohol. Eat small, frequent meals.
3. **Wear loose-fitting, lightweight, lightcolored clothing.** Dark colors absorb the sun's rays and raise body temperature.
4. **Slow down, stay indoors,** and avoid strenuous exercise during the hottest part of the day. Postpone outdoor games and activities. Take frequent breaks if you must work outdoors. **Use the buddy system** when working in the heat.
5. **Check on family, friends, and neighbors** who do not have air conditioning, or who are more likely to be affected by the heat.

**(Story continued on page 9...)**

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## 2011 Missouri Adoption Heart Gallery

The Heart Gallery features professional photographs of Missouri foster children awaiting adoption. The 173 photographs capture the hearts and souls of the featured children. The 2011 Missouri Heart Gallery will be presented in an electronic format as well as appearances throughout the state. The media format will include a video/DVD as well as the use of the online Missouri Heart Gallery. View the 2011 Missouri Heart Gallery at [www.moheartgallery.org](http://www.moheartgallery.org). The Children's Division (CD) of the Department of Social Services partners with the Adoption Exchange of Missouri to host the gallery.

Check out the Missouri Heart Gallery Facebook fan page to keep up with events happening around the state:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Missouri-Heart-Gallery/166056128270>

# News You Can Use: Foster Care & Adoption Advisory Boards

## Board Representatives

### Northwest Region

- Rep 1: VACANT
- Rep 2: VACANT

### Northeast Region

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- **Yvonne Peoples** 314.604.0173  
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- **Barbara Bocklage** 314.608.5580  
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- **Phyllis Hackman** 636.527.3255  
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## Foster Care Associations

### Missouri Foster Care & Adoption Association

- **Ron Byington** 314.772.0277  
ronbyington@gmail.com

### Midwest Foster Care & Adoption Association

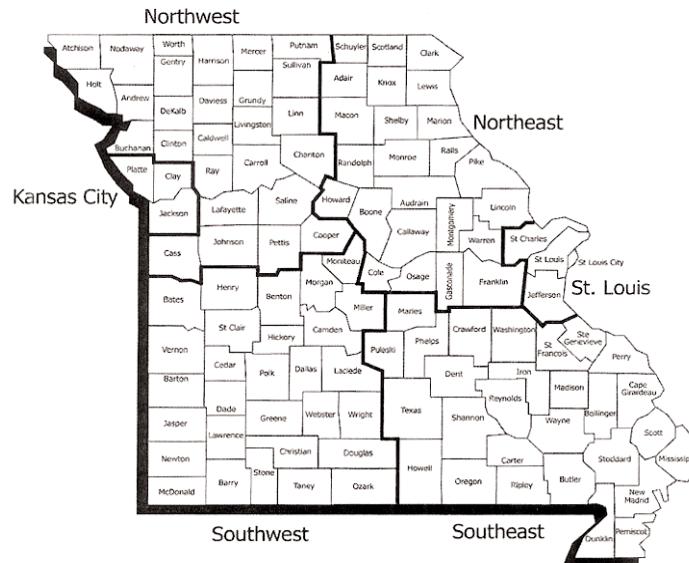
- **Lori Ross** 816.686.0463  
ross600@aol.com

### Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition

- **Nickie Steinhoff** 800.FOSTER.3  
nickiesteinhoff@foster-adopt.org

## Local and State Boards Working for You

The Children's Division supports foster parents through the ongoing work of the State Foster Care and Adoption Advisory Board. Each area/region of the state holds local meetings quarterly and works to resolve issues of their area foster/adoptive parents. The state board consists of two parent representatives from each Regional board and three foster parent association representatives.



## Get Involved

### Local Advisory Board:

Each local board operates within its own established bylaws. To find out more information about the work being done in your area, contact your parent representative or foster parent association listed in the column to the left.

### State Advisory Board:

Each area board is responsible for sending two parent representatives to the state meetings held quarterly in Jefferson City. Parent representatives are asked to make a two-year service commitment to the state board. If you are interested in representing your area, contact your parent representative, listed in the column to the left.

## Goals of the Advisory Board

**Goal 1:** To use available internal and external data to identify systemic needs, and develop plans to address those needs, using resources available within the agencies involved and the community as a whole.

**Goal 2:** To improve partnership between the Children's Division, other relevant state agencies, and foster parents through ongoing communication, input and support.

**Goal 3:** To work together with the Children's Division to clarify policy and practices, provide feedback and recommendations regarding present and proposed policies related to child welfare.

**Goal 4:** Improve the Children's Division's communication with, and resource families' knowledge of, Children's Division policy.

**Goal 5:** To provide an opportunity for resource families, Children's Division staff, and the community to network and share resources.

## Children's Division

### Regional Boards in Action Southwest Region

I am writing on behalf of Joplin, Missouri disaster relief. Not only do I serve on the Area Advisory Board for this region, but I also serve on the Missouri State Foster Care Adoption Advisory Board. Can you please help us get the word out regarding the needs of families there?

If individuals, families, or businesses are looking for a way to help Joplin tornado victims, especially foster/adoptive families, please call MFCAA or me to help. We are coordinating assistance with Children's Division and Family Services to continue to help them help their families. I can be reached at 417.766.5124 or [marvandmelinda@yahoo.com](mailto:marvandmelinda@yahoo.com)

#### Current needs for Joplin foster/adoptive families are:

- \*Gift cards (gas stations, Target, Wal-Mart, fast food (Sonic, McDonalds, etc.). Some have no access to their kitchens, or are overwhelmed by other details.
- \*Rubbermaid totes with lids
- \*New carseats
- \*New Pack and Play type cribs
- \*New luggage
- \*New backpacks

In closing, thank you for all you do every day to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children and youth. Please keep this area in your thoughts in the coming days and months.

Thank you!  
Melinda Nicholson

*Melinda has been on the ground in Joplin since the storm. She is working with Jean Rodriguez, the Children's Division Circuit Manager in the Joplin office, to provide support to the affected families and children*

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### 2011 Linking Hearts Adoption Event in Rolla, MO: An Event for Prospective Adoptive Families and Youth

The Children's Division is pleased to announce the annual Linking Hearts Community Adoption Event, sponsored by the 25th Circuit Adoption Unit, the Community Partnership, and the InterFraternity Council Pan-Hellenic Councils of the Missouri University of Science and Technology. This event offers an opportunity for families and children to meet and interact with each other in a fun and relaxed environment.

Games, activities, and a BBQ will be available for prospective adoptive families, Children's Division Workers, and children with the goal of adoption. The Linking Hearts event has been successful over the years in creating forever families for waiting children. In addition, the event increases awareness of the need for adoptive homes for children from foster care.

This year's event will be held on Friday, September 16, 2011 at Lion's Club Park in Rolla, Missouri. Sign-in for children will begin at 1 p.m. Activities will include games, crafts, swimming, volleyball, and basketball. Prospective adoptive parents are invited to join the festivities at 5 p.m. and stay through the closing ceremony at 7 p.m. There will be evening activities available, as well as a BBQ for all prospective adoptive parents, children, and case workers in attendance.

Counties are encouraged to participate in the event by registering children by September 2, 2011. Access the Child Registration Form at: <http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2011/cd11-054crg.pdf>.



## Capitol Ideas: Your Policy Update

### Child Care for Impacted Joplin Families(CD11-50)

In an effort to respond to those in need as a result of the May 22 tornado in Joplin, Child Care Assistance policies have been modified. Families affected by the Joplin tornado, either because they lived in the affected areas or they were employed with a business located in the affected areas, may file an application for Child Care Assistance under current policy defined as Extraordinary Circumstances. The remainder of this memorandum will explain the process for:

- Identifying affected areas;
- Filing applications;
- Extraordinary Circumstances definitions;
- Eligibility criteria;
- Verification;
- Tracking eligible households;
- Processing Protective Services Child Care requests;
- Referring families to resource and referral agencies; and
- Addressing child care provider issues.

#### Identifying Affected Areas:

Family Support Division (FSD) memorandum IM-29, dated May 31, 2011, introduced the Disaster Food Assistance program to FSD staff. The memorandum identified four specific Joplin zip codes as areas in which property was destroyed or heavily damaged. For the purpose of Child Care applications, and in the application of Extraordinary Circumstances policy, the same zip codes will be used – 64801, 64802, 64803 and 64804.

#### Filing Child Care Applications

Applications for Child Care Assistance may be filed at any Family Support Division office in the state or at any Children's Division office for Protective Services Child Care. Families who may have relocated to other parts of the state may apply using the Extraordinary Circumstances criteria, and the verification processes identified in this memorandum may be used, if the family can successfully demonstrate they originally lived in one of the affected areas or they were employed with a business located in one of the affected areas in Joplin at the time of

the tornado. Child care applications may also be available at Multi-Agency Resource Centers (MARC's) around the City of Joplin.

Enter the applicant's previous address into CD1P to verify if the zip code is from an affected area. Record information indicating the applicant is from one of the affected areas in Joplin in the comment section of the EU Member Role Screen (FM3Z). The comment should be clear that the family was displaced or affected by the Joplin tornado.

Although the timeframe for processing applications is not changed, staff is encouraged to make applications for child care assistance a priority. It is suggested that staff use the same three day timeframe referenced in IM-29, to the extent possible.

Child Care Assistance based on the Extraordinary Circumstances need for care policy may only be certified through July 31, 2011. Extensions then will be evaluated on an individual basis. <http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2011/cd11-050.pdf>

### Revision of the Travel Expense Log, CD-106 (CD11-49)

The Travel Expense Log, CD-106, has been revised to facilitate accurate recording of the reimbursable miles allowed which a resource provider may receive. Resource Providers and eligible older youth may be reimbursed for round trips when transporting foster youth for medical care, counseling, visits with parent(s), court, FST and PPR meetings. Allowable child-specific transportation which is intended to support the case plan and has been approved by the Family Support Team and/or case manager and supervisor is only reimbursed after the first 15 miles. The FST document that indicates that the mileage supports the case plan is attached to the Payment Request, PR, and the CD-106 and sent to Children's Division Payment Unit, CDPU. Child specific transportation that enables the child to remain enrolled in the school he/she was enrolled in at the time of placement in foster care is only reimbursed after the first 10 miles.

Other restrictions for mileage reimbursement include:

- Regional Director or Designee approval for trips exceeding 75 miles;
- Level B resource providers are not reimbursed for mileage unless it is over a 200 mile round trip and with Regional Director approval only

The CD-106 now includes a field to enter the required deduction and the current rate for mileage so that accurate calculations may be made. Only one child is to be listed on the form. Mileage Reimbursement Payment Requests will not be accepted at the CDPU without all the required documentation attached; CD-106, PR, and documentation that the mileage supports the case plan, if applicable.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2011/cd11-049.pdf>

### The Missouri Child Care Resource and Referral Network (MOCCRRN) DBA Child Care Aware® Of Missouri, Centralized Referral (CD11-46)

The Missouri Child Care Resource and Referral Network (MOCCRRN) doing business as (dba) Child Care Aware of Missouri has centralized child care referral operations via one toll-free number for the entire state of Missouri. That number is 1.866.892.3228 and should be provided to any person seeking child care services within the state of Missouri.

Families seeking child care options may also use an on-line function to conduct a selfguided child care search by accessing the Child Care Aware of Missouri website at <http://mo.childcareaware.org/>. This search can be modified by program type, location, child's age, the days and times care is needed, schedule preference, and other considerations. Individuals seeking child care will be asked to provide an e-mail address for tracking purposes. E-mail addresses will remain confidential.

When an individual seeking child care contacts Child Care Aware of Missouri, they will be referred to licensed and to screened unregulated (registered) and license-exempt child care and early learning programs in their immediate



## Capitol Ideas: Your Policy Update

area that have: self-certified to meeting certain health and safety standards; passed a TB tine test; have a fire, tornado, and/or severe weather plan in place; child abuse and neglect screenings on everyone living in the home 18 or older or working in the facility; and two letters of reference. What's Inside: Missouri Child Care Resource and Referral Network dba Child Care Aware of Missouri centralized referral If an unregulated (registered) or license-exempt child care and early learning program indicates that they would like to receive child care referrals, please refer them to Child Care Aware® of Missouri at the number or website listed above. You may also provide them a copy of or refer them to the Missouri Child Care Provider Reference Guide at [http://dss.mo.gov/cd/childcare/pdf/ccp\\_r eference\\_sheet.pdf](http://dss.mo.gov/cd/childcare/pdf/ccp_r eference_sheet.pdf). This guide answers many frequently asked questions about becoming a registered and/or licensed child care provider, suggests resources available to the provider for quality enhancement of their child care and early learning program, and discusses mandated reporting requirements as they relate to child abuse and neglect.

Child Care Aware® of Missouri still maintains member offices in regional areas around the state that provide services for child care and early learning programs in need of professional development assistance, inclusion assistance for a special needs child, or accreditation services, and CD and FSD staff should continue to refer those programs directly to the appropriate regional Resource and Referral (R&R) office. A map of counties served by each regional office can be accessed at <http://mo.childcareaware.org/AboutUs/RegionalAgencies.aspx>.  
<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2011/cd11-046.pdf>

### **Revision of Sexual Abuse Definition in the Glossary Section (CD11-42)**

Sexual abuse is defined as the use, persuasion, inducement, enticement or coercion of any child under the age of

18, to engage in, or having a child assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct by those responsible for the child's care, custody and control. Sexual exploitation is also included in the definition of sexual abuse when the act results in the sexual use of a child under the age of 18 by those responsible for his/her care, custody and control for the purpose of the individual's personal satisfaction and/or gain. Sexual exploitation of a minor includes, but is not necessarily limited to, pornography and prostitution. For additional information on sexual abuse see Section 7 Chapter 29 of the Child Welfare Manual.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2011/cd11-042.pdf>

### **Legal Aspects DVD Series (CD11-38)**

The Legal Aspects DVD Series may be used for training anytime at the local level as well as a resource for staff. We are continually assessing training and strive for ways to efficiently and effectively enhance your learning experiences. A Legal Aspects DVD Series Library Notebook containing the following DVDs is being sent to the county offices:

- Legal Aspects: CA/N Camp #1 (CD000197)
- The Legal Aspects of Concurrent Planning (CD000196)
- The Legal Aspects of Relative Placements (CD000195)
- Breaking Through the Bars: Incarcerated Parents (CD000199)

In addition, a podcast on "The Legal Aspects of Guardianship for Older Youth" (CD000198) is available for viewing over the Intranet.

This series of DVD trainings, podcasts and webinars, usually 1 to 1.5 hours in length, will cover the "legal aspects" of various child welfare issues from investigation through removal from the home to finding permanency for the child. The training topics are listed, along with links to the training materials, on the Children's Division (CD) Intranet website under Practice and Professional

Development/Legal Aspects DVD Series. The trainings are produced and distributed by the Legal Aspects Training Coordinator. If the training is available in a webinar or podcast format for viewing over the Internet, the URL is provided on CD's Intranet website under Practice and Professional Development/Legal Aspects DVD Series. As new or revised trainings are produced, the DVDs will be distributed to the county offices to be added to the Legal Aspects DVD Series Library Notebook or the URL will be added to the Intranet website.

Staff may only receive credit once for the training, but may use the DVD, podcast or webinar as a resource whenever needed.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2011/cd11-038.pdf>

### **Child Care Rate Enhancements (CD11-35)**

Section 1215.040.000 Child Care Rate Enhancements has been created as a new section of the Child Care Policy Manual. to provide an overview of the rate enhancements available to child care providers.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2011/cd11-035.pdf>

### **Resource and Adoptive Parent Child Care Frequently Asked Questions (CD11-34)**

The purpose of this memorandum is to introduce the "Resource and Adoptive Parent Frequently Asked Questions" guide. This document was developed to address common questions received from resource and adoptive parents regarding protective services child care. This document has been posted on the DSS internet at

<http://www.dss.mo.gov/cd/psdc.htm>.

Staff is encouraged to share the link and/or the document with current resource/adoptive parents as well as new or prospective families.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2011/cd11-034.pdf>

**Keep Current...** This is a brief summary of the current policies impacting the Children's Division. A more complete explanation with additional updates is available at: [www.dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2011](http://www.dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2011).

## Expert Exchange: Professionals Answer Your Questions

### Parents Ask:

*Our child wants to track down his biological family. Is this wise? Should we be concerned? What should we do?*

Your son's interest in his birth family offers you an opportunity to help him explore and perhaps resolve some feelings involving his adoption. His interest may have more complex motivation than simple curiosity, including developmental milestones of self-identity and independence. As you work through the following suggestions, keep in mind that your child's age and previous experiences when he was fostered or adopted will influence his personal reactions and, consequently, your parental responses.

### Remain calm so you can help your child anticipate and sort through all the

issues before deciding whether to proceed. Don't misinterpret your child's curiosity to mean he's unhappy in your family. The fact that he's verbalizing his curiosity to you indicates he feels secure enough with you to do so. That's very positive!

**Understand that your child's curiosity is both natural and unsettling.** Wanting to understand more about a birth family is part of the self-discovery process that intensifies during the teenage years. The search for identity revolves around questions such as: Who am I? Where do I come from? Who loves me? What are my values? Who do I want to become? All teens must wrestle with these questions in order to achieve self-identity. In doing so, it is only natural that adopted children consider their connection to their birth family as well as their adoptive family. For some, this curiosity can churn up troubling emotions about abandonment and unrealistic fantasies about reconciliation. Your son needs

your calm, matter-of fact help sorting them out. Even if he concludes that tracking down his biological family is not advisable or possible, working through these issues is an important part of the process of self-discovery. It is not a threat to you.

### Keep in mind your child and every child in foster or adoptive care has experienced rejection and may harbor unrealistic fantasies.

Even if it was done for valid reasons - such as a birth mother acknowledging she was unable to adequately care for her child - it was still a rejection and can cause a child to see himself as a burden or not important or good enough to love. For children with

Use your child's curiosity to strengthen both family bonds and his self-identity.

unresolved abandonment issues, it's a short step from thoughts like these to hopeful wondering whether their birthparents would love them if they

knew them now.

From the beginning, you have been trying to help your child feel safe, secure and loved. Because of his abandonment by his birth parents - however necessary and well-intended - your challenge to forge strong family bonds is greater. His curiosity provides another opportunity to do just that, provided you respond appropriately.

**Assure your child that curiosity about his birth family is to be expected.** Tell him you would be curious if you were in the same situation. Your objectives are twofold: to let him know that his curiosity is normal and, secondly, to head off any guilt he might feel about wanting to learn about birth parents or siblings. Make sure he knows you understand his interest and don't interpret it as being disloyal to you or dissatisfaction with his adoptive family. Your assurance will calm him and strengthen your family bond. Ask also

if there are concerns about being adopted that he might still need to work through. Let him know this is normal and you will help him.

**Help your child explore his motivation by asking open-ended questions and paraphrasing.** Open-ended questions cannot be answered by yes or no. For example, what has prompted his interest in learning more about his birth family? When did he begin thinking about it? Be sure to paraphrase both his ideas and emotions. This will assure him you are listening and help him clarify his own feelings. For some adopted children, wondering about a birth family may simply be a passing curiosity. For others, it may be much more intense, perhaps driven by unrealistic fantasies of what reconnecting might be like. Helping your child explore his motives will help him clarify them for himself.

**Follow up by asking what your child hopes to achieve.** Is he simply curious? Does he want to establish relations with a birth parent or biological siblings? How does he think this will change his life? Listen carefully by paraphrasing and asking thoughtful questions that will help him first identify and then evaluate his hopes. He might have very unrealistic expectations of connecting with new siblings or discovering a regretful and loving parent who can heal any lingering feelings of rejection. Ask, for example: How would he feel if what he hopes for proves true? How would he feel if it were not? How would he cope with that? What are his concerns and fears about searching for his birth family? How does he think reconnecting will change his life? How realistic is that?

**Help your child face possible negative outcomes of a search.** Adopted teens often have some very unrealistic expectations about reconnecting with a birth family. Asking questions is a better way to help him recognize that his

## Expert Exchange: Professionals Answer Your Questions

expectations are probably unrealistic than you pointing this out to him.

For example, you might ask what are some reasons that birth parents put children up for adoption or that the state intervenes to assume custody. What does this indicate about the plight of the parents and other siblings? What does this suggest about their prospects of having substantially improved their lives? If his parents were once desperately poor, too young to responsibly parent, abusive, substance abusers or incarcerated, what are the chances they have their lives in order now and can offer anyone love and support? What does he think the chances are that a birth sibling raised by a parent in such circumstances has had opportunities to thrive academically and emotionally? What might this birth sibling's chances of success in life be? How might a birth sibling feel about your child having enjoyed such substantially better opportunities? With jealousy? Bitterness? Anger? Depressed feelings about his own prospects? How would he deal with a birth sibling who resented him for having opportunities he did not enjoy? Ask if he feels prepared to deal with issues like these now, or would he be better prepared when he is older? What's the worst that could happen?

**Prepare yourself to deal with transition issues** that might underlie your child's interest in learning more about birth parents. In addition to dealing with identity issues, older adopted teens - like all teens - face the developmental challenge of transitioning to independence. This means beginning to establish a life increasingly based on decisions, risks and efforts of their own. Although you will remain an important anchor in his life, your child needs to gradually

separate from your direct influence in order to take charge of his own life. Don't confuse this normal developmental process with a rejection of you and your family. It's not. It's something all healthy teens must do, including adopted teens. Your teen needs to know you understand this, are not threatened by it, and will support his efforts to become more independent in healthy, age-appropriate ways.

**Discuss with your spouse how your child dealt with previous separation milestones** such as leaving his prior caregiver, bonding with you, beginning school, slights by friends, overnights at friends' or relatives' homes and sleep-a-way camp. This will give you some insight into how he might handle this transition. How did he feel when he first learned he was adopted? How did it change things for him? How did you bond with him? How strong are his bonds with his adoptive siblings? What would strengthen them? Understanding this will prepare you to help him deal with a transition that stirs up similar, but perhaps stronger, feelings.

**Assure your child that his adoption is forever** because transitioning to independence can stir up unconscious fears of abandonment in adoptive children. First, explain that it is natural for all children, whether birth children or adopted, to become more independent as they reach their late teens and beyond. Let him know you recognize this, expect it, and are prepared to help him make this transition. Secondly, point out how natural it is to have feelings like these return at a time of transition to greater independence. Third, assure him that being more independent simply means a change in the role he plays in the family, not a transition out of the family. He will remain your son, loved and welcome in your family, even when married and a parent of

children himself. Then, address specific practical aspects of the upcoming transition.

Be explicit in pointing out that this changing role is nothing like the abandonment he experienced as a child by his birth family. Let him know that it might stir up emotions that have their roots in that previous experience. Also, let him know that you would like him to voice these feelings when they arise and are confident he can deal with them now just as he has in the past.

**Work your way through all these questions and issues** before addressing the question of whether or not to try to track down your child's birth family. This will prepare both of you for what you might face if he does try. On the other hand, it might also cause your child to conclude that he is better off not pushing ahead with this quest.

Finally, ask whether or not your child would like to move forward. This question is valid regardless of whether your child came to you through a closed or a private agency adoption which may be open to inquiry. Either way, it's important to know what he thinks after exploring his own motives and possible outcomes more closely.

Ask opened-ended questions and paraphrase both feelings and ideas.



Dennis O'Brien is a licensed clinical social worker, experienced educator, and therapist. In addition to writing educational materials used by the Washington University School of Medicine Dept. of Psychiatry and weekly columns on parenting for the *Suburban Journals*, he writes monthly columns for *St. Louis Moms and Dads*, and regular columns for CHARACTERplus, Gifted Resource Council, and Gifted Association of Missouri. O'Brien's April 6, 2010 column, "Prevent teen suicide by addressing it," won the 2010 Missouri Institute of Mental Health award for outstanding reporting on suicide.



## Resources for Parents & Kids

### Taking the Bite Out of Summer

Summer time is fun time, but it's also prime time for injuries and accidents. Let's take a look at preventing and coping with animal bites. Try to **prevent bites and stings** by teaching children these safe practices.

#### **Bee Stings:**

Most bee stings will hurt for a day or two but aren't dangerous.

#### **To prevent stings:**

- Stay calm. Scared bees attack.
- Don't swat at or run from bees; it scares them.
- Avoid perfumes and lotions with a sweet, floral scent.
- Keep food and drinks covered so they don't attract bees.
- Avoid wearing bright colors, bees are drawn to them.



**If stung**, don't squeeze to get the stinger out. If the stinger was left behind, as evidenced by blackish particles on the skin, try scraping these off with a credit card. Do not squeeze the stinger; venom still in the sac may get into your system. Wash with warm water and soap. Apply a paste made of meat tenderizer or baking soda and a few drops of water. If after a couple of days the sting site becomes hot, red, or has other signs of infection, consult a doctor. If the sting victim has trouble breathing, call 911. Allergies to bee stings can be fatal.

#### **Mosquitos and Ticks:**

Mosquito and tick bites itch and these insects can transmit diseases like West Nile Virus and Lyme disease - both potentially dangerous for small children, elderly adults, and people with poor immune systems.

#### **To prevent bites:**

- Cover up. Clothing is a good barrier for insects
- Use insect repellent when in pest-prone areas
- Do not use insect repellent on infants
- Ask a pediatrician for advice on protecting infants
- Prevent mosquitoes from laying eggs near your home by eliminating standing water in flower pots, birdbaths, etc.
- Check nightly for ticks and remove immediately; it can take a while for a tick to transmit enough bacteria to cause infection and this simple step may prevent disease. These areas are especially popular for ticks:
  - Under the arms
  - In and around the ears
  - Back of the knees
  - Between the legs
  - Around the waist
  - Inside the belly button
  - In and around hair



**If bitten:** Mosquito bites can be treated with topical anti-itch cream and Benadryl. Remove a tick by grasping it near the head or mouth and gently pulling it straight out. Don't crush or "break" the tick. Kill it in a cotton swab soaked with rubbing alcohol. Wash hands after removing it. Clean the bite with rubbing alcohol. Watch tick or mosquito bite sites for unusual rashes or signs of infection. If the victim becomes ill in the next few weeks, contact a doctor.

#### **Dog Bites:**

4.5 million Americans are bitten by dogs each year and one in five requires medical attention. Children age 5 to 9 are the most common bite victims.

#### **To prevent dog bites:**

- Do not approach an unfamiliar dog.
- Do not run from a dog or scream. Remain motionless when approached by an unfamiliar dog.
- If knocked over by a dog, roll into a ball and lie still.
- Do not play with a dog unless supervised by an adult.
- Immediately report to an adult any stray dogs or dogs displaying unusual behavior.
- Avoid direct eye contact with a dog.
- Don't disturb a dog that is sleeping, eating, or has pups.
- Don't pet a dog without allowing it to see and sniff you.



**If bitten**, immediately report the bite to an adult. Wash immediately with soap and warm water and apply pressure to stop the bleeding. Contact your doctor for further care instructions and for information on reporting requirements in your community.

#### **Snake Bites:**

While rarer than dog bites, bee stings, or insect bites, snake bites can be just as - if not more - dangerous.

#### **To prevent snake bites:**

- Encourage children not to pick up or play with snakes.
- Avoid provoking a snake; if you cross paths with a snake, leave it alone
- Wear long pants or boots when in tall grass
- Avoid snake-infected areas at dusk and nighttime
- Be careful when handling rocks, logs, and other good hiding spots for snakes
- If you encounter a snake, do not run or move; snakes generally attack moving objects



**If bitten:** Remain calm; do not run. Do not apply ice. Do not remove venom; never suck or suction the wound. Do not take medication to relieve pain. Seek medical attention immediately. If a victim has been bitten by a snake not believed to be **poisonous**, but has any of these reactions, seek **medical attention immediately:** convulsions, dizziness, bloody discharge, sweating, swelling, numbness, fever, muscle weakness, fainting.

*Article reprinted with permission from Foster Parent College Connections.*



## Resources for Parents & Kids

### Special Education: So Much to Know

Are you working with a client or youth who has been identified or you think should be evaluated by your local school district as a child with a disability as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act? This law, commonly referred to as IDEA, provides the basis for special education services in Missouri.

The major purpose of the IDEA is to provide children and youth with disabilities the supports and services they need to learn and make progress in their education. It requires that each child receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). As a support person for a child with a disability, you may participate in many meetings, working with school personnel in planning the special educational services and supports that a child needs. It is important that you understand your child's rights under IDEA. The **Parent's Guide to Special Education in Missouri** is free and may be ordered online at: <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Compliance/documents/ParentGuide.pdf>. This Parent's Guide will assist you in understanding some of the most important aspects of special education. It was written by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Special Education. It is easy to read and understand.

*Article by Leslie Lewis, Director of Educational Advocacy at the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition*

### Commonly used acronyms for education.

ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
BD	Behavior disorder
BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan
ED	Emotional disturbance
CA	Chronological age
CWC	Class within a Class
ESY or ESYP	Extended School Year programs for students with disabilities
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual Education Plan
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
ISP	Individual Service Plan
ITP	Individual Treatment Plan
LD or SLD	Specific Learning Disability
LEA	Local Education Agency
LRE	Least restrictive Environment
MAP	Missouri Assessment Program
MPACT	Missouri Parents Alliance for Cooperative Training
MR	Mentally Retarded
MSIP	Missouri School Improvement Plan
OT	Occupational Therapy
PT	Physical Therapy
RAD	Reactive Attachment Disorder

### Staying Safe on Hot Summer Days (Story continued from page one.)

6. Never leave children or pets alone in vehicles. Check on your animals frequently to ensure that they are not suffering from the heat.

*If someone does get overheated, deal with it immediately.* Muscle pains and spasms, called **Heat Cramps**, are the first sign a body is overheated and in trouble. Immediately move the person to a cool place, loosen clothing, fan him/her, give small amounts of cool water and instruct him or her to drink slowly. If he/she refuses water, vomits, or loses consciousness, **call 9-1-1**. The next level of heat illness is **Heat Exhaustion**, which typically happens during heavy exercise or work in hot weather. Signs include cool, moist, pale or flushed skin; headache; nausea; dizziness; weakness; and exhaustion. Follow the care guidelines for heat cramps above.

**Heat Stroke** is a life-threatening condition in which the body's temperature control system stops working and the body cannot cool itself. Symptoms are hot, red skin that may be dry or moist; changes in consciousness; vomiting; and high body temperature. Call 9-1-1 immediately. While you are waiting for help, apply cold compresses to the underarms, groin, and neck to quickly cool the person. If he/she is conscious, give small sips of water.

The danger of cars on hot days cannot be overlooked. **In 2010, 49 US children died from being left or trapped inside a hot car.** This year, the first car-related death by hyperthermia (overheating) occurred in March. Two simple habits can help prevent these needless deaths:

1. **Have a designated teddy bear** that goes in an infant or booster seat when it is empty. When you put a child in the infant/booster seat, put the teddy bear next to the driver. The bear will remind the driver there is a child in the back seat. Move the bear back to the infant/booster seat when you take the child out.
2. **Always lock your car.** A three-year-old boy died in June when he slipped out of the house and climbed into an unlocked car to play. He did not know how to open the door from the inside and was trapped. By the time his parents found him, it was too late to save him. Locked car doors keep out curious tots.

*Article reprinted with permission from Foster Parent College Connections.*

# Foster and Adoption Resource Center

## Eastern MO ARC

Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition  
1750 S. Brentwood Blvd., Ste. 210, Brentwood, MO 63144  
800.FOSTER.3 (314.367.8373) / [www.foster-adopt.org](http://www.foster-adopt.org)

### [RE]FRESH: A Fashion Coalition™ is open!

[RE]FRESH is a fashion adventure of new and repurposed clothing for teens and twenties! [RE]FRESH offers foster and adoptive families high-quality, low-cost clothing, and generates revenue to support the Foster & Adoption Resource Center through sales to the general public. We also offer job training and volunteer opportunities for youth in foster care through our Fostering Financial Success: [RE]FRESH Program. [RE]FRESH is open exclusively to foster/adoptive families on Thursdays to the public Friday through Sunday. All of the proceeds go toward our programs that help foster and adoptive families.



Visit [www.foster-adopt.org](http://www.foster-adopt.org) to download a flyer (PDF) with shopping details and procedures for youth in foster care and foster/adoptive/kinship families.

### 24-Hour Crisis Intervention for Pre- and Post-Guardianship/Adoptive Families in St. Louis County

The Coalition offers free, 24-Hour access to Crisis Intervention for pre- and post- guardianship/adoptive families in St. Louis County. We help families:

- 1) manage immediate crises;
- 2) improve child, parent, and sibling relationships;
- 3) increase family self-management skills; and
- 4) prevent disruption.

For immediate assistance, call Dawn Milburn, Lead Family Intervention Specialist at 314.614.2342. Crisis Intervention is made possible thanks to a generous grant from the St. Louis County Children's Service Fund.



For more information on [RE]FRESH or our programs, please visit [www.foster-adopt.org](http://www.foster-adopt.org), [www.refreshstl.org](http://www.refreshstl.org), or call 314.367.8373.

## Western MO ARC

Midwest Foster Care & Adoption Association (MFCAA)  
3210 S Lee's Summit Rd., Independence, MO 64055  
816.350.0215 / [www.mfcaa.org](http://www.mfcaa.org)

### (Story continued from page one)

More than 15 foster family homes were destroyed in the tornado that hit Joplin, Missouri. Those foster families were caring for 25 children. In addition, one adoptive parent was killed.

Lori Ross, Executive Director at Midwest Foster Care & Adoption Association described one amazing story, involving a longtime foster family in the Joplin area. This family was very involved with Joplin youth in foster care. The foster mother served as the area's foster parent co-trainer, helping to teach new foster parents the ropes. She was critically injured in the tornado along with her teenage foster daughter. They were brought to the hospital right away and she was alert enough to request that the hospital put her and the teenager together in the same room for treatment. She knew that it was important that she continue to be a strong mother to this teenager even in the midst of this horrifying event. They remained hospitalized together until she recovered enough to travel to a rehab facility in Springfield. Her husband has continued to provide care for another special-needs foster youth in their home, despite losing their home and the injuries to his wife and foster daughter.

Monetary Donations can be sent to: MFCAA, 3210 S. Lee's Summit Road, Independence, MO, 64055. You can also make a monetary donation at [www.mfcaa.org](http://www.mfcaa.org). Please note that the donation is for Joplin foster/adoptive families. View current in kind donation requests on page three, or email [lori@mfcaa.org](mailto:lori@mfcaa.org).

Most foster and adoptive parents would not call themselves heroes; but to be a foster or adoptive parent is to wear an invisible cape for life. It means being committed to a child.

**Become a member!** MFCAA Membership is free, and all services are available free of charge to members. To qualify for membership, you must have adoptive, foster, or kinship placement children in your home (or be actively awaiting placement of foster children). If you are interested in becoming a foster/adoptive parent, please call 816.350.0215. You can fill out an online membership form or download a printable version at the MFCAA website: [www.mfcaa.org/contact\\_membership.html](http://www.mfcaa.org/contact_membership.html).

## Waiting Children: Seeking Forever Families



### Meet Viyolla

Viyolla is friendly and talkative. She describes herself as nice and “very photogenic!” Viyolla really enjoys school and loves to read. When she grows up, she wants to do something for a living that will allow her to “help others.” Viyolla is very curious of her surroundings. This beautiful girl is very playful and exceptionally sweet. She loves singing and watching TV. Some of her hobbies include painting her nails and creating artwork.

For more detailed information about Viyolla, please contact Monteshia Goodloe at 816.889.2124 or [monteshia.l.goodloe@dss.mo.gov](mailto:monteshia.l.goodloe@dss.mo.gov).

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### Meet Sheldon, Mariah, and Jauan

**Sheldon (12), Mariah (6), and Jauan (11)** need a loving home that is ready to commit to them forever! They have been separated since they came into foster care and need a forever family who will be patient with them as they adjust to a new home. Sheldon is the oldest of the bunch. He tends to be shy around new people and is highly intelligent. Jauan is the middle child and is very protective of his younger sister. He's outspoken and outgoing. Mariah is the only girl of the bunch and she loves getting all of the attention. She is very energetic and easily entertained. With two older brothers, it's easy to see how she has become a bit of a tomboy.

Their team is open to exploring one home for all siblings or separate homes committed to maintaining contact. For more information on this fabulous trio, please contact Liz Johnson, Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter at 314.367.8373 or [lizjohnson@foster-adopt.org](mailto:lizjohnson@foster-adopt.org).



*Photo courtesy of Sandy Schrock.*



### Meet Loren

**Loren (11)** is a very outgoing girl with light brown hair and green eyes. One of the first things people notice about Loren is her cheerful smile and delightful laugh. She loves to draw, color, and sing (especially songs by Justin Bieber!). She also likes to play softball, swim, and visit the park during the summer. Loren also enjoys playing with her toys, especially her barbies, and eating her favorite food, peanut butter. More than anything, Loren wants to be adopted by a family who will stay with her “forever.”

Loren is legally free for adoption. For more information on this wonderful child, please call Myshena Crisel, Family Development Specialist, at 573.568.2111 or [myshena.a.crisel@dss.mo.gov](mailto:myshena.a.crisel@dss.mo.gov).

*Photo courtesy of Sears Portrait Studio.*

Family Connections  
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