

Family Connections

Volume 9, Issue 3 ~ Summer 2010

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And much more. . .

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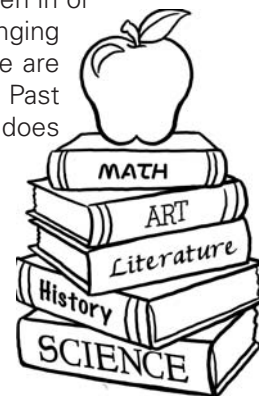
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Educational Stability Elusive for Youth in Foster Care

Quality education is vital to every child's well-being, and is especially crucial for vulnerable youth. Through positive learning experiences, children in or adopted from foster care can find a sense of security and belonging that lights a path to adult success. Yet, students in foster care are more likely to drop out, repeat a grade, and struggle in school. Past abuse and neglect play a role in these outcomes, but so does excessive mobility in care.



The Problem: Students Fall Behind

Children in care change living placements often, which usually means changing schools. At each new school, the child may lack a stable support system, may have trouble getting school records or credits transferred, and may therefore need to repeat classes or grades. With each move, students lose an average of four to six months of academic growth. It's easy to see how they can fall behind. Students in care who rarely or never change schools are far more likely to graduate from high school. In addition, children who experience school stability have a better chance of more quickly achieving permanency.

It is important to keep informed about laws and policies that promote educational success for youth in care. By learning about these rules and programs, we can all champion better outcomes for youth. A good education opens doors to a better life, and all youth deserve a fair chance to acquire the tools they need to realize a brighter tomorrow. *Article by Katherine Burdick, Esq., Zubrow Fellow at the Juvenile Law Centerom, Reprinted in Adoptalk (Spring 2010)*

(Continue to page 3 for Questions to Consider When Selecting a School.)

Adoption Heart Gallery Moves through Missouri

The Gallery has been traveling across Missouri since April, featuring professional photographs of Missouri foster children awaiting adoption. The 208 photos capture the hearts and souls of the children. Everyone is encouraged to attend — especially current and prospective foster and adoptive parents as well as community partners. The Children's Division (CD) of the Department of Social Services partners with the Adoption Exchange of Missouri to host the gallery.

Remaining dates for the 2010 Missouri Heart Adoption Gallery

For a complete and updated schedule, visit <http://www.moheartgallery.org>

September 1st - 9th

- Battlefield Mall (Springfield, MO)

September 10th - 21st

- Carthage Public Library (Carthage, MO)
- Webb City Public Library (Webb City, MO)
- Joplin Public Library (Joplin, MO)
- McDonald County Library (Pineville, MO)
- Crowder College, Farber Building (Neosho, MO)

September 24th - 30th

- West Plains Civic Center (West Plains, MO)

October 1st - 7th

- The Bread Company (Poplar Bluff, MO)
- Butler County Courthouse (Poplar Bluff, MO)

October 13th - 21st

- St. Louis Mills Mall (Hazelwood, MO)

October 22nd - 29th

- Mid Rivers Mall (St. Peters, MO)

November - TBD

- Heart Gallery Closing Ceremony
State Capitol Building (Jefferson City, MO)

News You Can Use: Foster Care & Adoption Advisory Boards

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Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition

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nickiesteinhoff@foster-adopt.org

Director of Children's Division Will Retire This Fall

Paula Neese, Director of the Children's Division, has decided to retire this fall. Her unique combination of frontline experience, institutional knowledge and leadership ability will be missed.



For decades, Paula has been a tireless leader and an advocate for Missouri's families and children. She first joined the Division in 1986 as a frontline caseworker. She worked her way up through the ranks, serving as a Program Development Specialist, Children's Services Specialist, Assistant Area Director, Northern Regional Director and ultimately, Division Director beginning in 2005. After a brief stint with a national child welfare agency, she returned to the Children's Division to finish the agency's national accreditation effort, a process completed at that time by only six other states.

Her additional accomplishments include the development and coordination of the Intensive In-Home Services Training Program, a crisis intervention service for families, and guiding the Division through the Child & Family Services Review process. Paula is currently spearheading the reorganization of the Division's leadership structure. Every one of these initiatives has made a difference in the lives of Missouri's children.

Paula will be hard to replace. While the Division regrets losing such a valuable asset, it will not deter us from our commitment to child protection and permanency. Everyone wishes her the best of luck in her future endeavors. *(Letter from Ronald J. Levy, Director of the Missouri Department of Social Services)*

2010 Meetings - Mark Your Calendar

Date / Time: Tuesday, September 14, 2010 / 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Location: Howerton Building
 615 Howerton Ct., Second Floor, Conference Room
 Jefferson City, MO 65103

All foster and adoptive parents are welcome to attend the meetings and are also encouraged to contact area representatives with issues related to foster or adoptive children and families. Please RSVP to your area representative, or to Cheryl Williams, Secretary of the Board, at williams.cd@sbcglobal.net.

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.



Educational Issues

Missouri Foster Care Education Bill of Rights

These laws require public school districts and child-placing agencies to ensure foster children don't fall through the cracks when it comes to receiving an education.

Section 168.018, RSMo, requires each school district to designate a staff member as "the educational liaison" for children in foster care. Acting in an advisory capacity, the educational liaison is required to:

1. Ensure and facilitate the proper educational placement, enrollment in school, and checkout from school of foster children;
2. Assist foster care students when transferring from one school or district to another, by ensuring proper transfer of credits, records and grades;
3. Request school records of a foster care student pursuant to section 167.022, within two (2) business days of a foster care student's placement in a school; and
4. Submit school records, within three (3) business days of receiving a request for a foster care student's records.

Section 167.019, RSMo, requires a child-placing agency, as defined in section 210.481, RSMo, to promote the educational stability of foster children. The child-placing agency must take into consideration the foster child's school attendance area when placing the child. This section further defines the right of foster children in regard to their continuing education:

1. A foster child has the right to remain enrolled in and attend his or her school of origin or to return to a previously attended school in an adjacent district.
2. The school district shall accept for credit full or partial course work satisfactorily completed by a foster care student while attending a public school, non-public school, or non-sectarian school in accordance with district policy or procedure.
3. A foster care student's school district of residence shall issue a diploma to a foster care student under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court providing the student completes the district's graduation requirements.
4. A school district shall ensure that if a foster care student is absent from school because of a change in placement made by a court or child placing agency, or because of a verified court appearance or court-ordered activity, the grades and credits of the foster care student shall be calculated as of the date the student left school, and the student's grades shall not be lowered as a consequence of the absence.
5. Subject to federal law, school districts shall permit access to foster care student records to any child-placing agency for the purpose of fulfilling educational case management responsibilities required by a juvenile officer or by law and to assist with the school transfer and placement of a student.

For more information, visit <http://www.dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2009/cd0995att.pdf>.

Missouri Law requires each school district to designate a staff member as "the educational liaison" for children in foster care.

Determining Which School Serves the Child's Best Interest — Questions to Consider When Making a School Selection

- How long is the current placement expected to last, and what is his or her permanency plan?
- How many schools has the child attended?
- How have moves affected his or her overall health, and how anxious is the child?
- How is the child doing in school and which school can best meet her needs?
- Which school does the student prefer?
- How strong are the child's ties to his or her current school?
- Would the transfer happen at a logical time — e.g., after testing, between sports seasons, or when school ends?
- How would changing schools affect the student's school credits, extra-curricular activities, and ability to advance a grade or graduate on time?
- How would the commute to the school of origin affect the child?
- What school do any siblings attend?
- Are there any safety concerns?

By Katherine Burdick, Esq., Zubrow Fellow at the Juvenile Law Centerom • Reprinted in *Adoptalk* (Spring 2010)

Capitol Ideas: Your Policy Update

STARS Core Competencies Language Revision (CD10-27)

As a result of input from the State Foster Care Advisory Board, the language used for describing the core competencies as listed in the in-service section of policy and located on the CD-100 has been modified to provide enhanced description of those skills that are to be present if that competency is achieved and/or progressing.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2010/cd10-027.pdf>

Reasons Not to File Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) and Compelling Reasons (CD10-37)

According to Section 211.447, RSMo, if a child has been in foster care for at least fifteen of the most recent twenty-two months a TPR petition should be filed unless:

- the child is being cared for by a relative;
- compelling reasons exist; or
- the Children's Division has not provided reasonable efforts.

Compelling reason(s) are a subset of reasons not to file for TPR.

Determinations regarding compelling reasons should be made on a case-by-case basis. Federal regulations have set out a few examples of compelling reasons:

- there are no legal grounds to file the TPR;
- adoption is not the appropriate permanency goal for the child;
- the child is an unaccompanied refugee minor; or
- there are international legal obligations or compelling foreign policy reasons that would preclude terminating parental rights.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2010/cd10-037.pdf>

Initial and Ongoing Screenings for Children in Alternative Care (CD10-41)

The initial health examination should occur within 24 hours of a child coming into care. This examination does not need to be a full Healthy Children and Youth (HCY) assessment. The purpose of the initial health examination is to identify the need for immediate medical or mental health care and assess for infectious and communicable diseases. When possible, this examination should be completed by the child's current primary care physician, as he or she knows the child and has knowledge of the child's medical history. If a provider is not readily accessible, the initial health examination must occur within 72 hours of the initial placement.

To meet Council on Accreditation Standards and statutory requirements, the following must be completed no later than 30 days after the child is placed in Children's Division (CD) custody:

- the full HCY assessment, including eye, hearing, and dental exams;
- alcohol and drug screenings;
- developmental screening; and
- mental health screening.

Ongoing Screenings

All children from birth to age 10 in CD custody are to receive physical, developmental, and mental health screening every six (6) months following the initial health examination, as long as they remain in care. The HCY form, created by the MO HealthNet Division, includes screening questions for those areas. It is the Children's Service Worker's responsibility to ensure that children in CD custody receive the appropriate screening, assessment, and follow-up services as necessary. Resource providers who accompany the child to the appointment should be given a copy of the appropriate HCY form by the worker to be completed by the

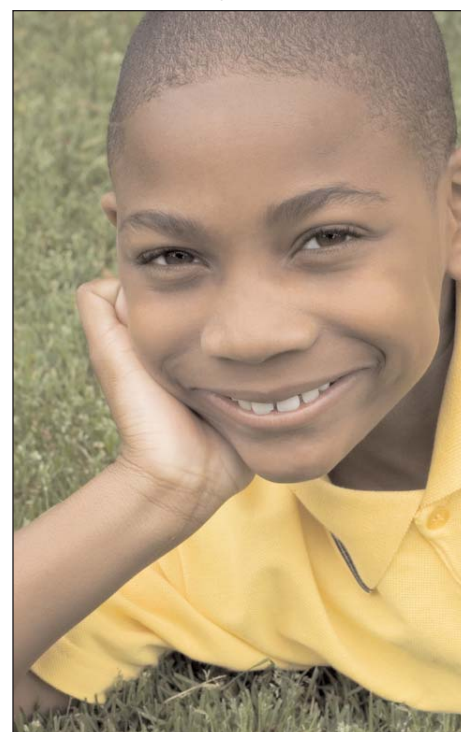
physician. After the HCY exam is completed, the Children's Service Worker should obtain the medical results and record(s) and share the information with the Family Support Team.

The Children's Service Worker must ensure that all initial medical information is given to the resource provider within 72 hours of the child coming into care if possible, but no later than 30 days following placement.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2010/cd10-041.pdf>

Protocol for RSMo 210.305 (HB 154) and HR 6893 Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (CD10-55)

RSMo 210.305, House Bill 154 gives grandparents first consideration for placement before other relative options and requires an immediate diligent search to locate, contact, and place with a grandparent once a decision has been made to take protective custody of a child during the first (3) three hours after custody. If the child is not placed with



Capitol Ideas: Your Policy Update

grandparents, staff must document in writing the facts about why the placement is not in the best interest of the child.

Staff are required to conduct a Family Support Team (FST) meeting prior to change in placement unless change occurs during an emergency. Staff should conduct necessary background screenings after the grandparents are contacted and are interested in being resource providers for the child.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2010/cd10-055.pdf>

Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act

Requires the Children's Division to identify and notify all adult grandparents and other adult relatives within 30 days when a child is removed from the custody of his or her parent(s) unless there is domestic violence. If relatives cannot be identified or found initially, the search for relatives should continue while the child is in care. When a suitable grandparent or relative has been located, consideration should be given to placement with the grandparent or relative as part of the primary or concurrent permanency plan for the child. Prior to placement, the appropriate background screening must be completed.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2010/cd10-027.pdf>

Planned Permanency Agreement, CD-129, Instructions (CD10-59)

This agreement is to be completed whenever the permanency options of Placement with a Fit and Willing Relative or Another Permanent Planned Living Arrangement are selected. The purpose of the agreement is to identify an appropriate planned permanent living arrangement in which the youth wishes to continue living by specifying an adult who will play a permanent role in the youth's life. Establishing permanency is a federal

requirement and a guiding principle of the Children's Division.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2010/cd10-059.pdf>

References for Foster/Adopt Applicants (CD10-61)

Policy has been revised for licensing of relative and kinship homes to require three personal references. Previous policy required five references. A new directive pertaining to any adult children no longer living in the home has been added to policy. If names of adult children no longer living in the home were submitted by the applicant in Section II on the CS-42, the worker may mail each one a Personal Reference Questionnaire, CS-101f, to provide an opportunity for them to comment.

Failure to receive completed references does not prevent licensure. However, before making the final recommendation, there should be discussion with the applicant regarding lack of submitted references.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2010/cd10-037.pdf>

Revisions to Resource Family Exit Interview, CD-112 (CD10-63)

One of the responsibilities of staff is to conduct exit interviews with all resource providers. This should be completed for those resource providers who choose to close their license as well as those homes that are revoked. The purpose of the exit interview is to determine if the agency may have been able to do something different or better to maintain this placement resource. This interview should be documented in the record.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2010/cd10-063.pdf>

Child Abuse/Neglect Administrative Review and Appeal Process (CD10-69)

The alleged perpetrator appeal process section has been updated to include an overview and new subsections that describe the two avenues by which an alleged perpetrator can receive an independent review of the Division's preliminary finding of child abuse or neglect by a Preponderance of Evidence (POE).

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2010/cd10-069.pdf>

Food Stamp Assistance for Youth in Out-of-Home Care (CD10-82)

Children in foster care may be eligible for Food Stamp benefits, depending on their living arrangement. For youth residing in a foster home, the foster parent may choose to include the youth in their eligibility unit; however, foster care payments received for the youth from the Children's Division or a Foster Care Case Management Agency are included as income to the eligibility unit, which may cause ineligibility. For youth residing in group home settings, if their room and board includes meals, they are not eligible for Food Stamp assistance.

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2010/cd10-082.pdf>

Keep Current...

The above is a brief summary of the current policies impacting the Children's Division. A more complete explanation is available at: www.dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/2010.

Foster and Adopted Children and Loss

Ambiguous Loss in Child Welfare

Ambiguous loss — a feeling of grief or distress combined with confusion about the lost person or relationship—is a normal aspect of foster care and adoption.

For children placed in foster care, this type of loss tends to happen over and over again, and is incredibly hard to process. To help children better manage these repeated traumas, foster and adoptive parents, as well as child welfare workers, must be sensitive to the role ambiguous loss plays in these children's behavior.

Foster children lose contact with their birth parents, physical surroundings, and often siblings, and enter an extremely tenuous situation.

A child who is placed with a family of a different race loses something else — the anonymity of being in a regular family. This vanishes when the “conspicuous family” goes on any public outing.

School can be another source of unsettling grief. When a child moves among several schools, both social and educational continuity is broken. The chances to develop lasting friendships and keep up academically is lost. If a child has a learning disability, or simply missed a lot of school earlier in life, this makes it even harder and the child may feel cut off from peers, or even looked down upon.

Even children adopted as babies, without conscious memory of their birth parents, may experience symptoms of ambiguous loss as they age.

The symptoms of ambiguous loss often mirror those of post-traumatic stress disorder. Common symptoms include:

- Difficulty with changes — even minor ones
- Trouble making decisions
- Psychic paralysis or the feeling of being overwhelmed when asked to make a choice
- Problems coping with routine childhood losses (death of a pet, move to a new home, etc.)
- A sort of learned helplessness and hopelessness due to a sense that he or she has no control over life
- Depression and anxiety
- Feelings of guilt

What You Can Do

Help your child identify what's lost.

In addition to losing their birth parents, an adopted/foster child may have lost extended family members, friends, a home and neighborhood, contact with people who share their heritage or looks, a family surname, native language and more.

Give voice to the ambiguity.

Acknowledge your child if he or she expresses feelings of loss. Show that you understand.

Redefine the parameters of what constitutes a family.

Acting as if the membership in an adoptive family is etched in stone may in the end be more stressful than explicitly recognizing that the family has some ambiguous boundaries.

Give your child permission to grieve the loss of his or her birth family without guilt.

Suggest times and places where your child is welcome to express his or her grief, and ways in which he or she can grieve. Talking, journaling, drawing, or venting feelings are just a few options.

Create a “loss box.”

Decorate a box and put items into it that represent things the child has lost. By creating the box, youth participate in a ritual that acknowledges their loss, and construct a controlled vehicle for revisiting their losses in the future.

Include birth parents and other family members in pictorial representations of the adoptive family tree.

One option would be to depict an orchard where trees grow side by side. The birth family, former foster families, or other significant people in the child's life can be other trees in the same family orchard.

Keep your expectations reasonable.

A child's need to grieve will not be fully cured in any predetermined time frame, if ever. Let your child know that feelings related to these losses will come and go, and provide a safe person to whom they can express those feelings.

Model healthy responses to loss.

If you suffer a loss, share your feelings openly. Let your children see you mourn,

so they can learn how you express sadness and anger in an appropriate way. For boys, seeing a grown man cry can be very instructive.

Avoid unflattering comparisons between your teen and a birth parent. Stress that a large part of one's identity is a matter of personal choice, not some preordained fate.

Losses may loom especially large when children approach adolescence. Missing pieces of their history make developing a confident self-identity much more complicated. Many feel that they are destined to make the same mistakes as their birth parents.

Birthdays and holidays may trigger intense feelings of loss for foster and adopted children. Be conscious of this occurring, and add or alter family rituals to help ease these feelings. On birthdays, add an extra candle to the cake in memory of the birth family. Or make a point of saying something like, “I bet your birth mom and dad are thinking about you today.”

Recognize that, by parenting a child who has experienced staggering losses, you will realize losses in your life too.

Support from other parents who are struggling with similar issues is key. Conversations with other foster/adoptive parents may bring to light new ways to approach issues linked to ambiguous loss, or just help you feel less alone. Loss is an inevitable part of adoption; acknowledging the role of ambiguous loss in children's perceptions and actions is the first step in the long journey of healing.

(Adapted from the Winter 2009 issue of Adoptalk, which was adapted, with permission, from two articles by Jae Ran Kim)

Expert Exchange: Professionals Answer Your Questions

Parents Ask:

What should we do if our child has been sexually assaulted?

Deal with your own emotions so you can focus on what your child needs.

Parents of a child who has been assaulted can be overwhelmed by feelings of helplessness, rage, sadness and guilt. Start by talking with your spouse about what each of you feels. It's probably a combination of these emotions, some stronger at one time, others stronger at other times. Putting them into words will relieve some of the emotional pressure and help you be calmer

and more emotionally available to your child. Writing about what you feel is often helpful.

Consider talking to a counselor. Do these things for your child's sake if not for your own. Keep in mind that dealing with your emotions will need to be an ongoing process for you as well as for your child.

Keep in mind that teens are victims of sexual assault much more frequently than many adults realize.

According to the National Crime Victimization Survey, one in six American women is sexually assaulted in her lifetime; 10% of sexual assault victims are men; 44% of rape victims are under age 18; girls ages 16 to 19 are four times more likely to be sexually assaulted; and 15 to 20% of teen pregnancies occur as a result of rape. Your child may also need to know this information to realize that, horrible as it is, she is not alone in having to cope.

Don't blame the victim—or yourself.

"Teenage rape victims don't always get the support they need from parents, especially if alcohol or risk-taking behaviors were involved, and it's particularly damaging when their parents fail to understand and support them," warns Dawn Jonas, a therapist at Bridgeway Counseling Services. "Alcohol or drugs may increase the chance

of a rape, but do not cause a rape. Teens make bad choices, but that doesn't mean they are to blame or deserve to be raped. If your teen is raped, only the perpetrator is responsible."

Make sure you stress her innocence to your child. Also, don't blame yourself or your spouse. Feeling guilty about what you could have done or said won't help you or your child.

Encourage, but don't force help on your child. "Rape victims lose the choice to control their bodies when they are assaulted, so you want to empower them—let them decide," Jonas said. "Point out

reasons to go to the hospital, police, and therapy, but let it be her decision."

Ask gentle

questions and listen actively by paraphrasing when you talk to your child. Use open-ended questions, such as, "What happened? When? How did you feel? How do you feel now?" The worst things you can do are to look shocked or interrogate her. Instead of firing questions, repeat key details and emotions back to her to assure her — and confirm for yourself — that you understand her.

Reassure and validate your child's feelings. Avoid the role of "detective," trying to obtain details or obsessing over criminal justice issues. Focus on your child's needs, not your own, and never say, "I warned you." Even seemingly gentle questions that ask "why" regarding any aspect of the assault are often received as blaming. "If a victim doesn't receive your support or, worse yet, is met with criticism or blame, she will probably not come forward to get help for several years and may face a lifetime of pain," Jonas said.

Don't treat your child differently. Rape victims don't want to feel different. They're highly sensitive to everyone else's behavior, so it is important to treat them just the same as you did before the rape. This means being matter-of-fact and

maintaining your expectations about behavior, family routine, responsibility, and consequences for misbehavior. Every child needs consistency, especially after something traumatic.

Be alert for fears of abandonment or loss of self-esteem. All foster/adopted children have been abandoned, some repeatedly. This can make them distrustful of adults and fearful they may be abandoned. Victims of sexual assault often blame themselves or feel ashamed or tainted — all feelings that contribute to a fear that they will be abandoned by friends and loved ones. It's a short step from feelings like these to feeling unworthy, unwanted, or worthless. Be aware of feelings like these, acknowledge they are normal, and reassure only after you have listened to her thoughts and feelings.

Understand that boys who are raped may have some special challenges.

They often feel ashamed and are hesitant to report it. "Boys who are raped often question their masculinity and need to be reassured that the rape was no reflection of their sexuality," said Jonas. Listen, validate your son's feelings, and reassure him that it is not his fault. Let him know that one in every five males will be sexually assaulted during his lifetime, one in six by age 18.

Be patient with your child—and with yourself. Victims never forget the rape and will deal with it for a long time. Keep in mind that many foster/adopted children have suffered prior abuse, and recent events may unleash strong feelings from the past. It's never too late — or too soon — for therapy. Parents also continue to have strong feelings that don't go away overnight. Don't be surprised if you and your child continue to deal with the emotional aftermath. It's normal. For more information, call Jonas at 636.757.2300 or visit www.bridgewaycounseling.com/sexualAssault.html.

Other Parents Ask:

How can we know if our child has been abused?

Be alert for symptoms.

Because so many victims tell no one of the assault, the behaviors a child exhibits may be the only clue parents have that something is very wrong. According to the Missouri Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA), only one in 10 sexual assaults gets reported.

Although they may try to act the same, victims often behave very differently after an assault.

They may experience changes in sleep patterns, appetite, moods, and feelings toward loved ones. They often become more isolated, avoiding parties and friends. Some develop eating disorders or engage in high-risk behaviors, such as alcohol or drug use. **Victims may also begin to act out.** Some pick fights. Some become promiscuous. Others never want to have sex again. **Victims from a religious background may be angry at God and avoid church or youth groups.**

These symptoms may indicate other emotional problems, but, regardless of



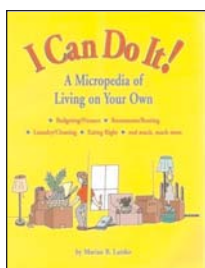
Dennis O'Brien is a licensed clinical social worker, experienced educator and therapist. In addition to writing educational materials used by the Washington University School of

Medicine, he writes weekly columns on parenting for the Suburban Journals, monthly columns for Savvyfamily, and occasional columns for CHARACTERplus, Gifted Resource Council and other publications. O'Brien's April 6 column, "Prevent teen suicide by addressing it," won the 2010 Missouri Institute of Mental Health award for outstanding reporting on suicide.

Media Mania

BOOKS FOR TEENS IN TRANSITION

Leaving home can be both exciting and terrifying for teens. When they are in that first apartment or dorm room, the responsibilities can feel overwhelming and they will have dozens of questions. The following resources may help. (Reprinted from *Foster Parent College Connections*)



I CAN DO IT! A Micropedia of Living on Your Own

By **Marian B. Latzko**

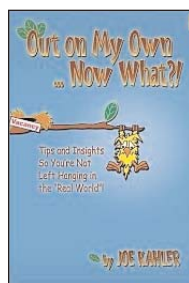
Reading level: Ages: Teens

Paperback: 127 pages

ISBN-10: 0965182606

ISBN-13: 978-0965182607

This easy-to-use, handy guide gives solid information in clear and simple language. Topics include: budgeting, insurance, savings, credit, renting, safety, networking, comparative shopping, cleaning, health, laundry, foods, transportation, travel, and more. This is a great go-to book for everyone in their first years of living on their own.



Out On My Own, Now What? Tips and Insights so You're Not Left Hanging in the Real World

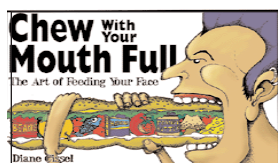
By **Joe Kahler**

Paperback: 224 pages

ISBN-10: 141960516X

ISBN-13: 978-1419605161

With humor and poignancy, a dad wrote this book to instruct and encourage young adults in nearly every aspect of living on their own. Although it covers many of the same topics as *I Can Do It*, it goes into greater detail.



Chew With Your Mouth Full: The Art of Feeding Your Face By **Diane Cissel, Northwest Media, Inc.**

Reading level: Ages: 13-21

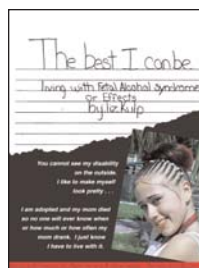
This little book covers it all — from gearing up a kitchen to making great food like Renee's Chili Rellenos Casserole and basic dishes like rice and oatmeal. There are four different menu plans with everything laid out — meals, snacks and desserts — for every day and a shopping list for the entire week. This book is excellent for people who are short on experience and cash.

VStreet

Subscription-Based Online Training and Support for Teens

VStreet.com is a comprehensive, secure website with interactive classes on such things as job retention, money management, apartment hunting, reproductive health, and more. For more information, visit www.vstreet.com/learnmore or call 800.777.6636.

MORE RESOURCES



The Best I Can Be: Living with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Effects

By **Liz Kulp & Jodee Kulp**

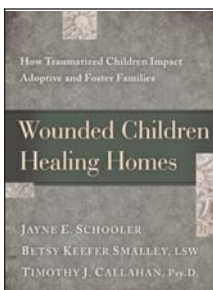
Reading level: Ages: 9-12

Paperback: 86 pages

ISBN-10: 1600344844

ISBN-13: 978-1600344848

A recipient of the prestigious Mom's Choice Award for Best Young Contributing Author, this book brings the reader into the life of a young teen with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. Through her own writings, the author takes readers on a life-changing journey that will impact their thinking about how to help and understand children with brain damage due to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.



Wounded Children, Healing Homes: How Traumatized Children Impact Adoptive and Foster Families

By **Jayne Schooler, Betsy Keefer Smalley, and Dr. Timothy Callahan**

Paperback: 304 pages

ISBN-10: 158760096X

ISBN-13: 978-1587600968

This book gives parents and caregivers the information, tools, support, self-awareness, and hope they need to help a wounded child heal emotional wounds and improve behaviorally, socially, and morally.

Healthy Foster Care America

New from the American Academy of Pediatrics, this site features current information, facts, and figures about the health care needs of children and teens in foster care. Online resources and tools can help health care professionals more effectively serve young clients and assist families who are raising children in or adopted from foster care.

www.aap.org/fostercarefeatures

ParentLink

A site for parents and professionals to access parenting information, support, problem solving techniques, and nutrition information. The ParentLink toll-free WarmLine (1.800.552.8522) is available in English and Spanish, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

<http://education.missouri.edu/orgs/parentlink>

Connect for Kids

Connects a wide audience from parents to professional child advocates with information and tools to learn about issues affecting children, families, and communities.

<http://www.connectforkids.org>

Tips and Resources

Links to Resources

Missouri Child Welfare Online Policies

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/cwmanual/index.htm>

Missouri Child Welfare Memorandums

(updates, policy and more):

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/memos/index.htm>

Missouri Children's Division Forms

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/forms/index.htm>

Missouri Code of State Regulations Foster Home Licensing Rules

<http://sos.mo.gov/adrules/csr/current/13csr/13c35-60.pdf>

Missouri Code of State Regulations Adoption Rules

<http://sos.mo.gov/adrules/csr/current/13csr/13c40-38.pdf>

Missouri Revised Statutes (see chapters 210, 211, and 453)

<http://www.moga.mo.gov/STATUTES/STATUTES.HTM#T12>

State and Federal Agencies

Department of Social Services

<http://dss.mo.gov/cd>

US Department of Health & Human Services

<http://www.hhs.gov>

Missouri Department of Mental Health

<http://dmh.mo.gov/diroffice/demdir/childsvcs/childsvcs.htm>

Network of Care

<http://networkofcare.org/home.cfm>

National Resources on Child Welfare

<http://www.childwelfare.gov>

<http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/foster.cfm>

<http://www.cwla.org>

<http://nacac.org>

<http://www.nfpainc.org>

<http://www.ccaainstitute.org>

<http://www.voices.org/publications>

FUN, EDUCATIONAL WEBSITES FOR KIDS

Worried your kids are going to forget everything they've learned since school got out? Then see the below list of some Educational Websites that are also fun, safe and good for your kids ages four and older.

Resources from *Common Sense* (<http://www.common Sense Media.org>)

PBSKidsPlay.org

Educational site entertains and teaches

ReadytoLearnReading.org

Free, fun games and activities help develop reading skills

Funbrain.com

Fun games build math and reading skills

Brainpopjr.com

Site that helps kids learn on their own

Starfall.com

Outstanding learn-to-read site sure to engage little ones

gridclub.com

Award-winning educational site worth its subscription fee

ZiggityZoom.com

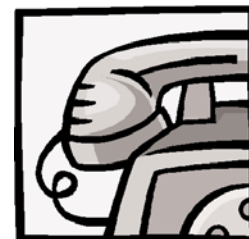
Cute book characters invite preschoolers to learn

SesameStreet.org

Brought to you by the letter "F" — for fun, a highly interactive site that is a safe and educational place for kids to play and learn

New Online Reporting Gives Missourians Tool to Combat School Violence

In an effort to reduce violence in Missouri schools, the Missouri School Violence Hotline (SVH) website (<http://schoolviolencehotline.com>) now includes *Report It!*, an electronic form that makes it easy to submit reports about school violence.



The Report It! form contains 10 questions that students, parents, and others can use to report details on locations, participants, and other facts regarding acts and threats of violence. Reports can be submitted anonymously. The information is monitored by the SVH staff, who forward the details to school and law enforcement officials.

"We are optimistic that the Report It! form and the toll-free school violence hotline (866.748.7047) will encourage more Missourians to report information about violence in the schools," said SVH Supervisor Jennifer Hunter.

Since October 2001, the hotline has been available to take anonymous phone tips regarding school violence. Missourians can report incidents of bullying, assaults or fights, thefts, weapons at school, bomb threats, and other dangers. The SVH operates weekdays from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. All information received by the hotline is entered into a central database and immediately relayed to the law enforcement agency and school district where the incident or threat of violence took place. The SVH serves all Missouri elementary and secondary schools.

The SVH website also provides resources to help schools combat violence. School administrators can receive free pencils, magnets, posters, and other promotional materials that will enable students to use the hotline to provide potentially lifesaving information without fear of repercussions.

The hotline program is supported by funding from the U.S. Department of Justice, the Missouri Department of Public Safety — Office of Director, and the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group.

For more information about the School Violence Hotline, please contact: Jennifer Hunter, SVH Supervisor, Department of Social Services — Children's Division, PO BOX 88, Jefferson City, MO (573.522.9802).

Foster and Adoption Resource Center

Eastern MO ARC

Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition
111 N. Seventh Street, 402, St. Louis, MO 63101
800.FOSTER.3 (314.367.8373) / www.foster-adopt.org

Coalition to Open New Foster and Adoption Resource Center

At every opportunity, the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition responds to gaps in services for local families with innovative programs designed to address their specific needs.

Over and over we have heard requests for a one-stop resource center for foster and adoptive families and youth — a community gathering place where families can access much-needed services like training, support groups, recruitment services, one-on-one advocacy, workshops, respite services, and more.

We are excited to announce that this Center will become a reality! It will be located at 1750 S. Brentwood Blvd., in the Joseph H. White Building. The Center will provide support and programming for more than 10,000 people each year!

The new location will allow the Coalition to expand its programming to include piloting a 24-hour Crisis Intervention program for St. Louis County and expanded recruitment services. The new Center will include a larger resale store to offer our families high-quality, low-cost clothing, generate income through sales to the general public, and provide on-the-job training and volunteer opportunities for youth.

For more information on the Foster and Adoption Resource Center, please contact Melanie Scheetz at 314.367.8373 or visit <http://www.foster-adopt.org>.



Western MO ARC

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

2010 Conference

Fostering Strategies for Change: Children, Families, and their Communities

November 17-18, 2010
Kansas City Convention Center
Kansas City, MO

Fostering Strategies for Change: Children, Families, and their Communities will showcase diverse regional resources. Conference speakers, papers, and workshops will present collaborative strategies for changing how systems and service providers identify and work with natural supports of families and their communities, as well as useful, innovative means to enhance family childrearing efforts. For further details, visit the Conference website at <http://fs4conference.org>.

We Need More Families!

We are seeking foster parents and children in foster care to participate in a research project about what makes kids resilient.

To participate, we need foster parents and children who are at least eight years old to complete surveys. Both the parent and child will receive payment for their participation each time a survey is completed.

Worried about having time to do the surveys? Don't be! We can do surveys during the evenings and weekends at a community location convenient to your home and your family's schedule — whatever works best with your family.

Please join us in this important effort to help youth in foster care — your participation is essential to helping us make the system better for youth in foster care. If you are interested in the SPARK Project, please call the SPARK Project team at 913.897.8454. We're looking forward to getting to know you and your family!

Waiting Children: Seeking Forever Families

Meet Devonta

Loves baseball, kickball, and mint chocolate chip ice cream

Devonta (11) is a great boy whose favorite sports are baseball and kickball, and whose favorite foods are cake and mint chocolate chip ice cream. Devonta says he enjoys birthday parties, dances, and playing games. He also likes to laugh at jokes and make funny faces. He's proud of the good grades he earns in school and is definitely motivated to learn. Devonta flourishes with one-on-one instruction. Devonta will need ongoing support to continue to be successful in school.



Devonta is a loyal and caring boy. He remembers people who have been kind to him and has a strong desire to maintain important relationships. Devonta will be best matched with a family that is able to provide a nurturing and fun household with clear expectations, consistency, and dependability. When Devonta was asked what he wants to do when he grows up, he said he wants to open his own restaurant and get married. Devonta would love to have a forever family to support him and help him reach his life goals. For more information about Devonta, please contact Gayle Flavin at the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition, at 800.FOSTER.3 or gayleflavin@foster-adopt.org. **Photo courtesy of Sears Portrait Studio.**

Meet Makayla

Dreams of becoming a teacher when she grows up



Makayla (9) is a beautiful and very charming nine-year-old girl. She is very tall and has shoulder-length brown curly hair. Makayla is very sweet and cares a lot about others. She's very outgoing and does not shy away from people. Makayla likes playing with baby dolls and Barbies®. She also enjoys shopping and picking out clothing. Makayla states that she dislikes being stuck in the house and prefers to be outside playing. Makayla describes herself as "very fun and very smart." Makayla's placement provider states that she is "a very happy child." Makayla is currently in the 4th grade where she performs at and sometimes above her grade level. Makayla states that her favorite subjects in school are math and computers. She reports that she "enjoys school a lot." Her teacher describes her as "very smart and insightful." Makayla expresses an interest already in attending higher education and she would like to become a teacher when she grows up. She has a lot of friends at school and shows a genuine interest in maintaining the relationships that she has built. For more information on Makayla, please contact Kerrie Ferlet, Adoption Specialist, at 816.325.6044.

Meet Delonte

Determined to graduate high school and go to college

Delonte (17) is a resilient teenager and is determined to be a part of a forever family. He is described by those who know him the best as "thoughtful and kind." Delonte has a strong desire to have a sense of belonging with a forever family; he longs for connections and positive attention. Sometimes, Delonte gets nervous thinking, "I really want to be adopted; but sometimes I don't think it will happen. If it does happen, it will be amazing; it would be a wonderful thing!"



Although delayed academically, Delonte successfully completed the 10th grade. He tries very hard in school and wants to learn. Delonte is determined to graduate high school and go to college. Delonte is legally available for adoption. For more information, please contact Sheila Suderwalla, Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter at the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition, at 800.FOSTER.3 or sheilasuderwalla@foster-adopt.org. **Photo courtesy of Sears Portrait Studio.**

Family Connections
c/o The Coalition
111 North Seventh Street, Suite 402
Saint Louis, Missouri 63101