

# Resource Family Connections Newsletter

## Spring 2018

### Ombudsman Corner

The Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) brings together a series of existing and new reforms to the Child Welfare Program. CCR is designed with the understanding that children in out of home care have positive outcomes when they are cared for in committed and nurturing family homes. CCR also known as AB 403, provided the statutory and policy guidelines to ensure services and supports provided to the child or youth and his or her family are customized toward the ultimate goal of maintaining a stable permanent family.

One of the major strategies to implement the goals and principles of CCR is the Child and Family Team (CFT) and Child and Family Team Meeting. (CFTM). A CFT is a group of individuals that includes the child and family members, professionals, caregivers, and other people identified by the family who are invested in the child and family's success. It is driven by the family member's preferences and includes persons with natural supportive relationships with the family that will continue to exist after formal services are completed.

CFT's and CFTM's are an integral component of meeting both the child's and family's goals in the family reunification process.



### Melissa's Message



Normalcy is a concept referred to quite often as part of The Quality Parenting Initiative, but what does it mean exactly and more importantly, how do we implement it? When a foster youth is placed into your home, nothing is "normal" about it, but there are things you can do as a caregiver that can help make the transition be as "normal" as possible. Firstly, treat the foster youth as you would your own children. It is important that foster children feel like a part of the family. This could mean that the foster child takes part in family outings and daily activities; such as family dinners or assisting with grocery shopping. Secondly, encourage the foster youth to maintain the hobbies that they enjoy. It will help them feel more connected to "their normal" and help their adjustment into your home. Lastly, your unconditional love and support do wonders in helping a child feel wanted, respected and normal.

Kern County Resource Families are Valued, Respected, Supported, and Skilled Partners and Advocates Who:  
*Provide safe loving homes ● Commit to the development and success of children and families ● Encourage family connections and nurturing relationships ● Maintain a life long connection to children whenever possible*

## Breakfast With Santa 2017

*Our annual Breakfast with Santa event was held on December 9th at Canyon Hills Church's beautiful City Center. The event was attended by 271 people who were served a delicious breakfast, courtesy of Eva's Cafe as well as had their photo taken with not only Santa but also with various Star Wars characters! We would like to extend our warmest thanks to our local businesses and community organizations who donated to this event. Thanks to them, and our own DHS staff, participants played carnival style games; had their faces painted; decorated items such as flower pots, ugly sweaters, reindeer candy canes and Santa hats; participated in a cupcake walk; and some lucky caregivers won raffle prizes including an autographed football from The Los Angeles Charger's LaDainian Tomlinson.*

*DHS would like to offer a huge "Thank You" to Lowes, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), Target, Kern Federal Credit Union, Canyon Hills Church, and the Kern Partnership for Children and Families for their kind donations and/or volunteer services. We would especially like to thank our caregivers, and their families, for being a part of this event. We look forward to seeing you at Breakfast with Santa 2018!*

### **Coming Soon!**

Starting in the Summer of 2018, the Resource Family Connections Newsletter will be featured in the published magazine *Fostering Families Today* and you will automatically receive a free annual subscription.. This is an exciting change for our newsletter! With this change, the newsletter and fliers will no longer be mailed so we are encouraging all of our licensed, relative/NREFM and resource family homes to contact their LPA or RFA social worker and list an email address so that we can still continue to provide you with all the fliers of upcoming events and trainings.

**Fostering FAMILIES**TODAY



### **Reminder for Licensed Homes**

As we enter our second year implementing the Resource Family Approval process, we want to remind our current licensed, relative and NREFM homes that the deadline to convert, or to be in the process of converting, to a Resource Family home is December 31st, 2019. Please note that after December 31st 2019, all licenses and approvals will be forfeit and will need to start the Resource Family Approval process from the beginning if they want to reapply. Please contact your LPA or Relative Assessment Worker for more information. You can also call us at (661) 631-6204 and ask to speak to the Worker of the Day.

## Holiday Cottage 2017

The Department of Human Services is proud to report that over 1000 wishes of children in foster care were filled this year as part of our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Holiday Cottage! We wanted to take the time to thank the community for their generosity in helping fill the wishes of foster children again this year! Many members of the community chose to fill BOTH wishes listed from the children in Kern County foster care, making the holidays just that much more special for these kids.

We thank you for filling out the children's wish letters and picking up the gifts quickly from the cottage! Your role as a Resource Family is critical in delivering these wishes in time for the holidays!

The Holiday Cottage was established 30 years ago to fulfill the wishes of children placed in Kern County foster care. During the 15 days we were open this year the Cottage was staffed by volunteers representing local community groups including: Camping World, CASA, Home Depot, Junior League of Bakersfield, Kern County Fire Department, Kern County Network for Children, Kern County Probation, Kern County Sheriff's Office, Kern Stop Meth Now, and Phi Sigma Sigma – CSUB.

We look forward to filling the wishes of the Foster Children placed in your home again during the holidays for 2018!



## FEBRUARY IS SAFELY SURRENDERED AWARENESS MONTH

For some women, childbirth becomes a crisis - and the decisions made following an infant's birth can be a matter of life or death for the child. The Safely Surrendered Baby Law responds to the situation of newborn infant deaths due to abandonment in unsafe locations. The Safely Surrendered Baby's intent is to save the lives of newborn infants, at risk of abandonment, by encouraging the mother to safely surrender the infant within 72 hours of birth, with no questions asked. The law exists so that these infants will not be harmed because the mother abandons them, or fails to provide them with care, sometimes leaving them to die. The person surrendering the baby will be given a medical ID bracelet that matches the infant that has been surrendered.

Under the law, a parent has at least 14 days to claim his or her infant should they change their mind about keeping & caring for the infant. Since 2006, 63 babies have been safely surrendered in Kern County. Children Safely Surrendered in Kern County are placed into families who are waiting to adopt.



## Training and Certification Reminders

For all licensed and RFA approved homes, please make sure that you are up to date with annual trainings (8 hours annually). Also make sure CPR certifications are current. If you are unsure when a certification will expire or how many training hours you have, please contact your LPA or RFA worker. You can also call us at (661) 631-6204 and ask to speak to the Worker of the Day.

To sign up for CPR/first aid training, please call (661) 319-1836.

See attached BC In-service training schedule.

## Healthy Sexual Development for Youth

The California Department of Social Service website is a helpful resource for keeping your teens safe and healthy when it comes to their sexual development. Such resources include; teen health and rights, information on HIV/AIDS and STD's, teen parenting and contraception options.

For more information, visit <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/Foster-Care/Healthy-Sexual-Development-Project/Resources-for-Youth>

## Aspiranet REACH Program

Aspiranet has launched a new pre and post-adoption program called REACH (Resources, Education, Advocacy, Crisis Intervention & Hope). This program is aimed at helping families who are considering adoption or who have adopted a child through Kern County Department of Human Services by providing education, support and counseling.

Please contact the REACH team at (661) 323-1233 extension 0 or see attached flier for more information.



**Families  
Formed With  
Love**

*If you are interested in submitting an article for upcoming newsletters, or have suggestions on improving the newsletter, please contact Cherie Linde at: (661) 873-2327 or email [lindec@kerndhs.com](mailto:lindec@kerndhs.com) or Melissa Bodirsky at: (661) 873-2382 or email [bodirsm@kerndhs.com](mailto:bodirsm@kerndhs.com).*

### KERN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

100 E. California Ave., Bakersfield, Ca. 93307

PO Box 511, Bakersfield, Ca. 93302

Recruitment Phone (661) 631-6204

[Resourcefamilies@kerndhs.com](mailto:Resourcefamilies@kerndhs.com)

Fax (661) 633-7077

[www.co.kern.ca.us/dhs/FosterFamilyResources/](http://www.co.kern.ca.us/dhs/FosterFamilyResources/)





## Foster & Kinship Care Education Program

### Resource Family Training Schedule

January 2018 - June 2018

#### Thursday, January 18, 2018

**Time:** 10:00am-12:00pm

**Location:** Weill Institute, Room 102  
2100 Chester Ave  
Bakersfield, CA 93301



**Instructor:** Gayla Gibson, Relative Caregiver and Caregivers of Kern County (CKC) Member

#### **Topic:** Parenting Relatives

When the parents are no longer able to care for their children, grandparents and other relatives or close friends often step in, but without much knowledge or the Child Welfare Services (CWS) system, the resources available to help them, and the issues the children are dealing with as a result of their loss and trauma. This workshop discusses resources for meeting the children's needs and how to work with (CWS). Relative caretakers who have taken placement of minor children informally) are also welcome to attend.

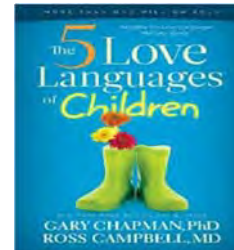
#### Friday, January 26, 2018

**Time:** 9:00am-12:00pm

**Location:** Weill Institute, Room 102  
2100 Chester Ave  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

**Instructor:** Barbara Reifel, LCSW

#### **Topic:** The 5 Love Languages of Children



Every one of us has a primary language of love, a way that fills our "love tank" better than any other. In this class series, specifically designed for Kinship and Foster Families, we will utilize the best-selling book *The 5 Love Languages of Children* in our care. There are 5 ways children (indeed, all people) speak and understand emotional love. They are physical touch, words of affirmation, quality time, gifts, and acts of service.

#### Tuesday, January 30, 2018

**Time:** 6:00pm-8:00pm

**Location:** Weill Institute, Room 102  
2100 Chester Ave  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

**Instructor:** Cheryllyn Haworth-Price, M.S.W., L.C.S.W

#### **Topic:** Self Care for Caregivers



Stress can make us ineffective at learning and reacting in ways we want to react. As a resource parent, you are asked to deal with difficult situations and make quick decisions. Research has shown that stress can make these sometimes difficult situations feel impossible. This training teaches you the different types of stress and how each type of stress can impact you. We also

cover how to take care of yourself to combat each type of stress, and how to give yourself all the tools you need to take on the daily expectations of foster parenting. This workshop style training will help you in creating your own Self Care plan that works for you!

**Monday, February 12, 2018**

**Time:** 6:00pm-8:00pm

**Location:** Kern County Department of Human Services:  
Columbus Center Orientation Room  
3711 Columbus Center  
Bakersfield, CA 93306



**Instructor:** Tabitha Myrow, M.A. Ed.

**Topic:** **Caring for Children with Severe Emotional / Behavioral Needs Level 2**

This training was created by the Kern County Department of Human Services specifically for those resource families who are working with children with difficult behavior and require a higher level of care. Come learn new techniques on how to deal with difficult behaviors.

**Thursday, February 15, 2018**

**Time:** 9:00am-12:00pm or 2:00pm-5:00pm

**Location:** Kern County Department of Human Services:  
Columbus Center Orientation Room  
3711 Columbus Center  
Bakersfield, CA 93306



**Instructor:** Carrie McAuliffe

**Topic:** **Human Trafficking: Commercial Sexual Exploited Children (CSEC)**

This training is specifically designed for foster parents, relative caregivers, and group home staff as a first step in combatting the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in California. We are working to raise awareness to the crisis at hand and increasing your ability to identify commercially sexually exploited children.

**Friday, February 23, 2018**

**Time:** 8:00am-3:00pm

**Location:** Bakersfield College, 1801 Panorama Dr.

**Topic:** ***3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Foster Youth Empowerment Conference***

This event will allow caregivers and community agencies to come together to collaborate with foster youth and develop partnerships that reinforce existing relationships. Attendees will learn what topics are important to foster youth and collaboratively develop ways to address barriers that foster youth might encounter. Learn the skills necessary to increase the success of foster youth as they transition into adulthood. \*Lunch will be provided, Free of Charge



**Saturday, February 24, 2018**

**Time:** 10:00am-12:00pm (English)

**Location:** Kern County Department of Human Services:  
Columbus Center Orientation Room  
3711 Columbus Center  
Bakersfield, CA 93306



**Instructor:** Angelica Gonzalez , MSW

**Topic: Grief & Loss**

Foster children experience grief & loss from being removed from their homes and being placed into foster care. Learn what to expect through the various stages of grief and what you can do to help lessen the trauma.

**Tuesday, March 13, 2018**

**Time:** 10:00am-12:00pm

**Location:** Weill Institute, Room 102  
2100 Chester Ave  
Bakersfield, CA 93301



**Instructor:** Tabitha Myrow, M.A. Ed.

**Topic: LGBTQ Basics and Cultural Sensitivity**

Training on LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning) youth laws and issues related to children placed in foster care and cultural awareness necessary in order to provide a safe and nurturing foster placement of LGBTQ youth.

**Tuesday, March 20, 2018**

**Time:** 6:00pm-9:00pm

**Location:** Kern County Department of Human Services: Columbus Center  
3711 Columbus Center  
Bakersfield, CA 93306



**Instructor:** Isaura Rizzo, MSW, ASW 30947

**Topic: Special Topics in Foster Care**

This session covers some of the more complex issues seen in the foster care system, such as navigating the medical system for children with special medical needs or partnering with the mental health system for children with mental health needs. This session is geared towards answering your specific questions and help you develop problem solving skills that will be useful in creating a team atmosphere with all the partners that work with you to keep children safe! Recommended for all resource families especially those that have recently attended the RFA training.

**Wednesday, March 28, 2018**

**Time:** 10:00am-12:00pm

**Location:** Maya Cinema, 1000 E. California Ave

**Instructor:** Barbara Reifel, LCSW

**Community Movie Screening: *Paper Tigers***



Paper Tigers is an intimate look into the lives of selected students at Lincoln High School, an alternative school that specializes in educating traumatized youth who are struggling with the dark legacy of Adverse Childhood Experiences. Simply put, it is cheaper to heal than to punish. Paper Tigers takes a look at what is possible.

**Wednesday, April 11, 2018**

**Time:** 6:00pm-8:00pm

**Location:** Weill Institute, Room 102  
2100 Chester Ave  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

**Instructor:** Isaura Rizzo, MSW, ASW 30947

**Topic:** *Caring for Children with Severe Emotional / Behavioral Needs Level 3/4*

This training was created by the Kern County Department of Human Services specifically for those resource families who are working with children with difficult behavior and require a higher level of care. Come learn new techniques on how to deal with difficult behaviors.



**Tuesday, April 17, 2018**

**Time:** 6:00pm-8:00pm

**Location:** Weill Institute, Room 102  
2100 Chester Ave  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

**Instructor:** Becky Colaw, M.S.

**Topic:** *“Damaged”*

This training will be based on the book *Damaged* by Cathy Glass. Discussion will be focused on foster care, adoption and relative care. Participants will receive a free copy of the book.



**Tuesday, April 24, 2018**

**Time:** 10:00am-12:00pm

**Location:** Weill Institute, Room 102  
2100 Chester Ave  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

**Instructor:** Gayla Gibson, Relative Caregiver and Caregivers of Kern County (CKC) Member

**Topic:** *Community Resources for Foster Children*

Come learn about resources available for the children in your care. Learn how to navigate the system and how to advocate for the children in your care. This training will include an overview of the resource directory provided by the Kern County Department of Human Services.



**Tuesday, April 26, 2018**

**Time:** 6:00pm-9:00pm

**Location:** Weill Institute, Room 102  
2100 Chester Ave  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

**Instructor:** Cherilyn Haworth-Price, M.S.W., L.C.S.W

**Topic:** *Human Trafficking: Commercial Sexual Exploited Children (CSEC)*

This training is specifically designed for foster parents, relative caregivers, and group home staff as a first step in combatting the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in California. We





are working to raise awareness to the crisis at hand and increasing your ability to identify commercially sexually exploited children.

**Tuesday, May 22, 2018**

**Time:** 10:00am-12:00pm

**Location:** Weill Institute, Room 102  
2100 Chester Ave  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

**Instructor:** Cherilyn Haworth-Price

**Topic:** *Navigating the Teenage Mood*

**Instructor:** Cherilyn Haworth-Price, M.S.W., L.C.S.W.

Adolescence is one of the most difficult transitional periods a person will encounter. We will discuss how teens experience the various transitions associated with adolescence, how trauma may impact those transitions, and how you as a parent can help support them. We will provide tips and techniques to defuse escalated teens and approaches to take when dealing with high risk situations, such as running away, cutting, and potential suicidality.



**Thursday, May 31, 2018**

**Time:** 5:00pm-7:00pm

**Location:**

**Instructor:** Cherilyn Haworth-Price, M.S.W., L.C.S.W

**Topic:** *"A Volcano in my Tummy"*

This training will be based on the book *A Volcano in my Tummy*.

It is about helping 6-15 year old handle their anger so that they can live successfully, healthily, happily and non-violently. The book has stories, easy to use games and exercises designed to encourage children to see their anger and to deal constructively with it. Participants will receive a free copy of the book.



**Wednesday, June 13, 2018**

**Time:** 6:00pm-8:00pm

**Location:** Weill Institute, Room 102  
2100 Chester Ave  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

**Topic:** *1, 2, 3 Magic Parenting*

**Instructor:** Becky Colaw, M.S.

Teach your kids to STOP arguing, whining, throwing tantrums, pouting, yelling, fighting, teasing, and being disrespectful. Also learn how to avoid the Talk-Persuade-Argue-Yell-Hit Syndrome, deal with the Six Kinds of Testing and Manipulation, handle misbehavior in public, exercise self-control and be an effective yet gentle disciplinarian.



**Thursday, June 21, 2018**

**Time:** 10:00am-12:00pm

**Location:** Maya Cinema, 1000 E. California Ave

**Instructor:** Cherilyn Haworth-Price, M.S.W., L.C.S.W & Barbara Reifel, LCSW

**Community Movie Screening:** *Resilience*



The child may not remember, but the body remembers.” The original research was controversial, but the findings revealed the most important public health findings of a generation. RESILIENCE is a documentary that delves into the science of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the birth of a new movement to treat and prevent Toxic Stress.

**Saturday, June 30, 2018**

**Time:** 10:00am-12:00pm

**Location:** Kern County Department of Human Services:  
Columbus Center Orientation Room  
3711 Columbus Center  
Bakersfield, CA 93306



**Instructor:** Angelica Gonzalez , MSW

**Topic:** *Medically Fragile Infants & Children*

This training will discuss the common medical conditions of medically fragile children in foster care. You will receive a brief overview of children and infants that require special care. This class also offers an interactive discussion in reference to the services offered to foster parents caring for medically fragile infants/children.



## Foster & Kinship Care Education Program

*Clases en español para familias de Recursos  
Enero 2018 - Junio 2018*

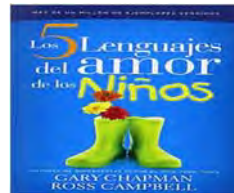
### Martes, 6 de Febrero 2018

**Hora:** 6:00pm-8:00pm

**Localidad:** Weill Institute, Room 102  
2100 Chester Ave  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

**Instructora:** Isaura Rizzo, MSW, ASW 30947

**Tema:** Los 5 lenguajes de amor de los niños



Cada uno de nosotros tiene un lenguaje primario de amor, una forma que llena nuestro "tanque de amor" mejor que cualquier otro. En esta serie de clase, específicamente diseñada para Familias de Crianza, utilizaremos el libro *Los 5 Lenguajes del amor de los Niños*. Hay 5 maneras en que los niños (de hecho, todas las personas) hablan y entienden el amor emocional. Ellos son físicos toque, palabras de afirmación, tiempo de calidad, obsequios y actos de servicio.

### Sabado, 24 de Febrero 2018

**Hora:** 1:00pm-3:00pm

**Localidad:** Kern County Department of Human Services:  
Columbus Center Orientation Room  
3711 Columbus Center  
Bakersfield, CA 93306

**Instructora:** Angelica Gonzalez, MSW

**Tema:** Pena y Pérdida

Los niños de crianza experimentan dolor y pérdida por ser removidos de sus hogares y ser colocados en cuidado de crianza. Aprenda qué esperar en las distintas etapas de pena y pérdida y qué puede hacer para ayudar a disminuir el trauma.



### Jueves 22, de Marzo 2018

**Hora:** 6:00pm-9:00pm

**Localidad:** Kern County Department of Human Services:  
Columbus Center  
3711 Columbus Center  
Bakersfield, CA 93306

**Instructora:** Isaura Rizzo, MSW, ASW 30947

**Tema:** Temas especiales en el cuidado de crianza

Esta sesión cubre algunos de los problemas más complejos que se observan en el sistema de cuidado de crianza, como la navegación del sistema médico para niños con necesidades médicas especiales o la asociación con el sistema de salud mental para niños con necesidades de salud mental. Esta sesión está basada a responder preguntas específicas y ayudarlo a desarrollar habilidades para resolver problemas que serán útiles para crear un ambiente de equipo con todos los socios que trabajan con usted para mantener a los niños seguros. Recomendado para todas las



familias de recursos, especialmente las que recientemente asistieron a la capacitación de aprobación de la familia de recursos.

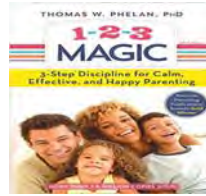
**Martes 19 de Junio 2018**

**Hora:** 6:00pm-8:00pm

**Localidad:** Weill Institute, Room 102  
2100 Chester Ave  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

**Instructora:** Isaura Rizzo, MSW, ASW 30947

**Tema:** 1, 2, 3 Magia!



Enséñeles a sus hijos a DEJAR de discutir, lloriquear, hacer berrinches, hacer pucheros, gritar, pelear, burlarse y ser irrespetuoso. También aprende cómo evitar el síndrome de hablar, convencer, discutir y gritar, lidiar con las seis clases de pruebas y manipulación, manejar la mala conducta en público, ejercitar el autocontrol y ser un disciplinador eficaz pero a la vez amable.

**Sabado, 30 de Junio 30, 2018**

**Hora:** 1:00pm-3:00pm

**Localidad:** Kern County Department of Human Services:  
Columbus Center Orientation Room  
3711 Columbus Center  
Bakersfield, CA 93306



**Instructora:** Angelica Gonzalez

**Tema:** Infantes y niños médicamente frágiles

Este entrenamiento discutirá las condiciones médicas comunes de los niños médicamente frágiles en el cuidado de crianza. Recibirá una breve descripción general de los niños y bebés que requieren cuidados especiales. Esta clase también ofrece una discusión interactiva en referencia a los servicios ofrecidos a los padres de crianza que cuidan a infantes / niños médicamente frágiles.

# CPR - First Aid – AED

## For Resource Families

**RSVP 661-319-1836**

Date	Time	Room	Facilitator(s)
Wednesday December 6, 2017	5pm-9pm	Santa Maria-English	Patty Scott Jana Slagle
Friday, December 8, 2017	5pm-9pm	Santa Maria- English	Monique Casas Jessica Macias- Cervantes
Monday, December 11, 2017	5pm-9pm	Santa Maria- English <b>Family Team - Spanish</b>	Patty Scott & Monique Casas Jessica Macias-Cervantes
Friday, December 15, 2017	5pm-9pm	*Santa Maria -English	Patty Scott Monique Casas
Tuesday, January 9, 2018	5pm-9pm	Santa Maria-English	Jana Slagle & Jessica Macias - Cervantes
Tuesday January 16, 2018	5pm-9pm	<b>Santa Maria-Spanish</b>	Jessica Macias-Cervantes
Saturday, January 27, 2018	8am-12pm	Santa Maria-English	Jessica Macias-Cervantes
Wednesday, January 31, 2018	5pm-9pm	Santa Maria-English	Monique Casas Patty Scott
Wednesday, February 7, 2018	5pm-9pm	Santa Maria-English	Monique Casas Patty Scott
Tuesday, February 20, 2018	5pm-9pm	Santa Maria-English	Patty Scott Jana Slagle
Saturday, February 24, 2018	8am-12pm	<b>Family Team -Spanish</b>	Jessica Macias-Cervantes
Tuesday, February 27,2018	5pm-9pm	Santa Maria-English	Patty Scott & Jessica Macias- Cervantes
Monday, March 5, 2018	5pm-9pm	Santa Maria-English	Monique Casas & Jessica Macias- Cervantes
Wednesday, March 14, 2018	5pm-9pm	Santa Maria-English	Monique Casas Patty Scott
Tuesday, March 20, 2018	5pm-9pm	Santa Maria-English	Patty Scott Jana Slagle
Saturday, March 24, 2018	8am-12pm	<b>Santa Maria-Spanish</b>	Jessica Macias-Cervantes

**Certification is valid for 2 years**

## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF: TIPS FOR FOSTER AND RESOURCE PARENTS

Taking in a child who needs you can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life – but it can also be stressful for you and the rest of your family. Taking care of yourself is critically important, for your own well-being and for the well-being of the child you're caring for and others in your household.

For a child, being removed from their parents and home is stressful and can be traumatic. Between the experiences that led to their placement in your home, and the removal itself, the child you are caring for is very likely to exhibit some signs of trauma. Even when you provide loving care, a child may have difficulty adjusting. They likely miss their parents and their home. This very natural and normal reaction can make it hard for them to respond positively to you and may impact their behavior in many ways.

This tool is designed to help you:

- reflect on your experience as a foster or resource parent
- identify your strengths and where you may need more support
- be aware of how traumatic experiences may affect the child in your care and how that might impact you as a caregiver
- respond to the child in a supportive way even when their behavior is challenging

If you have a caseworker, therapist or close friend you rely on for support, you may want to discuss this information with that person so they can support you as you care for this child. You may also want to share it with other family members to help you all focus on what you can do to best support the child and each other.

Please note that throughout this document, to keep it simple, we refer to a single child in your care. If you are caring for more than one child, it may be helpful to reflect on the tips and questions in relation to each child separately. Even siblings may react differently to a situation like this, depending on their ages, personalities and individual experiences.

### **Strengthening Families**

Strengthening Families is an effort to help families give their children what they need to thrive. All families have unique strengths, and all families sometimes need help to stay strong.

Strengthening Families is built around five “protective factors.” Protective factors are strengths families rely on, especially when life gets difficult. A parallel set of protective and promotive factors, called Youth Thrive, describes what adolescents and young adults need to thrive – but for this tool, the focus is on you as a caregiver. The protective factors discussed in this tool are:

- Parental resilience: *Be strong, even when you're stressed*
- Social connections: *Get and give support*
- Knowledge of parenting and child development: *Learn more so you can parent better*
- Concrete support in times of need: *Get help when you need it*
- Children's social-emotional competence: *Help your child learn to care for themselves and others*

For more information, visit  
[www.strengtheningfamilies.net](http://www.strengtheningfamilies.net).

## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF: TIPS FOR FOSTER AND RESOURCE PARENTS

### **Resilience: *Be strong, even when you're stressed***

Resilience is the process of managing stress and functioning well even when things are difficult. Being resilient as a parent or caregiver means:

- Taking care of and feeling good about yourself
- Asking for help when you need it
- Being hopeful and preparing for the future
- Planning for what you will do in situations that are challenging for you and/or the child
- Not allowing stress to get in the way of providing loving care for the child
- Taking time to really enjoy the child and doing things you like to do together

The following questions help you think about your own resilience and how you can stay strong:

1. What helps you feel calm when things are stressful in your everyday life? Please list three small actions you can take to help yourself feel strong and calm. Can you make time to do these things on a regular basis?
  
2. What things really get under your skin as a parent? Make a plan for the things that you know have been stressful and might happen again. Think about the things this child might do differently from your other children and how you will respond.
  
3. Think back to other parenting or child care experiences you have had. What were some of the things you really enjoyed? Ask the child in your care about things they enjoy doing or would like to try. Building routines together around activities that you both enjoy is an important part of building a positive nurturing relationship.

**Trauma Tip:** It is easier to feel resilient in a parenting role when you get positive feedback from the child that what you do matters and the child feels loved. It may be hard for this child to give you that feedback at first. Don't get discouraged—it is understandable. They are likely scared and frightened. They may feel they are betraying their birth parent(s) if they let anyone else get close to them. It is very important for you to continue to provide loving care, even when the child can't let you know they want it or appreciate it. **Please remember to take care of yourself and remind yourself you are doing your best in a difficult situation.**

## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF: TIPS FOR FOSTER AND RESOURCE PARENTS

### **Social connections: *Get and give support***

It's easier to handle parenting challenges when you have positive relationships with family, friends and neighbors. Having a network of caring people in your life helps you feel secure, confident and empowered – and this helps us all become better parents. Your social support network is an important asset, especially while you adjust to caring for this child. You can strengthen it by:

- Focusing on relationships where you feel respected and appreciated
- Accepting help from others and looking for opportunities to help them back
- Building your skills and comfort in reaching out to others, communicating, resolving conflict and doing all the other things that help to keep a friendship strong
- Building your network so you have multiple friends and connections to turn to in different situations and needs

Take a few moments to think about your social connections:

1. Who can you turn to for emotional support? Is there anyone who can provide back-up if you need child care or other help? It may be helpful to reach out to them now and explain your situation so they can be prepared to help you.
2. Do you know other parents with a child around the same age as the child now in your care? It can be very helpful to reach out to parents with children the same age so you can plan playdates, set up carpools and make other practical arrangements. They can also be a helpful source of information if you have parenting, school or other issues.
3. Is it hard for you to reach out and make friends? If so, let your caseworker know this is the case. You can also reach out to the child's teacher or doctor, or look up a family resource center to help you find a support group for foster parents. Many communities also have activities for parents and caregivers including Parent Café or Community Café. Having people to talk to who understand your situation will make things easier.
4. If you are married, this transition in your family will likely put a strain on the marriage as well. Talk with your spouse about the expectations and concerns you each have. Plan for how you will manage the additional stress and continue to make time to nurture your relationship.

**Trauma Tip:** Children who experience traumatic or stressful events often exhibit challenging behavior. This can be hard for you, of course, and can be particularly tough when you and the child are in social situations. It may be helpful to let those close to you know that the child is going through a stressful and traumatic time so they can join you in being supportive and non-judgmental even in the face of challenging behavior.



## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF: TIPS FOR FOSTER AND RESOURCE PARENTS

### **Knowledge of parenting and child development: *Learn more so you can parent better***

Knowing what to expect makes taking care of a child a lot easier. Child development follows general patterns and there are many good sources of information that can help you if you are running into challenges. Providing the best care possible for this child may require you to learn and use some new techniques, because of this child's unique personality and experiences. Knowledge of parenting and child development helps you:

- Know what to expect as a child grows and develops
- Understand what children and youth need to help them learn and thrive
- Use new skills to help your child be happy and healthy
- Recognize a child's unique needs, strengths and interests
- Understand how to respond in a positive and effective way when a child misbehaves

Think about the following questions as you consider your own knowledge of parenting and child development:

1. Where can you go to get parenting information? There are many good sources of information, including your caseworker or the child's teachers or pediatrician. The web is also a good source – but the quality of online parenting information varies. Some reliable sources include: the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/parents/>); for infants and toddlers, Zero to Three (<http://www.zerotothree.org/>); and, for children and youth who have had traumatic experiences, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (<http://www.nctsn.org/resources/audiences/parents-caregivers>).
2. When you observe other parents with children the same age as the child in your care, what do you like about the way they parent? What have you observed that seems effective? What things do you want to do differently?
3. If you have parented before, what do you remember about the time when your child was this age? What were your favorite things about this age, and what did you find challenging? Make time for the positives, and start researching any challenging issues now so you can be prepared.

**Trauma Tip:** While it is important to understand typical behavior, it is also important to remember that when children experience stress or trauma they can also exhibit behaviors that are not typical, including regressing to earlier stages of development. It is important for you to understand trauma and how it impacts development. The following guide was written for those caring for a child who may have experienced child abuse or neglect:

[http://www.fosteringperspectives.org/fp\\_v10n1/Kennedy&Bennett.pdf](http://www.fosteringperspectives.org/fp_v10n1/Kennedy&Bennett.pdf).

## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF: TIPS FOR FOSTER AND RESOURCE PARENTS

### **Concrete support in times of need: *Get help when you need it***

All families go through tough times and need help at times from their extended families, friends, faith community or other community services. This is a time when your family may need more support. Knowing where to get help in the community can make things a lot easier. It is important to be able to:

- Know what help is available
- Ask for help when you need it – such as financial help, a break from work or home responsibilities or therapy for yourself, a child or another family member
- Get what you need to keep your family healthy and safe
- Help others when possible

In terms of concrete supports:

1. Caring for an additional child can put a strain on your family budget. Are there things that already put a financial stress or burden on your family? Make sure to discuss any existing or expected financial costs and challenges with your caseworker or with someone you trust in the community. They may know of resources or benefits you may be eligible for. To find resources on your own, find out if your community has 2-1-1 service (through your local United Way) or call a local child care resource and referral agency.
2. Does the child in your care need specific types of supports or services? Find out through conversations with the birth parent (if possible), your caseworker and/or the child's pediatrician, child care provider or school.
3. Are you nervous about asking for help or support? You may be used to being the one who others come to for help – and you are certainly doing a lot to help the child in your care right now. But all families have times when they are the ones who need to ask for help. Think about what you can do to feel comfortable asking for support, and practice how you will ask for what you need.

**Trauma Tip:** Keep an eye out for whether or not the child is exhibiting signs of trauma. If you have concerns, discuss with a professional (such as your caseworker, child care provider/teacher or doctor). They may be able to connect you and the child to mental health services and other supports. Responding as soon as possible to any trauma the child experienced is the best way to help them recover.

## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF: TIPS FOR FOSTER AND RESOURCE PARENTS

### **Children's social emotional competence: *Help your child manage feelings and relationships***

Helping children develop social-emotional competence allows them to manage their emotions and build healthy relationships throughout their lives. The things you do to model and help children learn these skills makes a huge difference. For children who have experienced stress or trauma, an intentional effort to support and nurture their social and emotional skills can be especially important. We can help children develop these skills by:

- Responding warmly and consistently to a child
- Teaching a child the words they need to express how they feel
- Allowing a child to express their emotions
- Being a role model: showing a child how to be kind and how to interact positively with other people, even when they are upset

The child you are caring for is probably trying to manage a lot of difficult emotions. Your help and support at this time is very important. Some questions to ask yourself are:

1. Are there emotions you are uncomfortable with? How can you prepare yourself to deal with them? What if the child is angry? Sad? Indifferent? How will you respond? It is important for the child to have freedom to express their feelings and to deal with their emotions – even if they make you uncomfortable.
2. What do you know (or can you learn) about what gives the child comfort? How can you build these things into your everyday routine with the child?
3. If the child is old enough, help them to create a plan for themselves about what they will do when they feel angry, sad or scared. These feelings can be overwhelming and it can be hard to control behavior in the moment.
4. A child's visits with a birth parent (or another significant person) can affect the child in unpredictable ways, including an escalation in problem behaviors. Plan ahead for managing your feelings about the parent, parent-child visits and conflicting emotions the child may experience.

**Trauma Tip:** Not surprisingly, trauma can impact a child's social emotional competence. It can be hard to remember that a child's challenging behavior may be a normal response to difficult experiences. Try to respond with empathy rather than anger and work with the child to identify better ways to express their feelings.

If you have other children in the home it can be especially important to talk with them about the challenging time the child you are caring for is going through.

# Fitness Classes

Stay healthy and strong all year long with these **FREE** community classes!

## Yoga

**Monday: 5:30—6:30pm**

**Mercy Hospital Downtown** - Clerou Lecture Center  
2215 Truxtun Avenue

**Wednesday: 6:00—7:00am**

**Mercy Hospital Southwest** - Buena Vista Room  
400 Old River Road

**Wednesday: 5:15—6:15pm**

**Memorial Hospital** - Founders Hall Auditorium  
420 34th Street



## Zumba

**Monday thru Thursday: 6:00—7:00pm**

**Mercy Conference Center**-Across from Mercy Hospital Downtown  
16th & D Streets

**Saturday: 8:30—9:30am**

**Mercy Conference Center**-Across from Mercy Hospital Downtown  
16th & D Streets



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Classes are **FREE** and open to the public. Space is limited and classes are **first come, first served**. For questions, contact the Community Wellness Program at **661.861.0852**.

Classes will not be held on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving Day.

Sponsored by the Department of Special Needs and Community Outreach



# **Aspiranet REACH**

## **Post-Adoption Support Services**

### **For Kern County**

***Adoption Resources, Education, Advocacy, Crisis Intervention & Hope***  
**1001 Tower Way Suite #250 | Bakersfield, CA 93309 | 661-323-1233**

Greetings Adoptive Family!

On behalf of Aspiranet and Kern County Department of Human Services, we are excited to announce Aspiranet's post-adoption support program, REACH (Resources, Education, Advocacy, Crisis Intervention & Hope). This program is designed for families who have adopted a child through Kern County Department of Human Services and reside within Kern County. Services provided are free of charge and include individual and family education, support, counseling and referral to adoption knowledgeable resources in the community. Our services also include access to parent educational support groups, an adoption library, as well as a quarterly newsletter with adoption related articles and resources.

The team at Aspiranet REACH understands that adoption is a life long process and that families face unique challenges along the way. If you would like to know more about our services or would like to schedule a time to discuss your family's current needs, please contact the REACH team at the Kern Aspiranet Office at (661) 323-1233 x0.

Sincerely,

The Kern Aspiranet REACH Team





**BAKERSFIELD  
COLLEGE**

**FREE MOVIE EVENT**

**HOSTED BY BAKERSFIELD COLLEGE  
FOSTER & KINSHIP CARE EDUCATION PROGRAM**

# PAPER TIGERS

One high school's unlikely success story.



Maya Theater  
1000 California Ave.  
Bakersfield, CA. 93304

"Absolutely riveting, profoundly important."

Wednesday, March 28 2018  
10:00 am-12:00pm

Small popcorn and drink included

*Resource Parents  
you will receive a certificate for 2  
hours of on-going training*

Paper Tigers is an intimate look into the lives of selected students at Lincoln High School, an alternative school that specializes in educating traumatized youth who are struggling with the dark legacy of Adverse Childhood Experiences.

Simply put, it is cheaper to heal than to punish. Paper Tigers takes a look at what is possible.

**Appropriate for children over 13 years of age.**

A separate movie for children appropriate for ages 3+ will be presented at the same time on a different screen.

For more information and to RSVP call the BC Registration Line 661.319.1836 or Araceli Navarro 661.395.4737



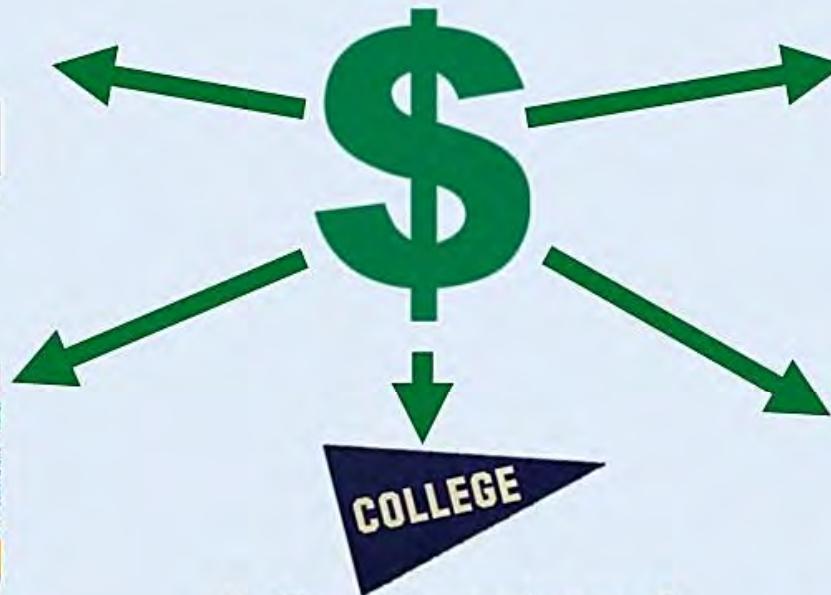
# AVAILABLE NOW



Department of Human Services with the assistance of the Kern Partnership for Children and Families can provide funding support in the following areas:



**Prep Classes  
for SAT**



**College Acceptance &  
Dorm Room Deposits**



**Work Clothes &  
Supplies**



**Food Handlers  
Card & Training**

*Funding is limited to youth (current or former) from CSEC, AB12, ILP, CAL-Learn and/or Foster Youth programs.  
Email [501c3@KemDHS.com](mailto:501c3@KemDHS.com) for additional information & availability.*