



CHEROKEE COUNTY FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION

From The President

Cherokee County Foster
Adoptive & Parents
Association

June 2011

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Congratulations to The Griffis family & Courtney Goodwin, they finalized their adoptions in April.

The summer has started and we want to remind those who have pools, lakes or any type of body of water to make sure your "basic water safety" card is up to date. We are now half way thru the year, have you taken advantage of the many opportunities to get training hours? If you haven't started yet this weekend is a great time to get 6 hours so that you will be half done.

Every quarter we host a training conference so that everyone can get the much needed training that is required and get a chance to associate with other foster families while at the same time your children get to come and play with other foster kids. A lot of our foster children who have participated at these events have become friends and enjoy seeing each other. It allows them to see that they are not alone and that there are other children in the same situation as them. Our next conference is this Saturday June 25th, if you haven't registered yet it's not to late. You can register at www.fosteroradopt.org/pdf/CCFAPARegistration.pdf.

GIVE ME A BREAK SAVE THE DATE!

July 16th, Boys & Girls Club, Univeter Road, Canton, Georgia 30115
Time: 10:30am – 4:00pm

We have Evan the Magician (he was voted The Greater Atlanta Magician of the Year for 2007).

This facility has a bigger area for the kids; we will have access to the Gym, a teen room and a separate area for the smaller kids. Parents can drop the children off at 10:30am and pick them up by 4pm.

We will not be serving lunch at this event, so please pack a sack lunch for your child/ren and write their name on it. We will however have drinks and snacks for the kids.



Families in Sync

Solutions to get everyone on the same schedule

With all the daily commitments we as parents have then add extra children as they come and go do you ever find yourselves spinning out of control?

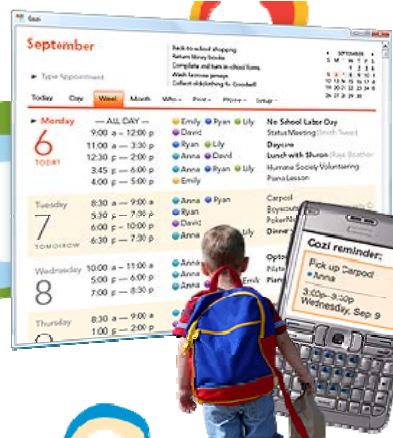
Does this sound familiar? My daughter needs a ride to practice every night this week. My son's basketball game starts at 7 pm. My husband is out of town until Wednesday and between the dog's annual visit to the vet, school conferences, and school play and my own dentist appointment, our family's schedule begins to spin out of control.



If you are a good planner then maybe this is not as much a problem for you as it would be for others but I see some of you doing what to me seems impossible. Some of our families have 6 or more children and they are all into something. If things seem to be spinning out of control STOP and assess the situation. As the years go by we find our selves juggling even more commitments. I read an article where one family purchased chalkboard paint and painted a portion of their kitchen wall and they used the wall to communicate with each other keep coordinated and stay in contact with each other and even though their schedule hasn't gotten any easier the idea is working for them.

As your family grows, the need to coordinate calendars becomes a big priority. Managing the agendas of parents, kids, caregivers, case worker visits, court dates, extended family & friends can be a difficult task. Most families can't dedicate a wall to chalk scribbles, but most families are willing to try some system to improve the scheduling, communication and correspondence that continues to change each year as kids grow, jobs changes and schedules collide. Here are a few ideas to try to incorporate into your families calendar dilemma.

Family Meeting: Companies do it, classrooms do it, sports teams do it - and so should your family. A weekly planning meeting may seem basic, but face to face coordination is one of the best ways to lay down a foundation for good communication. The first appointment will be a mandatory family meeting maybe after a family meal during the weekend to review the week's activities. In order for this to work everyone has to be committed so if someone can't make it, let them know that there is no guarantee that they will have the car, have a ride to practice or have their plans accommodated that week.



Schedule the Non-Scheduled: Make appointments for those things that don't need to be scheduled - like vacuuming the living room, folding laundry and cleaning your room. If you plug household chores and regular events into the family schedule, there's a better chance that everything will get done and a last-minute change won't upset the apple cart.

Use the Technology You Have: Most of us don't use the technology we have to our full advantage. Many cell phones come with built-in calendars and alarms. Computers may have simple calendar programs, pop-up reminders options or simple digital notepads. Many cordless phones are also equipped with a message button for leaving a quick message at home right through the phone base.

Try New Software: An online calendar can be a great way to keep everyone in the loop. Google Calendar (Google.com) offers free software for creating an online calendar, complete with color-coding and multiple calendar options for sports teams or clubs. Family-friendly software is now available for families who can access calendars, lists and reminders and communicate changes in plans from one web location. Check out www.cozi.com, created by some Microsoft veterans, which allows you to plug in family schedules and send messages via e-mail or text - even access your grocery list from your cell phone.

Message from D'Anna



School's out for the summer! I hope June finds you with plans for outdoor activities and time to soak up nature and rest from busy school, testing and homework schedules! As I write this, I am reminded that today is Flag Day!

*You're the emblem of the land I love.
The home of the free and the brave.
George M. Cohan*

June is also a time to honor our fathers, this Sunday it's time to celebrate the important role fathers have in family.

In May, we took custody of 11 children in May; 7 boys and 4 girls. 5 of these children were from ages 0-5; 2 were from 6-12; and 4 were 13 and over. 8 of these children were white and 3 were Hispanic. 9 of these children were placed in Cherokee DFCS foster homes and 2 were placed in a group home. There were 3 sibling groups of 2 children. There were no re-entries. One child was returned at the 72-hour hearing and no children were returned at the 10-day hearing. Last month, we had 6 children exit foster care for reasons of reunification (5 children) and 1 child emancipated. We did not finalize any adoptions in May. When May came to a close, we had 151 children in care. Our median # of days in care is 232 days, which is a slightly lower number of median days in care last month.

We have a total of 65 foster resource homes. We have had a number of positive closures due to the number of foster parent adoptions that took place in Cherokee County last year.

We strive to place most of the children who come into foster care in Cherokee County foster resource homes. At this time, we are beginning to have difficulty placing those children in Cherokee foster homes because many of our homes are full.

Our top need in terms of recruitment is families that are willing to FOSTER. We need families that are willing to work with birth parents and that can work to support the reunification case plan. Although we need FOSTER parents for all ages at this time, our greatest need is for families willing to accept teenagers and sibling groups of 3 or more children. We also need families willing to accept moderate to severe emotional and behavioral issues. We have increased our recruitment efforts in targeted geographic areas this year, but the need continues.

Congratulations to the Sergio and Jennifer Ruiz who were recently named as our Foster Resource Parents of the Year! They're a great family and they've been a resource for our agency since June 2006. They are also a bi-lingual family and they assist us often with placements for children that do not speak English.

Congratulations to the Bohlers, our Foster Resource "Rookie of the Year" foster family! They've been open less than a year and they have been VERY helpful to the agency in accepting a number of placements, many short-term placements until a child can be placed with a relative and others that are going to be more long-term.

Don't forget about the Association's Training Conference planned for Saturday June 25th from 8:30am - 4:30pm at the Antioch Christian Church. The registration forms are available. If you have questions, contact Marie Blackwell at mblackwell@fosteroradopt.org. You will earn 6 training hours if you attend for the entire day. CPR training hours are also available this quarter.

Everything that's really worthwhile in life comes to us free - our minds, our bodies, our souls, our hopes, our dreams, our intelligence, our love of family and friends. All of these priceless possessions are free. ~ Earl Nightingale

Use these free gifts to make an impact on others today...the price is right!

Please let me know any suggestions, issues or concerns. I appreciate the feedback as information helps create a stronger partnership between us. I want to thank and celebrate all of the fathers this month. You are providing such a positive and influential role in the lives of the children you care for.

Happy Father's Day!

D'Anna Liber, dkliber@dhr.state.ga.us

Cherokee County Foster Adoptive & Parents Association



Building The Future with our Foster and Adoptive Parents as they open their hearts & their homes to children.



Check website calendar for upcoming events & training.

www.fosteroradopt.org

If you would like to receive the newsletter via email go to our web site and signup.

If your email changes let us know so that we can update our records.

Check us out on **Facebook**, many of our foster parents are connecting via the net. Click link below or put "Cherokee County Foster" to find us.

<http://www.facebook.com/event.php?sid=9337e82e1d11a302dc6636ebf8cd44e4&eid=75644102307&ref=search>

2011 Board Members

President

Marie Blackwell
mblackwell@fosteroradopt.org
770-378-0759

Secretary/Treasurer

Debbie Earle

If you are interested in sitting on our board let us know, we can always use the help!!

Our address has changed:

162 Morris Rd
Canton, GA 30114

Other Associations or Support Foundations

Foster Care Support Foundation

located at 115 Mansell Place, Roswell, Ga. 30076, 770-641-9591,
<http://www.fostercares.org>
Email: Rachel Ewald rachel@fostercares.org

Embrace Cherokee

Foster Parent Liaison Amy Blanton, amy.blanton@embracega.org
or visit them on the web <http://www.embracega.org>

AFPAG (State Foster Parent Association)

Feel free to contact them at: contactafpag@bellsouth.net

Executive Director

Sharon Carlson
404-918-1956
sharonlc@juno.com

President

Jane Leonard