



CHEROKEE COUNTY FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION

From The President

Cherokee County Foster
Adoptive & Parents
Association

March 2011

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Congratulations to The Reardon family, the Carter family, and Stamey family, they finalized their adoptions this month.

There is a new location we can use to take our children, it is the Mill Creek Family & Urgent Care in Woodstock, they accept Medicaid. The address is 7820 Hickory Flat Hwy, next to the Family Traditions Restaurant. Even though the address is Woodstock they are just past the Hickory Flat area on Hwy 140.



I want to thank all the families that attended this weekends training and we hope you left with valuable information. **Our next Conference is scheduled for June 25th** at the same location. We will be doing a continuation of the *Active Parenting of Teens*

workshop and the Family Nurturing Center will present a workshop on "**Turning Chaos to Confidence**", it teaches parents the importance of family rules, how to maintain discipline in the home and it encompasses the entire family. **VOICE Today** will be back as well.

We would like to thank D'Anna & Lou for coming by and giving us an update on some of the changes taking place and we really enjoyed meeting our new after hours team and learning how they do their job. Patty Sipos (Supervisor), Dawn Gann, Nicole Benoit, Tom Kearns & Ben Addison.

During our conference Ms Nicole Kinser came by to present some cakes she had made to show her talent for baking. She is donating her talents to any Foster or Adoptive families that may need a cake for special occasions like Birthday's, Graduations, etc. she said if you can get a picture of a cake you like she can make it. I think I speak for everyone there that the cakes were nicely decorated and tasted good to. If you want a cake you will need to call her at 404-667-7579 or email her at coleykinser@yahoo.com.



Did you know that the cost of what you buy at the grocery store is expected to rise by 3% this year. We all need any help we can get to be able to put food on the table.

Ms Mashanda Lane a local resident of Canton who is knowledgeable on how to save money at the grocery store teaches classes locally to those interested in saving at the checkout counter. Her classes are 2 hours long and I have asked her if she would come and teach us and she said yes. I know that the month of April is a busy month so I am working on finding a place to do this for the first or second Saturday in May, she would like to do it mid morning. You can invite anyone you like, DFCS staff is invited to come as well. Childcare will not be provided. She will have all materials so all you need to bring is pen and paper. I would like to know if you would be interested in participating in this class.

Mommy Burnout: 20 Ways to Recharge in 20 Minutes



What would you say if a study conducted by Salary.com reported that stay at home moms do work equivalent to \$117,856 per year? What about moms who work, how about \$71,860 plus your annual salary.

But you can't measure the value of a few sacred moments of peace, quiet & self reflection, which is often what busy moms crave most. Maybe what an overtired mom needs to appreciate herself is not so much a price tag on her efforts but regular habit of slowing down and

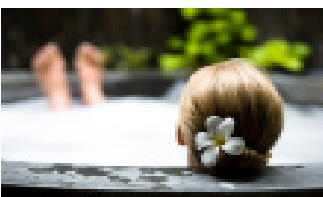


doing less. I know easier said than done right.

Mommy burnout can be addressed when you seize whatever moments of self-care you can, whenever the opportunities arise. So next time life gives you 20 minutes, don't waste a single moment complaining that it's not enough time. Plan ahead so that when the time arises you will know what you want to do, if you are not sure how to spend your time wisely then jump in to one of these relaxing ideas instead, and you'll find that the cure of mommy burnout was within your grasp all along:

1	Enjoy the perfect cup or tea or coffee	11	Take a mini-vacation, go to an ethnic market and spend \$10 on something you would never buy
2	Get your heart rate up	12	Buy yourself an inexpensive bunch of flowers
3	Write four fanciful postcards	13	Go to lunch with your girl friends
4	Flip through that old stack of magazines	14	Engage your inner child, finger paint, color, play with clay
5	Set your DVR	15	Imagine a natural place where you feel safe & comfortable
6	In your journal, write your idea of a perfect day	16	Turn on some soothing music, light a candle, dim the lights and take a bubble bath
7	Pick up the phone and call your best friend	17	Write a gratitude list for all that you have
8	Close the shades and dance to your favorite music	18	Be a rock star, sing in the shower as loud as you can
9	Sit outside under a tree, read or write a poem	19	Soak your feet in a warm footbath for 5 minutes then do your nails
10	Flip through your childhood photos	20	Set your alarm clock for 20 minutes, lie down and count backwards from 100. When alarm goes off you will feel refreshed and rested

Once you've found your favorite ways to briefly rekindle and relax, post your top five where you'll see them, like on the fridge or next to the bathroom mirror. When you steal 20 minutes for yourself, you make like a little brighter for the whole family. Make it a habit and you'll see.



Message from D'Anna



March Madness has been going on all month whether in terms of basketball court play, the winds and weather or as baseball season begins ...whether in basketball or baseball, I hope your favorite team wins!

As our **Year of the Youth** continues, I wanted to let you know we had a very engaging youth panel convene on March 16. Teens from all 3 counties (Cobb, Cherokee and Douglas) participated in an honest and heart felt discussion of what things we as professionals could do better for them while they are in care. The primary value that they want us to recognize is the importance of the case manager visit each month. Across all 3 counties, the consistency of the same worker who knows them is something that all of the youth greatly valued. Secondly, they value their education and, while, many of them did not see the importance of school while they were actually in school - as they look back, they realize that the consistency of one school and their relationship with their teachers would have provided a more positive outcome for them. They also voiced a need to be "normal" - having a cell phone, access to a computer, being able to spend the night out with friends, getting their driver's license, etc. The lack of these privileges and activities were all things that make them feel "different" and impacted their decision to leave care, once given the opportunity. So, we must do better. We must advocate for policies that allow our youth to be as normal as any teen. We must value the continuity of the same school and the same worker and work hard to maintain that relationship. As we continue to learn from our youth, I will update you and share any insights that I feel may be important to you as you care for youth in your homes.

An investment in knowledge pays the best interest. ~ Benjamin Franklin

As we get to know the vision and philosophy of our State Office leadership, I feel there will be a greater emphasis on child safety and less emphasis on family engagement. Rachelle Carneselle, our Division Director, is a prosecutor and her passion for consequences for those who harm children is paramount. In her first few months as our Division Director, we are seeing greater emphasis on making the best safe decision for a child in that moment and to involve the Juvenile Court to assist in the accountability of the matter.

Other news within our Region is effective Friday, April 1; all after-hour and on-call events will be handled by a Regional after-hours team. Each county in our Region will no longer have to rotate a worker in an on-call manner. We are very excited about this change! Our staff has been rotating the On-Call responsibility for years. As our staff has been reduced, the amount of time on rotation has increased, causing more interruptions to family and personal lives of staff. We are all looking forward to a Regional response to these calls, which will allow our staff to be more alert and focused during the work day.

Locally, in February we took custody of 10 children; 7 boys and 3 girls. 3 of these children were from ages 0-5; 1 was from 6-12; and 6 were 13 and over. 7 of these children were white; 2 were Hispanic; and 1 was bi-racial. 4 of these children were placed in Cherokee DFCS foster homes; 2 were placed in group homes; 3 were placed with relatives; and 1 was placed at RYDC. There was 1 sibling group of 3 children. There was 1 child who re-entered care. None of these children were returned at the 72-hour or 10-day hearings.

We had 4 finalized adoptions in February! 2 of these adoptions were in Cherokee DFCS Foster Homes and 2 children were adopted by relatives. Forever families have been created for these children!

We had 10 entrances and 10 exits in February so we remain at 145 children in care. Our median number of days that children remain in foster care is 328 (slightly lower than last month). The reasons for children exiting

Cont....

Message from D'Anna

foster care were for reunification to family, guardianship to a relative, 1 child was emancipated and there were 4 adoptions.

Thanks to Marie Blackwell for putting together a successful training day on Saturday, March 26th at the Antioch Christian Church. There was very good participation from several foster families. 7 training hours were earned - more than half-way to the 10 hours needed for your annual requirement. Please take advantage of these training opportunities throughout the year to remain in compliance as a fully approved foster home.

SAVE THE DATE:

Saturday April 30 (Embrace)

Saturday, April 30 is the date for this years fishing Rodeo! We have lots of new surprises for this year you won't want to miss this event... the pond has been stocked, so mark your calendars now! Contact Amy Blanton for more information at amy.blanton@embracega.org

One of my favorite quotes, by Pericles, is *"What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others."* Here's hoping that your favorite team wins in March Madness, you'll enjoy the blooms budding all around you and in some small way this newsletter will inspire you to reach new heights in all that you do. Thank you for what you continue to do in caring and loving our children.

D'Anna Liber

Director

770-720-3629

dkliber@dhr.state.ga.us



From left to right: D'Anna Liber, Patty Sipos (Supervisor) , Dawn Gann, Nicole Benoit, Tom Kearns, and Ben Addison

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