

fostering FUTURES

Rhode Island Foster Parents Association

No. 5 • Issue 7 • July 2006



Inside this issue:

Dr. Day Care and Family Photos - Page 2

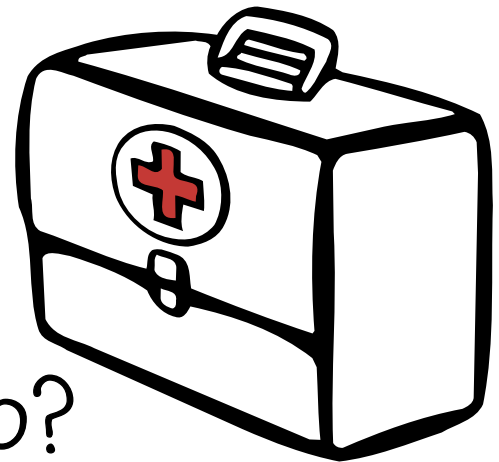
Welcome Our New Director of Development - Page 3

Eastside Marketplace's Friendship Fund - Page 3

Take Me Out To The Ballgame – PawSox Recap - Page 6

Important Information about Non-Prescription Drugs - Page 7

What Do I Do?



Handy, Fridge-Worthy First Aid Print Outs

It's practically impossible to parent a child from infancy to adolescence without encountering a situation, be it minor or major, that requires medical attention either at home or by a health care professional. But www.kidshealth.org has taken the guesswork out of what to do in some common scenarios. Go on-line and check out their First Aid Instruction Sheets (also available in Spanish) - or print them to keep in a folder for easy access - to help you handle some common childhood emergencies and less serious, but still scary, situations. You'll find topics ranging from frostbite to sunburn. Plus a wealth of health information for kids of all ages.

Dear Dr. Day Care,

I am getting remarried to a wonderful man I have been dating for nearly two years... He has three children, I have two. Their age range is from seven to seventeen. We decided to have a simple ceremony and invite our closest family and friends. I am concerned about the wedding pictures, especially the family pictures. How shall I have them photographed? How do I get every one to be a part of the family pictures?

Signed,
Mother and a Bride

Dear Mother and a Bride,

It sounds to me like you need to call a family meeting to have a discussion about the wedding pictures with the "soon to be" blended family. Begin the meeting by bringing a list of pictures that you and the groom have chosen to take and have your children review the list. Ask the children for their feedback on the list. Be very open to their comments and suggestions. Explain to your children that you need their cooperation on the day of the wedding regarding having pictures taken. Ask them if there is any special picture they would like to have taken. For example, they just might want a picture alone with their Dad and biological siblings. I suggest you be accommodating with their picture ideas and set a limit, having each child choose two to three poses of their own design.

It is important to advise your photographer before the wedding (a list would be helpful) on the special pictures you would like to have taken.

If you see any controversy at the family meeting regarding any of the children having a problem with the picture-taking, you might need to work their concerns out individually at a separate time. Enjoy the wedding and may I suggest getting each child a copy of the pictures they suggested and a special framed family picture for a keepsake.

Dr. Day Care is actually Mary Ann Shallcross Smith, Ed.D., owner of Dr. Day Care Enterprises which encompasses Kids Klub, Inc., Dr. Day Care's Child Development Center for Learning and Play, Comprehensive Child Care Services of Rhode Island, Women's Business Talk Show, and is also co-founder of Child Care Connection. Dr. Day Care welcomes your questions as they relate to child care. Please contact her at 1-877-333-1393 ext. 222 or email her at drdaycare@kidsklubri.com.

The Goal is Independence

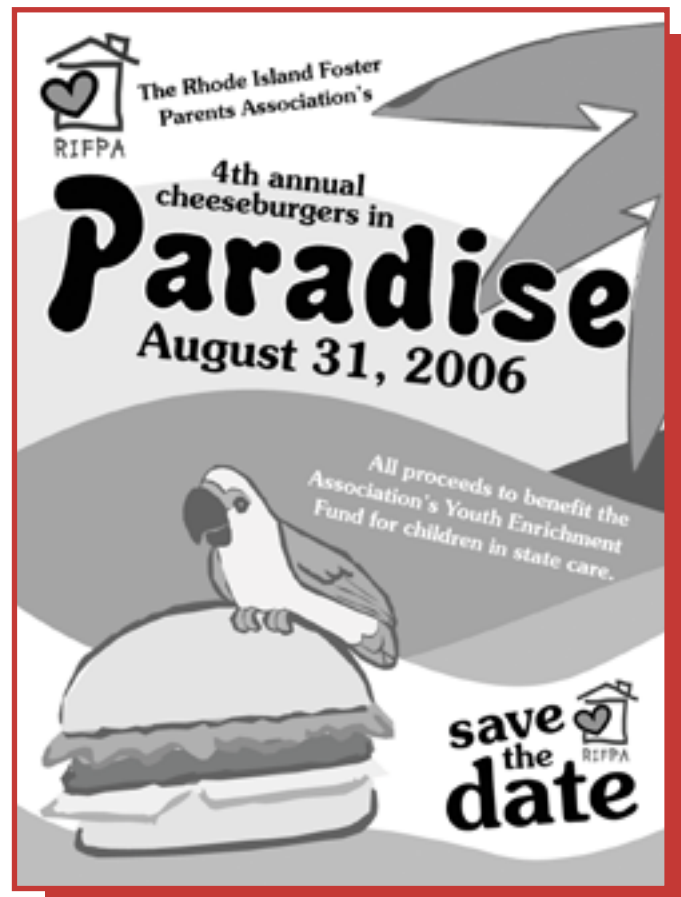
Did You Know?... that any teens who are currently in or were once in foster care, ages 14-23 may be referred to the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (JCYOI). This program will work with young adults on building assets for their future and even has a dollar for dollar match component. Its goal is to help youth have increased opportunities for successful transition to self-sufficiency.

The next two Financial Literacy Trainings are July 18th, 19th and 20th from 10am – 3pm and August 9th, 10th and 11th from 10am to 3pm.

For further information contact Lori Nelson @ (401) 781-3669 or lnelson@caseyfamilyservices.org. Lori is accepting referrals TODAY!

Please note that the JCYOI is designed to create financial, educational, vocational, health care, and entrepreneurial opportunities for youth, therefore an appropriate level of cognitive and behavioral skills are necessary to participate.

Also, transportation is NOT provided.



A Message from Our New Director of Development

Julie DiBari

I am very pleased to join the wonderful team at the Rhode Island Foster Parents Association. As most of you already know, RIFPA provides many critical services to both foster parents and youth in care. As I learned more about the Association's work I knew it was the place for me. While I am new to Rhode Island I am not new to the issues facing foster youth and foster parents. I myself am a former foster youth and a product of a loving foster family. I look forward to working with all of you this year and in the coming years to develop and provide more supports for youth and families. Look out for more information in a new section of the newsletter that will highlight development activities including programming, events, and recognition of our generous supporters.

Do You Shop at the Eastside Marketplace?

Your grocery receipts can help pay for summer camp for a child in foster care! The Rhode Island Foster Parents Association is a member of the Eastside Marketplace's "Friendship Fund". Eastside Marketplace will donate 1% of all receipts submitted to the Association's Youth Enrichment Fund. Help us fund summer camperships for children in foster care!

Get involved and spread the word to your family and friends!

Mail your original grocery receipts from Eastside Marketplace to:

RIFPA
55 South Brow Street
East Providence, RI 02914.

Thanks in advance for your participation.

Student Helping Students

We would like to extend a big thank you to the Wheeler Student Philanthropy Board for their contribution of \$550 to the Youth Enrichment Fund. This fund offers grants to youth age thirteen and under who live in DCYF sponsored out of home care, and who would like to participate in an activity that will enhance their self esteem, skills or knowledge. The Wheeler students who participated developed a thoughtful grant review process that included a site visit at the Rhode Island Foster Parents Association. Their generous contribution will ensure that more foster children are able to participate in the same activities, at the same facilities, as their peers.

IRIE Therapeutic Riding Program

A program involving equine activities for youth to improve their self-esteem, muscle tone, posture, coordination and overall emotional well-being.

IRIE's Therapeutic Riding Program is located on a four-acre working horse farm in Rhode Island. As horses have the potential to impact youth in extremely powerful ways, the program utilizes equine activities to help young adults bolster their self-esteem and overall emotional well-being, all the while improving their muscle tone, posture and coordination. Riders experience an unmatched sense of independence and this can lead to a positive improvement in their physical, emotional and mental health.

The North American Riding for the Handicapped Association states that the benefits of horse riding include:

- **Improved Coordination**
- **Strengthened Muscles**
- **Sensory Integration**
- **Improved Self Confidence**
- **Self Discipline**
- **Development of Responsibility and Respect**

Unlike other therapeutic riding programs that maintain an exclusive focus on physical disabilities, this program specializes in mental health issues. In addition to riding lessons, IRIE clinicians (as requested) can actually provide psychotherapy with youth as the individual is engaged in equine activities, such as grooming, tacking, etc.

Clinical evidence suggests that programs such as this may also help:

- **ADD/ADHD**
- **Anxiety**
- **Conduct Disorders**
- **Eating Disorders**
- **Learning Disorders**
- **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**

Services are tailored to meet the needs of the individual youth. Participants can be provided horseback riding lessons – and much more. For instance, youth can also be taught how to groom and take care of horses, as well as learn how to maintain the stable.



To request an enrollment application, or if you would like more information on the Therapeutic Riding Program please contact Amanda Tumminelli at 401-497-8109 or a.tumminelli@cox.net

The Department of Children, Youth and Families

B · U · L · L · E · T · I · N

NEW and IMPROVED Foster Parent Referral Program

Recruit a new home for teenagers, receive \$500 in “bonus” payments!

Current foster or adoptive parents are the best source of inspiration to potential foster parents. By recruiting new foster parents you may be eligible to earn a bonus through the new and improved Foster Parent Referral Program!

If you refer an individual or couple for foster care, you will receive a “bonus” payment of \$25 when the prospective foster parent completes and submits an application for foster care to DCYF. A second “bonus” payment of \$75 will be made once the prospective foster parent completes all of the licensing steps and is licensed as a foster home. Finally, the referring foster parent will receive a final “bonus” payment of \$250 when the prospective foster parent(s) accept their first placement. And, if the first placement is a teenager, the “bonus” payment is \$400. The prospective foster parent will have to report the name of the referring foster/adoptive parent in order for the “bonus” payments to be processed.

For more information regarding this new referral incentive, please contact the Association at 401-438-3900.

HIGHER EDUCATION GRANT

Money is available for youth in the custody of DCYF to attend Rhode Island College, the University of Rhode Island, or the Community College of Rhode Island. This grant money can fund the gap between other financial aid and the full cost of tuition, room and board, books, and related expenses. Youth are eligible to apply if they have:

- been in the custody of DCYF for a minimum of 24 months at the time of the recommendation;
- received a high school diploma or GED not more than 1 year prior to the date of recommendation;
- been accepted into either CCRI, RI College, or URI;
- applied for financial aid;

To qualify, applicants must also be under 21 years of age and enrolled as full time students.

Contact the Independent Living Coordinator, John O’Riley, at 401.528.3764 to apply or for more information.

Answers to your questions are a phone call away...

Keep this list of contacts on hand. Answers to your questions are just a phone call away.

LICENSING

Lee Sperduti	528.3605
Phil Steiner	528.3622
Linda Iacofano	528.3671
MaryAnn Jordan	528.3607
Zafar Khan	528.3617
Pat Logan	528.3620
Michael Motta	528.3609
Don Aldridge	528.3673

PLACEMENT

Rachel Arpin	528.3779
Michelle Berard	528.3782
Lisa Levesque	528.3778

RECRUITMENT

Robin Perez	528.3791
-------------	----------

Please update your files

If an opening becomes available in your home, please call the **Placement Unit: Michelle at 528.3782**

The **mission** of the Association is to **provide education** and other forms of **support** to families that provide substitute care, and to the community-at-large, in order to further the cause of **children** who cannot live with their **parents**.

Major Fun in the Minor Leagues

Our 3rd Annual Foster Family Night at the Pawtucket Red Sox was held on Friday, May 26th. This event would not have been possible without support from Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island, our marquee sponsor. We would also like to acknowledge funding support from all of our “Diamond Sponsors”; RIFPA, DCYF, RICORP, Casey Family Services, Communities for People, Groden Center, Phoenix Homes, and RI MENTOR.

Thank you all for helping to make this event such a tremendous success. Because of your support, over 425 children and families turned out for a wonderful night of Paw Sox baseball vs. the Louisville Bats. The evening featured t-shirts for all (we still have some extra shirts available on request!) a pre-game tent party barbeque, visits from the team’s mascots Paws and Sox, and an autograph session with a Paw Sox player! Our tent and reserved seating were right along the first base line and several lucky children even caught some foul balls! This was such a wonderful way for us to conclude National Foster Care Month in Rhode Island. Many foster families who attended the event took the time to express how much fun (despite the weather and final score!) they had and that they enjoyed the food, the location, and the opportunity to meet with other foster families.



Mascot “Sox” entertains the children before the game.



A Paw Sox Player signs autographs before the game.



Staff from Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island staff the event.

Kids Aren't Just Small Adults

Important Information About Giving Non-Prescription Medicine To Your Children

Today's nonprescription, over-the-counter (OTC) drugs are safe and effective treatments. And they are serious medicines - no less so for children than adults. With that in mind, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), working with manufacturers of OTC drugs, developed this important advice for parents:

1. Never guess on the amount of medicine given. Kids aren't just small adults: Half an adult dose may be more than your child needs - or not enough to help.
2. Always check for the proper dose. Read the label - every time.
3. Know the abbreviations for tablespoon (Tbsp) and teaspoon (Tsp). Don't confuse them.
4. Avoid making conversions. If the label says two teaspoons and you're using a dosing cup with ounces only, get another measuring device.
5. Never play doctor. Twice the dose is not appropriate just because your child seems twice as sick as last time.
6. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before giving two medicines at the same time.
7. Always follow the age-limit recommendations. If the label says don't give to children under two, don't do it. Call your doctor.
8. Always use the child-resistant cap, and re-lock the cap after each use.
9. Heed the "keep out of reach" warning. We've come a long way since cod liver oil and nose holding to get the medicine down. Today's medicines are often flavored - all the more reason to store all drugs out of reach.
10. As with any medicine, always check the package and the medicine itself for signs of tampering. Don't use any medicine from a package that shows cuts, tears, slices or other imperfections. If you notice anything suspicious, tell the pharmacist or store manager.

This information was developed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Nonprescription Drug Manufacturers Association: FDA, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, HFI-40, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Maryland 20857. NDMA, Nonprescription Drug Manufacturers Association, Office of Public Affairs, 1150 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. Washington, DC 20036.

Rhode Island Foster Parents Association

Executive Board

President

Anne Pascucci

Vice President

Jacqueline Dowdy

Treasurer

Catherine Hanrahan

Secretary

Patricia Corbett

Immediate Past President

Mary Ann Shallcross Smith

At-Large

Lynne DeValerio

Patricia DaSilva

Dorothy Fields

Linn Freedman

Michelle Saunders

Aaron Sherman

Peter Slom

Executive Director

Lisa Guillette

Development Director

Julie DiBari

Mentor Coordinator

Leslie Carpenter-Vargas

Office Manager

Linda Fournier

Phone 401.438.3900

Fax 401.438.3901

Email rifpa.org@verizon.net



Rhode Island Foster Parents Association
55 South Brow Street
RIFPA East Providence, RI 02914

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PROVIDENCE,
RI
02904
PERMIT NO.
3056

web <http://www.rifpa.org> email rifpa.org@verizon.net

FREE CHILD CARE for Children in Foster Care

Comp Services offers **free preschool** to all foster children ages 3, 4, and 5. We work with over 20 child care centers and family child care homes in Rhode Island. We are waiting to offer your foster child a fun and exciting learning experience, call Rita at 401.475.7707 x250.

Foster Parent HelpLine

The Foster Parent HelpLine is a peer support service that is available statewide. It is staffed by foster parents who understand the issues and situations you face on a daily basis. Foster parents are encouraged to call the helpline with their questions or when they simply need someone to talk to.

Call the Rhode Island Foster Parents Association's HelpLine:

1.800.655.7787

24 Hours

Your call will be confidential.

A service of the Mentor Program.
RIFPA STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS ARE MANDATED REPORTERS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT LAWS.



Fostering Futures is published monthly by the Rhode Island Foster Parents Association, and partially funded through DCYF, to keep foster parents and others informed and aware of the issues and activities that affect them. Please send your ideas, suggestions, tips, and input via e-mail to: kara.duffin@rifpa.org, entering "Newsletter" in the subject line, or mail to:

RIFPA
Attn: Newsletter Editor
55 South Brow Street,
East Providence, RI 02914