



April 2010



Extremely Important Issue Regarding Water Safety

By Michelle Trca, Director

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Special points of interest:

- * May 1 is this year's annual Foster Family Appreciation Picnic at Kiwanis Park for District 1. Please RSVP by April 26th to Martha or Liliana. Families MUST RSVP to swim, no exceptions.
- * May 15 Tucson will hold their Foster Family Picnic. Please contact your FS for more details.

Summer is nearing and with that, comes high temperatures and increased water exposure outdoors. A Place to Call Home wants you to keep your family safe around water, not only during the summer months, but all year long as well!

Water Safety: Water safety means keeping family members safe around any body of water. Primarily, swimming pools and lakes, but also of importance and not to be forgotten or minimized are smaller bodies of water such as bathtubs, toilets, buckets of water, lawn features and spas.

Pool Fence Requirements: APTCH enforces pool fence compliance 100%. APTCH has a higher standard of pool fence requirements beyond the minimum state licensing/certifications requirements. Presently, APTCH stands firm and unbending that all licensed/certified homes with a swimming pool or body of water over 18 inches deep outdoors are required to have a fence that meets the DES inspection requirements. Beginning 2010, APTCH further specified that all new families joining APTCH must have an iron wrought fence in particular, as this fencing has proven time and time again to be the safest in preventing accidental drowning and near-

drowning. As a reminder, pool fencing and fencing around any body of water must remain in compliance at all times and under no circumstances should a family ever allow their fencing requirements to be out of compliance. Should you have extenuating circumstances that would create violations of this agency policy and licensing requirement, notify your Family Specialist immediately.

Supervision: According to the Phoenix Fire Department, drowning is one of the leading causes of death for children under the age of four in Arizona and that most children drown in their own pools. However, many children also drown in **buckets, toilets, bathtubs and small outdoor bodies of water**. The BEST method to prevent accidental drowning or near drowning is maintaining proper supervision. Foster children are required to be supervised 24/7 and heightened supervision is expected around any body of water. **NEVER leave a child or vulnerable adult alone in (or near) a body of water for ANY reason!!!** Phoenix Fire Department also reports that a child can drown in "just a few inches of water". Never lower your standard or make any exceptions when it comes to proper and ex-

pected supervision!

Vulnerable Population: For our most vulnerable population, children and adults with disabilities, never over estimate their capabilities in or around water. Never make any assumptions that lowering proper and expected supervision for any reason is permissible. It's not! Be an expert with your child or adult's ISP and ensure you are well versed in their safety risks, especially any related to water. ISPs will document specific risks associated with swimming pools, bathtubs, etc. and document the specific instruction for water safety requirements.

New Placements: Verify water safety issues or risks for any child or adult being placed in your home. APTCH screens for this information at referral, but be diligent to inquire and obtain verified information for risks and safety requirements with water.

A Place to Call Home wants to ensure all measures are taken to keep children and adults safe and protected. We take our commitment to the children and adults placed in our care to heart and believe strongly in what we do. Join us in an emphasized effort to ensure safety for children

Behavior Specialist Corner

By James Leonard, D2 Behavior Specialist

As I write this I am beginning my second week working at A Place to Call Home. It has been a whirlwind; meeting tons of people and a few times seeing some familiar faces again. I was not sure what to expect as I started visiting with some of the families and began meeting people, but I have been in awe of some of the things I have seen.

In particular I walked into a home and began talking to a Foster Mom about data collection and behavior charts in order to develop a behavior treatment plan for her son.

As I mentioned his name, her eyes lit up and her smile was electric as she

talked (**gushed!**) about how great he has been doing. Then, as if on cue, he walked into the home and from the door yelled “Mom!” and walked directly to her and gave her a hug and kiss as she said (More gushing here) “Que Bonita Niño”- that beautiful child.

In that moment I was reminded of a quote that I have repeated many times before. Billie Holiday once said, “A person needs a little bit of love in their life and food in their stomach before they can listen to anybody’s sermon on how to behave.”

Sometimes we get so caught up in the ABC’s we miss this setting event, when a person has a place they belong and people they belong to, then we really have a chance to affect their behavior. Turns out mom’s love and inclusion into a family, balanced with a successful behavior treatment plan, is a treatment plan for success!



Native Pathways

By Tallerita Tunney, D1 Family Specialist

American Indian Terminology

Over the next several articles, a review of ICWA and American Indian history will be done so that you as foster families can have a better understanding as to the structure of American Indian child welfare is set up the way it is and why each tribe/community holds onto decision making powers as much as they do. Initially, below is a list of “catch phrases” that have a major role in the history of American Indian people and the responsibility of the US government.

BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs): An agency now under the Department of the Interior, and formerly under the Department of War. The BIA was formed in 1824 to help facilitate the relationship between American Indian communities and the US federal government due to the treaty obligations the US government undertook in its formation of the Constitution both as a trust relationship as well as a government-to-government relationship. The relationship initially was charged

with assimilating the American Indian (e.g. It’s location under the Department of War), now it has evolved to facilitating the self-determination of American Indian peoples. Today the BIA is responsible for ensuring that treaty rights of the 562 federally recognized tribes and communities are protected while assisting with meeting self-determination goals. This rocky relationship has created a long standing history of distrust among American Indian tribes and communities and the BIA and other governmental arms.

Trust relationship: The legal obligation of the federal government to provide certain protections to American Indian peoples, in theory as compensation for the land and lives lost with the foundation and expansion of the USA. Trust responsibilities of the US government include education, health, child welfare, resource management and compensation (i.e. coal/oil mining, etc.).

Government-to-Government: The idea and acknowledgement that American Indian tribes have a right to their own governmental structures. The federal government works with each individual tribe/community’s government. There are 12 BIA regional offices to assist with the communication and bureaucratic needs of each tribe/community.

Self-Determination: The freedom and ability of each tribe/community to make decisions for their own tribe/community. The Self-Determination Act of 1975 brought a halt to an unofficial stance by the US government to terminate tribes and groups of people for over 30 documented years.

Pan-Indian: The formation of a collective group of American Indian peoples that crosses tribal and language lines. The most popular image of a pan-Indian event is the Powwow as it has moved further away from a specifically “Plains tribes” activity.

District 1 Partnership With Cornerstone Christian Fellowship: Second Saturday

We are excited to announce that Cornerstone Christian Fellowship of Chandler has chosen to do a community service project, called Second Saturdays, benefiting you, our dedicated and hardworking foster and adoptive families!

Volunteers will be dispatched into the community beginning the second Saturday in May to help with various household projects such as painting, yard work, light handyman projects and cleaning. If you live in the following zip codes and could use an extra hand doing some household projects, please email Recruitment Coordinator Jacqueline Destremps (jdestremps@tocallhome.com) or call our Mesa office at 480-456-0549.

Currently volunteers will assist families living in the following zip codes:

85286; 85295; 85297; 85298; 85248; 85249; 85224; 85225; 85226

Depending on the success of the program, we may be able to open up this opportunity to families living throughout Maricopa County.

We will review all requests received to determine which requests can be fulfilled and notify you if you have been chosen to set a date for the project. Please understand that not all requests can be fulfilled at this time.

More information will be provided at the April 24th Quarterly Support Meeting as well. Anticipated start date and dispatch of volunteers is targeted for the second Saturday in May.



Coming Together by Julie Radunz

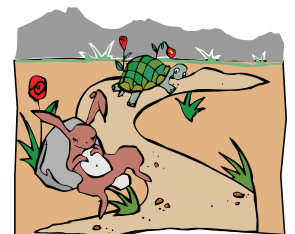
“Once in a forest lived a rabbit and a tortoise. The rabbit had the habit of making fun with the slow moving tortoise. As days went one day the tortoise got irritated and shouted at the rabbit. The rabbit then challenged the tortoise to have a race with him. If he wins the race the rabbit will stop making fun of the tortoise. The tortoise also agreed. Both started the race. The rabbit ran very fast and within a few minutes he was near the winning line. He was not able to see the tortoise so he decided to rest for a while till the tortoise arrives, then he can quickly go to the winning line before the tortoise crosses it!

The rabbit rested under a tree and soon he was in deep sleep. When he awoke he saw that the tortoise had already crossed the winning line! The tortoise had won the

match. So being fast like a rabbit is not a matter but being steady and active is a big thing like tortoise.”

Written by Debbie Williamson

- Bed Tyme Tales - www.bedtymetales.com



Parents, this is a great way to bring up the subject of homework with your kids. Toward the end of the school year kids tend to get restless in school and lose sight of the end goal. Encourage them stick with their hard work as they reach the finish line.

Nominate Your Caseworker

Has your caseworker provided exceptional support through your foster care/adoption process?

Each month AdoptUsKids will recognize a professional and feature their story on their website.

Send the story of your caseworker to family@adoptuskids.org.

Please include the caseworker's name and contact information.



Direct Deposit

The Department of Children Youth and Families has recently implemented direct deposit of foster care reimbursement checks. If you are interested in having your reimbursement be directly deposited into your checking or savings account, call the number listed on your child's billing form to obtain more information about signing up for this program.

Family Focus—Opening Your Home and Your Heart by Liz Mehnert, D1 Program Coordinator

The Bumann's have been opening their home and their hearts to children in need with A Place to Call Home since July 2007. Katherine and James have exemplified what "Doing Right by the Children and Adults We Serve" means. Katherine and James came to A Place to Call Home with the skills and experience necessary to care and provide for medically fragile and special needs children. Katherine is an LPN who has always wanted to care for children with high needs requiring specialized care and her husband James has always had a special place in his heart for children with special needs. The Bumann's have raised three children of their own who are grown now and they see Fostering and Adopting children with special needs as a "Journey into the second part of their life". They are currently fostering three children with special needs and are medically fragile. These children require 24 hour a-day supervision and monitoring of their specialized medical equipment with a high level

of commitment to ensure their needs are met on a daily basis. Katherine and James coordinate their days by the number of medical appointments, follow up therapies and medical monitoring each child requires. It is a busy and complicated schedule, but the Bumann's have committed to accommodate their lives to meet their children's needs. Katherine and James believe wholeheartedly that fostering and adopting is truly a commitment of the mind, heart and spirit and that the reward is not a check but the smile on a child's face and that as a foster parent you receive so much in return from making that commitment.

The Bumann's adopted their special needs son Dylan after being told by many people they would never be able to adopt him. As Katherine states "When everyone was saying no, God was whispering yes. God blessed us with our son September 9, 2009. Now who would you have listened to?" The Bumann's believe you cannot let the system barriers get in

the way of taking care of kids. When Katherine is told no, she responds with yes and how can I get it done!

Last Thanksgiving Katherine and James took their family on a road trip to Indiana for the holidays. Everyone told them it would be too difficult to try and travel with all of the children and their medical equipment. In perfect Bumann family fashion, they did take the trip and Katherine arranged for all the travel equipment and necessities for the children. While it was a lot of work and coordination, the outcome of the trip was a wonderful experience for all and offered an opportunity for the children to experience new things and to feel like a part of a family. Katherine can only describe the experience as feeling blessed. Katherine and James treat their foster children as their own and truly provide A Place to Call Home for them. We are thankful to have the Bumann's as part of our A Place to Call Home Family.

Q & A

by Jacqueline Destremps

Beginning with this newsletter we will feature a new Q & A section. We realize that you have a lot of questions, and many families have those same questions, so this is a way to try and get those questions answered for everyone.

Q: We have friends who would like to become foster parents, how do they start the process?

A: We love it when our families refer friends! It's likely they've interacted with you and your foster children, so they have some idea of what it takes to be a great foster parent. Just have them call the Recruitment Coordinator, either Jacqueline Destremps in Mesa at 480-456-0549 or Lora Sall in Tucson at 520-318-9906. ~ Jacqueline Destremps, D1 Recruitment Coordinator

Q: Can Foster Parents claim foster children on their taxes?

A: Unfortunately, the answer to that is more complicated than can be answered in a short Q&A section. There are variables for determining if they can claim the foster placement as a qualifying child. For most of our foster families the answer is "no", because they do not meet the requirements from the IRS. However, they would need to consult their tax accountant regarding their situation. ~ Jill Richardson, D1 Accountant

Spring Has Sprung by David Willing

The official 1st day of spring was March 20th, and as all of you know, with the increased daylight available to us, comes the need to organize increased activities with your children, particularly outdoors. Here is one activity that can include the whole family, and help children feel a sense of belonging and achievement:

Painting Planting Pots

Many gardeners like to start growing seeds inside in early spring, before transplanting them to a garden. But before planting, you can make fun pots to start your wonderful little gardens in. This is a great activity to start welcoming spring into your homes. You'll need at least one small terra-cotta pot and saucer for each person, a variety of paints and brushes and of course, imagination! Paint the pots in wonderful spring colors and themes and talk about what kind of plants you're going to start in them.

Important Dates To Remember

District 1 - Please call Martha or Liliana to RSVP.

- 4/2—Office Closed for Good Friday
- 4/12—Home Improvement: Mandated Reporters, Sexual Abuse Investigations, and a Family Violence Discussion; Presented by the Mesa Police Department for the Center Against Family Violence Location: Mesa Office
- 4/24—Quarterly Support Meeting (Mandatory for all licensed families to attend) : Forms Training: Old and New Location: North Bible Church 15678 N. Greenway-Hayden Loop, Scottsdale

District 2 - Please contact your Family Specialist to RSVP

- 4/2—Office Closed for Good Friday
- 4/3—CPR/First Aid
- 4/15—Home Improvement
- 4/17—CPR/FA Recertification
- 4/24—Quarterly Support Meeting

Ideas for activities, donations or sponsorships for the May Appreciation Picnic? Contact Jacqueline Destremps in Mesa or Lora Sall in Tucson.

Tucson Area Events

4/3/10 & 4/10/10—7:00pm

Adults \$5.00

Children under 12 Free

Tucson Monsoon Women's Football Game at Tucson High, A general welcome to APTCH families will be announced at the game when APTCH families attend. (Confidentiality will be strictly enforced)

4/10/10 10:00 – 1:00 Free 520-396-3266

Family Street Painting, Green Streets Block Party, geared for the whole family, you'll be painting a vibrant, environmental mural in the street around the Feld Davis Park.

4/17/10 9:00 -1:00 520-404-4471

Brandi Fenton Park, 3482 E. River, Tucson, AZ, 4th Annual Pima County Fun Fair, "Parade of Horses", Learn about

Arabian horses, hands-on demonstrations & educational exhibits.

4/24/10 7am – 12pm Free 298-5490

March for Babies

Team up for babies and help prevent Birth Defects, Pre-mature Birth & Infant Mortality.

Event includes a beautiful walk & post-walk celebration with food, music, & more/U of A Mall by Old Main.

4/24/10 1pm – 11pm Free

Crawfish Festival

Our Lady of LaVang Parish, 800 S. Tucson, 85716, 940-6749.

Phoenix Area Events

Every Friday

Free—Movies in the Park 2010 at Kiwanis Community Park – Mill Ave. and All-America Way

Movies begin at dusk (approximately 7:00 p.m.)

Movies shown by the fire pit on the west side of Kiwanis Lake. Visit www.tempe.gov/Events/Movies.htm for more information.

4/17—10 a.m.-4 p.m

Global Village Festival

This family friendly festival celebrates a variety of cultures through art, music, dance, food and sports. Wander through areas devoted to different ethnicities, engage in hands-on activities and visit an international bazaar. Expand your culinary horizons and sample food from seven continents. Watch the Parade of Nations, featuring kids from Gilbert dressed in clothes that represent their respective native lands. Gilbert North Civic Center Campus, 50 E. Civic Center Drive. FREE. 480-503-6224.

www.ci.gilbert.az.us.

4/20 3:30—6:30

Mesa Prevention Alliance Presents: “4:20: Take Back The Time”

Skateland ~ 7 E. Southern Ave., Mesa

Free admission and skate rentals for the first 1000 skaters. Bring your friends! Have fun skating! Sign up for Programs and get great information about youth activities in Mesa!

4/24 8:00 AM—2:30 PM

Horses Help’s annual Spring Round Up and Special Needs Lifestyle Expo

Expo offering a wide array of information and resources to the special needs community. Vendors will provide information on nutrition, habilitation, life planning, medical and care in an outdoor booth setting at the Riding Center. Additionally, a petting zoo, games and a BBQ lunch for \$5 will be provided. For more information please visit www.HorsesHelp.org.

4/29—5/1

The 2010 Special Olympics Arizona Summer Games will feature track and field events, artistic and rhythmic gymnastics, kayaking*, power lifting, tennis, equestrian* and volleyball. For a complete listing of 2010 Summer Games events, times and locations, please visit www.SpecialOlympicsArizona.org/2010-summer-games

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Serving children and adults with
special needs.

