



Alabama
Foster & Adoptive
Parent Association

Newsletter

November 2016

A Publication of the Alabama Foster & Adoptive Parent Association

**I didn't give you
the gift of life,
life gave me
the gift of you!**

—Unknown

celebrating

National Adoption Month



A message from the President

November is National Adoption Month. The number of children adopted from Foster Care this year is over 500. There are still hundreds waiting to be adopted. Through the efforts of people like you we can get the word out about this. I know many counties are planning events this month to celebrate adoption month and to recruit more foster and adoptive homes. If you are planning an event please contact us to either attend or to help you spread the word on the afapa.org website or Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parent facebook page.

Hope everyone reading this had a good Summer. It has been a very busy for all of us at AFAPA. Many of us have been attending GPS and now TIPPS panel nights and week 8 TIPPS nights, attending local foster parent association meetings, and our advocates have been attending meetings with foster parents all over the state as part of their support system.

Please read and enjoy this issue of our newsletter. If you know a foster parent who is not receiving this let me know and it will be available online at www.afapa.org.

RPPS is a new acronym you will be hearing, this stands for Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Standard. All foster parents must receive this training for their home to be approved. This includes current foster parents as well as those currently attending training to be a foster parent.

Please visit our website at www.afapa.org and like us on facebook Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parents.

I'm reposting this in case you missed it last time.

Goodbye GPS Hello TIPS: Trauma Informed Partnering for Permanency and Safety

Family Services is pleased to announce a new curriculum for foster/adoptive parents and other providers of residential services to our children. TIPS complements and supports state and national efforts to develop a System of Care which features more trauma-informed service provision to our children and families. TIPS incorporates trauma-informed research, philosophy, and practice related to the roles of foster and adoptive parents. Input and material from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network are incorporated throughout.

Because there are many agencies and certified GPS leaders in Alabama, the complete statewide transition to TIPS will require an aggressive training schedule. In the meantime, county staff and agencies are to continue training GPS until the current GPS Leaders can receive the 3 day TIPS Leader Update Certification training or new Leaders complete the 8 day TIPS Leader Update Certification course. Deciding Together has also been updated to TIPS/Deciding Together. The parent group sessions will continue to be co-facilitated, with one of the co-facilitators being an experienced foster/adoptive parent who has been certified as a TIPS Leader and an agency co-leader.

The transition to the trauma-informed version of MAPP will be supported by a website for Alabama's TIPS Leaders and Trainers which contains training materials, articles, and other resources. The site will be available only to those who have completed the TIPS Leader certification process, and information about how to access the site will be shared with those individuals.

Buddy Hooper / *President AFAPA*



ADOPTION MONTH HISTORY



The first major effort to promote awareness of the need for adoptive families for children in the foster care system occurred in Massachusetts. In 1976, then-Governor Mike Dukakis proclaimed Adoption Week and the idea grew in popularity and spread throughout the nation. President Gerald Ford made the first National Adoption Week proclamation, and in 1990, the week was expanded to a month due to the number of states participating and the number of events.

During the month, states, communities, public and private organizations, businesses, families, and individuals celebrate adoption as a positive way to build families. Across the nation, activities and observances such as recognition dinners, public awareness and recruitment campaigns, and special events spotlight the needs of children who need permanent families. It also includes National Adoption Day, traditionally a Saturday, which is observed in courthouses across the nation as thousands of adoptions are finalized simultaneously.

GET INVOLVED & PLAN AHEAD

Promoting awareness can be done through planned events and campaigns, gatherings and celebrations, and simple everyday activities. These are all opportunities to educate ourselves and others about adoption and about issues surrounding adoption. With a little advance planning, our efforts can work wonders. Even one family for one child is a success.

NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY NOVEMBER 19TH, 2016

This day is a collective, National effort to bring awareness to the more than 100,000 children who are in foster care waiting for a permanent and loving family to call their own. Last year more than 4000 children were adopted on NAD and since it began 16 years ago more than 58,000 children have been adopted on NAD. In Alabama there are hundreds of children who are in foster care available to be adopted but have no identified resources available. Most of these children are older children. If you are foster parent willing to adopt consider expanding your willingness to adopt an older child.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

For Fostering Hope Scholarship go to www.fc2sprograms.org for application process. This Scholarship covers tuition and fees to all of Alabama's 42 public community and technical colleges, four-year colleges or universities. Children currently in the legal custody of the foster care program at the time of graduation from high school or at the time of receipt of a GED certificate are eligible to apply up to the age of 26. Children who were age 14 or older when adopted from the foster care program are also eligible to apply up to age 26. You may call the state DHR information number for additional information.

For information about the Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parent Association Scholarship go to www.afapa.org website. We are currently working on an online application so keep checking back. The deadline to apply is March 1st, 2017. This is for a \$1000 scholarship that will be sent to the student's college and deposited into their account. This Scholarship is for Foster Youth and Birth and Adopted youth of Alabama Foster Parents. For more information contact Buddy Hooper at buddy@afapa.org.

MEET DEVAN P.



Devan, born July 2003, is a thoughtful and kindhearted boy who is interested in sports, video games, cars, and music. He is very likable and aims to please others. His favorite color is blue and his favorite restaurant is Taco Bell. He

enjoys going to church and interacting with other children. He does well in school when he is not distracted by others. His favorite subject in school is math. He is active and likes to be outdoors playing football and basketball.

Devan needs a family that is patient and will provide consistent structure and unconditional love. He sometimes struggles with behaviors related to impulse control, but he continues to work on those issues. He has siblings that he would like to maintain communication with if possible. He is excited about the possibility of being a part of a permanent home. He would benefit from a two-parent home with or without children.

Photograph provided by www.heartgalleryalabama.com

AFAPA JOURNAL AND HANDBOOK

The Journal had not been updated in several years. We had been waiting on some recent updates so they could be included. The updated Daily Journal for Foster and Adoptive Parents will have the new AFAPA logo on the cover. The contents have been updated with current policies and some new policy. AFAPA has been giving these journals out for 10 years to foster and adoptive parents as well as DHR staff at the many trainings we do around the state and at the annual conference at Shocco Springs. To make it easier for you to have a copy of the updated material we have also created an Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parent Handbook which can be accessed and downloaded from the afapa.org website. The one difference is the Handbook does not have the calendar included but it does have DHR phone numbers that are not in the journal. That makes it easier to download and print the 68 pages or you can download and keep a copy on your computer.

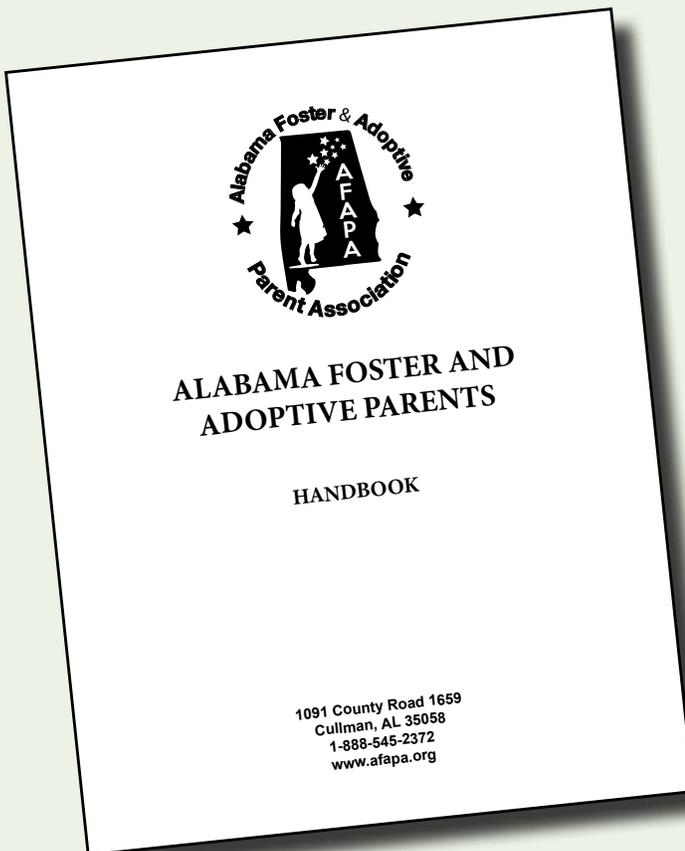
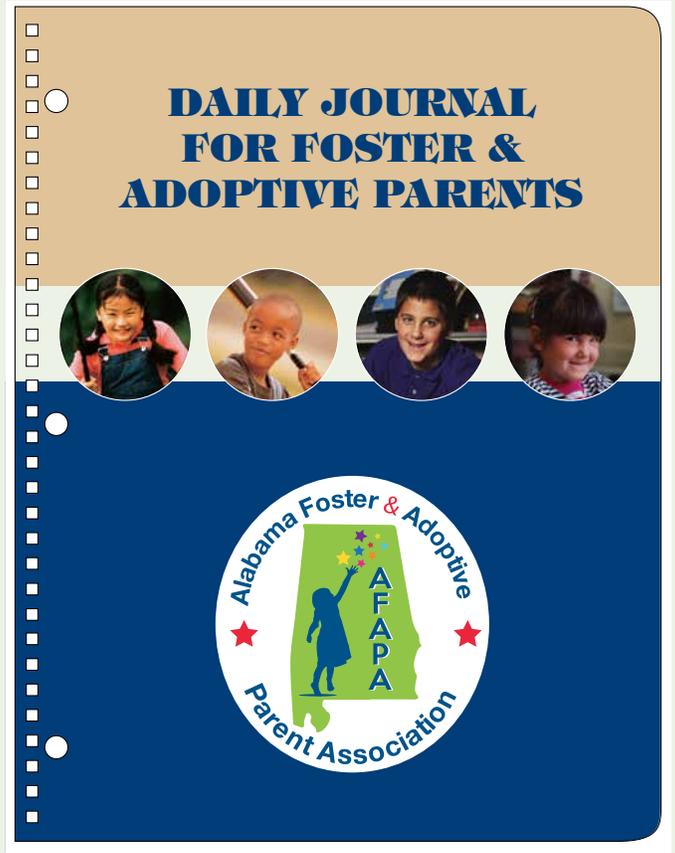


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MEET DARRYL



Darryl, born September 2000 is a happy boy with an infectious smile. He has many friends and enjoys being around older kids as he says they are more

fun. He enjoys playing video games and being outside with friends playing basketball and football. He seems proud when he talks about being a greeter at church and assisting with the offering. His favorite foods are pancakes, pizza, and French fries. Darryl receives special education services and needs additional help in math and reading. He has an IEP. He enjoys school but can be disruptive at times. He receives medication to help control his behavior. During times of change in his life he will regress until he adjusts to the changes in routine. Darryl wants a family that will keep him safe and will play games with him. He would like to have other children in the home and wants a family that is active. He enjoys being around animals and says that he would love to have a pet.

Photograph provided by www.heartgalleryalabama.com

To learn more about the children waiting for adoption, visit www.heartgalleryalabama.com



MEET DEVIN



Devin, born November 1999, is a charming, charismatic and intelligent child. Devin enjoys doing his own thing but can develop some friendships when given

the opportunity. Devin is a very good reader. He loves to read about airplanes and has lots of ideas about flying them. He does not watch much television and prefers to play video games or play on the computer. He is not really that interested in sports but has participated in playing soccer and volleyball. Devin enjoys the outdoors. He loves animals and has enjoyed dogs at his past placements. He also likes to go hiking. Devin enjoys eating out and talking about the future. He has decided to get his GED and pursue a career in car mechanics. He loves cars of all types and thinks a job working with his hands will be a good fit to keep him busy and interested. His social skills are average although he becomes anxious when he has to interact with a lot of people but is getting better at it. He is learning when to speak and when to not interrupt. Devin is adaptable and requires some redirection. Devin does well with laid back personalities who don't sweat the small things and can take things for face value. He requires structure and routine. With those things in place, he does quite well. Devin is very interested in being adopted and wants to find his forever family! He desires to be part of a family again and he feels there is a family out there for him.

Photograph provided by www.heartgalleryalabama.com



**North Alabama
Prudent Parent Training
Standing Room only
October 20th**

MEET RENIE



Renie, born February 1999 is a loving young lady who likes to please others around her. She is very artistic and loves arts and crafts, especially crocheting. She also enjoys to play games on her tablet,

listen to music on her I-pod, watch T.V. and go to the park. Renie receives special education services in school. She loves to read and considers English her best subject. She does not enjoy Math or Science. Due to past experiences, Renie receives counseling and medication to help address emotional issues. Renie loves shopping and is looking for a mother that will indulge this passion. She enjoys attention and would flourish in a family that is able to devote their time and attention to her. She will also need a family that provides consistent structure, patience and unconditional love. Renie is very excited about finding a forever family. She desires a family consisting of two parents with other children in the home.

Photograph provided by www.heartgalleryalabama.com

MEET KENNETH

Kenneth, born March 2006 enjoys singing, drawing and learning to play instruments. He also enjoys attending football games. He earns average grades at school and has an IEP to help him with math and reading. His favorite subject is Science. Kenneth would like to be a teacher



because he enjoys helping others. He can be described as an excellent helper and enjoys assisting with household chores such as cooking and cleaning. Kenneth has a very healthy appetite. His favorite food is Mexican. He enjoys attending church and learning about God. Kenneth loves to dress nice and picking out new clothes. He longs to be adopted by a two parent family.

Photograph provided by www.heartgalleryalabama.com

MEET LASHAY

Lashay, born September 1999 has a friendly, outgoing personality. She makes good grades and enjoys playing sports. Her favorite subjects are math and science. She would like to try out to be a cheerleader.



Lashay participates in regular church activities. She can be helpful at times. Lashay has struggled with depression and multiple losses in her life. She needs someone who can help promote a positive self-esteem and is also attentive to her needs. Lashay had mentioned going to a single parent home because she prefers to be in a home with a single mother. She is physically healthy and takes medication for ADHD. Lashay enjoys listening to all types of music.

Photograph provided by www.heartgalleryalabama.com

MEET ANTONIO

Antonio, born in January 2002, is a very intelligent bright young man who is talented and likes to sing Antonio has an ear for music and can play many instruments. In the past, has enjoyed playing the drums at church. He likes to read the Bible and quote scriptures. Antonio's behavior is a barrier for his success as he is unable to control his anger at times. He is easily agitated by his peers, likes to provoke others and likes to do things to irritate others especially when he knows it bothers a person. He likes to talk often and not listen. He can be defiant and oppositional and wants things his way. Antonio had some improvement with respecting authority but he sometimes tests male and female limits. He does respect females to some extent especially when the female shows him who is dominant based on the fact of adult/child relationship. Antonio has a warm heart and can show affection but he tries to keep a wall built up of the bad-boy, nothing bothers me mentality (on the outside). He can be remorseful for his actions and demeanor. Antonio would benefit from being in a two-parent household with a strong father and mother figure or a single parent male home with a consistent structure and firm boundary setting. Antonio does exceptionally well academically in school but sometimes his behavior impedes his learning. He is really a gifted child and can go in deep thought analyzing any and all situations. Antonio desires a loving family but he's somewhat resistant due to his numerous rejections which have caused multiple placement changes.



Photograph provided by www.heartgalleryalabama.com

MANDATORY TRAINING FOR FOSTER PARENTS

Training for Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard also called Normalcy for Foster Children will be state wide. Next training will be in Foley, Alabama November 17th.

Normalcy for Foster Children is defined as the ability to “easily participate in age-appropriate social, scholastic and enrichment activities”.

The Center for the Study of Social Policy defines normalcy as the ability to engage in healthy and developmentally appropriate activities that promote well-being.

The first Reasonable Prudent Parent Standard Training was held in Madison Alabama on October 20th.

The Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard

- “The standard characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the health, safety, and best interests of a child, while at the same time encouraging the emotional and developmental growth of the child, that a caregiver shall use when determining whether to allow a child in foster care under the responsibility of the state to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities.” (Alabama State Law). This is consistent with the federal law.

There will be a MANDATORY Training for all foster parents about Prudent Parenting. BOTH FOSTER PARENTS in the home are REQUIRED TO ATTEND. You can choose whichever time that works best for you. You must be registered prior to attending. You should receive a letter from your county DHR office or your child placing agency. Please respond to the person who sends you the letter which session you will attend and ages and number of children that will require childcare and any allergies the children have by the date requested. In order to receive credit for the 3 hour training you cannot be more than 15 minutes late and cannot leave before the training is over, try to arrive early to avoid delays. If you are unable to attend for whatever reason you will need to notify the person who sent you the letter to talk about alternative opportunities you may have to get the training.

For child placing agency foster parents you will receive the training from your agency within 30days of the training in your area. If you have any questions contact your agency.

Childcare WILL BE provided as well as mileage. This training is MANDATED by the State Office and it will address changes in policy that will affect you. This does count towards your hours of training.

The Trainings are tentatively scheduled for 4 areas of the state at this time. More trainings could be added as needed. South West Counties will be November 17th in Foley, Alabama; Central Counties surrounding Montgomery will be early December possibly December 1st; North Central Counties surrounding Birmingham will be second week of January Possibly January 12th; and South East Counties will be second week of February possibly February 12th. We are securing locations at this time. All approved foster parents must attend this training at some point. Exact location and dates of trainings will be included in your letter from your local DHR. Locations and dates will also be posted on the afapa.org website and the Alabama Foster and Adoptive Parent facebook page as they become known.



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AFAPA NEWSLETTER INFO:

Articles can be submitted to Buddy Hooper, Editor. E-mail submissions should be addressed to afapa@afapa.org. Otherwise, mail to AFAPA 1091 County Road 1659 Cullman, AL 35058. Deadline dates fall the first of the month in February, May, August, & November.

