



May is Foster Care Month!

Foster VC Kids, a division of Ventura County’s Children and Family Services, is taking this opportunity to highlight the amazing care our foster and relative caregivers provide, and educate our community about the needs of the most vulnerable children in our communities. RDS would like to offer its deepest appreciation to all caregivers in our system.

We would also like to extend special gratitude to those caregivers who work tirelessly to transport children to and from visits, making what can be a very emotional experience that much smoother with a caring embrace before and after; to the caregivers who put aside their own fears and partner with birth families to keep relationships intact and champion successful reunification; to the families that are able to keep siblings together, leading to one less loss amongst many; to the caregivers who commit to keeping children in their schools of origin to offer more stability and support; and to the caregivers who take the myths head on and care for teens and older children who are just as in need of a home with heart.

We will be celebrating the hard work of our caregivers throughout the month of May. Please join us on May 2nd for the 3rd Annual Hope 4 Kids Festival and Run in Camarillo so that your dedication as a caregiver can be celebrated. Join us for the run in the morning, and stick around for the festival and our caregiver celebration at 11 am. Caregivers will be honored and given a token of appreciation!

On May 5th at 10 am please plan to join us for our annual Children’s Services Auxiliary & Board of Supervisors recognition and celebration event. **Stay tuned for more details!**

CFS Contacts

Recruitment, Retention, & Support Info Line	654-3220	General Info Emergency Response and Court Units	654-3444
RDS Manager	654-5594	General Info Ongoing Units	240-2700
Licensing	955-2274	General Info East County	955-2290
Relative Approval	654-3214	General Information Central Programs	654-3405
Placement Coordinators	654-3211, 654-3217 or 654-3216	Children’s Services Auxiliary (CSA)	654-3245
Placement Vacancy Line	289-1900	CSA Reimbursements Case Aid	289-1926
Adoptions	385-9158	Field Based Case Aids	654-3449 or 289-1989
Youth Services Division	385-9146	ILP Coordinators	385-9114 or 385-9143
Rx for Kids Public Health Program	981-5373	Eligibility Officer of the Day	654-3409
Children’s Health & Disability Prevention Nurse	654-5536		

Caregiver Kudos

From Social Worker, Jenny Perez:

Over the years I have had several children on my caseload placed in the Russell home. Heather and Joel Russell are a great example of how communication between the foster family and birth family works. When appropriate, they have opened communication between the birth parents and themselves in order to provide the children in their home with the most stable environment. Heather goes out of her way to make sure the parents are kept up to date regarding any issues with their children and is willing to supervise telephone calls between parents and children, which provides more opportunities for parents and children to communicate- making the time spent apart a little easier for both the parent and the child. They support reunification and are excellent role models for the parents in our system. In certain cases, they have maintained relationships with the parents after the children were returned home- encouraging the parents to keep doing well. They have always kept excellent communication with me as the social worker as well. Key words I would use to describe them would be: understanding, positive, flexible, and caring. I am so thankful to have such great foster parents to work with!

From Social Worker, Socorro Reynoso:

I began working with Ana Padilla in August of 2014. Prior to meeting her, we exchanged emails and she was always so responsive and enthusiastic/excited to help in whatever ways she could. No more than a half hour ever passed before hearing back from Ana. The case we shared was comprised of a father who lived out of state and a local mother. If Ana could have it her way, she would have both parents over for dinner on a regular basis. She wanted to make sure the parents knew their child was being well cared for and went above and beyond what was asked of her to help facilitate family reunification, including supervising visits on the weekend for the father who traveled in from out of state. She had open lines of communication with both parents, which helped ease their worries. Everyone knew they were on the same team. Talking to Ana is like talking to a social worker. She possesses the knowledge and training that I had to attend two years of post graduate studies in order to obtain. I thank God for foster parents like Ana. They make the process for everyone involved so much easier. Ana, you rock. Thank you for your hard work, dedication, and the beautiful heart you have for the children of Ventura County.

From Social Worker, Kathryn Bly:

Melissa & Tony Valenzuela are the foster parents for a five year old boy who came into their care in 2014. He previously didn't have daily structure or has ever been enrolled in school. His transition into the structured home and school environment was difficult. He began acting out, behaviorally, through severe and violent tantrums. Melissa went to school with him almost every day during his first two weeks of school to sit next to him in the classroom and help refocus his attention. Melissa has also been taking him to PCIT and transporting him to the visitation center for his visits. Most notably, Melissa stands out as a foster parent in her advocacy for the biological parents. Melissa talks to the biological parents over the phone to answer any questions they have and update them on his progress at home and school. Melissa ensures that the biological mother and father are involved in the parent teacher conferences, field trips and the school meetings held to discuss his behaviors. Melissa attends the meetings with the biological parents so that they can all work collaboratively in making the best decisions for his care.

From Social Worker Shaquinta Thomas:

Ms. Joanne Ponce was amazing when assisting with reunification efforts. She wrote encouraging notes to the mother during the supervised and monitored portions of visitation. She took it upon herself to really get to know the mother and assist her throughout this difficult time, as she worked to regain custody of her child. Ms. Ponce took it upon herself to send the mother photos of her child's day to day activities, which the mother expressed she felt a deep gratitude for. Once the mother had achieved unsupervised visitation through hard work and great case plan progress, Ms. Ponce and her family invited the mother into their home. The child engaged in in-home therapeutic services to assist with developmental milestones. It was Ms. Ponce who suggested the mother be included in those sessions with the therapist in the Ponce's home. The mother did not have much family in the area and thus her support system was quite small. The Ponce family learned of this and has invited the mother over for family celebrations, even baking the mother a birthday cake. The mother has expressed a sincere appreciation for everything that the Ponce family has done for her. She believes and thinks of them as an extension of her family. Throughout the agency's involvement, the

Ponce's have given the mother encouraging words, hope and assistance. They have successfully fostered a relationship that will have a long-term lasting effect on this family. The transition from visit to visit and from home to home was done so easily and so successfully largely due to the Ponce's willingness to engage with the mother. This experience will not be forgotten by me, as a Social Worker, and the mother has assured me on numerous occasions, often through tears, that the Ponce's sheer kindness is one she will always cherish.

From Social Worker, Jiann Pemberton:

Rebecca Ketner has embraced her new role as a foster parent and has gone above and beyond to support the foster youth in her care. Rebecca has especially made great effort to support her foster youth's connection with his school of origin and extended family. For example, after her foster youth was in her care for a few short months she took several days off of work, during the cold holiday season, to travel with her foster youth to help him connect with family members in Minnesota that were identified through family finding. She has been a strong advocate in helping this youth identify who he is through his connection with extended family members and Rebecca continues to seek answers to any questions her foster youth has about his family. Fostering has admittedly not been an easy job, but Rebecca has not faltered in her commitment to provide the best care that she can offer.

From Social Workers, Robyn Licht & Rachael Berry:

Immediately, from the time the kids were detained, Angela Johnson was in constant communication with me about her desire to help support her siblings during this time, and was open about her concerns. Angela worked so that she could move into the family's home, after her mother moved out, allowing her siblings to be placed back in their home, with Angela as their care giver. She worked very hard to ensure her siblings were able to return to their own rooms and beds; Angela is young and has undoubtedly has sacrificed a lot in the process. Angela is an amazing young woman and I believe the children will thrive in her care. This showing

of family support and rallying around each other is very wonderful to watch especially as an ER worker.

From Social Workers, Jennifer Kaman & Robyn Licht:

The Torres Foster Home follows up and ensures the children's emotional needs are being met. Recently, the family home welcomed two children who had just entered the foster care system. During what has to be one of the most difficult times in a child's life, Natalie Torres reached out for help to ensure that she was providing everything the children needed during this difficult transition. The Torres family was extremely supportive to the boys from the minute they met them at the office. Natalie told the boys they will take it one day at a time. She immediately made it clear that she was there to support them during this difficult time. The Torres home has also been very willing to coordinate visits with a relative, which was immensely helpful to the children's adjustment. Natalie took it a step even further, and invited the relative to accompany the children for haircuts and shoe shopping. After this, the children began to open up and settle in a bit more. This kind of partnership is exactly what children need during these scary times.

From Social Worker, Kristen Jenewin:

An infant was placed with Marcia Johnson back in August, and wasn't tracking, or meeting other developmental milestones. Tri Counties services were put in place three times a week. Over time, I witnessed that the child was not only tracking, but was smiling, cooing, rolling over, and grabbing. The caregiver transported to and from visits to the mother every week. The caregiver was supportive of these visits, and very hopeful that the mother would reunify. The caregiver even transported the child to see the mother on Thanksgiving. When it came time to do an extended visit, the caregiver transported the child to the mother, and gave the mother a baby book that she made of all of the infant's milestones. The caregiver has remained in some contact with the mother, and provides support when she can to the mother. It has been a very successful reunification in part because the caregiver really supported the mother and went above and beyond.



Remembering the *Mission*

“Being a foster mom has truly been amongst one of the Best “Feel Good” experiences of my life. I had always had in my heart the desire to help the most vulnerable victims in our community... Our Children, whom through no fault of their own at their very young age endure some of the most intolerable life experiences. I was blessed with having a Huge Heart and being the kind of person that loves to help others. As soon as God blessed me with the ability to help a child, I took advantage of the opportunity . I’ve been able to fulfill my desire to help these little ones ever since. As life would have it, I was not only able to help one, but two little ones at a time...Contrary to what most people think, I do believe that making a difference in the life of just ONE person, is VERY WELL WORTH IT and can in fact change our world because touching the life of one child has a ripple effect for every single person this child interacts with for the rest of his life well after my time on this earth comes to an end. This is a way to achieve immortality as one of my favorite quotes affirms ...

“What we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal.” — Albert Pike

Blessings,
Ana Padilla, Foster Mommy

Spotlight on The 3rd Annual Hope4Kids Festival & Run

The HOPE4Kids Festival & Run is a community effort sponsored by RaisingHOPE in partnership with Living Oaks Community Church, Ventura County Children & Family Services and a variety of community partners. The event will also include a foster & adoption fair, resource tables, food trucks, youth performances, free kidzone and vendor booths! Foster parents and relative caregivers will also be celebrated during a recognition ceremony at 11 am! Mark your calendars to join us for the run, celebration, and festival!

Monies raised by this event go directly to assist foster youth in paying for any needs that are not covered by Medi-cal, the county and other organizations.

For more information or to register to run, visit <http://www.hope4kids.myevent.com/>

New Kinship Funding in Ventura County

There is new funding available for relative caregivers who are caring for eligible children.

Caregivers with eligible children will be contacted by the Children & Family Services' Eligibility team!



Looking for *Resources?*

If you were unable to attend the Agency 101 resource fair, you can view the resource directory [HERE](#). The directory contains a range of local resources to help you meet your child's physical, emotional, mental health, educational and developmental needs.

Don't forget to visit fosterVCkids.org/resources to view our Resources sections for the most updated information about resources available to caregivers, past issues of The Foster Network, and upcoming events! You can also [“Like” Foster VC Kids on Facebook](#) for current info on events and resources!

FOCUS on Foster Families is designed to help support youth and caregivers as they navigate common challenges. The app includes an extensive library of video interviews with youth and foster/adoptive caregivers sharing what has been helpful for them, and experts providing guidance on how to best navigate the legal, school, and child welfare systems. These videos and resources answer questions like: What does it feel like to come into a new home? What are foster youth looking for from their caregivers? How do I prepare kids for a visit with their birth parent? ... and many more! Download the App FREE today on your mobile phone or tablet from the [iTunes App Store](#) or [Google Play Store](#)!

Empowered to Connect Conference Simulcast

Empowered To Connect, together with Show Hope, hosts the Empowered To Connect Conference — a two-day conference designed to help adoptive and foster parents, ministry leaders and professionals better understand how to connect with “children from hard places” in order to help them heal and become all that God desires for them to be.



If you are not from a faith background, this information is still very accessible, applicable, and highly useful for anyone caring for children with difficult histories. The simulcast will take place on Friday, April 10 and Saturday, April 11.

Caregivers and others interested can view the simulcast at Grace Baptist Church in Santa Clarita for a fee of \$40/couple or \$25 for an individual. Call 661-296-8737 for more information.

The conference features Dr. Karyn Purvis together with Michael & Amy Monroe, and is ideal for adoptive and foster parents, those considering adoption or foster care and those who are serving and supporting others, including social workers, agency professionals, church staff and ministry leaders, counselors, therapists and others.

Calvary Chapel in Santa Barbara is also hosting the simulcast for free. Visit <http://www.calvarychapelsb.com/calendar/empowered> or contact Sarah Johnson at slj414@gmail.com for more information.

Golf Club for Youth

River Ridge Golf Pro has availability for a Golf Club Team for 10 weeks at \$50 dollars for children ages 7-14. Call or email Jon Gomez for more information 805-320-2668 or thegteam07@gmail.com.

This activity is eligible to be reimbursed through the Children’s Services Auxiliary. Please visit <http://fostervckids.org/childrens-service-auxiliary/> to download and review the reimbursement procedures and forms!

Hair Whisperers

If you are a caregiver in need of in-home lice removal, please remember to contact RDS at 805-654-3220 or fostervckids@ventura.org to request a referral. Caregivers should not contact Hair Whisperers directly unless they are seeking to pay for the service out of pocket. In order for CFS to pay for this service, the referral must be made by a staff member.

A Note About Networking

Remember to RSVP to our Foster VC Kids networking groups held at Ventura Missionary Church. With low RSVPs, the meeting is at risk for being cancelled, as was the case with the February meetings. Please email elisa.carreno@ventura.org to RSVP and let us know you plan to join us!

If you are interested in starting your own Foster Parent or Caregiver meet up or networking opportunity, email angelina.mccormick-soll@ventura.org so your meet up can be promoted and shared through our newsletter and website! We want to assist in helping our caregivers connect!

Placement Vacancy Line

Do you have a vacancy in your home? If so, please remember to call our Placement Vacancy Line at 805-289-1900 to leave a message and let our placement team know! You should also call and leave a message if you have had to evacuate your home due to a disaster. Please note this is a message line. If you would like to talk to a placement team member, see our CFS contacts sections for the placement coordinators’ direct lines.

Milestones Celebrating the Achievements of Foster Youth

We are pleased that, with your help, this year's *celebration* will include more foster youth than ever before! Historically, we have held a "Graduation celebration" each June. In recent years, the event turned into "Milestones" and recognition has expanded to include other achievements by foster youth as well. This year will be even more inclusive. We will honor completion of high school, receiving a TEACH scholarship or being over 18 and reaching a "significant" milestone. This can be anything the youth would like to publicly celebrate.

For example:

- Completing a semester of college
- Receiving a vocational certificate
- Getting an internship, job or a promotion
- Reconnecting with a sibling or family member
- The bottom line is, if a youth is turning 18 or older, and has ever been in foster care in Ventura County at any time, and can identify something that they would like to celebrate with their peers and supporters, get in touch with us to receive an invitation.

Milestones will be held at California State University Channel Islands on May 30, 2015 and will include a keynote speaker, dinner, music, and a photo booth, as well as gifts and prizes for the foster youth being honored. The honorees are encouraged to bring guests. The event is funded entirely by donations from individuals, agencies, churches and businesses in our community.

For more information about Milestones, please visit the website at www.milestonesvc.org or e-mail at info@milestonesvc.org.



Ventura County Children & Family Services

What's Goin' On?

Foster VC Kids Calendar of Events

Opportunities to learn, grow, AND receive training credit!

Please don't forget to visit our Events calendar at www.fostervckids.org for up-to-date information on training, networking groups, and other events.

Redirecting Children's Behavior

6 Thursdays starting April 2nd - May 14th,
71 Day Road, Ventura

This is your opportunity to attend a "LIFE-CHANGING" PARENTING CLASS. If you ask anyone who has ever attended the Redirecting Children's Behavior (RCB) 6 week course, you'll hear that you will never parent quite the same way again! Learn to see the world from your child's perspective, and understand the cause of misbehavior and lack of cooperation rather than merely treating the symptoms. This class covers all types of misbehaviors in children from 2½ to 18 years old. The course will be facilitated by Stephanie Main-Bell, M.A., who has been teaching RCB and other parenting classes for almost 20 years. This course is fun, informational, and transformational and includes the Redirecting Children's Behavior book and/or workbook. Each week you will be able to ask questions, receive feedback and build upon what you've learned. Please RSVP to rcarlson@vcccd.edu

Teach Me

Monday, April 6th, 6:00pm – 8:00pm,
Moorpark College FH 112a

A workshop based on the importance of positive parenting experiences and how to begin practices that will result in permanent connections. Foster parenting in a way that is lighthearted and positive for the caregiver, family, and the kids in our care. Please RSVP to Wendy Homan at homanwendy@aol.com

The Therapeutic Use of Daily Life Events

Tuesday, April 7th or Tuesday, May 8th, 8:30 am-4:00 pm,
975 Flynn Rd., Camarillo

This course explores the use of everyday life events, as they are occurring, for therapeutic purposes. It provides a framework of supporting others in moving to a place of less pain and trouble – or simply towards the next step in their development. Topics include recognizing daily life events, themes, opportunities, characteristics of relational child and youth care, the process of change, and the elements of intervention. Register at <http://www.eventbrite.com/o/casa-pacifica-centers-for-children-and-families-254246353>

Empowered to Connect Simulcast

Friday, April 10 and Saturday, April 11
Santa Clarita or Santa Barbara

See page 5 in the newsletter for more info.

Foster Talk Networking

Friday April 10th, 9:00am – 11:00am, 2080
Winifred St., Simi Valley (Cornerstone Church)

An opportunity to receive updated information as to changes related to foster care and network with other foster parents who are geographically related. Specific topics will be addressed each month. Friendships will be made and resources revealed. Please RSVP to Wendy Homan at homanwendy@aol.com



What's Goin' On?

Foster VC Kids Calendar of Events

Baby Basics and Beyond

*Monday, April 13th, 7:00pm – 9:00pm,
RSVP for directions please*

Participants will discuss developmental needs and characteristics of infants. Participants will identify variations on those needs depending on the special needs of the at-risk infant. Participants will explore ways of addressing the needs of the infant that will support secure attachment and developmental growth. Participants will learn methods of self-care to better support family health during the infancy stage. Please RSVP to Jason Lee at Jason_lee5@vcccd.edu

The IEP Basics via Conference Call

*Monday, April 13th or Monday, May 11
12:00pm-1:00pm, Register for call in number*

Learn about IEP (Individualized Education Program). Different topics will be presented each time with the opportunity for discussion at the end. Please register to receive the phone number, access code and have any handouts sent to you in advance. Visit <http://rainbowconnectionfrc.weebly.com/register-now.html> or call 805-485-9643 to register.

Need Resources?

*Wednesday, April 15th and Wednesday, May 20th
10:00 am -11:00 am in Oxnard at
2401 E. Gonzales Rd. #100*

*Thursday, April 16th and Thursday May, 21st
10:00am-11:00am in Simi Valley at 1900 Los Angeles Ave*

Please come join Rainbow staff & other families for an hour long exchange of ideas, solutions, community programs & resources for families of children with special needs. 3rd Wednesday in Oxnard and 3rd Thursday in Simi 10am – 11am Coffee, tea & information will be provided monthly. Registration required! Visit <http://rainbowconnectionfrc.weebly.com/register-now.html> or call 805-485-9643 to register.

Relational Repair

*Tuesday, April 14th or Tuesday, May 5th ,
8:30 am-4:00 pm, 975 Flynn Rd., Camarillo*

This course introduces a child and youth care model for supporting individuals who have experienced relational stress, trauma, or disrupted relationships. Shifting from common deficit or strictly behavioral models, this course incorporates brain science to inform straightforward, yet thoughtful ways of reimbursing young people for the broken or missing experiences in their lives. Register at <http://www.eventbrite.com/o/casa-pacifica-centers-for-children-and-families-254246353>

Sharing Strategies from Non-violent Crisis Intervention: A workshop for Parents and Caregivers

*Friday, April 17th, 8:00 am-3:00pm,
5100 Adolfo Rd., Camarillo*

This workshop will provide parents and caregivers with an overview of some of the concepts and strategies taught in the Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training programs. The workshop will give parents and caregivers: Insight into behavior patterns of their child, ideas for intervening early as behaviors start to escalate, and ways to keep everyone safe. This is a free training for caregivers of children with an IEP. The fee is \$10 for families without an IEP. To register, visit <http://www.venturacountyselpa.com/WorkshopsandConferences.aspx>. You may also call or email Barbara Rush at Brush@vcoe.org or 805-437-1560.

The Drum: A Mini-Musical Based on a Tale of Generosity

*Friday, April 17th and Saturday, April 18th, 7:00 pm
(Doors open at 6 pm), The Elks Lodge,
801 South A St., Oxnard*

All children have dreams, just like Jordan's dream of one day having a drum. Watch as Generosity helps everyone's dreams come true. Starting with a stick, Jordan's day becomes quite magical. "A stick turns into bread; to children it is fed; Then I am given a pot, and I think 'Why not?'; It replaced the one beyond repair, and I got a new coat to wear!" Jordan's last adventure of the day involves a wedding party made up of musicians. Do you think his/her dream will finally come true? Don't miss this charming mini-musical based on a wonderful folk tale from India! Reserve your free tickets by emailing info@omytheater.org!



What's Goin' On?

Foster VC Kids Calendar of Events

8th Annual Non-violent Communication (NVC) Conference: Compassionate Communication

Saturday, April 18, 9 am - 5 pm and Sunday, April 19, 9:30 am - 4:30 pm, CDR, 221 E. Ventura Blvd., Oxnard

For those who are new to Compassionate Communication (NVC), you will learn how to: Deepen connections with your friends, family and co-workers, Learn to speak from the heart and listen without judging, transform conflict into compassionate dialogs, create more harmony and peace at home and at work, & increase confidence and self acceptance by changing our self talk.

For those who are familiar with NVC, new topics include: NVC for Visual and Kinesthetic Learners, Resolving Conflict with Kids, Working with Anger, & Rewire your Brain for a Change - Neurobiology & NVC. Sessions offered in Spanish and English. Fee is \$60 and includes lunch. Scholarships are available! Visit <http://www.chooseconnection.com/nvc-conference> to learn more, register, and apply for a scholarship.

Bring it to the Table

*Thursday, April 23rd, 6:00pm – 8:00pm,
Moorpark College FH 112a*

A round table, town hall style, workshop bringing seasoned and new foster parents together to discuss new issues and solve old problems. We will also chat about new policies, techniques and services available to our providers. Please RSVP to Wendy Homan at homanwendy@aol.com

26th Annual Walking the Path Together Conference

Saturday, April 25th, 8:00 am-1:30 pm, Garden Grove School, 2250 Tracy Ave., Simi Valley

The Walking the Path conference is for families and caregivers of children 0-5 with special needs. This year's theme is "How Your Garden Grows," and breakout session topics include language, behavior, self-regulation, sensory/motor, and building the family. Foster families and relative caregivers may attend the conference at no cost, if they register before April 10. The conference includes an English track and Spanish track. Visit <http://vcoe.k12oms.org/1630-94178> for more information and to register.

Leaders for Change: The Protective Factors in Action

*3 Saturdays: April 25th, May 2nd, & May 9th
8:30 am-2:30 pm, Westminster Presbyterian Church, 755 Bard Rd., Port Hueneme*

Leaders for Change is a leadership training program designed for family leaders like YOU! It will help you identify and build on your leadership strengths and equip you to take on a new leadership role in the systems serving children and families. As part of this program you will experience a community program that is free and a great opportunity for you to participate and engage with leaders to create change on issues important to your family. Join us is for 3 full day workshops and graduate with new leadership strategies! Childcare, meals and Spanish translation will be provided! Contact Diana Arellano at 645-9989 ext 228 or dareallano@first5ventura.org to RSVP or for more information!

Upcoming Informational Sessions for Prospective Foster Parents

*Tuesday, April 28th or Tuesday, May 19th
from 6:00 pm-8:00 pm at 855 Partridge.*

Families can also complete the informational session online at <http://fostervckids.org/training/>

West County Foster Parent Networking

*Tuesday, April 28th, 6:00 pm-8:00 pm (Evening Group)
Wednesday, April 29th, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm,
Ventura Missionary Church, 500 High Point Dr., Ventura (Sanctuary Building)*

An opportunity to receive updated information as to changes related to foster care, receive support from your foster parent peers, and earn training hours Please RSVP to Elisa at elisa.carreno@ventura.org. Childcare provided by contacting Channel Islands Social Services at 805- 384-0983.



What's Goin' On?

Foster VC Kids Calendar of Events

Hope 4 Kids Festival & Run

Saturday, May 2nd, 8:00 am-2:00 pm, Camarillo Community, Park 1605 Burnley St., Camarillo

The HOPE4Kids Festival & Run is a community effort sponsored by RaisingHOPE in partnership with Living Oaks Community Church, Ventura County Children & Family Services and a variety of community partners. The event will include a foster and adoption fair, vendors, food trucks, and free kid zone! Foster parents and relative caregivers will also be celebrated at this event at 11 am! Visit <http://www.hope4kids.myevent.com/> for more information and to register.

Professional Foster Parents

Monday, May 4th, 6:00pm – 8:00pm, Moorpark College FH 112a

This class is designed to aid in the refinement of foster parents to be seen and respected as professionals. Tips are given on how to manage the process of foster parenting. This training will also help Foster Parents in becoming familiar with the role of a foster parent, the role of the Social worker, the benefits of teamwork and effective communication within the foster care system. Please RSVP to Wendy Homan at homanwendy@aol.com

Foster and Relative Caregiver Appreciation

Tuesday, May 5th, 10 am, County of Ventura Government Center, Hall of Administration, Board of Supervisors

In partnership with the Children's Services Auxiliary and the Board of Supervisors, Children & Family Services wants to celebrate the dedication and high quality care provided by our foster and relative caregivers. We will celebrate with light refreshments, music, and acknowledgement by the Board of Supervisors. Please RSVP to Victoria.gonzales@ventura.org or 289-1956 with the number of adults and children you will be bringing!

Foster Talk Networking

Friday, May 8th, 9:00am – 11:00am, 2080 Winifred St., Simi Valley (Cornerstone Church)

An opportunity to receive updated information as to changes related to foster care and network with other foster parents who are geographically related. Specific topics will be addressed each month and friendships will be made and resources revealed. Please RSVP to Wendy Homan at homanwendy@aol.com

Baby Basics and Beyond

Monday, May 11th, 7:00pm – 9:00pm, RSVP for directions please

Participants will discuss developmental needs and characteristics of infants. Participants will identify variations on those needs depending on the special needs of the at-risk infant. Participants will explore ways of addressing the needs of the infant that will support secure attachment and developmental growth. Participants will learn methods of self-care to better support family health during the infancy stage. Please RSVP to Jason Lee at Jason_lee5@vcccd.edu

Women of Substance, Men of Honor Rummage Sale

Saturday, May 9th, 3353 Old Conejo Rd, Newbury Park

This will be the 7th annual, "ginormous" rummage sale to benefit foster youth in Ventura County. It will be held on Sat., May 9 in the parking lot at the Lighthouse Church in Newbury Park. Proceeds will be used to purchase gift cards for the foster youth being honored at the Milestones celebration later in May. You can help by donating items (clothing, TV's, etc.) to be sold on May 9. Volunteers are needed to help staff the event. Contact Chloe at chloe@wosmohinc.com or 805-376-0472 for more details.

Come See Us at The Movies!

Our new PSA will be playing on 54 movie theater screens at Century Riverpark, Century Downtown Ventura, Edwards Camarillo and the Regal Simi Valley Town Center Theater!



What's Goin' On?

Foster VC Kids Calendar of Events

Educational Champion Training

Saturday, May 9th, 9:00am-4:00 pm (lunch on your own), 5100 Adolfo Road, Camarillo

If you would like to help a child in foster care navigate the education system, come learn about becoming an "Education Rights Holder." When a child in foster care does not have a viable adult in his life to support, advocate, and remove barriers to his education, the court must appoint a responsible adult to carry out these duties. Ventura County has a need for volunteers who are willing to be assigned education rights for one or more children in foster care. Relatives, foster parents, mentors, and other trained, committed volunteers are appropriate education rights holders. Minimum commitment to an assigned child is one year.

For more information on becoming an Ed Rights Holder email fys@vcoe.org to RSVP for the training, email rcarlson@vcccd.edu. You must register by May 6th. Foster Parents will receive credit for 6 hours of training and are encouraged to attend even if they cannot make a one year commitment to becoming an Ed Rights Holder at this time.

West County Foster Parent Networking

*Tuesday, May 26th, 6:00 pm-8:00 pm (Evening group)
Wednesday, May 27th, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm (Daytime group) pm, Ventura Missionary Church, 500 High Point Dr., Ventura (Sanctuary Building)*

An opportunity to receive updated information as to changes related to foster care, receive support from your foster parent peers, and earn training hours Please RSVP to Elisa at elisa.carreno@ventura.org. Childcare provided by contacting Channel Islands Social Services at **805- 384-0983**.

Icebreakers

*Thursday, May 28th, 6:00pm – 8:00pm,
Moorpark College FH 112a*

A class that details and describes the benefits of interactions between biological parents and caregivers. Ideas are explored to provide communication while maintaining confidentiality and appropriate boundaries. Please RSVP to Wendy Homan at homanwendy@aol.com

Kinship Parenting for Relative Care Givers (Walk-ins welcome!)

Kinship care is the full or part-time parenting of children by grandparents or other relatives. These training groups will explore the practical issues related to parenting a second generation and provide tools and support to help you get and keep your bearing along the way. No RSVP needed. For further information, email kssp@kidsandfamilies.org.

Oxnard Resource Group

1st & 3rd Tuesdays of each month,
6:00 pm-7:30 pm, Sierra Linda Elementary School, 2201 Jasmine Street, Oxnard

Ventura Resource Group

2nd & 4th Tuesdays of each month,
6:00 pm-8:00 pm, Kids & Families Together
856 E. Thompson Blvd. Ventura

Simi Valley Resource Group

3rd Wednesday of each month,
6:00-8:00pm, Simi Valley Senior Center,
3900 Avenida Simi, Simi Valley

Thousand Oaks Resource Group

2nd Tuesday of each month,
6:30 pm-8:30 pm, Senior Concerns, 401
Hodencamp Rd. Thousand Oaks

Camarillo Resource Group

4th Wednesday of each month,
6:00 pm-8:00 pm, at CISS,
5251 Verdugo Rd. Suite G, Camarillo

Santa Paula Resource Group (Bilingual)

2nd Thursday of each month,
9:30 am-11:00 am, Our Lady of Guadalupe
427 N. Oak St., Santa Paula

SAVE THE DATE! The 2nd Annual Fun in the Sun Foster & Kinship Caregiver Training Conference

Saturday, June 13th, Oxnard, CA Time and location are being confirmed, more details to come! Plan to join the FKCE team for a day of fun, learning, and networking!

Foster Care Snapshot:

The Critical Need Continues...

In the Month of January: A total of **1,162** cases were open with CFS.
There were **41** removals and **50** closed cases.
299 children were in foster care placements.
114 children remained in group homes or in shelter care.
349 children were in kinship/relative care placements.
We welcomed **3** new foster homes into the CFS family!

Please help us spread the word about the need for quality foster homes! Remember, foster parents are eligible to receive an incentive of **\$100** for referring a family once they complete the licensing process and an additional **\$100** once a child is placed in the new foster family's home! **Contact your licensing analyst for more information!**



Useful Links

Foster VC Kids

fostervckids.org

iFoster

www.ifoster.org

Casa Pacifica

http://www.casapacifica.org/training/free_training_for_foster_care_providers

CFS Independent Living Program

www.ventura.org/ilp-youth/ilp-youth

Children's Services Auxiliary

www.csavc.org

CASA: Court Appointed Special Advocates

www.casaofventuracounty.org/

Channel Islands Social Services

www.islandsocialservices.org/

California Youth Connection

www.cal-youthconn.org/

Hope 4 Kids Festival & Run

<http://www.hope4kids.myevent.com/>

Kids & Families Together

www.kidsandfamilies.org/

VC Foster Parent Association

www.vcfpa.com/

Dark to Dawn

www.darktodawn.org/

James Storehouse

www.jamesstorehouse.org/

Women of Substance, Men of Honor

www.wosmohinc.com/

Interface Children & Family Services

www.icfs.org

Aspiranet

www.aspiranet.org/

Arrow Child & Family Ministries

www.arrow.org/

Casa Pacifica

www.casapacifica.org/

Koinonia Family Services

www.kfh.org/

National Foster Parent Association

www.nfpaonline.org/

TEACh Fund Scholarship

www.vccf.org/scholarship/tech/index.shtml

VC Office of Education Foster Care Services

www.vcoe.org/spes/FosterYouthServices.aspx

Neighborhoods for Learning

www.first5ventura.org/parents-caregivers/neighborhoods-for-learning

Child Development Resources

www.childdevelopmentresources.org/

Rainbow Connection Family Resource Center

www.rainbowconnectionfrc.weebly.com/

Macaroni Kid

www.camarillo.macaronikid.com/

Parent Click

www.ventura-ca.parentclick.com/

On-Line Training Resources

Foster Care & Adoptive Community

www.fosterparents.com/

Foster Parent College

www.fosterparentcollege.com/

California's Just in Time Training

www.qpicalifornia.com

Foster Club

www.fosterclub.com/_booster/article/foster-parent-online-training