



the foster NETWORK

October/November

Manager's Message

“Who Ya Gonna Call?”

No, unfortunately the Ghostbusters are not around when there are strange things amiss in foster care. Nevertheless, we encourage you to utilize the RDS team to help you find your way. Here are some of the common questions by caregivers:

- Who is my child’s social worker now? Who do I call if I can’t reach my social worker?
- How can I access my child’s prescriptions? How can I be reimbursed for medications for my child?
- Who do I call if my child has lice? How do I access resources for my child?
- Who do I call if I’m having challenges or if I am ready for another placement?

We are aware that being a foster parent can be confusing and frustrating when you can’t reach your social worker or get what you need for the child in your care. If you are having difficulty, the RDS team is here to provide support. Unless it is a safety issue (which would be a call to the hotline), you can utilize the RDS caregiver line as a primary point of contact for questions at 654-3220 or email us at fostervckids@ventura.org. We’ll get you the answers or help you to find what you need without your going through a lot of phone trees. We’re available Monday-Friday 8am-5pm. After hours, leave a message and we’ll return your call the very next business day.

“I ain’t afraid of no ghosts,” but I am afraid when our caregivers and children do not get the information and support they need. We’re here to help.

Very truly yours,
Elizabeth Thasiah, Program Manager

CFS Contacts

Adoptions	240-2700	General Information Family Support & Collaboration	654-3405
CFS Hotline	654-3200	General Info Ongoing Unit	240-2700
Children’s Health & Disability Prevention Nurse	240-2700	ILP Coordinators	240-2700
CSA Reimbursements	654-3220	Licensing- NEW NUMBER!	654-3405
Eligibility Officer of the Day	654-3409	Placement Vacancy Line	289-1900
Field Based Case Aids	654-3444	RDS Manager	654-5594
Recruitment, Development & Support Info Line	654-3220	Relative Approval	654-3405
General Info East County	955-2290	RFA Officer of the Day	654-3405
General Info Emergency Response & Court Units	654-3444	Rx for Kids Public Health Program	289- 9308
		Youth Services Division	240-2700

PPE Program

Peer Partner Educators

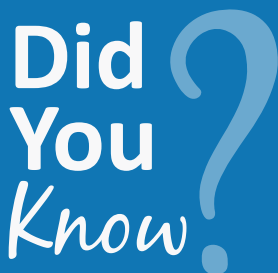


You can also call a Peer Partner Educator for support. Peer Partners are available for all County foster and relative caregivers.

We are very excited to introduce you to the new Foster Peer Partner Educators (PPE) through Channel Islands Social Services (CISS). The Peer Partner Educators bring a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm as experienced Foster Parents. They are looking forward to connecting with you and being a resource in your fostering journey. In the coming weeks, RDS will assign PPEs to all foster families. Until then please, feel free to reach out to the PPE for your area to introduce yourself and discuss any needs you may have for additional training, resource referrals, or other support. Visit the Channel Islands Social Services website to learn more <http://islandsocialservices.org/families/ppe-program/>. In the next few months, the Peer Partner Educators will begin holding local Hub meetings for Foster Parents to obtain additional, ongoing training and have opportunities to network in person. CISS will be providing free childcare at the Hub meetings! Keep an eye out for a group coming to your area! If you have questions about the program, please contact Channel Islands Social Services at 805-384-0983!

*Bilingual

PPE Team	Email	PPE iPhone #
Alexa Schumacher (Simi Valley)	PPE.Alexa@islandsocialservices.org	805-905-1784
Kim Amstutz (Simi Valley)	PPE.Kim@islandsocialservices.org	805-861-3775
Leeann Cunningham-Mesa *Bilingual (Moorpark/Thousand Oaks)	PPE.Leeann@islandsocialservices.org	805-905-9267
Liz Thiele (Moorpark/ Newbury Park)	PPE.Liz@islandsocialservices.org	805-861-3196
Maureen Warn (Ventura/Ojai/Oak View)	PPE.Maureen@islandsocialservices.org	805-861-4450
Natalie Torres *(Ventura/Santa Paula/Fillmore/Piru)	PPE.Natalie@islandsocialservices.org	805-905-1982
Sonia Correa * (Oxnard/Port Hueneme)	PPE.Sonia@islandsocialservices.org	805-907-1028
Bill Formanek (Camarillo)	PPE.Bill@islandsocialservices.org	



Ventura County's Human Services Agency's 'Foster Health Link' earns 'Best of California' award!

In August 2016, the Center for Digital Government honored Ventura County with an award for Ventura County's Foster Health Link website and mobile application. Foster Health Link gives foster parents electronic access to health records and resources to support foster children's needs. Read the Ventura County News Channel (VCNC) article or to view a video about Foster Health Link, [click here](#).

The School Zone

Dear FYS,

I am a foster parent to a child entering 4th grade. She has been living with our family for almost a year. She has trouble in school and does not seem to be improving much. While her reading skills are at grade-level, her math skills are only at a 2nd grade level. I made sure she had extra tutoring last year but it didn't help all that much. I don't think she should go into 4th grade but rather should repeat 3rd grade so that she can catch up. How can I convince the school to retain her for a year?

-A concerned foster parent

Dear Foster Parent,

It's fantastic that you are so highly attuned to your child's educational status and progress, and that you have connected her to tutoring services. Knowing where your student stands in the core subjects is the best place to start when assessing her academic needs. It's important to keep in mind that many education-related decisions, including school placement, grade-level retention, and assessment for special education must be made by the child's education rights holder (ERH). Knowing who holds those rights and working as a team with that person to support decisions that are in the child's best interest is key.

Grade-level retention is a practice that was more widely used in the past, based on a belief that if a student was not performing at grade level in one or more subjects, the student needed more time at that grade level to catch up and become ready for the next grade level. While that might seem intuitively true, there is now a wide body of research that shows that retention often does more harm than good for students. Various studies have found a higher drop-out rate and lower achievement among retained students, and better personal adjustment and more positive attitudes toward school among students who were promoted.

Schools have many tools and resources on hand to help students who are struggling in school. Ask your school principal or Foster Youth Liaison about their district's MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports), and ask to have an SST (Student Study Team) meeting scheduled. At that meeting, school staff will discuss what resources and supports are available at the school and the team will decide what interventions would be most helpful. The SST process is often a series of meetings rather than a one-time event – the team will periodically review the student's progress and adjust the supports as necessary. Ultimately, the school may recommend that the student be assessed for special education services, if interventions in the regular classroom prove inadequate.

Finally, know that your encouragement and support of your child are of utmost importance. Incorporating math into your everyday experiences can make math relevant and fun for a child who's likely never had that type of interaction with parents. Try math games at home, comparison-shop prices at the grocery store, practice times-tables in the car, or help the child create savings in a piggy bank for a desired toy. Strategies like this will create intrinsic motivation and interest in math and may take away some of the fear that many kids (and adults!) associate with the subject. Keep up the good work, and don't hesitate to continue reaching out for assistance!

-Foster Youth Liaison Services

**If you have a question regarding foster youth and education, please, write in!*

Send any questions you may have to Crystal.Stratton@Ventura.org.





Family Team Meetings

The Ventura County Children and Family Services Agency is excited to announce the official roll out of Family Team Meetings (FTM), scheduled for September 6, 2016. The purpose of Family Team Meetings is to keep children safe, promote children's well-being and support families. Family Team Meetings are held to foster a shared understanding between child welfare staff, behavioral health staff, families, friends, neighbors, schools community members, caregivers, and other helping agencies. These interested parties work together to learn what the family hopes to accomplish, set realistic and important goals, recognize and encourage the family's strengths, identify what the family needs, find solutions that build on the family's strengths and lead to necessary changes, make a plan for who will do what and when it will be done, and agree on the next steps.

Family Team Meetings will be held as frequently as needed to address emerging issues, ensure integrated and coordinated intervention, and to refine the plan as needed. They will take place early in the case and a minimum of every 90 days. As part of this ongoing teaming process, caregiver attendance and participation will be important as we work together to plan and coordinate strength based services and supports that ensure the safety and well-being of children. The Resource Family Recruitment, Development, and Support (RDS) unit staff are available to accompany caregivers to Family Team Meetings to provide an additional layer of support to caregivers and the team. Please contact your Community Service Coordinator or any member of the RDS staff for any questions or additional support needed with Family Team Meetings: (805) 654-3220. We look forward to your participation at future Family Team Meetings! Childcare is available and would be set up by the referring Social Worker.



Things to Think About

As a Mandated Reporter...

If you think a child is endangered, call the 24-hour hotline immediately at (805) 654-3200. Reports will be kept confidential and callers may remain anonymous.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CALL 911.

As an approved Foster Parent, you are a mandated reporter, required to report any suspected child abuse or neglect.

If you witness or suspect abuse call the 24-hour hotline at (805) 654-3200.

Mandated reporters must first call the hotline to report suspected child abuse or neglect and must also submit a written report. **Mandated reporters** may obtain [forms here](#).

[Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Training](#) is a self-paced, online program that provides an overview of the significant definitions, requirements and protections of the California Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Act. (Takes up to 4 hours to complete.)

[Click here to access the training.](#)

Nurses' Corner

Caring for Substance Exposed Infants

~Julie Anne De Santi, RN, BSN, Public Health Nurse



When caring for a drug exposed baby, it is important to be prepared for the child to be at risk for the effects of the prenatal substance abuse. The most common types of drug exposure include methamphetamine, alcohol, marijuana and opiates (including heroin, oxycontin, Vicodin and codeine). Babies exposed to drugs during pregnancy are at an increased risk to several difficulties including sleep and/or feeding issues. Some drug exposed babies may have shortened sleep cycles and move to an alert state very quickly, whereas other drug exposed babies may sleep for long periods due to depressed nervous systems and may need some help to wake and eat. When dealing with a drug exposed infant experiencing sleep issues, it may be useful to try these supportive measures:

- **Quiet and Calm Environment-** Drug exposed babies often have trouble falling asleep so it is important to minimize noise.
- **Swaddling-** Swaddling helps infants gain and maintain organization of their bodies and allows them to have more stable breathing. Be careful not to overdress or wrap too tightly so that the baby does not overheat. Also always place a swaddled baby on her back.
- **Gentle Handling-** These babies do best by using slow, steady handling and quiet voices during care. Gentle massage with oil becomes a soothing form of care.
- **Vertical, Rhythmic Rocking-** Some babies need help falling asleep with vertical, rhythmic rocking (up and down instead of side to side). Some caregivers rock on exercise balls to gently comfort a distressed baby.
- **ALWAYS BACK TO SLEEP!**

Drug exposed babies may have a more difficult time feeding and maintaining a healthy weight. They are typically monitored by a physician who will design a specific feeding schedule to meet the needs of the individual baby. When caring for a drug exposed infant experiencing feeding issues, there are important tips to follow:

- **Keep A Feeding Log-** Make sure to maintain a log of all of the baby's feeding amounts during every 24 hour period.
- **Extra Time To Feed-** Remember that it may take these babies 30-45 minutes or longer to feed because they can be easily distracted or have difficulty feeding. Patience is key.
- **Feeding Environment-** These infants should be fed in a calm and quiet environment with minimal noise and disturbances.
- **Higher Calorie Formula-** These babies may need to be put on higher calorie formula. Carefully follow the physician's instructions.
- **Always Consult Baby's Physician-** Discuss any questions and/or concerns regarding the baby's feedings with the baby's physician.
- Remember that not every child will be affected in the same way, and there is no way to predict what a child's impairments will be.
- Do not assume that nothing can be done. Research shows that almost all children will do well when placed in loving and stimulating homes. Anticipation of concerns will affect how a child will do long-term. Parents who proactively identify their children's needs early on and get them the necessary care and/or therapy will find that their children thrive.
- Children who show developmental delays should be referred for educational interventions through the federal Early Intervention Program (for infants through the third birthday) or through local school systems (for children three and older). Programs are often available at little or no cost for children who qualify. Referrals for speech therapy, occupational therapy, or physical therapy may be appropriate.
- Mental health professionals can help parents cope with difficult behavior in their children. Specific assistance should be given to help children develop secure attachments with caregivers.
- Parents of infants with feeding, sleeping, and irritability problems may need support or respite care to prevent burnout.

Although the effects of prenatal drug exposure are different for each child, all children do better when families and professionals work together to meet the challenges.



Call for Kudos!

We know that excellent teamwork between caregivers, bio parents, community resources and social workers happens every day. Now, the Foster VC Kids team wants to hear about it! We are asking for everyone to submit kudos about any great experience they want to share. Please drop an email to Crystal.Stratton@ventura.org to share the love!!

Kudos Corner

Megan and John S. This wonderful family in Simi Valley was willing to go above and beyond! After having a five month placement of two adorable kiddos, the children were reunified with their mother after she successfully found housing for her family. Our Resource parents, John and Megan, exceeded expectations, helping the mother move into her new home and modified their license in order to provide respite for this mother. Their understanding of the importance of support for this mother is greatly appreciated, and their compassion for this mother and her children are amazing. Thank you, for being such a strong part of this family's support network. ~ *Betty C.*

Wow RDS Recruitment Team! The Information Session had great coverage of resources and supports for caregivers. Having a former foster youth and current Foster Parent present made this a 'real' and engaging learning experience. I feel strongly that the informational meeting encouraged me to continue with the foster care approval process! ~ *Prospective Resource Parent that attended an Informational Meeting*

Kristin W. Kristin committed to caring for a child who needed daily medical care in Los Angeles. She transported not only the child but his mother to these treatments every single day! Thank you, Kristen! This is another example of going well over and beyond what we could hope for! ~ *Sheri M.*

Joe W. Thank you to Joe for caring for a child with some very challenging behaviors! During his time in home placement, the child began to engage and communicate, demonstrating the high quality support he received in the home. A stable caregiver is the beginning of healing for our kids. Thank you! ~ *Sheri M.*

Serena C. Serena has been very open to suggestions and partnership with her social worker, licensing worker, & birth family! Thank you, Serena! It's been wonderful working with you! ~ *Norma R.*

James Storehouse and Volunteers I wanted to express my gratitude to all of the people who brought this Back to School event together. It was well thought out and organized. There was plenty of assistance to help with special requests and even a fitting room for the people who needed one. My foster children had a great time, as they put it "SCORED BIG TIME" at this event. They took away backpacks with school supplies, clothes, shoes and even lunch. This took a great pressure off of my shoulders to provide these necessary items for them. As the saying goes "It takes a village to raise a child", your partnership and support is part of that village. Thank you so much!!! ~ *Paula S.*

Way To Go, KFTJ and RFA Workers! I spoke with Ms. H. who has been fostering for less than a year. She said she had been wanting to foster for some time but was somewhat hesitant because of the negative things she had heard. She decided to do it anyway and said she has had the best experience working with the County and has been so impressed at how they work and is so excited that as soon as her adoption is finalized she is going to foster to adopt another child. Her friend has also noticed her experience and she is also getting ready to begin the process of getting RFA Approved to start fostering our children. This was a great reminder as to why we are here and love what we do. Had to pass the positive story your way to let you know you guys are awesome and to keep up the great attitude and job. ~ *Sonia C.*



Learning in *Style*

Sending our kiddos back to school has been a success! Over the summer, there were many events available to the youth by our resource partners, such as free backpacks, school supplies, new and used clothing and shoes, and so much more!

James Storehouse put on their 2nd Annual Back-to-School FREE Shopping Event! They served approximately 250 foster youth ranging in age from 10-25 years old. Everyone received a brand new backpack, school supplies, new clothes, shoes, books, and toiletries. Stonefire Grill catered a beautiful lunch for everyone in attendance and they raffled off 6 brand new bikes with helmets and locks. A huge **THANK YOU** to the more than 50 volunteers for helping everything to go so smoothly! Look for our Back to School event next year!

James Storehouse will continue to assist the foster community (including back to school supplies and clothing) at their warehouse in Newbury Park (T/W/F from 9am-2pm). You can drop in to pick up backpacks and school supplies, but for clothing and shoes, an appointment is necessary.

You can email at jamesstorehouse@gmail.com.

Heart 2 Heart was able to serve over 120 children in a very successful Heart 2 Heart backpack Gift Away with the help of many wonderful community partners and dedicated volunteers – H2H would like to thank Victoria, Suhey and her daughter and Hazel, Hope, Rosemary F., Ernie S., Corey B., and, of course our KFT Staff!

Children's Services Auxiliary currently reimburses up to \$40 per child to cover back-to-school costs. Contact RDS by phone at (805) 654-3220 or email or visit their website at www.csavc.org to learn more.

Fostering Relationships through Visitation (FRV) Program Overview

We are pleased to announce a new visitation program to enhance and support our caregiver's relationships with birth families and their children. This model has proven highly successful in other counties to improve information sharing between families and child/ family stability.

What are the goals of the Fostering Relationships through Visitation Model?

Visitations between birth parents and children recently placed in foster care can often go poorly. The goal of the project is to make visitations between children, foster parents, and birth parents more comfortable and less awkward. Specifically, the program hopes to:

- Strengthen the relationship between foster/resource parents and birth parents
- Help parents to have a successful visit, feel less rejected by their children, and so encourage repeated visitation
- Increase foster/resource and birth parents use of "following the lead" and delight with their children
- Provide supportive training and coaching to birth parents to assist in rebuilding attachment with their child

What do I need to know?

Families selected for FRV:

- Families may opt out of the program.
- Families will be offered an Ice Breaker meeting prior to the start of the visitation program to enable them to meet each other and discuss the child's needs.
- Foster/resource parents will receive training about ways to support the birth parent during the visitation and encourage following the lead.
- Foster/resource parents will attend 5 visits at a CFS office with birth parents and children.
- After each visit, the foster/resource parent and birth parent will fill out a brief questionnaire and will receive phone calls from the social worker to discuss the visit.
- Birth parents will arrive prior to the start of each of the 5 visitations to meet with a Field Based Case Aid Mentor and receive training on following the child's lead, attuning the child, and managing challenges in the visit.

To view a short video about FRV, please visit www.fostervckids.org/frv. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Foster VC Kids program coordinators, Angelina McCormick-Soll, LCSW or Renee Lodder at 805-654-3220.

Ventura County Parade It was a grand time!

Saturday August 6, Foster VC Kids partnered with Children Services Auxiliary and the Ventura County Fire Department for the 2016 Ventura County Fair Parade. We thank everyone who came out to support us! Foster VC Kids along with our partners rallied together along with a lot of spirit, spunk and style. A great time was had by all!



Caregiver Recruitment Events *Come Visit Us!*

Oxnard School District's 5th Annual Event:
STRENGTHENING OUR FAMILIES
Saturday, September 24th, RJ Frank Middle School

This FREE event will have multiple Family Workshops, a Community Fair, Student Performances, a raffle and more! Foster VC Kids will have an info booth and will be presenting a workshop on: Seeking Foster Families with Heart. Lunch is provided and child care is available for children ages 5-12. Translation available (English, Spanish, Mixteco). For more info Jennie Gutierrez 805-385-1501- x 2161

21st Annual Multicultural Festival
Saturday, October 1st, Plaza Park, Oxnard

Come visit us at Foster VC Kids' booth at the Multicultural Festival! The festival brings together community by celebrating the rich cultural diversity of its residents and the city's history. People of every culture come together to learn and discover their shared values in an atmosphere that honors all. The festival offers a variety of performing groups, live music, food vendors, exhibitors, demonstrations, and hands on activities for the entire family. Admission is always free.

The Happenings Nook

Ventura Aquatic Center Pumpkin Plunge
When: Saturday, October 22th, 12:00pm-3:30pm
Where: Ventura Aquatic Center, 901 South Kimball Rd.,
Ventura, CA 93003

Come join the Aquatic Center for the last weekend of Open Swim for Fall! They are offering a costume contest, face painting, pumpkin decorating, water games and activities. There is a floating pumpkin patch - \$1 per pumpkin. Fee for entry is \$3-\$5. For more information, please visit www.cityofventura.net/aquatics or call (805) 654-7511.

Aspiranet's Trunk or Treat
When: Thursday, October 27th, from 3:00pm-5:00pm
Where: Camarillo Office at 5284 Adolfo Rd. Camarillo 93012

Fun for all ages! Bring the family to the Camarillo Office for tons of treats and no tricks as Aspiranet hosts their Trunk or Treat. Tons of goodies, tons of fun! For more information, contact (805) 289-0120.

Supervisor Bennett's Great Pumpkin Roll
When: Saturday, October 29th, 2:00-7:00pm
Where: 1851 Terrace Drive, Ventura

Supervisor Bennett and his wife Leslie will be hosting their annual Great Pumpkin Roll, full of a pumpkin carving, bowling and catapult potluck party. Please bring your side-dish by 3:30.

2:00 - Begin pumpkin carving and practice pumpkin bowling.

3:30 - Potluck dinner is served. We will provide foster children a pumpkin to carve, drinks, lasagna and bread. Please provide a side dish.

4:45 - Pumpkin bowling down the driveway and catapult competition begins.

6:00 - Judging of carved pumpkins begins.

Items to Bring: A jacket or sweater for when the evening cools down; Your preferred Carving Tools; Any special food or drink needs

Note: Parking is limited on Terrace. Be prepared to unload at the house and then drive back down the street to park. Please RSVP by October 14 to Cruz.Benitez@ventura.org 654-2703 ***Limited capacity, early reservations encouraged.** Foster parents or other supervisors of the foster children are welcome.

Trick 'r Treat in the Park and Howl-O-Ween Pooch Parade

When: Sunday, October 30th, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm
Where: Lemon Park (Rancho Tapo Community Park)
located at 3700 Avenida Simi, Simi Valley, CA 93063

Come join the Rotary Club of Simi Valley at The Howl-O-Ween Pooch Parade and Pet Expo that has quickly become one of Simi Valley's most colorful and beloved events. Marchers dress themselves and their dogs in their Howl-O-Ween finest and parade around Rancho Tapo Community Park (Lemon Park). There will be over 40 vendors, family trick 'r treating in the afternoon, kid's and family costume contest and award ceremony (requires registration at the information booth upon arrival), pumpkin decorating, food available for purchase, silent auction, Ventura K-9 Search and Rescue demonstration, and more. Pooch Parade registration is \$10. The event (minus the parade) is free and open to the public. For more information, please visit <http://www.simisunsetrotary.org/major-fundraisers/pooch-parade/>.

YMCA's Halloween Parent's Night Out

When: Saturday, October 29th, 5:30pm-10:30pm
Where: 3760 Telegraph Rd., Ventura, CA 93003

The Ventura Family YMCA will be hosting a special Halloween Parent's Night Out on Saturday October 29th from 5:30pm-10:30pm! More details will be available as it gets closer. For more information, contact Julie O'Brien at (805) 642-2131 or check out the website at www.ciymca.org/ventura/html/events.html

Channel Islands Harbor Annual Pumpkin Fun Day

When: Sunday, October 30, 10:00am-2:00pm
Where: Fisherman's Market, 3350 S. Harbor Blvd, Channel Islands Harbor, Oxnard

Bring the whole family for a day of fun. Various events will be taking place all day, including pumpkin decorating, trick-or-treating through the Farmers' Market, costume parade and costume contest. Special prizes will be given to the winners. Other activities include face painting, live music and a bounce house. The entire event is free and open to the public. There is no charge to enter or to participate in the contests.



Arrow
CHILD & FAMILY MINISTRIES
Helping Kids - Strengthening Families

INVITES YOU TO THE VCCF

FAMILY HALLOWEEN HAUNT



OCTOBER 31ST / 3-5PM
VENTURA COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION BUILDING
4001 MISSION OAKS BLVD. - CAMARILLO

Bring the entire family to Trick-or-Treat in the safety and comfort of the VCCF building. Throughout the building, participating offices will be decorated, staff will be in costume, and there'll be lots of goodies to pass out!



FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CONTACT KATHY DONOFRIO
KATHY.DONOFRIO@ARROW.ORG • (805) 482-2423
WWW.ARROW.ORG



Arrow's Family Halloween Haunt

When: Monday, October 31, 3:00pm – 5:00pm
Where: Mission Oaks Blvd, Camarillo, CA 93012

Bring the entire family to Trick-or-Treat in the safety and comfort of the VCCF building. Throughout the building, participating offices will be decorated, staff will be in costume, and there'll be lots of goodies to pass out! For more information, contact Kathy Donorfrio at (805) 482-2423 or email at: Kathy.Donorfrio@arrow.org

Star of Wonder Outdoor Festival

When: Sunday, December 4th, 3:30pm-4:45 pm
Where: Calvary Community Church, 5495 Via Rocas, Westlake Village, CA 91362, Outdoor Lawn

Calvary Community Church would like to invite you all to our Foster Youth Clothing Distribution. They will have "like-new" clothing featuring various sizes and brand names that will fit girls and boys from birth to age 25 years old. Join them afterwards for the 'Star of Wonder Outdoor Festival' from 5-9 pm. Enjoy snow sledding, a petting zoo, making s'mores in fire pits, and listening to the Christmas story. To make sure there is enough clothing for all, please RSVP with size, age, and gender to [Patricia Kawamoto kenkawa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Patricia.Kawamoto@kenkawa@sbcglobal.net).

What's Goin' On?

Foster VC Kids Calendar of Events

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. Be sure to also **"like" Foster VC Kids on Facebook** to get regular updates about training, other Foster VC Kids events & read caregiver kudos.

Educational Champion Training *(Central County)*

Trainers: Laura Welbourn, Coordinator, Special Populations
(with Joanna Della Gatta, Rhonda Carlson & guests)

Saturday, October 1st 9:00am-3:30pm
(half hour break for lunch)

Kids & Families Together Resource Families Training
Center 1317 Del Norte Road, Suite 115 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. 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.

For more information on becoming an Ed Rights Holder, email LWelbourn@vcoe.org. To RSVP for the training (no later than September 23rd), email r Carlson@vccd.edu
Sponsors: Ventura County Office of Education & Ventura College FKCE

Weekly Community Group

Monthly Park Days and Foster Talk Meetings

Defending the Fatherless offer numerous support activities weekly and monthly, starting after Labor Day. Please contact Karen Gamboa if you would like to be connected and receive more information.

defendingthefatherless.info@gmail.com

PARENT TEACHER Forum

PARENTS & SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS

Come learn how to become a foster parent or mentor and walk alongside our local foster youth to ensure their educational success!

Tuesday, October 11th from 4-6pm

3400 West Gonzales Road, Oxnard
Oxnard High School Performing Arts Building

Join the Ventura County Office of Education and Foster VC Kids to watch the VCOE foster youth video premiere. Hear top educators, foster parents and leaders discuss the latest programs and legislative mandates that help youth thrive in school and at home.

TEACHERS
plant the seeds
of knowledge
that last a lifetime



What's Goin' On?

Foster VC Kids Calendar of Events

FAFSA and Chafee: Understanding Financial Aid available to Foster Youth *(West County)*

Presenter: Danielle Rodriguez & Venturaz
College Financial Aid Staff
Thursday, October 13th 6:00-7:30pm
Day Road Center @ Ventura College 71
Day Road Ventura, Computer Lab

Current or former foster youth have a lot of financial aid available to them simply by filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This informational session for care providers and students (current high school seniors, graduates or college students) will provide information and hand-on help in completing the forms that will help youth pay for college in the Fall of 2017. For the first time, FAFSA applications will be open in October instead of January. Registration is required by October 10th. Participants will receive credit for 1.5 hours of training upon completion of the class. RSVP to rcarlson@vcccd.edu Sponsors: Ventura College Financial Aid, FKCE, & Ventura County Office of Education

Parenting as a Team *(West County)* New!

Facilitators: Bill & Pam Lehtonen,
Certified Parenting Educators
Friday, October 21st 6:00-8:00pm (Dinner included)
Day Road Center @ Ventura College 71 Day
Road Ventura, Large Training Room

Raising children is one of the most challenging tasks you will ever face in life; being in a committed loving relationship is the other. Putting them both together can either make life easier and manageable or more difficult and discouraging. This class will give you additional tools and skills that you can use to create a supportive, harmonious partnership for raising children. We will discuss why couples disagree and ways to come together. Feel free to attend with your co-parent or on your own! In addition to being long-time Parenting Educators, Bill & Pam, married 35 years will also bring their experience of raising their 3 children by birth, but now also raising 3 of their granddaughters (8, 10 and 20) who they have adopted. Participants will receive credit for 2 hours of training upon completion of the class. Please RSVP to rcarlson@vcccd.edu

Foster and Adoptive Parent Retreat *Mosaic 2016*

Saturday, November 5th, 9:00am- 9:00pm
Cornerstone Church, 2080 Winifred Street Simi Valley, CA 93063.

This year we will be introducing you to Maridel Sandberg, our General Session speaker, an adoptive mom, a grandmother to 13 and an advocate for orphans both locally and abroad. We are excited to be welcoming back Mary Beth Dragoun to lead us in worship and Laurie Steinfeld back to lead the Paint Nite along with many other breakout speakers. Registration includes lunch, dinner, main sessions, breakout sessions and Paint Nite with Laurie! The cost for the event is \$45.00 for early bird registrations (if registered by October 29th) <http://mosaicretreat.com/>

Understanding LGBTQ: *(Central County)*

Sponsored by: Oxnard & Ventura College FKCE
Wednesday, October 26th 6:00pm-9:00pm
(arrive by 5:45 for a light dinner)
Camarillo Location TBD

This "special-event" workshop will introduce you to essential concepts and culture of LGBTQ people. We will discuss how to be a foster/kinship parent to an LGBTQ youth if your religious beliefs are in conflict and how the idea of being a public servant can guide you to provide a loving and safe caregiver to LGBTQ youth. This workshop is open to all of our community partners, including foster & kinship youth, in Nick's words "anyone who is old enough to consider human sexuality."

- Understand what LGBTQ stands for and what that means to the LGBTQ population
- Identify the significant overlap between typical male and female physical, emotional and sexual traits
- Create a way to support LGBTQ youth in your home and community, even if it is challenging to you personally.

Trainer: Nick Lawrence: Nick Lawrence holds a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from UC Santa Barbara. He is a science and former sex education teacher having worked with teens in public education. He has trained ministers and lay ministers for both the Unitarian Society and the Episcopal Diocese of California. He is currently the Program Coordinator for Foster and Kinship Care Education at Santa Rosa Junior College and is a transgender man.

To RSVP email rcarlson@vcccd.edu or debbieflowers@vcccd.edu or call 805-289-6327 or 805-678-5144

Education Rights Holder Forum *(Central County)*

Facilitators: Laura Welbourn & Joanna Della Gatta
Thursday, November 3rd 6:00-8:00pm,
dinner available at 5:45pm
Ventura County Office of Education 5100
Adolfo Road, Camarillo-Camarillo Room

If you are a Foster Parent, CASA or other advocate who holds Education Rights, this forum is for you! Designed for those who have completed the Education Champion Training or who already have education rights for a youth in foster care, this gathering will give you the opportunity to have dinner, share your experiences, learn from other Education Rights Holders, get a refresher on education laws impacting foster care and seek answers to those challenging situations. Please bring your Education Rights Holder binder with you! Participants will receive credit for 2 hours of training upon completion of the class. Please RSVP to rcarlson@vcccd.edu

You must RSVP for the training by Tuesday, October 18th by emailing rcarlson@vcccd.edu or debbieflowers@vcccd.edu
Sponsors: Oxnard & Ventura College FKCE

CPR & FIRST AID Recertification Training

Participants must already possess a valid CPR and/or First Aid card and are in need of RENEWAL of their current card. Priority goes to Foster & Kinship parents in Ventura County. Pre-registration is REQUIRED.

- First Aid Recertification, Friday October 7th 4:30-6:30pm (East County)
- CPR Recertification, Friday October 14th 4:30-6:30pm (West County)
- CPR Recertification, Friday November 4th 4:30-6:30pm (East County)
- First Aid Recertification, Friday November 18th 4:30-6:30pm (West County)
- First Aid Recertification, Friday December 2nd 4:30-6:30pm (East County)
- CPR Recertification, Friday December 9th 4:30-6:30pm (West County)

Please register with debbieflowers@vcccd.edu or rcarlson@vcccd.edu
Sponsor: Oxnard & Ventura College FKCE

Also coming this Fall at a date & location to be determined

The 5 Love Languages of Children *(East County)*

Trainer: Pam Lehtonen, Certified Parent Educator
2 mornings TBD in Simi Valley 9am-11:30am (2 parts)

Every one of us has a primary language of love, a way that fills our "love tank" better than any other. In this class series we will utilize the best-selling book *The 5 Love Languages of Children* by Gary Chapman & Ross Campbell to inform our understanding of the love languages of the children in our care. The first week we will view the DVD, get an overview of the languages and complete a personal love languages survey. In the following week, we will more thoroughly explore each of the love languages based on the reading and quizzes/observation you will do with your children at home. This class has been specifically designed for kinship and foster families. Come and benefit from Pam's 25 years of teaching in the public and private sectors as well as her personal experience of raising her 3 birth children and 3 grandchildren (ages 8, 10, and 20). Be prepared for a fun and interactive class series! Participants will receive credit for 5 hours of training upon completion of the class. If you are interested in this class please email rcarlson@vcccd.edu and put "Love Languages Simi" in Subject line.

Your Healing Home

(Previously called Sensory & Therapeutic Play)

Trainer: Adryana De La Rosa, Occupational Therapist
Facilitator: Pam Lehtonen, Kinship Parent
Date & Location TBD

Do you know the amazing benefits that await you and your child through "toys" and equipment designed to help during daily routines and activities to calm and heal from past trauma? Adryana De La Rosa is an Occupational Therapist who brings to this class her wealth of experience. She will share how Foster and Kinship families can set up their home environment to assist in calming the dysregulated child. She will bring with her many ideas of the types of play and toys that can be beneficial to your child. Facilitator, Pam Lehtonen will bring personal experience of many of these therapies to make her home a sensory and therapeutic place of healing for her PTSD and ADHD adopted grandchild. Participants will receive credit for 2 hours of training upon completion of the class series. If you are interested in this class please email rcarlson@vcccd.edu and put "Your Healing Home" in Subject line.
Sponsor: Ventura College FKCE

Foster Care Snapshot:

The Critical Need Continues...

In the month of June

There were 893 children in out-of-home placement
326 children were in foster home placements (County and FFA).
358 children were in kinship/relative care placements
102 children were in guardian homes
14 finalized adoptions (61 Calendar year-to-date)
66 children remained in group homes/shelter care
31.1% of siblings are separated from each other
14.9% are placed with some, but not all siblings

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

Arrow Child & Family Ministries
<http://www.arrow.org/>
Aspiranet
<http://www.aspiranet.org/>
California Youth Connection
<http://calyouthconn.org/>
Casa Pacifica
<http://www.casapacifica.org/>
CASA: Court Appointed Special Advocates
<http://www.casaofventuracounty.org/>
CFS Independent Living Program <http://www.ventura.org/ilp-youth/ilp-youth>
Channel Islands Social Services <http://www.islandsocialservices.org/>
Child Development Resources
<https://www.childdevelopmentresources.org/>
Child Hope Services
<http://www.childhopeservices.org/>
Children's Services Auxiliary
<http://www.csavc.org>
Dark to Dawn
<http://www.darktodawn.org/>
Foster VC Kids
www.fostervckids.org
Hope 4 Kids Festival & Run
<http://www.hope4kids.myevent.com/>

iFoster
www.ifoster.org
Interface Children & Family Services
<http://icfs.org/>
James Storehouse
<http://jamesstorehouse.org/>
Kids & Families Together
<http://www.kidsandfamilies.org/>
Koinonia Family Services
<http://www.kfh.org/>
Macaroni Kid
<http://www.camarillo.macaronikid.com/>
National Foster Parent Association
<http://nfpaonline.org/>
Neighborhoods for Learning
<http://first5ventura.org/parents-caregivers/neighborhoods-for-learning>
Parent Click
<http://ventura-ca.parentclick.com/>
QPI California
www.qpicalifornia.com
Rainbow Connection Family Resource Center
<http://rainbowconnectionfrc.weebly.com/>
TEACh Fund Scholarship
<http://www.vccf.org/scholarship/tech/index.shtml>

VC Foster Parent Association
<http://www.vcfpa.com/>
Ventura County Office of Education Foster Youth Services
<http://www.vcoe.org/spes/FosterYouthServices.aspx>
Women of Substance, Men of Honor
<http://www.wosmohinc.com/>

Foster Parent Training Websites

California Just in Time Training
<http://www.qpicalifornia.org/justintime.shtml>
Cenpatico U
<http://www.cenpaticoU.com>
Foster Care & Adoptive Community
<http://fosterparents.com/>
Foster Club
http://www.fosterclub.com/_booster/article/foster-parent-online-training
Foster Parent College
<http://www.fosterparentcollege.com/>

