



the foster NETWORK



Fall 2017

Greetings Foster VC Kids Caregivers,

As we seek to enhance the stability, support and partnership between our social workers, caregivers and families, we would like to update you about the staff and resources available to support you and the children/families you serve.

The newly named “**Placement Stabilization Team**” (PST) is comprised of 5 Placement Stabilization Coordinators who will work with you to identify best match placements for children and conduct follow up calls to caregivers during the first three months of a new placement. Placement Stabilization Coordinators will also make referrals and team with Social Workers, Peer Partner Educators (PPEs), resource partners or with one of our regionally assigned Caregiver Support Specialists for more in-depth support, resource linkage and training. The PST team is comprised of Sandra Nolan, Elisa Carreno, Betty Cedeno, Janelle Montalvo and Cynthia Hutchison. You may contact the Placement Unit at 289-1900 or email: HSA-PLACEMENT-REQUEST@ventura.org.

In addition to the initial placement coordination and stabilization efforts provided by our PST team, we also have on staff regionally based Foster and Relative Caregivers Support Specialists (CSSs). These Caregiver Support Specialists maintain a regional caseload of all of our county foster and relative caregivers.

- Sheri Meyerson - Camarillo/ East Co./ Contracted Short Term Shelter Families: 654-5568 or 765-5161
- Ana Navarro - West County/ Spanish Speaking Caregivers/ Medically Fragile children: 654-3204 or 290-7262

Relative Caregiver Support Specialists:

- Mirna Pina - Ventura/ Santa Paula/ Fillmore & Piru/ Ojai Valley/ Somis & East County: 289-1985 or 256-9278
- Tanya Sanchez-Oxnard/ Port Hueneme/ Camarillo: 654-3278 or 320-6217

Caregiver Support Specialists will continue to provide support to social workers, caregivers and PPE’s in order to ensure children and families receive the highest quality care and support. Some of the roles of a CSCS include:

- Identifying beneficial resources and supports
- Supporting caregiver navigation of the child welfare system
- Trouble shooting agency or partnership challenges
- Securing hard to access resources or special funding and training
- Providing education, training and updates on policies, practices and initiatives
- Participating in Family Team Meetings
- Supporting caregivers during and after a Complaint Investigation
- Supporting caregiver engagement with birth parents
- Providing assistance with your roles in supporting reunification
- Linking caregivers with a Peer Partner Educator

We are grateful for the commitment and care you provide our children. If you need immediate attention, please contact our Caregiver Support Line at 805-654-3220 or email us at fostervckids@ventura.org.

Elizabeth Thasiah

CFS Contacts

Adoptions	240-2700
CFS Hotline	654-3200
Children’s Health & Disability Prevention Nurse	240-2700
CSA Reimbursement	654-3220
Eligibility Officer of the Day	654-3409
Field Based Case Aids	654-3444
Recruitment, Development, & Support Info Line	654-3220
General Information East County	955-2290
General Information Emergency Response & Court Units	654-3444

General Information Family Support and Collaboration

(Formerly Central Programs)	654-3405
General Information Ongoing Units:	240-2700
ILP Coordinators	240-2700
Licensing NEW NUMBER!	654-3405
Placement Vacancy Line	289-1900
RDS Manager	654-5594
Relative Approval	654-3405
RFA Officer of the Day	654-3405
Rx for Kids Public Health Program	289- 9308
Youth Services Division	240-2700

NOVEMBER

is *National Adoption Month!*

Each year, November is recognized as **National Adoption Awareness Month**. While all adoption-related issues are important, the particular focus of this month is the **adoption of children currently in foster care**.

For over two decades, National Adoption Month has been celebrated across the country. Many national; State; local agencies; and foster, kinship care, and adoptive family groups will arrange programs, events, and activities during the month of November to raise awareness for children and youth in foster care who are waiting for permanent families.

For more information on adoption, visit www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/

1976

In 1976, Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis announced an **Adoption Week** in his State to **promote awareness of the need for adoptive families for children in foster care**

1984

In 1984, President Reagan **proclaimed the first National Adoption Week**

1995

In 1995, President Clinton expanded Adoption Awareness Week to the **entire month of November**.

1998

In 1998, President Clinton directed the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to **develop a plan to expand the use of the Internet as a tool to find homes for children waiting to be adopted from foster care**.

2008

In 2008, President Bush provided an **explanation of National Adoption Month in Spanish**.

2016

In 2016, **Ventura County finalized 122 adoptions of foster youth**.

November 18th is *National Adoption Day!*

The Dave Thomas Foundation is committed to finding forever families. To order a copy or download your free PDF, visit www.davethomasfoundation.org/adoption-guide/.

National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness of the more than 100,000 children in foster care waiting to find permanent, loving families. This annual, one-day event has made the dreams of thousands of children come true by working with policymakers, practitioners and advocates to finalize adoptions and create and celebrate adoptive families.

In total, National Adoption Day helped nearly 65,000 children move from foster care to a forever family. Communities across the county celebrate the Saturday before every Thanksgiving. In 2016, more than 5,100 children were adopted by their forever families during the 16th annual National Adoption Day celebration in 430 cities across the United States.

This year's National Adoption Day celebration will be on Saturday, November 18, 2017.

For more information, visit nationaladoptionday.org.

To read more from the Dave Thomas Foundation on Adoption, visit www.davethomasfoundation.org



Nurses CORNER

Vacations *and* the Foster Child

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

Vacations are part of family life and in many cases you will find as a foster family you will be able to include your foster child in the plans for a holiday. Most of the time it is supported and encouraged to add the foster child to these plans.

When a foster child experiences a typical family vacation, it benefits children in many ways. They are introduced to new cultures and experiences as well as help them to socialize and build confidence in unique circumstances. It also allows them to compare notes as to what they did during the summer off when they get back to school with their friends.

Before planning a vacation/holiday or school trip for the child you are fostering you need to prepare by knowing the following things:

Learn about the permission needed regarding the rules and regulations for leaving the area with the foster child. The child's individual circumstances must be taken into account and their welfare and safety is considered paramount.

It is expected that the child's supervising social worker will be contacted before any plans are made to leave the area on a vacation to receive permission or advice regarding any paperwork or approvals that need to occur. Sometimes a judge must grant permission and occasionally the biological parents must give permission. Keep in mind that the request to leave the state or

country can take several weeks to acquire, so plan in advance before finishing the arrangements to leave. Always carry the HEP, court orders of placement and MediCal proof for the child when leaving home.

Give notice of plans ahead of time because it may take several weeks' time to get the approvals necessary from those legally responsible in CFS. For plans to take the child/children out of the country, the time to get passports, original birth certificate and court approval will need to be arranged well in advance of making reservations for the trip.

Before entering into plans for a vacation ask yourself some of the following questions

- How well do you know your foster child? If it is less than 30 days you should give it a lot of thought.
- What is the child's age and activities that would be of interest to them?
- Would the child miss family visitation, therapy or school by going on the family vacation? In some cases this would not be allowed and would cause a legal problem. Other cases the visitation schedule can be modified by agreement with birth parents and social worker.
- How is the child's health? Can the child handle the type of activities planned on the trip?

If things all fall into place then sit back and enjoy the ride as you will be providing the greatest opportunity your foster child has ever experienced. Those opportunities include fun, excitement, memories and life skills never before offered to them. Have a wonderful time.

Did YOU Know?

Families are able to self-refer for Tri-Counties Regional services!

Tri-Counties Regional Center provides a variety of supports and services for individuals with developmental disabilities living in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties so that they may live fully and safely as active and independent members of our community. To see a list of service provided click [HERE](#) or call the Oxnard office at (805) 485-9643, (805) 485-9892 En Español or the Simi Valley office at (805) 823-2325, (805) 485-9892 En Español

Call for Action!

To all of our wonderful resource families who are co-parenting with birth families – We want to hear from you! We would love to talk to you more about your experiences and successes and share your stories. Please contact Jaci Johnson at 805-289-1948 or email her at Jaci.Johnson@Ventura.org



Kudos Corner



Betty C.

I just wanted to say thank you to Betty who helped us at the CSA Picnic. Betty, I LOVE working with you. The joy you bring to the families is really appreciated. They all loved your ability to wrangle the small goats and chickens and position the families perfectly to take their memorable pictures from our CSA 2017 Picnic. Thank you for your dedication to our families! – Leeann M.

Shelley H. & Charlie G.

I have had the pleasure to work with resource parents, Shelley and Charlie. They have been providing excellent care to drug exposed baby Ruby. Ruby has needed a hospital stay, weekly doctor appointments, and they need to make sure she is fed every 3 hours so she gains weight. They provide consistent detailed updates and are not only providing excellent care for Ruby, but they are working with the biological family to make sure they know Ruby's needs. Ruby's dad works two jobs and has no experience with a drug exposed baby. They have been facilitating visits for dad and making sure he knows all of Ruby's needs and preferences. A dad who had a fear of foster care now feels the support of our resource parents. I am grateful for these parents and their willingness to work with our biological families; this has been implemental for Ruby's case. – Jennifer K.

Nancy and Michael S.

This family expanded their license to a capacity of four, with the goal of being available for siblings to be together. They currently have two sets of siblings, two brothers and two sisters. They are managing the challenges that go along with working with two different biological families and reunification services, as well as four kids in the house between the ages of seven and ten. They do this balancing act with the children's best interest in mind. They have done a wonderful job of reaching out and communicating with the parents, while caring and nurturing the kids. These four kids are dramatically less traumatized because they were able to stay with their sibling. Thank you to this family for extending themselves to make a difference in the lives of children. – Betty C.

Alexa S.

As a PPE, Alexa is a great advocate for the foster parents she works with. She diligently reaches out and knows the pulse of the fostering community. She tenaciously works on finding the right match for the homes on her caseload and has greatly assisted in many successful placements. She is a great source of information and mentor. Kudos to you Alexa, for making connections that lead to good outcomes. – Betty C.

Jenn and Kevin T.

I have been working with Jenn and Kevin since December 2016. They always keep me updated with what's been going on with the child, and are more than flexible when it comes to visitation scheduling. They truly love the child as their own. It's been such a pleasure to work with them! – Jessica V.

Yvonne M. You are such an inspiration, and so great with our kids. We appreciate how you are always willing to go above and beyond! Thank you! – Sandra R

Joe W. A former Emergency Shelter Home provider, Joe took placement of a teen and though the child was moved after about 6 months, Joe has maintained contact with him, having regular visits and interacting with the child's NREFM with whom he now lives.

Shortly after the child was moved Joe took placement of a younger child who stayed nearly a year while reunification services were provided. Joe and his wife accepted him as family, involved him in all activities, and, took him with them on trips across the country. Joe and his wife were able to make real progress in addressing and helping to eliminate or modify the concerning behaviors. The child came into Joe's home speaking only a few words and communicated mostly with body language or by crying. By the time he was reunified the child was speaking in complete sentences. During the reunification process Joe facilitated multiple visits per week with mom and dad. He offered special visitations with the parents as well, inviting to take the whole family out to dinner at a restaurant. Since this child's reunification Joe has stayed in contact with him. He inquires regularly about the child's schooling and wellbeing. Joe has had several meetings with the child and his family, one recently at the park. I think he's done a phenomenal job. – Sheri M.



Call for Kudos!

We know that excellent partnership between caregivers, bio parents, community resources and social workers happen 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!!

Come Visit Us!

The Foster VC Kids CSC's have been making their way around the Ventura County, spreading the word about the need for loving homes for our Foster kiddos! Make sure you come say hello at our upcoming events, and pick up a reusable shopping bag! Don't forget to let us know if you know of any events we should be a part of.

September 23

Art Festival Community Event, Plaza Park in Oxnard (11am-3pm)

September 23

Strengthening our Families Community Event hosted by Oxnard School District, Frank Junior High School

September 30

Make a Difference Day, Plaza Park in Oxnard

October 17

Multi-Cultural Festival in downtown Oxnard – Live music, booths, arts & crafts

The School Zone

Dear **FYS**,

I am a new foster parent to two school-aged siblings. They will be attending their school of origin in the Fall, which is in a neighboring city to our home. Since my spouse and I both work, we are in need of after-school programming. We called the school and were told the program is full but our kids will be added to the wait-list. We are very worried that this will not be solved by the time school starts.

What should we do?

— *Busy Parent*

Dear *Busy*,

Recent legislation (AB1567, Campos) gives first priority enrollment in before and after school programs to foster and homeless youth. Beginning July 1, 2017, before-and-after school programs are required to inform the parent or caregiver of a pupil of the right of homeless children and foster children to receive priority enrollment and how to request priority enrollment, subject to program capacity. The bill further allows district administrators to directly certify to the programs that a youth is in foster care (or homeless) without further documentation from a care provider. Also, this bill will prohibit a program that charges family fees from charging a fee to a family if the program is aware that the child is in foster care (or homeless).

Check in with the Foster Youth Liaison for your district to see if he or she can guide you in ensuring your students receive priority enrollment. This legislation is very new, so districts will be determining policy and procedure this year.

For assistance with this or any other school-related question or concern, please contact us at (805) 437-1525 or fys@vcoe.org.

Foster Youth Education Rights

As we begin another school year and our kids are getting ready for back to school, here is a useful link that summarizes the California Education Code rights for our foster youth.

- 1) To remain in their school of origin,
- 2) To immediate enrollment in school,
- 3) To partial credits for high school students,
- 4) To Graduation,
- 5) To College,
- 6) To School Discipline,
- 7) To school records

For more information, click here:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/lr/pf/fy/fosteryouthedrights.asp>

Check out the Foster Movement Podcasts!

The Foster Movement Podcast, featuring former foster youth and national leaders in foster care advocacy, provides powerful insights and practical tools to help you work with others to provide More Than Enough for kids and families in foster care where you live. The podcasts cover topics such as 'Navigating Biological Family Relationships', and 'Changing Society by Changing Foster Care'. To listen and subscribe, just go **HERE** or visit <https://cafo.org/series/foster-movement/>



Resource Center Back to School

As we welcome Fall, we also welcome getting back in to the routine of buses, lunches and the sound of school bells ringing. If you need assistance with backpacks or school supplies, please contact RDS at 654-3220 to find out how to get in touch with your local resource partner. Resources are available if you have questions on youth education, educational rights and more. Foster VC Kids partners offer tutoring options that are available to foster youth. Please check out our online Resource Toolkit, and for more resources [HERE!](#)

Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program:

FYSCP works in collaboration with foster liaisons in each district in the county to ensure that the educational, physical, social and emotional needs of foster youth are identified, to determine gaps in educational and social support services and provide those services, directly or through referrals to collaborative partners. The program also seeks to facilitate the completion and timely transfer of school records, improve students' academic achievement, reduce truancy, dropout rates and delinquent behavior, and provide advocacy to promote the best interest of foster youths throughout the county. Contact the Foster Youth Services Program at 805- 437-1525 fys@vcoe.org.

Project Understanding Tutoring Centers

Tutoring Centers provide extra instruction for students grades K-5 with volunteer tutors in one-to-one interaction. Project Understanding currently has 11 tutoring centers throughout Ventura County, in El Rio, Oxnard, Santa Paula, Saticoy and Ventura. Free for all students. Contact RDS at 805-654-3220 for referral sheets and instructions. Sometimes students may have to be on a waiting list due to space limitations. For more information, visit www.projectunderstanding.org/tutoring-centers/ or contact Maria Gonzalez, Program Manager – 805-652-1326, ext 303

Eureka! Tutoring

Free tutoring for foster youth in all subject areas, kindergarten through college. Embracing the Whole Child Foundation sponsors educational assistance. One-on-one tutoring available through in-home webinars

and in home. To schedule a tutoring session, go to: www.ewcata.com . For more information, contact Lynette Lucas at 714-989-6159 or email ewchild@yahoo.com.

James Storehouse-Back to School Supplies

Backpacks and school supplies are still available and the warehouse and boutique are open to the foster community to shop for free on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9am-2pm. For an appointment, call (805) 499-7161 or Email: jamesstorehouse@gmail.com

Featured Resource Partner:

Women of Substance & Men of Honor (WOSMOH)

WOS&MOH, Inc. addresses the needs of guidance and support for at-risk youth by providing rehabilitation & restoration services, education on healthy lifestyles and relationships, Leadership mentoring courses and scholarships and items including hygiene products, and food and clothing vouchers. Transitional foster care youth & Probation youth are provided with Christmas Gift Bags, Transitional and after care support, a Community Nest, Transitional Housing and referrals for support.

WOSMOH is always partnering with other agencies and businesses to fundraise, provide activities for youth and families, and create supports within the community! To locate services, get involved or see what upcoming events are happening, email helpingyouth@wosmoh.org or visit their new website at www.wosmoh.org!

Foster VC Kids is here to help. We have many resources available for you and your children's needs, other than the above highlighted. If you have specific material or resource needs, contact your social worker or Foster VC Kids for support at fostervckids@ventura.org or call us at 654-3220. We can help you to access the resources you and your child need to thrive.

To see the full list of resource providers, see our full **FOSTER VC Kids RESOURCE TOOLKIT** at www.fostervckids.org/resources.

2017 CISS PPE HUB's

Each month Fostering Resource families are invited to come together for quality time with a variety of speakers. Training certificates are available.

Lighthouse Church, 3353 Old Conejo Rd, Newbury Park, CA 91320 6:00-8:00pm

Meetings are held the 2nd Thursday of every month.

September 14 - Trust Cased Relational Intervention, Mission Statement

October 12 - Trust Based Relational Intervention, Life Books

November 9 - Trust Based Relational Intervention, Notes of Thankfulness



What's Happening at the YMCA this fall

The Y is, and always will be, dedicated to building healthy, confident, connected and secure children, adults, families and communities. Every day our impact is felt when an individual makes a healthy choice, when a mentor inspires a child, and when a community comes together for the common good. VENTURA FAMILY YMCA | 760 Telegraph Road, Ventura, CA 93003 805.642.2131 • ciymca.org/ventura

The Ventura Family YMCA has something for everyone. These are just part of the wide variety of activities and programs they offer:

Afterschool Care - With today's busy schedules, many parents partner with the Y for a little help. Afterschool at the Y is known to improve a child's attitude about school and boost their self-confidence. Your child will receive the care and attention he or she needs: • Homework help • Creative play • A safe and fun environment to play with friends • HEPA standards (Healthy Eating and Physical Activity) SIGN YOUR CHILD UP FOR AFTERSCHOOL CARE TODAY!
For more information, please contact Julie O'Brien at Julie.Obrien@ciymca.org

NFL Flag Football | September 4 - November 11

Keep your child healthy and happy and sign him/her up for Youth Flag Football. Our coaches emphasize character development and encourage self-confidence with every practice and game. Players will have opportunities to grow physically, mentally and socially while having a blast playing the game. There is playing time for everyone. For any more information, contact Vinny.Savelich@ciymca.org or call 805.642.2131 x13.

Youth Basketball League | September 14 - November 11

Give your child the opportunity to build confidence and learn new skills! Our coaches emphasize learning fundamentals, displaying

teamwork and having fun, with plenty of playing time for all. All players receive a jersey and an end-of-season trophy. Don't wait! Sign your child up for a season to grow and learn physically, mentally and emotionally! For more information, contact Vinny.Savelich@ciymca.org or call 805.642.2131 x13.

Youth & Government - California YMCA Youth and Government creates a six month learning by-doing experience that teaches the values of democracy by bringing together a cross-section of the state's high school students. The program runs from the end of August to the end of February. Scholarships available
Meetings are weekly at 6pm at the Ventura Y. Day TBD

- Experience government first-hand
- Learn how to solve community problems
- Debate current topics and issues
- Discuss with peers throughout California

For more information contact: Julie O'Brien 805.642.2131 x23 Julie.Obrien@ciymca.org

Aquatics - The YMCA has been America's leading swim instructor for more than 100 years. Our aquatics programs extend beyond instruction. We also provide recreational, competitive and specialty aquatics programs for all ages and abilities, including parent-child classes, water exercise and therapy, water safety and rescue, and water sports. You can view our swim program schedule at www.ciymca.org/ventura/html/aquatics.html

Like all Y programs, swim, sports and play is open to all with financial assistance available. For more information, contact Amber Stevens, Director of Aquatics and Youth Programs at Amber.Stevens@ciymca.org or 805.642.2131, x17.

Resource Events *Looking Back*

Children's Services Auxiliary hosted their annual Summer Picnic in the Park! Many families were able to relax and have fun! Our PPE and CSA members were able to make great connections with Foster families and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the picnic.

From left to right: Alexa Schumacher, Foster PPE, Leeann Mesa, Foster PPE & CSA President, Sonia Correa, Foster PPE, Betty Cedeneno, Placement Stabilization Team

In partnership with **Women of Substance, Men of Honor (WOSMOH)**, our newest Faith in Motion partner, **St. Peter Claver's** Missions of Mercy in Simi Valley hosted a Rest and Reunion event. The festivities included games, face painting refreshments and FUN! The event was great! The church will be doing this event yearly to honor and spread love and fun to our families and youth.



On behalf of the **Children's Services Auxiliary** and Fostering the Future, we would like to congratulate the 10 recipients of this year's **Joan Gendreau and Brendan Acosta Scholarships**. We are pleased to announce that a combined total of \$18,158 will be given to these individuals to further their educational goals. These 10 amazing individuals have committed to majoring in such fields as Psychology, Nursing, Child Development, Family Therapy, Business Administration and Mental Health at the following schools UCLA, CSUN, CSUCI, CCBC, Moorpark, Oxnard and Ventura Community We also had one individual who qualified for a sports scholarship. These students will be using their award money to further their education and aspire to reach their goals. The essays submitted detailed the effects of Foster care and how in many cases they overcame obstacles and barriers. It is with great pride that we recognize and celebrate the success of these students. For details on how to apply for the 2018 Scholarships please visit our website csavc.org for details.

Children's Services Auxiliary recognizes the need and awards scholarships to Court Dependent graduating high school students or GED equivalent who are applying to at least one of the following: Vocational/Trade School, Community College, 4-year College and/or applying to the Military after high school or GED completion. These scholarships are awarded yearly and it is never too late or too early to consider applying for opportunities for the college bound youth in your home!

Businesses with **HE**♥**RT**

Ventura County Children & Family Services

Businesses with Heart is our newest addition to the Foster VC Kids family of resources.

Many local businesses have asked how they can help support our foster community. Businesses with Heart provide opportunities for businesses to partner with Foster VC Kids to help support our foster youth and caregivers. Businesses can provide discounts on their products or services, they can mentor a youth to provide an inside look at what goes on in the day of a particular business, even offer an internship or job! Please check our website for all details on services and discounts for: restaurants, dentists, mechanics, recreational activities, furniture, barber shop, and much, much more! If you would like to suggest a particular need or would like to refer a business to Businesses with Heart, please contact Jaci Johnson at jaci.johnson@ventura.org.



New Partner Highlight!

La Rouge Salon | 2104 E. Main St, Ventura | 805-667-8533
Offering FREE haircuts, every Wednesday from 2pm - 5pm. Come relax in a beautiful urban salon setting and get a fresh look! Owner Rachel Perryman says that everyone deserves to feel special. Come meet your stylist who is looking forward to providing a real salon experience and a great haircut! Call for your appointment and bring your Businesses with Heart ID card (**Coming Soon!**).

Upcoming Resource Events

Monthly Parent's Night Out Event

Clare Rice speaks on Encounter Church's foster ministry:

When I joined the lead team staff at Encounter 5 years ago, I knew very little about foster care and adoption. At that point, all I knew is that as the new Director of Care Ministries, I was now charged with overseeing the Foster Care Ministry. What started as part of my job description, very quickly filled my heart with love for foster families. For some time I felt conflicted by this passion, because I don't feel the calling to be a foster mom. What I quickly learned is that there are a number of ways that I can serve. For now the most important way for me to provide is by increasing awareness of the needs of the foster care families in Ventura County to the members of Encounter Church.

We started by taking on a backpack ministry that developed into Love Does Bags. If you're a foster parent in Ventura County, perhaps you've been on the receiving end of one of our red backpacks filled with items and packed with love and prayer. Love Does Bags has grown quickly thanks to the dozens of volunteers who donate and serve each month. However, we wanted to serve more, and have a personal connection with the foster families. When asking foster parents where they saw opportunity for our church to serve and all of them responded "RESPITE CHILDCARE"! We hosted a few Foster Care Parents' Night Out events to give parents a needed break, and children an evening of fun. Our childcare staff cared for children up to age 12 while the parents enjoyed an evening out. The parents and staff agreed that the events were a win-win for all involved. Starting this summer, we will start hosting Foster Parents' Night Out at Encounter every other month on the first Friday. —Clare Rice, Director of Care Ministries, Encounter Church



The Foster Parents' Parents Night Out will be Friday, September 8, 5-9pm. There is a \$5 fee per family and pre-registration is required. You can register online at www.encounterlife.org/events or email Clare at crice@encounterlife.org. Encounter Bible Fellowship Church 6950 Ralston St, Ventura, CA 93003



CASA of Ventura County – A Night of Fine Food and Music

Join our Court Appointed Special Advocates for an evening of fine food and music at Café Firenze on September 14th at 6pm. Tickets are \$50 per person with opportunity drawings throughout the evening! To purchase tickets, visit www.casaofventuracounty.org or call 805-389-3120. For more information, email Pam Knitowski at pam@casaofventuracounty.org

Women of Substance, Men of Honor – Annual Breakfast Fundraiser

Women of Substance & Men of Honor has an upcoming Annual Breakfast Fundraiser on October 28th at Spanish Hill Country Club to raise funds for care packages. Start time is 9am with registration open at 8:30. Tickets can be purchased on our website: www.wosmoh.org



Mosaic Retreat – Hope for the foster and adoptive journey – Saturday, November 4th, 9am-9pm

Please join us at Cornerstone Church at 2080 Winifred Street in Simi Valley for guest speakers, breakout sessions, and fellowship! A light breakfast, lunch and dinner will be served and an evening event you won't want to miss! Foster care training hours are offered, however childcare is not. To register, visit: <http://mosaicretreat.com/registration>

James Storehouse – Fall Activities

In October, James Storehouse will partner with Kids and Families for the Coats and Costumes Giveaway event. For more information, call (805) 499-7161 or email: jamesstorehouse@gmail.com

In November, Thanksgiving dinner meals with all the trimmings will be available to foster and kinship families in need. Everything is included. It just needs to be cooked! Packs will also include gift certificates for a turkey. We also plan to have our annual Dream Day for little girls in foster care, ages 4-11. We will be taking them to the American Girl Doll Store at The Grove where they will pick out a doll, get the dolls' ears pierced, and we will have a special seating out on the patio to have lunch together with their new dolls. The Grove will have a special surprise for each of the girls, as well. Email jamestorehouse@gmail.com to sign up beginning in October.

PLACES we've been



Crystal S., Jaci J., and Steve M. at the County of Ventura's 'Taste of Wellness Fair.

Calista M. from Ventura High School volunteers to help apply temporary tattoos and pass out recruitment information at the Ventura 4th of July Street Fair.



Jaci J. and Ana N. at the Ventura Chamber Business Expo



Jaci J. and Crystal S. at Choppers and Coppers



Foster VC Kids, Children's Services Auxiliary, Ventura County Fire and the Boy Scouts marched along the parade route opening up the Ventura County Fair for the 2nd year in a row!

What's Goin' On?

Foster VC Kids Calendar of Events

Kids & Families Together Presents *Nurturing Connections*

Kids & Families Together (K&FT) is excited to announce our new psychoeducational material used in our SET (for foster and kinship resource families) and FAM (for pre and post adoptive families) programs! Nurturing Connections includes information on the following topics:

1. Attachment
2. Development
3. Trauma and How It Impacts Us
4. Trauma and the Brain
5. Resilience
6. Therapeutic Parenting Philosophy
7. Therapeutic Parenting Toolbox
8. Co-Parenting
9. Making Sense of Your Attachment History
10. Grief and Loss
11. Self-Care
12. Play and Family Bonding
13. Adoption



There are helpful video links throughout as well as extra resources at the end of the book. Take advantage of this opportunity to deepen your understanding of your child's experience and talk things out one-on-one with K&FT's attachment and trauma-informed clinicians. To self-refer, call Rachel Ashleman, LMFT at 805.643.1446, ext. 106.

Parenting Again: Grandparents as Parents (West County)

Facilitators: Pam & Bill Lehtonen

Saturday, September 9th, 9am-2pm, Includes lunch

Ventura Missionary Church, 500 High Point Drive, Ventura

Just when you thought your parenting days were over, you get a call and your grandchildren or niece and nephew need to come to your house to stay. For many of us, that temporary circumstance turns into a permanent situation and most of the time you are overwhelmed. You do your best and make sacrifices.

Bill and Pam Lehtonen have been raising their grandchildren for over 14 years. In their home, they have a 21 year old in college and two elementary aged children, 10 and 9. With over 35 years as parent educators, they have learned that traditional parenting is not enough for these kids. Children who come from hard places all experience loss, trauma, attachment issues and much more. Pam & Bill will share the struggles of loss, anxiety, financial problems, relationships with birth parents and the complexities of raising children in our fast-paced world. They will also discuss the many blessings that raising a second family can bring with practical tools that can make a lasting difference.

You are not alone! Come and experience like families who want to learn ways to take care of themselves and also get the much needed help in raising their second family. Let's do this together! Celebrate Grandparents Day with us! Each Participant/Couple will receive a copy of the book, *The Kinship Parenting Toolbox*.

Participants will receive 5 hours of training upon completion of the class series. Please RSVP to Rhonda Carlson at rcarlson@vcccd.edu
Sponsor: Ventura College FKCE

CPR & FIRST AID Recertification Training

Participants must already possess a valid CPR and/or First Aid card and need a RENEWAL of their current card. Priority goes to Foster & Kinship parents in Ventura County. Pre-registration is REQUIRED. **There is NO childcare available at these trainings.**

Adult & pediatric CPR & First Aid *Recertification* Classes (East & West Counties)

All classes start at 4:30pm and end at 6:30pm

First Aid – September 8th

Day Road Center at Ventura College, 71 Day Rd, Ventura, 93003

CPR – September 1st

James' Storehouse 3541 Old Conejo Rd. #117, Newbury Park, 91320

To register, please contact your local FKCE office: Email rcarlson@vcccd.edu or debbieflowers@vcccd.edu or call 805-678-5144 or 805-289-6181

All Ventura County Foster Caregivers are welcome at no charge. Hosted by FKCE

Mandated Reporter Training – NOW A REQUIRED TRAINING FOR ALL FOSTER & RESOURCE FAMILIES!

For Professionals who are mandated reporters in the fields of Health, Mental Health, Education, Social Services, Justice, Law Enforcement, Faith, and Childcare. Participants will learn how to recognize respond to and report child, dependent adult, and elder abuse and gain knowledge of prevention resources in our community. **No cost, with materials & certificates provided.**

November 9th, 2017 9:00am-11:30am at National University 1000 Town Center Drive, Oxnard, 93036

January 24, 2018* at 9:00am-11:30am at VCCF Building** 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd, Camarillo, 93012 - ***SPANISH ONLY

March 29, 2018 1:00pm-3:30pm Location to be determined

Email any questions to jfortega@partnershipforsafefamilies.org

Go to *The Partnership for Safe Families and Communities* website for links to register www.partnershipforsafefamilies.org/events

FKCE Trainings

Trust Based Relational Intervention Video Series (West County)

Trainer: Pam Lehtonen

5 Mondays: September 11, September 18, September 25, October 2, October 9 6:00-8:30pm (choose one, all, or any combo!)

Ventura Missionary Church, 500 High Point Drive, Ventura (Room 325)

Because of their histories, children from hard places have changes in their bodies, brains, behaviors, and belief systems. While a variety of parenting strategies may be successful in typical circumstances, children from hard places need caregiving that meets their unique needs and addresses the whole child. All 5 evenings are video based training with room for discussion at the end of each class. Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) is a research grounded intervention that meets the complex needs of children who have suffered harm during early childhood. Pam has implemented these strategies in her home and will also offer tips and suggestions from her own experience. Each participant/couple that attends will also receive a copy of the book "The Connected Child" by Karyn Purvis and David Cross.

Participants will receive credit for 2.5 hours upon completion of each segment of training. Please RSVP to Rhonda Carlson rcarlson@vcccd.edu and specify which classes you intend to take. Sponsor: Ventura College FKCE

Resource Parent

Networking and Support Groups

Resource Parent Networking provides foster parents the opportunity to meet and build relationships with other foster parents in their communities. Be sure to "Like" us on Facebook and visit www.fostervckids.org to view the most current information on events!
* Please note that meetings are subject to change*

Trauma-Informed Parenting Support Group

Educational: Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Caregivers in Ventura County have the opportunity to explore a variety of topics in a safe, supportive environment of their peers. Topics include trauma, Brain and Dysregulation, attachment, therapeutic parenting, dealing with difficult behaviors, working with birth families, playfulness and more. Receive training hours that can be applied toward Resource Parent training requirements. Child care provided by CISS and must be arranged at least 48 hours in advance. Please call to RSVP if you plan on attending a group. Attendance is not required each week. **Thursdays 6:00-8:00pm, June 8-July 27 Kids & Families Together 856 E. Thompson Blvd., Ventura**

Call Amy at 805-643-1446 ext. 133 to register for group.

Simi Valley: Provided through the Ventura and Oxnard FKCE programs and meets the 2nd Friday of the Month at Cornerstone Church. Contact rcarlson@vcccd.edu or DebbieFlowers@vcccd.edu for more information.

Ventura: Foster VC Kids monthly networking meetings are currently on hold. See the HUB Calendar. Contact Foster VC Kids at 805-654-3220 or fostervckids@ventura.org for more info and for upcoming dates.

Spanish: Foster VC Kids hosts meetings the last Wednesday of the month from 6-8 pm at Ventura Missionary Church. Contact Foster VC Kids at 805-654-3220 or fostervckids@ventura.org for more info and for upcoming dates.

Camarillo: Defending the Fatherless is a Christian faith based caregiver support network/group. All are welcome. Email defendingthefatherless.info@gmail.com or go to <http://www.defendingthefatherless.net/> for more info.

Ventura County Foster Parent Association (VCFPA):

The VCFPA offers support, training and resources to Ventura County foster, adoptive, and relative caregivers. They hold monthly membership meetings bi-monthly. For information on the association and meetings dates/times/locations, visit <http://www.vcfpa.com/>.

Facilitating Behavioral Change

Monday, September 11th 6:00-8:30pm

Children who come from abuse, neglect or trauma are more likely to display problem behaviors. This video based class will explore the Connecting and Correcting principles. The video lecture will provide practical insight and tips on how to use Trust Based Relational intervention in real-life situations.

Empowering, Connecting, and Correcting Principles

Monday, September 18th 6:00-8:30pm

Trust-Based Relational Intervention is a research-based approach to working with children who come from "hard places". Children who have been exposed to drugs and alcohol in utero or who have suffered abuse, neglect or trauma early in life suffer from significant disruption in development. This video- based class will offer strategies to help children overcome these deficits and gain the path to needed healing.

Playful Interaction

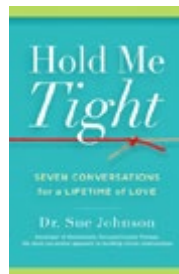
Monday, September 25th 6:00-8:30pm

Through play, children learn to develop the social and emotional skills needed to succeed in life. This video will outline the importance of play and will provide practical examples of playful interactions. You will learn how to unlock the mysteries of playful nurture that is needed in all human relationships.

Hold Me Tight Couples Workshop (8 sessions) (Camarillo)

September 27th- November 15th 6pm-8pm
(This workshop is FREE and you'll receive training hours!)

Kids and Families Camarillo Office 4001
Mission Oaks Blvd., Suite P



Are you ready to strengthen your relationship with your partner and in turn, benefit your children and their future relationships?

The goals of this group are to: 1) identify and change frustrating and painful cycles couples get caught in, 2) improve communication, 3) help couples make sense of their own and their partner's emotions and relationship needs, 4) begin to heal and forgive past relationship hurts, and 5) deepen and enhance trust, emotional safety, and physical intimacy.

Research has shown that when partners are securely attached, they find it easier to be good parents. They also model healthy relationships for their children and tend to have children who are also securely attached. Securely attached children are happier, more socially competent, more resilient to stress, and more likely to form healthy relationships in the future. *To register for the next group, please contact Rachel Ashleman, LMFT at 805.643.1446, ext. 106.*

Healthy Touch Monday, October 2nd 6:00-8:30pm

Touch is more powerful than any other form of communication. Touch is essential to human existence. This video will explore the importance of touch, particularly as a tool for promoting healing and developing deeper connection between parents and children. You will learn practical ways to add healthy touch to your daily life.

Trust Based Relational Intervention for your Teenager

Monday, October 9th 6:00-8:30pm

Developing a trusting relationship with any teenager can be challenging. For teens with traumatic backgrounds of abuse, neglect or broken homes, it is especially challenging for both the teen and for the adult caring for them. This video follows youth ages 11-18 that are offered Trust Based Relational Intervention. You will see how this approach brings about remarkable changes.

Please RSVP to Rhonda Carlson rcarlson@vcccd.edu and specify which classes you intend to take. Sponsor: Ventura College FKCE

**** College of the Canyons**, located in Santa Clarita also hosts Foster and Kinship Care Education classes. These workshops are FREE for ALL foster and resource families, College Students, Educators and anyone interested in parenting classes. These classes are available for B, D, or F rate renewal. Parking passes are needed for all classes, and passes will be emailed to registered participants.

You can register online <http://www.canyons.edu/Departments/ECE/Pages/Foster-and-Kinship-Care.aspx> OR Email mimi.leach@canyons.edu. These workshops/classes are for adults only, as childcare is not provided

For Relative Caregivers

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- Walk-ins welcome! Training hour certificates provided upon request. For further information, email aacosta@kidsandfamilies.org. For further information, email kssp@kidsandfamilies.org

Sponsors: Ventura College FKCE, Oxnard College FKCE
and Kids & Families Together

Ventura: 1st and 3rd Tuesdays 6:00-8:00pm
Kids & Families Together 856 E. Thompson Blvd.

Santa Paula: (Bilingual) 2nd Tuesday of the month
6:00-8:00pm | First 5 Neighborhood for Learning
217 10th St.

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

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

For more information on the above classes or to RSVP you may call or email: Debbie Flowers at Oxnard College 678-5144 or Rhonda Carlson at Ventura College 289-6181 debbieflowers@vcccd.edu or rcarlson@vcccd.edu

Foster Care Snapshot:

The Critical Need Continues...

In the Month of April:

There were **851** children in care

240 children were in foster home placements (County & FFA)

397 children were in kinship/relative care placements

98 children were in guardian homes

17 finalized adoptions

55 children remained in group homes/shelter care

29.9% of siblings are separated from each other

18.1% are placed with some, but not all siblings

We welcomed **5** new foster homes into the Foster VC Kids 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

Aspiranet

www.aspiranet.org

Bethany Family Services

www.bethany.org

California Youth Connection

www.calyouthconn.org

Casa Pacifica

www.casapacifica.org

CASA: Court Appointed Special Advocates

www.casaofventuracounty.org

CFS Independent Living Program

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

Channel Islands Social Services

www.islandsocialservices.org

Child Development Resources

www.childdevelopmentresources.org

Child Hope Services

www.childhopeservices.org

Children's Services Auxiliary

www.csavc.org

Dark to Dawn

www.darktodawn.org

Foster VC Kids

www.fostervckids.org

HulaFrog

www.hulafrog.com/Ventura-Ca

iFoster

www.ifoster.org

Interface Children & Family Services

<http://icfs.org>

James Storehouse

www.jamesstorehouse.org

Kids & Families Together

www.kidsandfamilies.org

Koinonia Family Services

www.kfh.org

Macaroni Kid

www.camarillo.macaronikid.com

National Foster Parent Association

<http://nfpaonline.org>

Neighborhoods for Learning

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

QPI California

www.qpicalifornia.com

Rainbow Connection Family Resource Center

www.rainbowconnectionfrc.weebly.com

Raising HOPE/HOPE4Kids

www.raisinghope.org

Shelter Care Resources

www.sheltercareresources.com

TEAch Fund Scholarship

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

VC Foster Parent Association

www.vcfpa.com

Ventura County Office of Education Foster Youth Services

www.vcoe.org/spes/FosterYouthServices.aspx

Women of Substance, Men of Honor

www.wosmohinc.com

Conejo Valley Guide

www.conejovalleyguide.com/events-calendar

Foster Parent Training Websites

California Just in Time Training

www.qpicalifornia.org/justintime.shtml

Cenpatico U

www.cenpaticoU.com

Foster Care & Adoptive Community

www.fosterparents.com

Foster Club

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

Foster Parent College

www.fosterparentcollege.com