



CONNECTING, SUPPORTING, AND STRENGTHENING FOSTER FAMILIES

BREMER, BUTLER, FRANKLIN, AND GRUNDY COUNTIES

# Allison Area Foster Parents

## “Autism—A Parent’s Perspective Tuesday, January 19, 2010

Plan to come to our next support group meeting on Tuesday, January 19, to learn more about autism, a condition that more and more foster/adoptive families are dealing with. The meeting will be from 7-9 p.m. at the Vineyard Community Church, 319 W. Bremer Avenue in Waverly. Our speaker this month will be Dr. Suzanne Bartlett, who is a physician at Waverly Health Center. Dr. Bartlett is the parent of a nine-year-old son with autism, is the 1st Vice President of the Autism Society of Iowa, and is on an Act Early autism panel working through the Centers for Disease Control. She will share her family’s personal experiences from her son’s infancy until now, including the early signs, the diagnosis, the trials and tribulations they have faced, and the strategies they have used. This is a great opportunity to hear from someone with personal and professional expertise on this important topic. Dr. Bartlett

will also allow time for questions from the group. Since Dr. Bartlett is scheduled to be there at 7:00, we will plan to have her presentation first and will share announcements and other items of business when she is finished.

Free child care will be provided for newborns through 12-year-old children in the nursery and Sunday School area of the church by several students from Wartburg, and teenagers are welcome to come and meet with Kate Haberman-Foelske, foster parent and therapist, who is facilitating our teen support group this year.

Please bring a snack item to share with the group. Paper products and beverages will be provided.



### KidsNet Support Worker Changes

Iowa KidsNet has made some staff changes which will affect our families in Butler and Franklin Counties. Pam Jones will continue to support the families in Bremer and Grundy Counties and Caren Brunsvold will now be supporting the families in Butler and Franklin. Caren shares this information with us. *I have worked in the area of foster care and adoption “forever.” Currently I am the support worker in Cerro Gordo Co, and also teach PS/MAPP, lead orientations, and various other trainings. My husband and I have been foster and adopt parents for over 18 years—parented everything from newborns to independent living youth so I have little bits of knowledge in a lot of areas. I hope with questions and/or issues you may have, if I can’t answer it I will help get you to someone that can. I know this is a huge time of transition. I will work with you, Pam and others to make it go as smooth as possible. I look forward to meeting you, getting to know your families, and growing together as we continue to provide care to the children that need us. Thank you for your continued efforts as we all evolve in our roles in helping families.*

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# ODDS AND ENDS

Plans to implement our Certified Respite Program are proceeding nicely. We have 16 people who have expressed interest in becoming in-home respite providers for area foster families. We will hold their training on January 16 and January 30. At our March meeting we will have a training on respite and how to utilize the new program including expectations for the foster homes using respite care. In order to use the certified respite providers you **MUST ATTEND** this training, so mark your calendars now for our March 16 meeting.

Many of our families took time from their busy holiday schedules to attend our foster family Christmas party on December 5 in Clarksville. We send a big thank you to foster parents David and Kris Nelson for allowing us to hold the party at St. John Lutheran Church where David is pastor. Unfortunately, the Nelsons were called to South Dakota due to the death of David's mother so were unable to join us that day. We extend our sympathy to the whole family.

We also need to thank several groups who helped make Christmas special for our kids including:

- the students at Denver High School who had a toy drive and helped with our Christmas party
- Tom Singewald of Waverly who was a wonderful Santa Claus at our Christmas party
- the members of the Shell Rock United Methodist Church who donated gifts
- the members of the Union Congregational United Church of Christ in Reinbeck who donated gifts
- one of the departments at CUNA Mutual Insurance in Waverly donated gifts
- Harry and Antonio-Abel Lipschutz and Pam Jones who helped deliver the gifts in time for Christmas
- Sam's Club Foundation for providing the funding for our Christmas party

For licensing or relicensing questions, contact Michelle Sloyer the DHS licensing worker assigned to our four counties. If you need to reach Michelle, you can call her at 319-292-2416 or email [msloyer@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:msloyer@dhs.state.ia.us).

The activities of our group are funded in large part by generous grants and donations from the Waverly-Shell Rock United Way, the Bremer, Butler, and Grundy County Community Foundations, the Waverly Community Foundation, the Waverly Exchange Club, and Sam's Club Foundation. We thank all of these organizations for their support.

**If you are currently receiving our newsletter by mail and would be willing to receive a copy electronically instead, please email Nancy at [magnall\\_ifapa@msn.com](mailto:magnall_ifapa@msn.com). Each copy we are able to send by email saves our group about 60 cents which we can then use for other activities and supports for our member families.**

Winter weather in Iowa means there is always the possibility that we might have to cancel our meeting. When possible, we will make a decision to cancel by 2 p.m. on the day of the meeting. We will notify KWWL-TV of the cancellation, will post a notice on our website, will send an email to those members whose email addresses we have, and we will leave a message on the answering machine at 877-467-4100 or 319-352-3600. If you are ever in doubt about whether the meeting will be held, call before you set out.

*Cedar Falls foster parent, Lisa Timmerman, is willing to provide respite care for other foster families in their own home. If interested in this option, contact Lisa at [timmermanl@dikenh.k12.ia.us](mailto:timmermanl@dikenh.k12.ia.us) or 319-266-8689.*

The IFAPA Spring Conference is fast approaching on March 5-6 in Ankeny. This conference always offers two days of great trainings as well as a chance to meet and interact with other foster and adoptive families from around the state. Our support group is offering \$50 scholarships to any of our members who want to attend both days of the conference or \$35 scholarships for any members who want to attend just one day of the conference. Contact Nancy at the phone numbers below or by email at [magnall\\_ifapa@msn.com](mailto:magnall_ifapa@msn.com) if you would like a scholarship.

**"When you feel like letting go, remember why you held on so long in the first place."**

Anonymous

## Upcoming Events

January 19, 2010: Regular Meeting in Waverly  
Training on *Autism: A Parent's Perspective* with Dr. Suzanne Bartlett

February 13, 2010: Family Valentine/Mardi Gras Party  
2-4 p.m., Parkersburg United Methodist Church

IFAPA Spring Conference  
March 5-6 in Ankeny  
Scholarships Available

March 16, 2010: Regular Meeting in Waverly  
Training on *Respite Care and Certified Respite Program*

April 10, 2010: Spring Training Fling in Waverly  
9 a.m.-4 p.m. CPR/First Aid and Others

May 18, 2010: Regular Meeting in Waverly  
Foster Parent Appreciation Event

## Other Area Support Group Meetings

We are fortunate to have several excellent foster/adoptive support groups in this area. Families are welcome to attend whichever group best meets their needs and works best with their family schedule. Other January meetings in this area include:

### Black Hawk County Foster Parent Group

Tuesday, January 12  
7-9 p.m.

Grace Lutheran Church, 1024 W. 8th Street in Waterloo  
Training on *CPR*—Must RSVP and pay \$15 fee  
Contact Dianna Seedorff 888-622-4521 or 319-235-2534

### Charles City Area Foster Parent Group

Tuesday, January 12  
6:00-8:30 p.m.

Osage Alliance Church, 726 State Street in Osage  
Call Josh Pedretti for more information at (563) 419-7057

### Mason City Area Foster Parent Group

Tuesday, January 19

Doors open at 6:30; Speaker from 7-9 p.m.

DHS Liberty Room, 22 North Georgia Street in Mason City  
Training on *Medication Management and Organization and Documentation Requirements*  
Call Christie McGuire for more information at 800-720-9850 Code 62