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## May/June Newsletter 2016



### **Director's Letter**

*Thank  
you* 

Dear Families,

The month of May is designated as National Foster Care Month, which at Focus on Youth we refer to as Foster Parent Appreciation Month. It's the perfect time to share how much we appreciate the work and sacrifices you make every day as foster parents for the children so desperately in need of the safety, stability, understanding, patience, and nurturance you provide.

Because of YOU, the children we serve:

- Will go to bed in safety tonight
- Will not be hungry tonight
- Will not be hurt tonight
- Will begin to heal

The work is not easy, but the need for superheroes like you is great. On behalf of the children God has entrusted this agency to serve, THANK YOU.

May God bless you and your family -

Bryan Forney  
Executive Director

### **Clinical Article**

#### **The Importance of Healthy Attachment**

By Katie Dixon, Youth and Family Therapist



As parents, we want what's best for our children. We desire to see them grow, be happy and healthy and to reach their full potential. The physical health of our children often remains at the forefront of our minds. Feeding, bathing, and developing healthy sleep habits all contribute to the well-being of our children. Another significant contributor to helping our children reach their full potential is healthy attachment and bonding. Bonding is the process whereby parent and child determine that they are special to each other. It was once thought that bonding must take place immediately following birth; however, today we know that bonding does not have to take place at one specific moment and attachments can be built following early childhood. Here are some important ways you can foster healthy growth in attachment with your child:

### **1. Eye Contact**

You look at child affectionately and he or she picks up on the positive emotion conveyed by this nonverbal signal and feels safe, relaxed, and happy. If you're depressed, stressed, or distracted, you may not look directly into your child's eyes at all. Maintaining eye contact also plays an important role in sustaining the flow of conversation between you and your child.

### **2. Facial Expressions**

Your face is able to express countless emotions without you saying a word. If your expression is calm and attentive when you communicate with your child, he or she will feel secure. But if your face looks distressed, angry, worried, sad, fearful, or distracted your child will pick up on these negative emotions and feel stressed, unsafe, and unsure.

### **3. Tone of Voice**

Even if your child is too young to understand the words that you use, he or she can understand the difference between a tone that is harsh, indifferent, or preoccupied and a tone that conveys tenderness, interest, concern, and understanding. When talking to older children, make sure that the tone you use matches what you're saying.

### **4. Touch**

The way you touch your child conveys your emotional state—whether you're attentive, calm, tender, relaxed, or disinterested, upset, and unavailable. The way you wash, lift, or carry your baby or the way you give your older child a warm hug, a gentle touch on the arm, or a reassuring pat on the back can convey so much emotion to your child.

### **5. Pacing, Timing and Intensity**

The pacing, timing, and intensity of your speech, movements, and facial expressions can reflect your state of mind. If you maintain an adult pace, or are stressed or otherwise inattentive, your nonverbal actions will do little to calm, soothe, or reassure your child.

Parents, I encourage you to look for ways you can help promote the positive connection

and well-being of your child this month.

Information retrieved from: <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/secure-attachment/what-is-secure-attachment-and-bonding.htm>

## **Training Institute**

What's New?



### New Heartsaver Class

- The American Heart Association has updated the training materials for CPR and First Aid. Beginning in May, class will be 4.5 hours long. The time of the class will be from 9:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Alicia Ajiboye.

### Important Reminders

#### Outside Training Forms

- Remember to contact, Alicia Ajiboye, Training Manager, if you have questions about attending trainings outside of our agency. In order for outside training credit to be accepted, please be sure that you turn in your certificates and complete the most updated outside training form. The updated version of the form can be found on our website in the "FOY Members" section. Please contact Andy at [adodds@focusonyouth.com](mailto:adodds@focusonyouth.com) if you need assistance logging on.

#### Fees

- Fees listed on our training brochures and website are for those who want to attend FOY training outside of our agency. Foster parent trainings offered through FOY are FREE to current FOY foster parent and alternative care or respite providers.

[Click here to see upcoming trainings](#)

## **Foster Parent Articles**

### **Meet the Begans**

Rodney and Melissa Began will celebrate their 17<sup>th</sup> year as foster parents in August. Rodney and Melissa are actively fostering youth and have adopted three children into their family through foster care.

Q: What motivated you to become foster parents?

A: We wanted to become foster parents because we wanted to help show children in need a

different way of life.

Q: What is your biggest advice to new foster parents?

A: Never take things personally in foster care.

Q: What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

A: We really enjoy going camping and being outdoors.

### **Meet the Del Valles**

The Del Valles have recently been licensed as a foster/adopt family on March 7, 2016. They reside on the East side of Cincinnati near Amelia. Vincente and Katrina are compassionate, nurturing, and faithful. They have been active in their church mission groups including spending time in Alaska working with children and teen-agers.

Vincente works as an IT engineer and manager and Katrina is a licensed minister and organizes short term mission teams for her church. They enjoy being in the outdoors such as biking and camping, and they are dedicated to helping others in need. The Del Valles believe in celebrating a person's successes and in building them up to achieve their highest potential.

Welcome to Focus on Youth, Inc. Vincente and Katrina! We are blessed to have you join our family!

### **Getting to Know: Dorene Hill**



Dorene has worked at Focus a little over a year. She calls herself the "ARMS" person. She is a receptionist that Answers most incoming calls, Records and scans documents and other information, Makes sure all people: visitors, guests, and children are served and treated with respect, and Sorts incoming mail and organizes. She was led to work at Focus because she worked in the profession with children for years. After doing some research, she thought she would like to be involved with a smaller agency, such as Focus, making an impact in children's lives. Her hobbies include fishing, reading, being outdoors and making people dream again. When I asked Dorene, "What do you mean by dream again?". She responded "I like to motivate and give hope to many people in all walks of life." Her favorite foods include lasagna, good hot fish with hot sauce, hot tea with lemon, Wendy's chili and "good" chocolate. Her favorite scripture is one from her wedding invitation, "I will Bless the Lord at all times and his praise shall continually be in my mouth"-Psalms. One place she would like go in the world is Africa- she wants to put her foot in the soil. Her biggest influences were her mentors and her grandma. Her mentors helped her to Rise

to any Occasion. They provided her with the "you can do it" attitude and in doing so many doors have been opened for her.

## **NHA Moments**



Whitney and Maria-I am excited for your forever family to grow by one more! I appreciate the consistency you have provided for the children in your home and the safe permanent home you've provided. -Leah

Vincente and Katrina- You worked hard and were diligent in getting everything turned in. Congrats on getting your license and a placement!- Patty

Crystal- I really appreciate how open you are to working with primary families. It shows that you care about meeting your kid's needs.

Chrisitan- I am proud of your hard work at school and at home. You're doing great! Keep it up!- Stephanie

Dustin and Kalie- Thank you for providing such an awesome home for the youth that are placed with you. I appreciate your commitment to advocating for the youth. - Stephanie

Chris and Kate- I appreciate how your family is so nurturing. You both are great with working with all the children in your home. - Katelyn

Anne- I admire your families ability to utilize positive interventions. I see how much team work and communication your family has. - Katelyn

Erin- I am impressed with you and your family. Your love for Aiden and commitment to him and his well-being has truly amazed me!- Amber

Renee- I have noticed how much effort you have put in with your grades. I am proud of your hard work in school and at home!- Amber

Brooklyn- I am very impressed with the hard work you put in, in school and work! I am happy to have had the opportunity to work with you and see you grow! Keep up the good work!

Gwen- Thank you for being such a great foster parent! I am very impressed with your skills in helping teen girls! you are very much appreciated and valued at Focus on Youth!- Megan

Marleny- You are always very friendly and open to talk when I visit. Keep up the good work on getting your diploma!- Megan

Blake C.- I have noticed how hard you have been working! Your daily reports you give me are amazing! I am impressed with you. - Amber

Keri and Marc- You have continued to support, love and nurture the children in your home, which has help to stabilize the children in your home. Thank you, for all that you do. - Leah

Danny and Chrystal- You have opened up your hearts and home to an older child. This shows the compassion you have for children. - Patty

Kissi- You greeted me in a friendly manner. This shows a respect for others and appropriate interactions.- Patty

Blake C.- I am so proud of you and the hard work you put in to graduate! Great job!- Amber

Mackenzie- Thank you for being so open to talk! You have great goals that you seem determined to accomplish! Keep up the great motivation and communication! -Megan

Erica and John- You guys continue to do an amazing job advocating for the needs of the youth in your home. Keep up the great work!

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### A Special Thank You to Our Volunteers!



Mark – 3 hours  
Teresa-5 hours  
Carl & Shelba – 6 hours each  
Kelly, Shawn, Kaitlyn, Frank, Sheila - 6 hours each

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### Support Focus on Youth, Inc.



It's time to renew your Kroger Community Rewards enrollment for our agency. Please go to the Kroger web page, and make sure you are signed in with your Kroger Rewards Card. Go to Community, then to Community Rewards, and re-enroll Focus on Youth, Inc. A percentage of everything you spend at Kroger will be contributed to our agency at no cost to you. Many thanks to those who have been a part of this program for all these years! At

last count, Kroger has contributed over \$4,600 to our agency!



You can support FOY by starting your shopping at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) today. Simply add Focus on Youth as your chosen charity. Thank you for your generosity!



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