



A program of
Dunn Mental
Health Center,
Inc.

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Understanding Your Child's Per Diem

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One of the most frequently asked questions from foster parents this time of year is, "Do I need to claim the money I have received from Foster Care Select during the last year on my taxes?" The answer to that question is, "NO" and here is why.

The daily per diem is money for the foster children in your care. It is not payment to foster parents; therefore, it is not income. That is why it is not claimed on your taxes. The per diem tends to cause some confusion for parents because it is issued as a check in their name, but it is really the money given to you to cover the expenses incurred by the child. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Clothing—occasionally you receive a voucher from the county to get the child some basic items, but the per diem is to be used to buy the additional clothing they need. We ask that you average \$40 a month on new clothing.
- Transportation costs—the cost for you to take the child to visits, appointments, and to school if needed.
- Extra curricular activities—the cost

for the child to participate in sports, music, art, or other recreational programs to give them opportunities to socialize with others.

- Hygiene products—shampoo, soap, feminine products, diapers, good-nights for older children, haircuts (when approved), etc.
- Allowance—as discussed in last month's newsletter, we ask that you allow the child \$40 a month that they get to choose how it is spent (that is about one day's per diem out of the month).
- Other household costs which may increase with the addition of children are food expenses, utilities, birthday and holiday gifts, and vacation expenses so that the whole family can participate.

When a child is placed in your home, the child's needs help us determine their level of care. Indiana ranks high in the level of reimbursement to foster parents compared to other states. Reimbursement is even higher for therapeutic children because they tend to have more costs associated with meeting their needs in the above listed areas.

Reminder: Annual Re-licensing Due

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, we have several parents who will have an annual evaluation due in March. You should have already received a letter outlining what needs to be done if your license is due to be evaluated. Foster Care Select wants to stress that both parents must have their 20 hours of continuing education completed by March

28th. CPR and First Aid do not count toward the 20 hours, but are also required to be current. If you are due for your 4 year re-licensure, you must have the electronic fingerprints done and a qualified letter. You also are required to have physical exams for everyone in your home. Please don't wait until the last minute to schedule these things!

Special points of interest:

- *Learn about what the daily per diem covers.*
- *Learn how to model dealing with change*
- *See all of the local opportunities to earn licensing hours*
- *Learn about how FCS provides training to foster parents*
- *Lynne's Corner*

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Therapy Toolbox

By: Cindy Royce, MSW, LCSW



Change is inevitable. When kids are placed in your home, we understand that they have witnessed and experienced situations over which they had no control. We also acknowledge that these situations may have also led to their removal. We expect changes in behavior and increased irritability due to the fact that children most often do not have a role in determining what happens to them.

What happens when the change occurs within your own family structure? Births, deaths, marriage, divorce, or changes in who is living in your home are events that can bring joy, or sadness to everyone in the home, including the foster children.

So, how do you navigate through these

transitions when they belong to the foster parent and not necessarily the foster children in your home? How do you continue to run the house, deal with the children and deal with your own sadness? No one expects you to be able to handle life's difficulties alone.

It is ok to be sad around your children because you can teach them and mentor to them how to cope with loss and despair in an appropriate way.

Change is normal and how we respond to it teaches our foster children skills that are not typically recognized as part of the foster care norm.

Some of these changes involve events that typically produce reactions of joy and happiness such as a birth, wed-

dings, job promotions, and awards. How do we demonstrate to our kids that it is ok to be genuinely happy for someone else? Taking the time to acknowledge someone's success and happiness sets a great example for our children. It helps us to learn how to internally achieve good feelings through feeling good for someone else, even if your first response is to feel bitter or jealous.

Take every opportunity, whether it is a situation that causes you sadness or happiness to talk about emotions and answer questions in an age appropriate way. It is important to teach children that although we may not always have control over the things that happen in our lives, we can learn appropriate ways to express our feelings and share in others' sorrow and joy.

Focus on Benefits: Access to Training

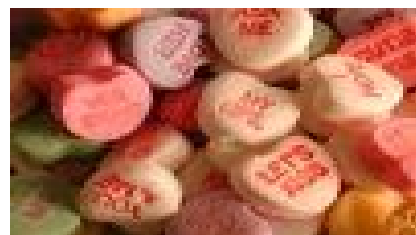
As we approach the annual evaluation of foster parent licenses, most foster parents are beginning to panic about training hours and whether they have enough.

One of the benefits of being a foster parent with Foster Care Select is having multiple opportunities for training. Each month, the newsletter lists several trainings that can be used toward meeting the criteria of 20 hours of training each year. CPR / First Aid / Universal Precautions has been offered multiple times over the last year. We have also offered FAKT pre-service

training 5 times in the last year. Any training that is offered within an hour's drive is automatically listed in the newsletter. Email flyers are also sent to those who have listed their email addresses with us. There should be no one who has difficulty meeting the training requirement.

A new training option will be offered in conjunction with the Foster Parent Support Group Meeting. The meetings will be held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on the 4th Tuesday of every month. The first hour will be a traditional support group meeting and activities. If you attend

the meeting, you may stay for the 2nd hour and their will be a training hosted by one of our therapists that you will receive one hour of continuing education for. Just think, if you take advantage of the meeting every month, you can get the majority of your training hours with little effort!



Regional Training Opportunities

Recently the Foster Care Select Office in New Castle has ordered some books and videos on the Alternative Training List. Foster Parents may earn up to 8 of their 20 hours of continuing education needed annually through these resources. You may check these out by contacting Lynne at 866-521-3010. Please limit yourself to one item at a time so that everyone has an opportunity to utilize these resources.

CPR / First Aid / Universal Precautions

Saturday, March 1st at 9 a.m. at FCS offices

Ongoing Training Hours.....

Ball Memorial Hospital presents:

“The Resilient Pre-School Child”

Saturday, March 1st 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Call 765-741-1073 to register. \$5 Fee

6 Hours of continuing education

Foster Care Select Mini Conference

Saturday, March 8, 2008

9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the FCS offices.

Light lunch served. RSVP

6 hours of continuing education

Sessions include “Working with Oppositional Kids” & “Permanency”

Nurturing Your Child's Learning Style: There is really more than one way to learn!

Are you frustrated because your child can beat every level of Mario, but can't learn his multiplication tables? For the majority of children, learning comes easily enough, but for others, school can be a challenge.

Understanding how your child learns will help you to better assist them when they struggle in school.

As you go through the day, you store information using your 5 senses: sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. Everyone has a preferred way of learning which influences how they remember things later. How do you remember a phone number? Do you say it aloud? Do you "see" it in your mind in your address book? Do you imagine moving your finger over the keypad on the phone to jog your memory?

Children are no different. They learn and recall information by using similar tricks.

The Visual Learner

This child likes to see what they are learning. They tend to not be able to focus on what you are saying when the TV is on. They spend less time on the phone because they tend to look at the

person who is talking to get visual cues. Visual learners tend to be strong, fast readers and excellent spellers, but have trouble spelling words they have never seen. They may like to listen to music when studying because it breaks silence while not being visually distracting. In class, they would rather watch what others are doing than listen to the teacher talk.

The Auditory Learner

This is the most talkative child of the three learning styles. They may doodle when the teacher talks, but not because they are bored, but because it doesn't require thinking and they can focus on listening. They often tend to monopolize conversations. They like to read, but may be slower and enjoy reading silently to themselves. They are good spellers if they sound out the word and tend to talk better than they write. If the teacher is writing a lesson on the board and another student is talking to a friend, they may be drawn more to listening to the conversation rather than looking at the board.

The Kinesthetic Learner

This child likes to move, touch, feel, and manipulate what he is learning.

They tend to use a lot of gestures when talking, and excel in sports. When the teacher passes out a worksheet, this child is likely to jump right in and do what "feels right" rather than to listen to or read the directions. If the lesson doesn't involve doing something physical, the student is likely to start their own drawing or going through their desk.

Before jumping to any rigid conclusions about your child's learning style, talk to their teacher. If there are significant learning problems, an evaluation may be warranted. If that isn't the case, you can do some things at home during study time to facilitate learning. Visual learners will benefit from taking notes or watching you practice solving problems on paper. Auditory learners will benefit most from having you explain answers and quiz them orally. The kinesthetic learner would benefit from educational computer games that allow them to be physically involved when learning. Whatever your child's learning style is, having parent's who are involved in making sure that homework is complete, and understood by the child is most important.

Lynne's Corner



I love Valentine's Day! Why? Because I love the color pink, I love to read romance books for fun, I love chocolates, and I love to show my family how much I love them. It is important to feel loved and this is a perfect time to let the children in our homes learn what it feels like to be loved in a healthy relationship.

There are lots of ways to show love to our families. Giving hugs and tucking children in at night and listening to them say their prayers are great for young children. As children get older, being involved in their activities, making time to listen to them tell stories about their day, making their favorite foods, spending one on one time in an activity that they enjoy such as watching their favorite movie (even if it isn't yours!) are great ways to express love. Including everyone in planning family



great way to show love. Sometimes it is a phone call, homemade gift, or a few minutes of quality time that say the most.

Lynne's Secret Recipe for Best Ever Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients: 250 g. Crisco, 1 c. In a mixing bowl beat :

1 stick butter flavored Crisco
1 cup sugar
3/4 c. light brown sugar until fluffy.

Add and mix well:

2 eggs
2 t. vanilla

Mix together and then slowly add to butter mixture until well blended:

2 1/4 c. sifted flour 1 t. baking powder
1 t. baking soda
1 t. salt

Stir in 1 c. semi sweet chocolate chips and 1 c. white chocolate chips. A cup of chopped pecans or walnuts is optional.

Use an ice cream scoop to make large cookies on an ungreased baking sheet or stone. Bake 9 to 12 minutes.

A program of Dunn Mental Health Center,

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**Check out our NEW website
www.fostercareselect.org
Online forms available by
using password SELECT99**

FosterCare
SELECT

*Nurturing hope in the lives of
Children*

Dear Shawna.....



Dear Shawna,

What should I do if my child is getting in trouble at school for not having homework completed.

From, "I graduated a long time ago"

Dear "I graduated a long time ago,"

Some children have more trouble organizing their time to complete homework assignments. There are a lot of factors that contribute to a child's success. Learning styles, motivation and interest in the material, relationship with the teacher, and self-esteem all play a part in how your child handles homework.

First, I would recommend setting up a communication system with the teacher. It is very important to know what the teacher's daily expectations

are and whether or not the child is meeting them. This can be done very simply by using an assignment book that the parent and teachers comment in daily. If that doesn't work, exchanging email addresses or setting up appropriate times to call the teacher are options as well.

Next, I would recommend developing a homework routine based on the child's needs. Some children do best if they "get right to it" after school and complete any assignments they have prior to engaging in leisure activities. Other children need a break for a snack and some free time before settling in to work on homework. Either method you choose should involve setting aside an appropriate amount of study time and having a quiet area with a table and good lighting. Children should not be laying in the floor with the TV on in the

background trying to complete homework.

After work is completed, it is important that you check it to insure it is correct and complete. The purpose of homework is to practice what is taught and if the child is not doing it right, it doesn't help if you leave it that way, or do it for them. It is important that you reinforce teaching how it is to be done.

Finally, it is very important to praise a child for the effort they have put into their work. It should be stressed that good grades are a result of hard work, not just being smart. Even if their grade improves a little, it is important to point out that the effort made during homework time directly relates to improvements in overall performance.

Keep in mind that **Communication + Structure + Praise = Success!**

Foster Care Select is a child placing agency which promotes providing care of the highest quality to foster children with special needs. Started in 2007, we have grown to over 50 homes across the state in less than a year and have several more homes in the process of becoming licensed.

Our regional offices are:

- *Northern Region— located in Fort Wayne*
- *Central Region—located in Indianapolis*
- *East Central Region—located in New Castle*
- *Southern Region—located in Bedford*

For more information on fostering through Foster Care Select, contact Lynne Carter at 866-521-3010.

