

Advisor

Spring 2011



Advisor

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Canadian Foster Family Association (CFFA) Fundraising/Membership Drive Campaign

We are pleased to announce an exciting opportunity for you to support the CFFA by becoming a new or renewing donor or organizational member. The Canadian Foster Family Association is a national organization with a mandate to speak as a collective voice for foster families throughout the country. Its primary goal is to enhance the quality of care provided to children in Canada. As the CFFA does not receive any government funding, one of the ways that the Association is maintained is through its membership fees.

Every new or renewed membership taken out between January 2011 and March 31, 2011 will be entered into a draw. Westjet has generously donated the prize which will be:

Two return airline tickets to anywhere Westjet flies!!



The draw will take place at the CFFA Annual Conference being held in June 2011 in Prince Edward Island.

A yearly donor membership is \$20.00 an organizational membership is \$200.00. By joining NOW you will receive 2 extra months. Yearly memberships begin April 1st each year. Membership includes 3 newsletters a year, keeping you up to date with new information at the National level, as well as Provincial/Territorial updates.

Attached is a Membership form for your convenience. Please make sure you write in the name of the person who referred you as their name will be put into a separate draw with a prize of an IPOD.

If you have any questions please contact:

Mary Smith, Fundraising Chair
Phone Number (902) 443-7716
Email: smith.kp.m@ns.sympatico.ca

Thank you in advance for your support of the Canadian Foster Family Association and good luck!!

**** Members of the CFFA Board of Directors and immediate family members are not eligible for this draw****

A Message from the SFFA Board

The SFFA Board of Directors continues to work to guide our organization. With any organization, it is important from time to time to think about where you are and where you wish them to go. To achieve this, the Board met for a strategic planning session in February. It was a very enlightening process where we were able to reflect on the missions of our organization and what key components are involved in being an organization that promotes the development of healthy foster families. For me one of the key exercises we went through was to formulate our core values.

As it turns out, we as the Board feel that the core values of the SFFA are CRAISy, that is Children First, Respect, Accountability, Integrity and Service to Humanity. We will be sharing more of what we discussed during our strategic planning session at our PAGM. We hope that many of you attend to give us feedback and guide us in refining where the SFFA is heading.

One of the ways we hope to encourage and assist foster families is by financially supporting the activities of the local committees. You will find information on the funds that have been provided to date.

If you have any questions about what your SFFA Board of Directors is doing or hopes to do in the future don't hesitate to contact us. We are here to represent our membership, the foster families that provide such a valuable service to the children in care, the affected families and to society as a whole.

Anthony Carr, Director

This is a poem written by a birth mom to her child, who is in foster care:

For Jody...

*This is the mother who gave birth to you
The woman who was the first to hear you cry
To hold you close in her arms and tell you I love you.
The woman who sang to you and rocked you
Until you were sound asleep
The woman who loved you before you were born
The woman who chose your name... Jody
The woman who wants the best for you
This woman who is your mother
Loves you dearly, no matter what
My love for you is unconditional.
This woman is learning what is important.
I know I am weak right now
But by you I live and will gain strength in time
I will be there
To give you the love you truly deserve.*

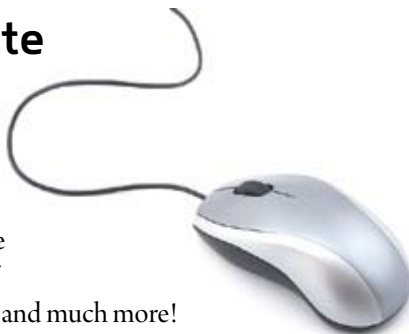
...by Audrey

Check out the SFFA website

Please visit our website for the latest information on fostering in our province. You'll find:

- Updated **manuals and policies**
- A **calendar of events** for the whole province
- Continuous **announcements** from our staff
- A list of our **Resource Centre materials** ... and much more!

We ask that all SFFA Local Committee Executive members notify us of all current and upcoming events as well as any training so that we may post them on our website calendar.



“Please visit our website for the latest information on fostering in our province.”

www.sffa.sk.ca

Foster Parenting: It is what you signed up for!

Consider this scenario... You've grown up fairly sheltered from the grim realities of living in a broken home. Yours was a happy, safe, non-chaotic childhood that involved family vacations, neighborhood barbeques, and yearly visits to summer camp. Unknown to you were the realities of alcoholism, domestic violence, food stamps, or homelessness. Life has treated you well and now you have decided to "give back."

Foster parenting is not just for anyone.

Reading the local paper, you find an interesting article about becoming a foster parent. You are so intrigued by the idea of helping a child in need that you contacted the number at the end of the article and decide to begin your journey into the wonderful world of foster parenting. You soon find yourself attending trainings and following through with all of the steps that are necessary to become a foster parent.

A few weeks later, you receive a call notifying you that there is a child in need of foster care. After a short conversation with the agency worker on the other end, you and your spouse agree to care for the child.

Your doorbell rings the next day. You answer it enthusiastically and cordially greet your new foster child. She is a 9 year old girl that has a history of physical and sexual abuse, not to mention some behavioral issues that are of concern. She is an attractive little girl that appears to be in desperate need of a bath, a haircut,

and some new clothes. She appears apprehensive at first but warms up quickly once she settles in.

The first few days go by without incident.

As the "honeymoon" ends, this adorable little girl starts to change. She becomes more moody, needier, and less cooperative. Her true colors are beginning to shine through. She is now an angry and defiant girl that knows how to push your buttons. She's very good at it, in fact.

"This isn't what I signed up for," you think to yourself.

The once peaceful home that you occupy has suddenly transformed into a house of chaos. Screaming, yelling, and crying are now filling your once quiet residence. Bedtimes are now a catastrophe and never mind getting this child to take a bath.

"I hate you" and "You're not my mommy," now echo throughout the house on a regular basis. Peace and quiet are a thing of the past.

You may not have signed up for this, but believe it or not, many foster parents do sign up for this. They know exactly what they are getting themselves into and they still unselfishly welcome these children into their homes and lives with open arms.

Caring for these children takes an unimaginable amount of patience, compassion, and emotional strength. Foster parenting is not just for anyone.

Many of the children that are in foster care are placed there because of the unfortunate decisions that were made by one or both of their own biological parents. Abuse, neglect, domestic violence, abandonment, and constant household chaos are just some of the many issues that these children have been confronted with during their short lives. Without foster parents, these children would most likely be returned to unsafe homes or might unnecessarily be placed in treatment facilities. The burden to Social Services would be tremendous.

I want to acknowledge and thank the compassionate and hard-working foster parents out there who unselfishly care for our nation's foster children. Give yourself a pat on the back. You truly deserve it. Foster parents must have the right experience, attitude, and tools to be successful.

Please note: I am in no way trying to discourage individuals from becoming foster parents. I am simply acknowledging the level of commitment and hard work that is involved and I am thanking those that take on the challenge and persevere.

Chris Theisen has written several articles about child and teen behavior and is the creator of <http://www.ParentCoachPlan.com>, a comprehensive discipline plan for parents. His websites offer behavior contracts, behavior charts, and a wealth of information and advice related to parenting.

No Pension? No Problem!

by Janea Bellay-Dieno, Financial Advisor with JBD Financial Planning • www.jbdFinancialPlanning.com

“I am fifty-one years old, I have dedicated my life to working with kids, taking care of my family, making sure the clothes are clean, food is on the table and my family is loved. Now that I am approaching retirement age, I am not sure what my options are and how I am going to be supported financially.”

This is a common issue I hear from women, men and couples. How do I save for my retirement while still taking care of my family, and what income will the government provide me when I retire? What do I do if I don't have a pension?

There are ways to save for retirement if you don't have a pension plan:

1. Get a Financial Advisor. In most cases, a Financial Advisor will not charge you for a consultation on how they can help you. But it is important to interview 2-3 Financial Advisors before you choose one you would like to work with and you trust. Ask the Financial Advisor:

- About their education background
- How many years in the business
- How they get paid
- If they will work with you
- If they will design a retirement plan for you that includes tax and estate planning – this is important to having a full approach to your plans
- What kind of products they recommend (i.e. insurance, investments, mutual funds, stocks)
- How often you will meet with them and hear from them

2. Previous work place employment. Throughout your working years, was there a pension plan set up at that workplace? If

yes, you may want to talk to your Financial Advisor about it and get them to draft you up some scenario options of how much you can expect to receive from the old pension.

3. Canada Pension Plan. CPP recently changed their rules on how much you receive in retirement. The earliest you can receive CPP benefits is age 60, with a reduced benefit. You can call CPP at anytime and request a statement of your benefits so you will know how much you receive at age 60, before you turn age 60!

- Call Canada Revenue Agency and request a statement of each of your CPP contributions. You can go online and request the statement, or you can simply call and they will mail you out a copy. You will need your SIN, birthdate and mother's maiden name to complete the request. Phone: 1-800-277-9914

4. Old Age Security. This is a benefit you will receive at age 65. It is income dependent, and if you receive an income over a certain amount, the government will “clawback” some of these benefits and you will not receive the full amount. Talk to your Financial Advisor about how they can structure your income so you don't have an OAS Clawback.

5. Registered Retirement Savings Plans. RRSPs are a good investment if you are in a high income tax bracket NOW, and expect to be in a lower income tax bracket in retirement. Otherwise, you may want to look at alternative investments.

- The concept is simple – If you put some of your income in an RRSP, it grows tax free until withdrawn. The

purpose of an RRSP is to decrease your taxable income and defer tax payments on your investment until retirement. Remember, when you withdraw your RRSPs, you will have to pay tax on the income.

- Have your Financial Advisor show you how much tax you are saving and how your RRSPs are lowering your income tax bracket.

6. Tax Free Savings Accounts.

TFSA's are a great retirement tool if used properly. I don't suggest using a TFSA as a “savings” account, but more of an investment account that is going to be saved for retirement.

- The money you put into your TFSA will be with after-tax dollars. Any interest earned on your deposits will grow tax free.
- Open a TFSA, but use the money you save here for retirement.
- Invest in mutual funds that match your risk tolerance and retirement objectives.
- Get your Financial Advisor to show you how a TFSA will work for you and potentially how much tax it will save you.

7. Create a financial plan and set GOALS.

You may have heard of the term “Pay Yourself First”. Trust me, it works. I see it everyday where couples say they can't possibly save that much. Then two years down the road they are telling me they can save more because when they don't see the money, they don't spend it, and they don't miss it.

Set your savings goals, get a Financial Advisor to help you achieve your goals and you will be on your way to a successful financial retirement!

Government receives child welfare review report and names cabinet committee on children and youth

Today, Social Services Minister June Draude was presented with the Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel's final report, entitled For the Good of Our Children and Youth from Panel Chair Bob Pringle.

We must refocus emphasis back onto the children and families in need.

"Our government commends the Child Welfare Review Panel for undertaking this comprehensive, difficult and emotional review of the province's child welfare system, and we thank the many stakeholders who provided their honest and thoughtful input into the process," Draude said. "As a panel, we hope and pray these recommendations will mobilize all of us to work together to create the necessary changes in our child welfare system, for the good of our children, youth and their families," Pringle said. "This is not a time for blame, but a time to move forward toward a more positive future. Our panel has done its best to capture what we clearly heard and to offer a new direction."

"There is nothing more important to Saskatchewan's future than our children," Draude said. "That's why, today, I am proud to announce the creation of a Cabinet Committee on Children and Youth as a first step toward developing a new vision for child welfare through the combined efforts of all child, youth and family-serving ministries in Government.

To develop a new vision, we will be engaging our First Nations, Métis and community partners to working together on common solutions to common problems."

The committee will be responsible for developing and co-ordinating a Saskatchewan Children and Youth Agenda, as recommended by the panel, focusing on public policy and strategies across government to support children and families.

"First Nations Leadership are pleased that the Child Welfare Review Panel's report has been released to the public," FSIN Vice Chief Dutch Lerat said. "It is clear that change is needed so we can ensure that First Nations children and youth are safe and protected, and that they and their families have a chance at a more positive future. We must refocus emphasis back onto the children and families in need; moving forward by committing to meaningful engagement and an action plan that will best serve our children and their families, building on strengths to encourage healthy families and supportive communities."

The Cabinet Committee will be supported by the Deputy Ministers' Committee on Children and Youth, which will consider the findings of the Child Welfare Review Panel with key partners including First Nations, Métis, federal and provincial stakeholders. The committee will also develop a longer-term plan for responding to the panel's report, as well as a joint budget submission.

The committees will begin their work immediately. The province will issue a detailed plan for responding to the Child Welfare Review Panel's report in the spring of 2011.

The Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel's final report is available on the website at <http://saskchildwelfarereview.ca/CWR-panel-report.pdf>.

On November 9, 2009, the province announced that an independent panel, chaired by Bob Pringle, would review all aspects of child welfare in Saskatchewan. Pringle and panel members Howard Cameron, April Durocher and Carol Skelton gathered feedback from more than 1,200 individuals and organizations between April and July 2010 through face-to-face meetings, written submissions and website submissions.

For more information, contact:

Trish Alcorn
Social Services
Regina
Phone: 306-787-0916
Email: trish.alcorn@gov.sk.ca
Cell: 306-536-1479

Bob Pringle
Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel
Saskatoon
Phone: 306-229-1106
Email: bobpringle@saskatoon.ca

Lac La Ronge Indian Band Child and Family Services to provide emergency child protection services

Beginning January 1, Lac La Ronge Indian Band Child and Family Services, Inc., through an agreement with the Ministry of Social Services, will provide after-hour and weekend emergency child protection services to off-reserve residents in the communities of La Ronge, Stanley Mission, Stony Rapids, Wollaston, Black Lake, Southend, Uranium City and Pinehouse.

“This agreement will simplify access to emergency child protection services in several northern communities,” Social Services Minister June Draude said. “The agreement is an important step forward in our common goal of providing the best possible emergency protection services to the children and families of the North.”

“This new arrangement will provide children and families in need of emergency child protection services in these communities with a single entry point, regardless of whether they live on or off reserve,” Lac La Ronge Indian Band Child and Family Services, Inc. Director Dexter Kinequon said. “Effective January 1, a child protection worker who can respond to all after-hour

and weekend emergencies can be reached by calling Lac La Ronge Indian Band Child and Family Services at 306-425-5511.”

Lac La Ronge Indian Band Child and Family Services has the same authority as the Ministry of Social Services under The Child and Family Services Act. The agency was incorporated in 1994, and in June 2010 was accredited by CARF Canada for a three-year term after demonstrating a high degree of excellence in their work in five child and family services categories. In addition to a central office, the Agency currently has five sub-offices and 37 full-time permanent staff.

For more information, contact:

Brian Miller
Social Services
Regina
Phone: 306-787-0531
Email: brian.miller3@gov.sk.ca

Dexter Kinequon
Lac La Ronge Indian Band Child and Family Services
Lac La Ronge
Phone: 306-425-5511

Reminder to all Foster Parents

If you are interested in training or have any ideas, please contact your Local President. SFFA offers training and would be glad to set up training in your area.

“

Be sure to contact your local to see what events they have planned for the season.



There are barbecues, christmas parties, potlucks and other events happening around the province, which are a great way to have fun and meet fellow foster parents, foster children and your local and provincial SFFA representatives.

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Husky Community Rebate Program

Remember to support the SFFA by using your Husky Community Rebate Program Card. **Husky supports us by rebating 2% of your retail purchases** at Husky and Mohawk gas stations, convenience stores and Husky House restaurants.

More than words

simple ways to show your kids you love them

BY KARA FLECK



The Greeks have four words for love: eros, philia, agape, and storge – the name for the love and strong commitment between family members. I like the idea of having a special word for family love. As a parent, the affection I feel for my kids is limitless. I want them to grow up knowing that they are deeply loved.



Each moment brings a new chance to say “I love you”—not just with words, but with deeds and actions.

Valentine’s Day is right around the corner. For some, it can be a daunting holiday filled with the pressure of grand gestures and elaborate showing of affection. However, there are simple ways that you can show your kids you love them any day of the year.

Here are a few ideas to get you started ...

Touch them

Hugs, kisses, chubby baby belly zrrrrrrbrrrrts are all wonderful ways to shower your child with affection, and I do hope you are indulging in these as often as possible! However, today I would also like to encourage you to be mindful of small opportunities to be tender toward your kids. Give extra thought to how your touch affects your child when you are ...

- brushing their hair
- cleaning their face
- getting them dressed, putting on their pajamas
- lifting them into their high chairs or booster seats
- tucking them into bed

It can be easy to overlook these chances to show affection as so many of the activities involved in the care of our children are repeated (and repeated) until we can go on “auto-pilot” doing them. Instead, let these moments become a chance to nurture your children. Make a conscious effort to perform these routine tasks with love.

This doesn’t just apply to babies and toddlers either. Big kids and teens need that connection, too – a gentle squeeze on the shoulder, a tussle of their hair, holding their hand: much can be conveyed through a simple gesture.

Remember them

Just like grown-ups, children want to be reassured that you miss them when you are apart. Let them know that you are thinking of them when you are not together. If your child is the one going out of the home, send



a memento with them: a note in their lunch box, a funny picture of you together, a comic clipped from the morning newspaper. If you are the one leaving, bring back something for them. It doesn’t have to be fancy or cost you anything.

Here are some things our children have appreciated:

- a quick picture snapped by a cell phone camera of something fun from the day
- the free stickers they hand out at the grocery store
- a doodle you made for them
- an interesting leaf or pebble (we love heart-shaped stones at our house)
- a flower picked just for them
-

Let them help you

If your children want to help you with the housework or in the kitchen, let them. Include them in your every day tasks and be sure to thank them for their efforts. Yes, you can probably accomplish things faster without their help but faster isn't the goal. Slow down, be patient, and don't worry about things being done perfectly.

- let them help you fold the laundry
- prepare meals together
- my kids love to sweep the floor
- shovel snow, rake leaves, weed the garden together

Talk and share as you go about your tasks. Take advantage of these mundane chores and let them



become opportunities to make memories. I have vivid mental images of laundry day growing up—from sorting the clothes with

my mother to hanging them on the clothesline to dry. Every time I hang my own children's clothing I think of my Mother.

Create for them

Make something special just for your child. I love to knit for my children. With every stitch, a little piece of my heart goes into the tiny hat, sweater, or blanket. My sister sews clothing and toys for her children. But it doesn't have to be an elaborate or time intensive project to make a child feel loved.



- Draw them a picture
- Write them a poem
- Build a tower with their blocks or set up a scene with their dolls for them to discover
- Cook their favorite meal
- Play with their food: cut a sandwich into a heart shape, make an orange smiley face

Sing to them

Your kids don't care what your voice sounds like. Anything you sing will be a melody to your child. We sing as we go about our days and the songs



we sing are often just silly little ditties that only have meaning to us. Our family even has a song for running the dishwasher. Yes, we made up a song about our dishwasher.

My kids love it when we sing rounds together. But, don't feel like you have to stick just to children's songs or nursery rhymes. Sing your favorite songs to them—the Beatles, songs from church, songs your parents used to sing to you. Make up songs for them or change the words to an existing song and personalize it for your child.

One of my favorite ways to end a busy day is to sing to lullabies to my children as I'm tucking them into bed. Can you imagine how safe and wonderful it must feel to a child to be sung to as they drift off to sleep?

Of course there is always the easiest way of all to tell your kids that you love them: just say the words. How will you say "I love you" to your kids today?

Kara Fleck lives in Indiana with her husband, three kids, and a Boston Terrier named Nickey Disco. She believes that less is more, especially when it comes to childhood. She is the editor of www.simplekids.net. You can also find her at www.rockinggranola.com.

NEW discounts added for Foster Families

In order to receive the following discounts, foster families must show their membership card and one piece of identification.

The Cupcake Corner

10-3311 8th St E Saskatoon
(Gerad) 933-3385
25% off your cupcake order.
*Minimum 24 hours notice.
Cannot be used with any other deals or promotions. Not applicable to bulk pricing.

The Fun Factory

1633C Quebec Ave, Saskatoon
(Alana) 955-3778
Ages 1-2 \$3.99, 3 and up \$9.25,
Wed-\$2.00 off admission

Family Pizza

180 17th St W Prince Albert
(Curtis) 922-4606
15% off pizza orders

Dawgs Family Footwear

The Circle at Center and 8th
Saskatoon 477-0176
40% off retail purchases

The Giggle Factory

2-122 2nd Ave N Saskatoon
(Tammie & Paula) 975-9630
10% off retail purchases.

Lookin Good Family Hair Styling

412 Lillcoet St W South Mall
Shopping Centre Moose Jaw
(Tammy) 692-4556
½ off all haircuts; families will receive a punch card for 6 haircuts (after the 5th haircut, the 6th is free).

Lil Sprouts

6-2605 Broadway Ave Saskatoon
(Kim) 343-1112
10% off all purchases.

Buttons & Bows

116 103 St E Saskatoon 652-5437
10% off all purchases.

Rak's Bowling Pin House

217 Fairmont Dr Saskatoon
384-2400; call ahead for availability
2 for 1 pricing

Jet Steam Carpet Cleaning

221-4433
10-15% discount, depending on the area and number of rooms needing to be cleaned. Contact: Cliff

Costco Wholesale

When foster families purchase a NEW membership at Costco, you can receive a \$10.00 Gift card. This is not available for membership renewals. Please contact Debbie Oberhammer at 933-4262 if you are interested in this offer.

ICI Paints: 244-1161

Offers 30% off paint and 20% percent off brushes and rollers. Bring your membership card in and the discount account is under Saskatchewan Foster Families. The account is available all across Saskatchewan.

Payless: 651-3204

Offering foster families a 15% off all regular priced merchandise for 2009. The discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other

promotion or discount. You must show your membership card at time of purchase.

Picture Perfect

202 - 22nd St W Saskatoon
(Nathan) 653-5824
Picture Perfect takes photographs at roughly 100 schools in central and northern Saskatchewan. For foster children at the schools where Picture Perfect photographs, families can purchase school photos for \$8.00 per sheet; no minimum purchase necessary. For in studio portraits, there will be a 20% discount off in studio printed products and services and portrait enlargement up to 16"x 20".

Tomas The Cook

Members of the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association will receive 10% off at Thomas The Cook restaurant when they present their membership card.

Cozy Cradles & Kids Wear

(Regina): Offers a 10% discount to Foster families.

Uncle Ed's Furniture

715 1st Ave N Saskatoon
(Bernie or Manfred) 244-2057

Kids Trading Company

Suite 3B-4621 Rae St Regina 586-1336 Offering foster families a 10% off discount for everything in the store. Show your membership card at time of purchase. See www.kidstradingcompany.ca



Regina Inn Hotel & Conference Centre

1975 Broad St Regina, 525-6767

Members may book guestrooms at the Regina Inn by calling us at 1-800-667-8162 or going online to www.reginainn.com. When they call or go online please have them use the following rate code – GCR (Great Canadian Rate). This will allow them to use the rate and receive the reduced rate. Contact: Jayson Cairns

Jan 1 – Jun 19 Jun 20 – Aug 31 Sep 1 – 31

Oct 1 – Oct 31 Dec 1 – Dec 31 Nov 1 – 30 Rate Includes:

\$126 Standard \$117 Standard \$131 Standard Parking, Internet,

\$144 Superior \$135 Superior \$149 Superior local calls

\$153 Business \$144 Business \$158 Business

Travelodge Saskatoon

106 Circle Dr W, 242-8881

Preferred rate through SFFA. If you have trouble booking a room, contact Alana McLennan at 978-6520. Standard accommodation with two queen beds: \$113 plus applicable tax, based on single occupancy. \$123 plus applicable tax based on double occupancy, subject to availability.

Travelodge Regina

4177 Albert St Regina, 586-3443

Preferred rate through SFFA. Contact: Conrad Nixon.

Standard accommodation with two queen beds: \$113 plus applicable tax, based on single occupancy. \$123 plus applicable tax based on double occupancy, subject to availability.

Temple Gardens Mineral Spa

24 Fairford St E, Moose Jaw, 694-5055

Sun.-Thurs. (Spa Wing, Skywalk Wing) Guestroom with two queen beds or 1 king bed: \$139.00. *The price quoted above are for single and double occupancy; based on availability, in Canadian funds and are subject to 5% pst, 5% gst and \$4.99 parking/day. All rates are net/non-commissionable. Additional adults are \$15 extra per person, per room, per night. All suites are at regular corporate rates.

Best Western Seven Oaks Inn

777 Albert Street, Regina, 757-0121

Corporate rates for Saskatchewan Foster Families: Per room Sgl or Db Standard. Rooms, \$109.00 per night, plus 5% G.S.T., 5% P.S.T. & 3% Destination Tax (CAD\$). We do allow 4 persons in a room maximum. Additional person is Cad\$20.00 per person. Roll-a-way beds are available for the price of Cad\$10.00 per bed. February 11th - December 31st, 2011. Please note that corporate rates are valid during Sunday to Thursday.

The Brick

Saskatoon: 2035 1st Ave N, 244-1400

Regina: 2425 7th Ave N, 924-2020

Prince Albert: 1403 Central Ave, 763-1775

Moose Jaw: 10 Chester Road, 692-9520

North Battleford: 2731 99th St, 446-3433

If you know of a local business to request discounts from, please call Pam Kostyk for more information: 1-306-975-1580 and we will provide you with a letter you can present to the business which will then be followed up by the SFFA.



Local businesses show support for Saskatchewan Foster Families

Foster families in our province will be able to access considerable discounts thanks to the generosity of several Saskatchewan businesses. The “Discount for Foster Families” program, an initiative by the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association (SFFA), acknowledges local businesses that provide discounts to foster families within the province. In the past month alone, thirteen new businesses have been added to the program, with others expected to be unveiled soon.

The broad range of participating businesses will provide families with discounts for everything from hotel accommodations, children’s retailers, footwear, hairstyling, restaurants and recreational activities to furniture, home improvement and professional photography. These discounts will be available to foster families who present identification and a valid membership card.

The SFFA gratefully recognizes these community minded businesses for their commitment to helping improve the quality of care for all children and youth in care in Saskatchewan. “The response of the business community has been excellent,” says Paul Bunz, Senior Advocate & Training Consultant at the SFFA. “The willingness to participate will not only benefit our foster families financially, but also acknowledges that foster families are doing an important service for the children and youth in this province.” Other businesses who wish to take part in the program may contact the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association at (306) 975-1580.

A tough job!

When it comes to parenting, one of the toughest can be foster parenting. While nearly all other parents will know a lot of good, solid visual history on the children they are raising, as a foster parent, you may have little more to what information than those in the child welfare field will tell you.

At the same time you may indeed be a temporary stay, or grow to a permanent situation (whether official or just as it continues along). It takes special people to deal with this level of uncertainty and remain in the best interest of the children.

That's the most important aspect of it all though, if you are willing to do your best to help continue children along into a positive direction, from where they came from, caring that they are taken well care of; then foster parenting may very well be something that you can do to contribute to the future.

On the other hand, if you simply see foster children as playmates for your family or as additional income you should steer away as you can do more damage than good in the big picture for both your own family as

well as the foster children. As with any parenting, you need to be in it for the sake of the children.

The outcome needs to be the same as full time parenting at the point when they leave your home. In other words, you have to be a parent just the same, but within the foster children's life; you need to take over for some time, and do your best to see that they have a good home, and growing experience within it.

Some foster children were removed from a bad home situation, whereas others were brought into the foster home situation due to their own problems elsewhere (home, school, etc). Taking the time to find out as much as you can on this situation when coming into it will indeed help you to be better at foster parenting.

You will likely need to overcome emotional issues starting with how they came to your care. Some may know well already, or just think that they will get tossed from home to home for the rest of their lives. You need to find out as much as you can and help them understand at their current situation. They may even be rebellious as a result. Even

though they may still be young, they are humans and make decisions; though maybe without a good understanding of it all.

You may be the difference in their life that becomes the start of a happier lifetime. Remember, if no one helps them understand what they ask, they may simply make up their own opinion and hold everyone else to it.

You will also have to expose them to a good home where they are earnestly cared for. This is something all children need to prepare them for the world they will eventually be in. If they get there with a lot of anger and hatred, odds are they will never find happiness in it. Your task is to do your best to help them get there and find a good future.

In the end, there is no shorter answer to any child's growing years. It takes the whole stretch to get there. As a foster parent, you have the opportunity to show them a positive direction to run in, while also having proud memories of them (short or long). Doing your best at foster parenting will bring you many good experiences as well.

Published at: www.isnare.com

Foster Care Trading Post

The Foster Care Trading Post, that used to be called Foster Care Share, is exclusively for foster parents to use and has all kinds of FREE items up for the taking. Do you have used articles that you no longer need, such as children's clothing, toys, furniture or appliances? Do you need some new items like a bed, household items or personal items? Next time you are on the computer, you can visit one of these sites:

Saskatoon ...<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/saskatoonfostercaretradingpost/>

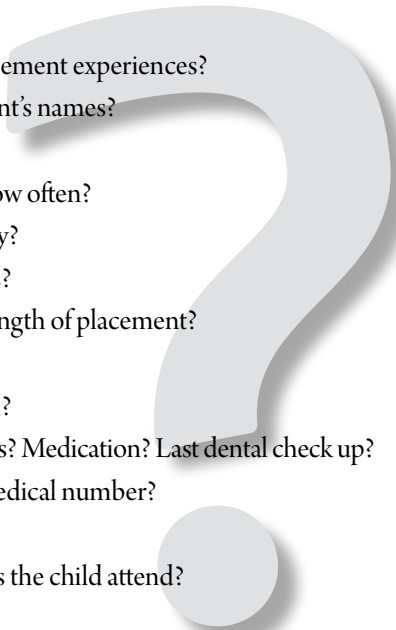
Regina ...<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/reginafostercaretradingpost/>

Fort Qu'appelle ...<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FQfostercaretradingpost/>

Don't forget to ask!

Foster Parents often wish they had asked more questions before accepting a child into their home. The list below is designed to assist you in your discussion with the Ministry. (All questions do not apply to all placements.)

- Why is this child being placed?
- What is the child's understanding of the reason for placement/separation from his family?
- What are the child's previous placement experiences?
- What is the family situation- parent's names?
- Where are the parents?
- Will the parents visit? Where? How often?
- Are there siblings? Where are they?
- Will there be pre-placement visits?
- What is the plan for the child? Length of placement?
- What is the child's legal status?
- When was the child's last physical?
- What is the child's health? Allergies? Medication? Last dental check up?
- Who is the child's doctor? The medical number?
- Is religion important to the child?
- What school and what grade does the child attend?
- Are there school problems?
- Does the child have any special behavioural problems? Habits?
- If this child has been sexually abused, is he at risk to himself/others?
- What will help the child feel at home? Favourite food, comforting toy?
- Will there be a clothing grant? Are the child's clothes adequate/appropriate?
- When will the social worker visit/call?
- Who do I call after hours?
- What do you (social worker) expect of me (foster parent)?
- Will I receive the form Confidential Information for Foster Parents Regarding Child Placement?



Grant allocations for each Local

Grant allocations are used for expenses such as training, Christmas parties, gatherings, meetings and other miscellaneous expenses. The presidents and treasurers of each local must complete a "Proposal Form for Additional Funding" form when requesting funds. The form is available on page 31 of the Foster Families Association Local Committee Policy Manual, which can be found on the www.sffa.sk.ca website. Below is a list of grant allocations for each local since April 1st, 2010.

Local	Amounts
Weyburn	\$200.00
Moose Jaw	\$1,935.00
Regina	\$1,200.00
North Battleford	\$1,025.75
Melfort	\$200.00
Nipawin	\$766.30
LaRonge	\$350.00
Saskatoon	\$3,353.36
Yorkton	\$3,145.00
Prince Albert	\$4,150.00
Misc Costs	\$2,244.83

Total allocated dollars to locals
\$18,570.24

Children in foster care or in the process of adoption

On May 17, 2010, the policy on issuing passports to children in foster care and to children who are the subject of an adoption process in Canada was amended. For more information on the new policy requirements and to view the form, please visit the Passport Canada website at www.ppt.gc.ca



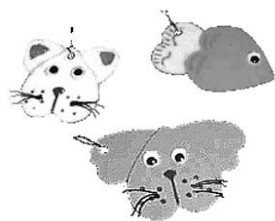
Policy change regarding Foster Parents adopting

Please be advised that the policy preventing foster parents who adopt a child from being allowed to foster for a one year period, following placement, has been removed.

How to make fun foam critters

Kitten, Puppy, or Tropical Fish

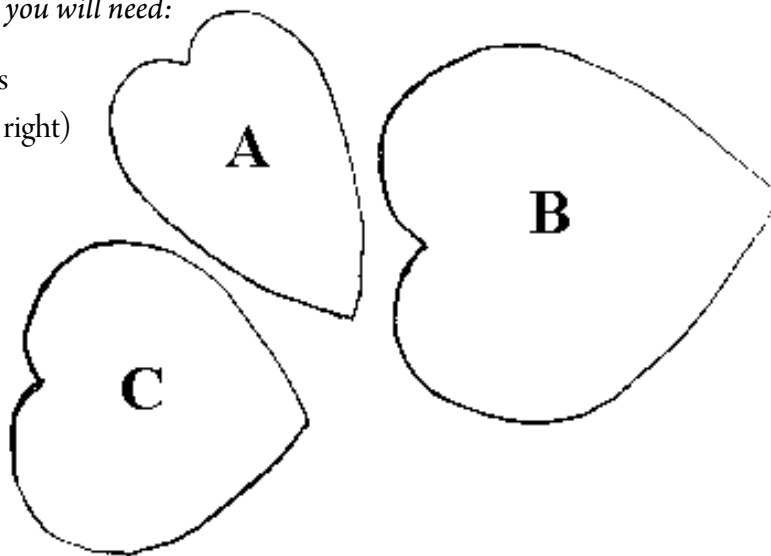
BY TWILA LENOIR



These heart shaped critters have lots of uses. They also make great zipper pulls, fridge magnets or decorations for picture frames or mirrors - or why not add one to a greeting card to make a special one-of-a-kind greeting for someone special?

To make all three heart-shaped foam critters you will need:

- craft fun foam sheets in your choice of colors
- printed heart shape pattern (shown bottom, right)
- paper punch
- plastic goggle eyes
- black yarn
- permanent black marker
- scissors
- glue



Instructions:

Print the heart shaped pattern, shown at right, which includes three hearts of different sizes, labeled A, B and C.

Puppy: Cut two “A” hearts and one “B” heart. Place the “B” heart upside down and glue the two “A” hearts in place on the back, placing them as shown in the photo. These are the puppy’s ears.

Turn the puppy over and glue on the goggle eyes. With a black marker, draw on a nose, with a line going down to the indent of the heart. Add small dots on either side for the whiskers. Glue on a few strands of yarn or thread as longer whiskers.

Kitten: You will need one “B” heart and two “C” hearts for the kitten. Follow the same directions as for the dog, using the “C” hearts for the kittens ears and looking at the photo for placement. Add a small triangle of pink fun foam, felt or paper to each of the ears.

Fish: Use one “B” heart and one “C” heart for the fish. Glue the “C” heart on top of the “B” heart as the tail. Add a plastic eye and, if you like, draw wiggly lines on the tail or scales on the fish body with a magic marker.

For All Critters: Finally, if using the critter as a zipper pull, punch a hole in one ear or on the tail of the fish. Add a small wire key ring which you can also attach to the end of a zipper.

Variations: Consider making these heart-shaped critters from felt or construction paper. See if you can create other creatures using the hearts - perhaps a bird, using the small hearts as wings, or why not cut a heart in half to make two fun foam mice?

FREE Activities

Regina UEY

The UEY website lists ideas of free activities available to families with young children in Regina. Most of the facilities and activities listed are available regularly throughout the year or season. For more information, please check out their website at: www.reginakids.ca

What is UEY?

Understanding the Early Years is a national initiative to study early childhood development in communities across Canada. The UEY initiative provides community members with quality local data about:

- Children's early development and readiness for school (Early Development Instrument);
- Family and Community factors that influence children's development (Parent Interview and Direct Assessment of Children Survey);
- The availability of local resources to support young children and their families (Community Inventory);
- Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of neighbourhoods (Census data);

UEY Regina research will inform us about how well our children are developing and the strengths and needs in our community.



READ Saskatoon

Romp 'n' Read

Romp 'n' READ is a week-long camp for parents and preschoolers that focuses on learning together. Each day has a different theme and camp activities include breakfast, songs, finger plays, story time, games, crafts, snack, social and literacy enhancement skills.

New this year, Romp 'n' READ has grown to a six or eight-week program that is being offered through Saskatoon's Community Associations. Registration is limited and is on a first come basis. Families are encouraged to contact their local community association for information or check the leisure guide.

Interested in hosting a Romp 'n' READ program in your community? Watch for our Romp 'n' Read Facilitator Training: March 31st, 2011. *Contact Desiree at 652-5448 for more information about the camp or trainings.*

Moose Jaw Kinsmen SportsPlex Swim Specials

• Membership Monday Evening Lap Swim—5:00 - 7:00 pm: 1/2 price regular admission for adults who belong to a non-profit organization, or if you are the guest of a Sportsplex member



• Toonie Tuesday Evening Lap Swim—5:00 - 7:00 pm: Adult and student admission is only \$2.00.

• Bring A Friend Friday—mid morning swim 9:00 - 10:15 am: Seniors (55+) bring a friend on Friday and receive 2 for 1 admission.

• Free Teen Swim—every Friday 9:00 pm - 12:00 am.



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