

Advisor

NEWSLETTER

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Spring 2018

Featuring

SFFA 2018 Provincial
Conference

How caregivers can help
adolescents

Signs & symptoms of teen
drinking and drug use

Barriers to placing siblings
together in foster care

Putting a child to bed who
fights sleep

Plus

CFFA Art Contest Guidelines

Don't expect to be motivated
by motivation

Maintaining your sanity
while living with children

Smoke detector recall



SASKATCHEWAN
FOSTER FAMILIES

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SASKATCHEWAN
FOSTER FAMILIES



Saskatchewan Foster Families Association ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

JUNE 17, 2018

RADISSON HOTEL

DaVinci Room (Conference Level)
405 20th Street East
Saskatoon, SK

10:00 - Noon Annual General Meeting

AGM

2018



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*We need
your
email*

We are now sending e-mails to our foster parents on a monthly basis. To be added to our list and receive the latest news, please send your e-mail address to wayne@sffa.sk.ca

THANK-YOU!

Message from The Chairman of the Board

I sure hope that spring is around the corner! There are a number of activities happening in the next few months that are very exciting.

The board of directors have been in discussion with Chief Cadmus Delorme who is an advisor to the board about our role as an association with respect to the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action. One of the activities that weaves into this conversation is the focus on Child Welfare. Child Welfare is getting a lot of attention lately by many provinces and territories, as well as federally. Foster Care and Foster Parents are playing a significant role in caring for children and families. Foster Parents are the hope for restoration and reconciliation in the complex Child Welfare System. The SFFA in partnership with the Canadian Foster Family Association (CFFA) are hosting a **Foster Care Symposium on April 23** as part of the Atamiskākēwak National Gathering 2018 <https://www.nationalgathering.ca/> being held in Moosejaw. The Agenda for the day is on the webpage. I urge you to check it out and attend where you can. It is not often that this type of event happens in our province.

The next exciting event is the CFFA national conference that is being hosted in Saskatoon by the SFFA. It begins June 14 and wraps up with the SFFA annual general meeting on June 17th. This is a national gathering of foster parents. I urge you to mark it on your calendar and



“ Saskatchewan has been blessed with continued growth in the number of homes that are providing care to children. ”

attend. More information will be forthcoming. In conjunction with the national conference is an art contest for kids. See the attached for more information about that.

The enhanced Foster Parent Pre-Service sessions conducted by the SFFA are being well received by the new foster parents and we are encouraged by the number of new foster homes that have joined us. To those we say thanks and welcome.

Putting on my President of the CFFA hat, I want to take the

opportunity to thank the SFFA for their continued support of the CFFA. I have had a unique opportunity to meet face to face with the board of directors in Yellowknife NWT and had a conference call with the board of the PEI foster parent association. As a foster parent, you are part of a national movement representing thousands of foster parents across Canada. Saskatchewan has been blessed with continued growth in the number of homes that are providing care to children and is the only province that is seeing growth. Other provinces are going down in the number of homes or are remaining status quo.

On behalf of the board of directors we want to thank the staff of the SFFA and you as foster parents for your continued work with children and families and your continued positive attitudes in the work you do. It is acknowledged nationally that the best recruiters of foster parents are foster parents who speak and show positivity in their engagement as foster families. We know it is not always ideal, but we continue to support the SFFA and you as foster families, to the best of our ability.

Best wishes and I hope to have an opportunity to meet many of you during these exciting events ahead of us.

Kevin Harris
Chairman of the Board, SFFA

How CAREGIVERS can help adolescents meet their EMOTIONAL NEEDS



Caregivers are uniquely situated to help youth gain and maintain a sense of well being, while building supportive relationships and connections to others.

Youth need to **FEEL A SENSE OF SAFETY AND STRUCTURE** – How caregivers can help:

- Be emotionally, physically and sexually safe for the youth in your home.
- Compliance with rules and structure is important, but is not the purpose of placement.
- Tell youth directly that they are safe. Literally, have the conversation.
- Be honest with youth regarding decisions being made about them.
- Include them in decisions.
- Help youth talk about how they perceive the system and adults' ability to keep them safe.
- Help youth learn how to advocate for themselves.
- Remember that consistent and rigid are not the same thing.

Youth need to **EXPERIENCE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION, GROUP MEMBERSHIP AND BELONGING** – How caregivers can help:

- Help youth to articulate the types of relationships they want with various significant people in their lives (family of origin, foster

family or extended family/friends).

- Encourage youth to get involved in cultural events in the community.
- Offer to help youth create a Life Book if they don't have one.
- Support participation in clubs/organizations/teams – even if there are concerns about the youth's behavior. Find ways to make it possible to participate.

Youth need to **DEVELOP SELF-WORTH THROUGH MEANINGFUL CONTRIBUTIONS** – How caregivers can help:

- Find opportunities for youth to give back in ways that are of interest to them.
- Look for opportunities for youth to participate in community action/organizing around issues of interest to youth.
- Discuss the purpose of giving back – help youth connect it to feeling of value to others.
- Explicitly verbalize times they make a contribution.
- Non-stop, over-the-top enthusiasm about youths' capacity to contribute in meaningful ways.

Youth need to **DISCOVER SELF, GAIN INDEPENDENCE, AND GAIN CONTROL OVER THEIR LIFE** – How caregivers can help:

- Do not use the threat of kicking a youth out of the home as a means of enforcing compliance.
- Share power.
- Talk with youth, not about them or at them.
- Don't over-react to experimentation.
- Remember that weird hair or funky clothes are not a reflection on the caregiver or the quality of parenting.
- Talk with youth about what control over one's life looks like in the adult world.

Youth need to **DEVELOP SIGNIFICANT, QUALITY RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS AND AT LEAST ONE ADULT** – How caregivers can help:

- Let youth see a variety of people.
- Talk honestly with youth about the pros and cons of their various friends.
- Encourage involvement of other adults besides yourself in the lives of youth.
- Talk with youth about what real friendships look like.
- Seek creative ways to let youth be in contact with kids who are viewed as a bad influence.
- Chances are that those youth are also looking for some structure and an interested, available adult.
- Connect youth with a mentor.

Youth need to **DISCUSS CONFLICTING VALUES AND FORM THEIR OWN** – How caregivers can help:

- Talk openly with youth, especially in cross-cultural placements, about different world views.
- Help youth to learn how to think critically about issues outside themselves.



“Tell youth directly that they are safe. Literally, have the conversation.”

- Make a point to ask youth how they feel about areas where values seem to be different – encourage them to explain how they arrived at their thinking and share personal values or beliefs with them.
- Help them to see that there are many ways to walk through the world, and that their world view is shaped by their own, unique experiences.
- Become educated about sexuality and gender so that information can be conveyed to youth.

Youth need to **FEEL PRIDE OF COMPETENCE AND MASTERY** – How caregivers can help:

- Encourage, encourage, encourage.
- Provide rides.
- Teach basic life skills in the home.
- Expose youth to music and the arts.

Youth need to **EXPAND THEIR CAPACITY TO ENJOY LIFE AND KNOW THAT SUCCESS IS POSSIBLE** – How caregivers can help:

- Role model how to have fun
- Engage in a variety of activities
- Discuss the idea of positive views of the future
- Help them tell their stories from a point of view of resiliency
- Help them understand the idea of HOPE.

Source: www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/groups/children/documents/pub/dhs_id_057253~8.pdf



FACING THE FUTURE... TOGETHER

2018 SFFA Provincial Conference

JUNE 14 – 16, 2018

JUNE
14–15

Becoming a Trauma Competent Caregiver Pre-Conference Training

This 2-day in-depth training session is designed to increase competency and sensitivity in caring for children with a traumatic history, give you tools to help children in your care heal, and give you insight into the meaning behind the behaviour of traumatized children.

JUNE
15

Caring for Aboriginal Children: A Cultural Curriculum Pre-Conference Training

Children thrive when they have a sense of identity and connection to culture. In the spirit of cross-cultural awareness, this curriculum includes the history, traditions and the richness of the Aboriginal people of Saskatchewan.

JUNE
15–16

Facing the Future...Together 2018 SFFA Conference

Join us for our Conference, Extravaganza and Gala events, featuring informative breakout sessions and including speaker Jeph Maystruck on 'Finding Your Super Powers'. See our website for more details.

JUNE
15

Facing the Future...Together Extravaganza Event

Social Event

JUNE
16

Facing the Future...Together 2018 SFFA Gala

Dinner and Awards Presentation

REGISTER ONLINE

saskfosterfamilies.ca/conference

SFFA Members may be eligible for no-cost registration* for conference and training events. Register online at SaskFosterFamilies.ca/conference, when prompted enter your SFFA Membership Number as the Discount Code, then click Update.

*subject to availability, register early to ensure your spot!



Recognizing the dangers of substance abuse

Canadian youth are initiating substance use as early as 14 years or younger. This early drug use sets in motion a pattern of behaviour that translates into destructive social consequences.

What makes drugs illegal?

Drugs are illegal if the government has included them in their laws on controlled substances.

Why are illegal drugs dangerous?

When people talk about the “drug problem,” they usually mean illegal drugs. Drugs can affect people’s emotions and how they feel, affect your relationships, and make you more or less inhibited. It’s not safe for anyone to take illegal drugs because they do affect your body and can cause death.

Illegal drugs aren’t good for anyone, but they are particularly bad for a kid or teenager whose body is still growing. Illegal drugs can

damage the brain, heart, and other important organs. They can affect our emotions and the way we feel, they may cause you to do things you wouldn’t normally do. While using drugs, a person is less able to do well in school, sports, and other activities. It’s often harder to think clearly and make good decisions for a person who is using drugs.

There may be long-term effects from taking drugs that we don’t know about. When people use drugs they can do risky or dangerous things that could hurt themselves or others. A person can die from taking drugs, even if it’s the first time they’ve ever taken a drug.

Drugs cause different experiences and reactions for different people. How a drug will affect you can depend on many things like your age, your body type, or your mental state.

Source: CCSA – Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse

Signs & symptoms of teen drinking and drug use

How can you tell if your child is using drugs or alcohol? It is difficult because changes in mood or attitudes, unusual temper outbursts, changes in sleeping habits and changes in hobbies or other interests are common in teens.

Watch List for Parents

- Changes in friends
- Negative changes in schoolwork, missing school, or declining grades
- Increased secrecy about possessions or activities
- Use of incense, room deodorant, or perfume to hide smoke or chemical odours
- Subtle changes in conversations with friends, e.g. more secretive, using “coded” language

- Change in clothing choices: new fascination with clothes that highlight drug use
- Increase in borrowing money
- Evidence of drug paraphernalia such as pipes, rolling papers, etc.
- Evidence of use of inhalant products (such as hairspray, nail polish, correction fluid, common household products); Rags and paper bags are sometimes used as accessories
- Bottles of eye drops, which may be used to mask bloodshot eyes or dilated pupils
- New use of mouthwash or breath mints to cover up the smell of alcohol
- Missing prescription drugs—especially narcotics and mood stabilizers

These changes often signal that something harmful is going on—and often that involves alcohol or drugs.

You may want to take your child to the doctor and ask him or her about screening your child for drugs and alcohol. This may involve the health professional asking your child a simple question, or it may involve a blood or urine drug screen.

However, some of these signs also indicate there may be a deeper problem with depression, gang involvement, or suicide. Be on the watch for these signs so that you can spot trouble before it goes too far.

Source: <https://www.drugfreekidscanada.org/protect-your-family/what-to-look-for-checklist/>

Information on the Assisted Adoption Program

We wanted to reach out to families who are involved in our Assisted Adoption Program to thank you for your commitment, the care you provide your children, and to answer questions some of you have due to a change in how we administer the program.

The Assisted Adoption Program supports families in adopting children with special needs through Saskatchewan's Domestic Adoption Program. We recognize that these special needs may not be covered by individual health benefits or private health insurance, or be available free-of-charge through programs available in the community. The Assisted Adoption Program may assist with these costs.

Thanks to you, and families like yours, the program has supported the adoption of many children since it was introduced in the 1980s.

In the past, the program was administered through a number of regional offices. In April 2015, we made the decision to administrate the program out of one office. This has been very helpful with ensuring a consistent approach when entering into agreements with families. We also recognize that this has resulted in some changes

to agreements at the individual level, and created questions and frustration for some families. We want you to know that we are here to answer your questions, and ensure you know how to request reviews of changes to benefits.

The annual review provides an excellent opportunity to review your child's needs and circumstances. Together, we need to assess how the previous year has gone, determine what supports are needed for the upcoming year, and then look to connect you to existing resources that may meet your child's needs and identify any gaps where we can support you. Families can also request revisions to their agreements if yours or your child's circumstances have changed. These conversations should always start with your assisted adoption worker. In the event that you need further assistance or there is disagreement, we can include other supports from the Ministry to help us find a resolution.

We hope this helps. Please feel free to connect with your Assisted Adoption Worker if you have any further questions or concerns.

Shannon Huber

Director, Adoption Services
Child and Family Services

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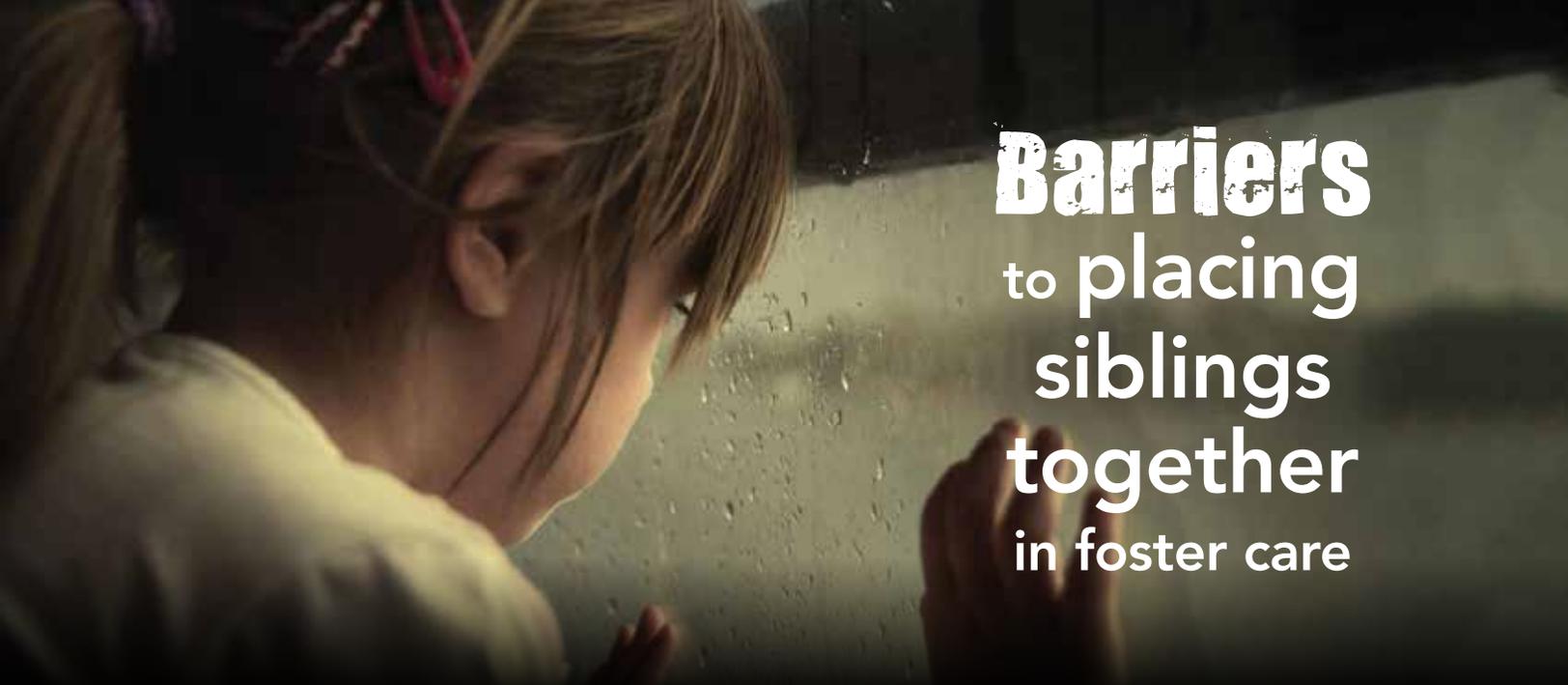
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Barriers to placing siblings together in foster care

When siblings cannot live in the same home

Despite supportive policies or a caseworker's best efforts, a number of situations may lead to siblings being placed separately. This initial separation can lead to permanent separation if a concerted effort is not made to place the children together. Both policy and practice should promote ongoing efforts to reunite separated siblings. Common dilemmas regarding separated siblings include the following:

- An infant may come into care and be placed in a foster home before workers have determined that the infant has siblings already in foster care or in adoptive homes. The foster parents of the infant may then

argue against the removal of the infant from their home. To avoid this dilemma, agencies should establish whether or not any infant or child coming into care has siblings already in placement. If so, strong efforts should be made to place the infant with siblings.

- In some cases of separated siblings, foster parents may want to adopt only the sibling placed with them. Workers are put in the untenable position of choosing the lesser of two evils—allowing the child to be adopted without his or her siblings or keeping the child in foster care until a family can be found who will adopt all of the siblings. To reduce the likelihood of this situation, foster parents should always be told at the time of placement that reuniting siblings is a top priority of the agency. Whatever decision is made, there should be provisions for maintaining connections with both the foster parents and siblings.
- A similar dilemma occurs when a sibling group placement disrupts because the foster parents cannot handle one of the sibling's behavior but they want to continue parenting the others. The worker must decide whether to remove just the one child or the entire sibling group. An alternative would be to have a temporary specialized placement for the sibling with behavior problems if the foster parents are willing to work toward reintegrating this child into their family. ▶





Maintaining ties between separated siblings

When siblings cannot be placed together, facilitating regular contact is critical to maintaining these relationships. Regular contact may even affect permanency outcomes. Ultimately, workers and foster or adoptive parents have to understand the importance of sibling contact for the children for whom they are responsible in order to maintain their commitment to making these contacts happen.

Caregivers play a crucial gatekeeping role in regulating contact between siblings, particularly after adoption, and sometimes they limit contact with the intent of protecting themselves or the child from what they view as negative influences or painful experiences. Sometimes supporting and sustaining sibling visits requires clinical interventions, including both sibling therapy and clinically supervised visits, in order to address dysfunctional patterns that have developed in their relationships.

Facebook and other social media make it much easier for siblings to both find and communicate with one another, regardless of the adults' feelings or concerns. Technology does carry both the benefits and the risks of social media.

Factors associated with placing siblings apart

Besides entering foster care at different times, a number of other demographic and situational factors are associated with the likelihood that siblings are placed in the same foster home.

These include:

- Size of sibling group—larger groups are more often split
- Age gap—wide age span leads to splitting
- Differences in the needs of siblings
- Type of placement—siblings placed with kin are more likely to be together and those in group care are less likely
- Behavior problems—a sibling with a behavior problem is more likely to be removed
- Organizational policies and procedures
- Adequacy of placement resources and supports
- Agency rules regarding the maximum number of children who can be placed in a foster home

When a sibling is abusive

Research identifies sibling assault as one of the most common forms of victimization in families generally, and more than 50 percent of children and adolescents have acted toward a sibling with severe violence. Whenever there is a concern that one sibling poses a safety risk to another, a thorough assessment needs to occur. Physical aggression within the normal range of sibling relationships needs to be differentiated from physical abuse or victimization of a weaker sibling.

Distinctions need to be made between sexually reactive behavior and sexual abuse by a more powerful sibling of another. Also, the severity of the abusive behavior needs to be assessed and a determination made as to whether the safety risks are moderate and can be managed through closer supervision, therapeutic parenting, and clinical treatment to change behaviors. If there is significant physical or sexual abuse that does not respond to treatment or if the risk of recurrence is high, the victimization of one sibling by another should not be ignored. In some cases, it may be possible to work toward reunification after a period of treatment for the offending sibling.

Strategies for preserving sibling ties in separate placements

Some promising practices from the field suggest ways to maintain ties among separated siblings.

- **Place siblings with kinship caregivers who have an established personal relationship.** Even when siblings cannot be placed in the same home, they are more apt to keep in close contact if they are each placed with a relative.
- **Place nearby.** Placing siblings in the same neighborhood or school district ensures that they will be able to see each other regularly. Also, keeping children in their same schools contributes to better educational outcomes.
- **Arrange for regular visits.** Frequent visits help to preserve sibling bonds. Also, visits with birth parents can be arranged to occur at a time when all the siblings can be together.
- **Arrange other forms of contact.** If the distance between siblings is great, workers need to assist foster and adoptive families in maintaining frequent contacts through letters, email, social media, cards, and phone calls. Make sure that children have full contact information for all their siblings. For instance, providing older siblings with calling cards may facilitate sibling communication.
- **Involve families in planning.** The adults in the siblings' families should be involved with the worker in developing a plan for ongoing contact. This meeting should include working through any barriers to visits, and the plan needs to be reviewed and revised as needed, at least yearly. Sometimes, there are value differences between families or differences in rules that cause parental discomfort with visits. Such differences need to be discussed and resolved.
- **Plan joint outings or camp experiences.** Siblings may be able to spend time together in a joint activity or at summer or weekend camps, including camps specifically for siblings or through short-term outings. Such camp experiences help siblings build and maintain their relationships.
- **Arrange for joint respite care.** Families caring for siblings may be able to provide babysitting or respite care for each other, thus giving the siblings another opportunity to spend time together.
- **Help children with emotions.** Sometimes sibling visits stir up emotional issues in children, such as the intense feelings they may experience when visiting birth parents. Children need to be helped to express and work through these feelings; this does not mean visits should not occur. Visits should provide some opportunities for joint Lifebook work with siblings. If siblings are in therapy, they should be seeing the same therapist, and it may be possible to schedule appointments either jointly or back to back. Children may also need help with feelings of guilt if they have been removed from an abusive home while other siblings were left behind or born later.
- **Encourage sustained contact.** Sustaining sibling contact often requires a unique understanding and commitment from parents. Many adoptive parents recognize the importance of their adopted children having contact with siblings living with their birth families or other adoptive families. Some families even travel across the country or to other countries to give their children the opportunity to get to know their siblings. Some States offset the costs of such visits through their adoption subsidy plans. The earlier these relationships can begin, the more children can use these opportunities to work through adoption identity issues that may arise, and the sooner they can develop truly meaningful relationships with siblings.

Source: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/siblingissues/index.cfm>





When sleeplessness, anxiety, worries, nighttime fears, potty training and other factors get in the way of a good night's sleep.

Children love to throw parents for a loop with their sleep habits. One minute your child is sound asleep in the snap of the fingers and sleeping through the night like a champ, but then suddenly they're in and out of their bed after you've already tucked them in three times and waking up much too often during the night.

If your child is having trouble falling asleep on their own, fighting bedtime and wide awake instead of sleeping, it might be time to try some of these tips to help the child who doesn't want to go to bed:

1. STICK TO A CONSISTENT BEDTIME ROUTINE

Maintaining a consistent bedtime routine where your children walk through the same steps to preparing for bed each night, and go to bed at the same time, makes all the difference in children who fall asleep on their own and those who are in and out of their bed.

Children's bodies who follow a consistent routine begin to wind down faster and the wordless cues that it's time for bed help them to peacefully fall asleep on their own.

Reinforce your child's appropriate bedtime by using a consistent bedtime routine. Resist holding them, rocking them, or relying on a

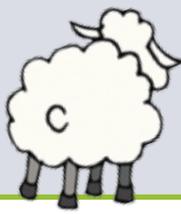
pacifier or bottle to get them to sleep. ... Stick to a regular pattern of daytime and nighttime sleep; don't let your toddler set her own sleep schedules.

2. SQUASH NIGHT TIME FEARS

Around 24 months, and sometimes all the way up until 6 and 7 years old, children begin to have night fears. They may think there is something under the bed, hiding in the closet or a dark room scares them. As an adult, it's easy to see through these fears, but telling a scared child that there is nothing to worry about, won't stop them from being afraid.

Dismissing nighttime fears doesn't make them go away, but you can help your child talk through why they have this fear and recognize where it came from. Maybe it was a book, or movie they saw, or a scary story someone from school told. When a child is able to walk through and then understand where the fear originates from on their own, then they can move forward and see the fear is not real.

Give your child tools to overcome their worries. Comforting solutions can make kids feel safe and reassured as they work through night fears. These can include a nightlight, flashlight, or even a spray bottle filled with "Monster Spray" or a large stuffed animal to "protect" them.



3. COMFORT ITEMS HAVE A CALMING EFFECT

A stuffed animal, favorite blanket or item of comfort can help a child settle into a peaceful state of sleep and again, offer comfort during the night if they wake up.

Is there an item your child always reaches for or asks for when they're upset, napping or carrying around the house? If not, let them choose something – you may already have it around your house or could take them shopping for a new stuffed animal or item – they want to cuddle with during the night.

Children, particularly those you see flopping around in bed, find comfort wrapped up in weight. If you find them saying "More, more!"... it might be time to invest in a weighted blanket. Remember to not exceed 10% of your child's body weight and to remove the blanket soon after they fall asleep. Also be sure to check any standards for blankets on foster children.

4. CUT SCREENTIME ONE HOUR BEFORE BED

Adults know how bad looking at screens can be for sleep, but the same rings true for kids. Shut off all devices – TV, phones, tablets and other digital devices – at least one hour before bedtime. The blue light that's emitted by devices can prevent the body's natural release of melatonin.

5. SOUND MACHINES

A sound machine set on white noise or ocean waves can settle a child into a dreamy sleep versus if there is no noise at all.

Think about this. When a room is completely silent, children will hear things going on outside their room. It may be outside of the house such as passing cars, horns honking, a car alarm, firetrucks and other noise that can startle and wake them up or keep them from falling to asleep.

Another reason a sound machine helps is because around the age of 18-24 months, children go through a period of separation

anxiety. This is not only separation anxiety from being away from their favorite person which may be Mom or Dad, but also they don't want to miss out on the fun. A sound machine mutes the rest of the noise from the house so your children can't hear you watching TV or listening to music and try to stay up and join you.

A soothing sound machine set on a low decibel level, will soothe tired kids to sleep at the start and middle of the night if they wake up.

6. ELIMINATE STIMULANTS

Children who have some anxiety and sleeplessness before bedtime can be super sensitive (or it can be caused by) stimulants found in drinks and food. Caffeine, energy drinks, sugary juices and even chocolate all have stimulants which counter the body's natural inclination to wind down and fall asleep.

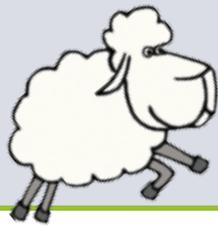
Cut caffeine after 3pm in the day to help wind down when it's time to hit the sack.

7. TRY A SPECIAL CLOCK WITH VISUAL CUES

Having a kid-friendly clock in your child's room can help them to see when it's sleep time and when it's awake time. Kids are very visually oriented and a kid-friendly alarm clock built with visuals that explain nighttime and daytime can be a lifesaver.

A *Kid'sleep Globetrotter Clock* has two functions – sleep time and awake time. This is good for toddlers who need a no-fuss simple clock with visual cues to tell them that it's still bedtime if they wake up too early or in the middle of night. Plus, it's ultra lightweight and easy to pack if you head out of town and need to take with you.

The *Stoplight Alarm Clock* tells kids via stoplight when it's time to sleep (red light), and when it's time to wake up (green light.) You can set the times for nap and bedtime and it has an optional beeping alarm function. This was the clock we used to help teach our kids when it was time to wake up after a few weeks of waking up too early. ▶



8. USE A REWARD CHART (SYSTEM) FOR POSITIVE BEDTIME BEHAVIOR

If bedtime is a challenge for your children, but they respond well to incentives for making positive choices and having good behavior, a reward chart could be the motivation they need.

Reward charts incentivize positive choices like staying in bed after you've tucked them in or not coming out of their room until the sun has come up. Children who can visually see the progress they're making towards earning a reward, will be encouraged by this strategy.

Rewards don't have to be big or expensive, they can be simple such as: coupons for a family game night, pizza night, new hairbands or a headband, or a toy from a dollar store.

9. CALMING ESSENTIAL OILS

There are proven scents that help the body calm down, and slip into a peaceful state which helps the body more easily fall asleep. Diffusers are the safest and most effective way to use essential oils at night.

Lavender, peace and calming, vetiver and orange and Roman chamomile are great natural scents you that you can also find in sprays and roll ons. Try rolling lavender on the bottom of the child's feet to help him/her settle down for the night or use a small spray or two on the pillow... and it smells wonderful too!

10. LIMIT FLUIDS BEFORE BEDTIME

Be careful to regulate the amount of fluids your child is taking in before bedtime. The time around potty training can increase the number of times they'll be up at night, but for older kids, the more fluids they drink, the more they'll be up at night. These sleep disturbances can cause bedwetting and waking up in the middle of important sleep cycles.

Limit drinking water after dinnertime and only drink water when brushing teeth. Be sure to use the bathroom before climbing into bed too!

11. SLOW DOWN & CONNECT BEFORE BEDTIME

Right before bed is the most important time to squeeze in time for connecting with your kids, so don't skip the pillow talk. Snuggle with them in bed, read a book, talk about the day, share your thoughts, listen and use the time to settle down together and sweetly connect with one another.

This doesn't mean you don't set limits so you aren't in the room all night or creating a bad habit of letting them stay up past their bedtime. Set a limit of 5 or 10 minutes of one-on-one time to connect with each of your kids and then let them know it's time to go to bed afterwards.

12. MUSIC & SLEEP MEDITATIONS

Cuddling up for a bedtime story is a great way to wind down, but sometimes that is not enough. There are stories specifically written and narrated to help children relax and fall asleep. Sleep meditations or stories can be found on youtube, itunes, spotify, and on some apps. They can be played on your tablet or smartphone. Just make sure you can turn the screen off while it plays so the back light does not keep the little ones awake!

Sleep Genius is an incredible app scientifically designed to train your brain to sleep sooner, deeper, and longer. There is also Sleep Genius for Baby, available on itunes.

Some nights sleep may feel like a hard fought battle when you have kids. There are many possible solutions for sleep issues in children. Rest assured this phase will not last forever. Sleep is too important to give up on.

Begin with a solid routine and follow up with one or more of the tips above. Be patient, because stress will make it worse. When you have tried everything and nothing works, seek help. See your child's physician and let them know what you have tried. Whatever you do, don't give up!

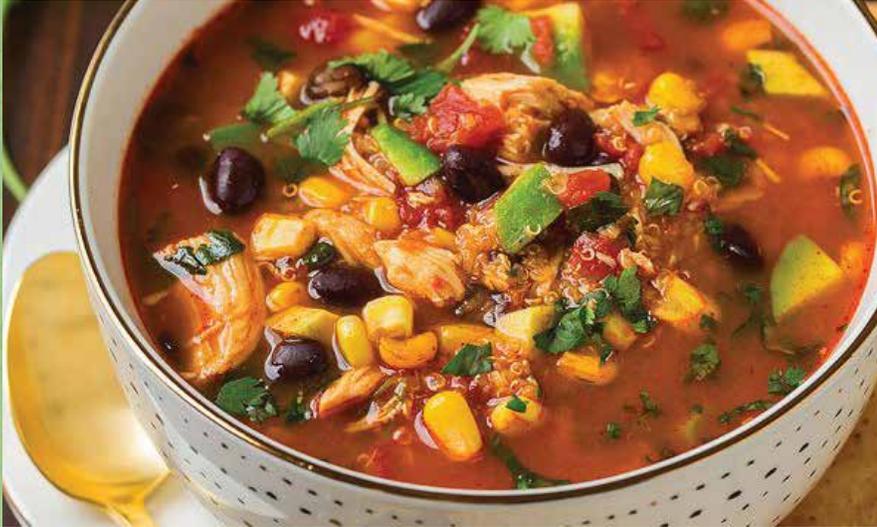
Source: <https://www.thepragmaticparent.com/child-who-struggles-to-fall-asleep/>



RECIPES FROM

Petty's Kitchen

by Hayley Petrow



Slow Cooker Enchilada Quinoa

- 1 lb ground beef, cooked (or ground chicken could be used too!)
- 1 1/2 cup quinoa
- 540 ml black beans, drained
- 1 cup corn, drained
- 540 ml diced tomatoes
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 tbsp jerk seasoning (or 1 or 2 chopped jalapeno peppers)
- 1 cup water
- 1 1/4 cup salsa (or 295 ml of enchilada sauce can be used)
- 2 tbsp chili powder
- 1 tbsp cumin
- 2 tsp ground coriander
- to taste salt & pepper
- 1 cup shredded nacho blend cheese
- 5 green onions, chopped
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- tortilla shells for serving

Yields 8 servings

- After ground beef is thoroughly cooked, place it in the slow cooker.
- Add ingredients from quinoa to salt & pepper into slow cooker and stir to combine.
- Cover the slow cooker and cook on high for 3 hours, or until all liquid is absorbed.
- Once liquid is absorbed, stir in half the shredded cheese.
- Use remaining shredded cheese, chives, and cilantro to top, and serve on tortilla shells.

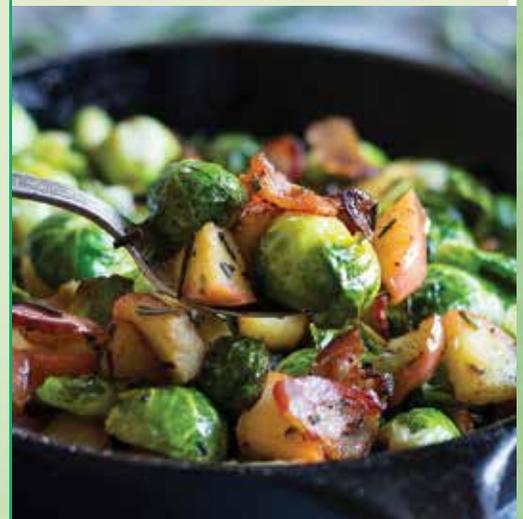
Recipe found at: bobbiskozykitchen.com

The kids will love filling their tortilla shells by themselves, and it makes a great leftover!

Brussels Sprout Side Dish

- 4 cup brussels sprouts
- 2 Granny Smith apples
- 1.2 lb slices of bacon
- 1 tsp dried sage
- 1/2 tsp thyme
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- salt & pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup raisins

- Preheat oven to 400°
- Place brussels sprouts in a colander over a boiling pot of water to steam sprouts, approx 25 minutes.
- Place bacon on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and cook at 400° for about 18-20 minutes. Bacon should be crisp.
- Once bacon is done place on paper towel to blot up excess grease. Then cut bacon into small pieces.
- Cut apples into small pieces.
- In a large baking dish place sprouts, bacon, and apple pieces. Now sprinkle sage, thyme, olive oil, and salt and pepper. Mix everything around to evenly coat.
- Broil mixture in oven for approx 5 minutes so the sprouts are toasted.



Holidays

To avoid disappointment contact your Resource Worker to let them know in advance before you plan a holiday if you intend on taking your foster children with you. Certain financial allowances are available to foster parents.



Respite

Due to the number of requests we receive for information on respite, the SFFA office is looking to build a respite provider list. If you or someone you know is willing to provide respite for a foster family, please contact our office at 306.975.1580 or 1.888.276.2880.

Please specify whether you are willing to go into someone else's home or if you prefer to provide respite in your own residence.

Also, please be aware that all respite providers must have current a *Criminal Record Check* and *Vulnerable Sector Check* in order to provide care.

Resiliency

A Therapeutic Foster Care Manager's Story

One of the most humbling roles I have the pleasure to fill as a therapeutic foster care case manager at the Family Care Network is facilitating a foster parent support meeting. As I survey the room of foster parents, I am struck by how everyone in the meeting is a true hero disguised as a "regular person."

The topics on any particular day in a foster parent support meeting include what this fun-loving group would refer to as "the usual." "The usual" is code for school suspensions, cancelled visits with parents, drug use, police encounters, runaways, cutting, visits to the local emergency room and, sadly, sexual exploitation. All of "the usual" are byproducts of very hurt and traumatized young people who have found their way into these heroes' homes. Not surprisingly, tears are shed in these support meetings as hearts break for the loved children in the care of all the people in the room. The humbling part of this for me is that the children are never blamed, criticized, or judged for their participation in "the usual." You might think that the meeting is to support the foster parents' efforts to not be angry or frustrated with the children in their care for what seems to be relentless disruptions in their lives. You'd be wrong. The support given to these parents is focused on problem solving to find the best ways to keep their loved

ones safe from the world and, at times, from themselves.

I will freely admit that the most resilient people on the planet are children who are in foster care. A close second to them are the people I sit with in these foster parent support meetings. Every meeting, tears turn to laughter and sorrow gives way to hope as the foster parents hold each other up in a way that only another foster parent can. The amazing thing about all this is that even supporting one another in this venue is done out of a place of love for the children in their care and based on the knowledge that they can never have all the answers themselves. Using 2 hours of their "child-free time" to lift each other up is only a small manifestation of the daily sacrifice that these therapeutic foster parents make. Being a foster parent to any child is a noble undertaking. But being a therapeutic foster parent to the most hurt and misunderstood children in our communities who redefine what "the usual" means is nothing less than the act of a hero. I leave every foster parent support meeting with renewed hope and energy to "keep on keeping on." I can only imagine how these heroes truly impact the children they open their homes and lives to.

Source: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/reallifestories/narratives/therapeuticresiliency/>

Warning! Don't Expect to Be Motivated by Motivation.

by Gretchen Rubin

I really dislike the word "motivation." I try never to use it. In writing *Better Than Before*, my book about habit change, and in talking to people about their desired habits, the term "motivation" came up a lot.

And here's why I don't like it: People use the term to describe their desire for a particular outcome ("I'm really motivated to lose weight") as well as their reasons for actually acting in a certain way ("I go to the gym because I'm motivated to exercise"). Desire and action are mixed up in a very confusing way.

To make it even more confusing, people often say they're "motivated" to do something when what they mean is, "My doctor and my family tell me that I need to quit smoking, and I know it would be healthier and cheaper to quit smoking, and I wish I would quit smoking, but I have no desire to quit and no intention to try to quit. But am I motivated to quit smoking? Oh, sure."

People often tell me that they're highly motivated to achieve a certain aim, but when I press, it turns out that while they passionately wish they could achieve an outcome, they aren't doing anything about it. So what does it mean to say they're "motivated?" No idea. That's why I don't use the word.

In fact, people aren't motivated by motivation. Expert advice often focuses on motivation, by telling people that they

just need more motivation to follow through. This may work in a certain way, for certain people (see below), but not for everyone.

The bad result of this advice is that some people spend a lot of time whipping themselves into a frenzy of thinking how much they want a certain outcome, as if desire will drive behavior. And it rarely does.

Instead of thinking about motivation, I argue that we should think about aims, and then concrete, practical, realistic steps to take us closer to our aims.

Instead of thinking, "I want to lose weight so badly," think instead about the concrete steps to take, "I'll bring lunch from home," "I won't use the vending machine," "I won't eat fast food," "I'll quit sugar," "I'll cook dinner at home at least four nights a week," "I'll go to the farmer's market on Saturdays, to load up on great produce."

Of course, in *Better Than Before*, I argue that it's a lot easier to follow through with such steps consistently if you make them into habits. The great thing about habits is that you don't need to feel "motivated!" And that's important because again, motivation doesn't actually matter much, if what you mean by that is "How badly do you want this?"

In my recent book, *The Four Tendencies*, I do talk about



how thinking about reasons for action can help some people to act, and how desire does help some people to act — but that's not the same as motivation. For Upholders and Questioners, thinking about reasons helps. For Rebels, thinking about desire helps. For Obligers, outer accountability is the crucial element. What does this mean? It means that Obligers are the least likely to be helped by thinking about "motivation." And guess what? They're the Tendency that talks most about motivation! They keep trying to amp up their motivation, and then they get frustrated because that doesn't work. Nope. Obligers should focus on systems of outer accountability.

So whenever I catch myself saying or writing, "I'm really motivated to do __," I stop and think: "What do I want, and why do I want it? And given that, what steps can I take to achieve my aim?" Because we really can't expect to be motivated by motivation.

Source: <https://gretchenrubin.com/2017/05/motivation>

20 Helpful (and amusing) tips for Maintaining Your Sanity while living with children

If you've ever been asked "how do you do it. You seem so calm and peaceful all the time?" Or maybe you're the one wondering how someone else manages to keep it together? In most cases, we usually think that everyone else 'has it more together' than we do. Yet somehow, we share a common goal of attempting to maintain our sanity while living with children.

Here are some tips that may help :

1. Lower your standards for cleanliness and order.
2. Did that? Lower them even more.
3. Your house will never look like a magazine spread, period. Embrace that.
4. No matter how many baskets you buy to contain toys, they will always be visible. Embrace the Toys 'R Us/ frat house-chic decor.
5. You can never have too many popsicles in the freezer. How many bad moods have been fixed by a simple popsicle?
6. If you can't change them, change your perspective. For example, did you know that toothpaste is great for cleaning things like faucets. So now when you go into the bathroom every day and see toothpaste splatter all over the bathroom faucet, think about how your children have done half the chore of cleaning for you. How considerate of them! Then wipe it off with a smile.
7. Those chores that no one ever wants to do. Decide if you would rather do it yourself, badger your child to it, or let it go. If you are confused about what to do, see Number 1 on this list.
8. No one cares what is stuffed under your child's bed, why should you. Unless it is old food. In that case, consider getting a dog.
9. If you have boys, your bathroom will always faintly stink like pee, so maybe invest in some Febreze.
10. Don't buy white furniture. Unless you enjoy screaming at your children every time they go near it.
11. Remember that however bad a situation might seem—it too shall pass—and one day it might even seem funny.
12. Do not paint any walls in your house with flat paint.
13. Be okay with letting your kids stumble sometimes. Whether that is turning in an assignment late because they didn't do it, or wearing an outfit that might look peculiar.
14. Noise canceling headphones are great for blocking out whining, bickering and the endless episodes of the same TV show.
15. Socks do not have to match. Every day can be Crazy Sock Day, which is infinitely better than Crazy Mom Day.
16. The crayons will break and it is okay to throw them away rather than save them to make some sort of craft that involves the hair dryer. In fact, give yourself permission to not feel guilty about all the crafts you never seem to get to.
17. Children will not suffer from eating the occasional hot dog or frozen pizza. And by occasional I mean more than you are really willing to admit.
18. Children do not appreciate top sheets or high thread counts. Buy neither.
19. Homework time is the worst time of the day. Help your kids and yourself by having a designated time and a quiet place to do homework. Try suggesting the neighbour's house. ;)
20. Just say "No" to ironing.

Source: <https://alphamom.com/>





ART CONTEST



Who Can Enter:

All children and youth living in Foster Homes between the ages of 2 -18 years of age.

Categories:

2-5 years 6-9 years 10-13 years 14 -18 years
(The Theme EVERY year is about your Family)

PLEASE NOTE: Upon receipt, the Art becomes the property of the CFFA and may be used for CFFA purposes.

You do not have to be a Contest winner from a Province or Territory in order to enter as long as the above guidelines are followed.

Guidelines:

The following guidelines **MUST** be adhered to in order to qualify for the Contest.

- The Art from each Province /Territory **MUST** be delivered to the CFFA Art Contest Chairperson at the start of the Annual CFFA Conference.
- The Art must be on letter size paper measuring 8.5 by 11 inches.
- The printed name, address, phone number and interpretation shall be on the back of the Art.
- A caption or other words of the child or youth are welcome.
- The CFFA Board and Executive will judge the Art at the end of the Board Meeting.
- The winners will be announced and displayed at the National Working Group.

For any further questions please contact secretary@canadianfosterfamilyassociation.ca

Kidde recalls smoke detectors

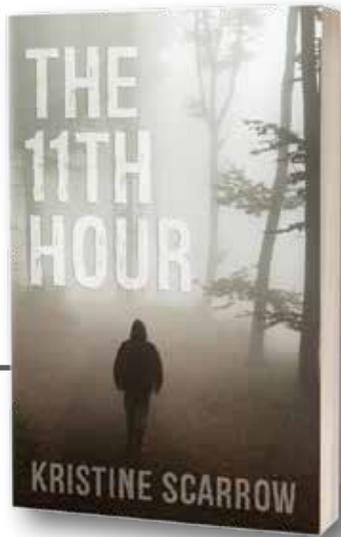
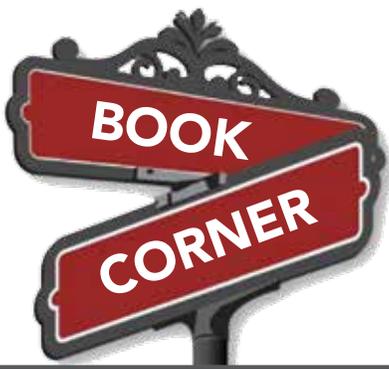
About 452,000 smoke detectors sold at Home Depot, Walmart and other stores nationwide are being recalled after the company discovered the device may fail to alert consumers of smoke. The Kidde company, which sold the detectors in the U.S. and Canada, was recalling **models PI2010 and PI9010** after a yellow cap was left on some alarms, possibly preventing the device from working. The yellow cap covers one of two smoke sensors, the company said. If the sensors are affected, homeowners may not be alerted to a fire.



The model and date are located on the back of the detector. Consumers were advised to remove the alarm to look for the presence of a yellow cap, and if the alarm has one, to contact Kidde customer service to get instructions on ordering a new one. You can call **833-551-7739** from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

There has been one report of a faulty alarm, the company said. No injuries related to the recalled products have been reported. The potentially defective alarms were sold September 2016 through January 2018, the company said.

Source: <https://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/news/local/Smoke-Detector-Recall-Kidde-Alert-Fire-Faulty-Yellow-Cap-help-477579433.html>



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THE 11TH HOUR

by Kristine Scarrow

Annika Dietty thinks her future is with Dylan Sopick — until they run away together.

One day, after weeks of secret planning, seventeen-year-old Annika Dietty leaves home at dawn to run away with her boyfriend, the charming and popular Dylan Sopick. She tried telling her friends and family how amazing Dylan is, but seeing as they all seem set against the relationship, she's decided their only chance is to run away together.

But not everything goes according to plan, and Dylan seems to be having more and more trouble dealing with every obstacle they encounter. At first Annika is sympathetic, knowing that he's had a harder life than she has, but very soon Dylan's behaviour becomes unsettling, and Annika realizes that her safety is at stake. She finally admits to herself that Dylan needs support that she can't provide. She wants to get him help — if she'll get the chance.

.....
"A gripping page-turner. *The 11th Hour* plummets readers into a crucible of teen love, angst and attitude, untreated mental illness, and the misguided faith that love will conquer all. This challenging novel builds layer upon layer, ever increasing the stakes right up to its shattering end."

~ Alison Lohans, award-winning author of *No Place for Kids* and *Picturing Alyssa*

.....
"A tremendous, eloquently written cautionary tale ... heartbreaking and thought-provoking."

~ Memoirs of a Bookworm



Kristine Scarrow, is the author of *Throwaway Girl* and *If This Is Home*. She teaches writing and journaling as a healing art in the community, as well through her work as the writer-in-residence at St. Paul's Hospital in Saskatoon. *The 11th Hour* is her third young adult novel.

www.kristinescarrow.com

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