



April 2013



THE BRIDGE

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE ALBERTA FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION

National Child and Youth Mental Health Day

May 7, 2013



FEATURING...

- OBSD Update
- Kids These Days: Memories of a Grandma
- AFPA Children's Summer Camp Information
- Mental Health First Aid workshops

NOTICE

Deadline for submissions for next BRIDGE

June 1, 2013

Return Undeliverable Canada Addresses to:

ALBERTA FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION
9750 - 35 Avenue
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Norm Brownell

Spring is finally starting to warm up with milder temperatures in the forecast, it's very welcoming since it has been a winter with a lot of snow and terrible driving conditions.

Our children's summer camps are being held the last two weeks of July:

Wee Wet & Wild is July 14th to the 20th, Ages 6-10
 Adventure Camp is July 21st to the 27th, Ages 10-13

Thanks to our Executive Director Katherine Jones whose persistence in acquiring matching dollars has enabled us to move ahead with the cladding of the main lodge. The work will be completed by early May.

These programs require lots of volunteers to work with the children and kitchen duties. Please contact the AFPA office @ 1 (780) 429-9923 or 1 (800) 667-2372 for more information.

Aboriginal Awareness Weekend will be held on May 24th to the 26th. This is a wonderful weekend to learn about Native culture. We are in need of volunteers to help with the weekend program, please call Shelly Morin @ 1 (780) 429-9923 or 1 (800) 667-2372 for more information.

On April 19th to the 21st we will be holding another work bee at our camp. There are several projects that we need to work on to get the camp ready for the season. Please call myself @ 1 (403) 271-9011 or the AFPA office to register. Thank you for volunteering, have a great spring.



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Katherine Jones

Have you ever noticed how quickly times slips away from us? You wake up one day and wonder where the time went and what you have been doing. That is about where I am right now. It seems like Christmas was just the

other day and here it is April already! It is a good thing I have to write these reports for the Bridge; it makes me reflect on what has been going on over the past few months and reminds me of how precious time is and how much we lose by rushing through life.

The following are items that were discussed at the January 2013 Ministry/AFPA Collaborative Provincial Steering Committee:

- Revised Ministry Organizational Structure
- Transition Out of Programs
- New committee members with change in Ministry structure
- Provincial Mentorship Program
- Outstanding items that need to be cleared up

The AFPA and Human Services staff continues to move into an "Outcome Based Service Delivery" foster care system. It is a challenging endeavour; however, we believe it will provide good outcomes for our children, youth and families. For those of you who are still struggling with trying to figure out what OBSD means the following overview may help:

"OBSD is focused on supporting vulnerable children and youth to live successfully in their own community and to be reunited quickly with their families. Children and youth will be placed in permanent homes as quickly as possible, youth will be transitioned to adulthood successfully and Aboriginal children and youth will live in culturally appropriate placements. It is believed that OBSD will improve the effectiveness of services that children and families receive and experience as they move in and out of the child intervention system.

In addition, it is also believed that OBSD will provide agencies, foster parents and caregivers more flexibility to respond to the unique needs of children and families while focusing on intended outcomes and better supporting innovative practice. Outcomes data received through OBSD within Alberta will be used to align the work between the formal child intervention system, caregivers and contract agency service delivery. Outcomes of OBSD in our province will be based on the child's safety, the child's wellbeing, permanency and family and community support."

The CFFA Annual Symposium is being held in Toronto this June. I look forward to meeting with the Executive Directors from across Canada at the Symposium. It is always a pleasure meeting delegates from across Canada and being able to dialogue and expand our knowledge and understanding of the various programs offered across this land.

For those who do not yet know, the Alberta Foster Parent Association will be hosting the 2014 CFFA Symposium. We have already begun making plans and looking for the best venue to hold the event. We hope that foster parents and social workers from Alberta will take this unique opportunity to join us at the 2014 CFFA Symposium and meet others from across Canada. Watch for information on the AFPA webpage and in future editions of the Bridge.

The Alberta Foster Parent Association in conjunction with the Alberta Association of Services to Children and Families has taken on a project to look at enhancing the available resources and services for children transitioning from foster care to adulthood. Our associations have jointly hired Jeff Solberg of Raymond, Alberta for a one year period as the analyst who will carry this project through to a very much needed finished product. I look forward to working with you, Jeff, and welcome you as a valuable part of the team. Many of you; foster parents, workers and youth will have the opportunity to meet with Jeff during the next year to add valuable input into this special project.

In closing, I would like to thank my staff for a job well done! It is a real pleasure working with every one of you. Thank you to Norm Brownell, President and Sylvia Thompson, Vice President for your support over the past few months and for your outstanding leadership.

Have a wonderful Spring and Summer everyone.



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BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REPORTS

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Sylvia Thompson

Welcome to spring It looks and feels like it has arrived.

As an update to transitioning, I am excited to inform you the AFPA and the AASCF have acquired a grant to hire an analyst. This person will be responsible for research and to assist in developing comprehensive resources for youth transitioning from care and their care providers. It is our aim that the resource will be beneficial to all care givers, including kinship and families of origin. I am looking forward to seeing what will be developed for helping to assist us with this issue. The successful candidate is Jeff Solberg from Raymond, AB. I expect that many of you will be hearing from Jeff in the next year.

Plans for our Fall training conference are well underway. Remember folks that it is our 40th annual conference, so plan to attend.

The AFPA is hosting the 2014 National Conference for the Canadian Foster Family Association. The conference will held in Edmonton, June 2014. Our theme for the conference is "Coming Together for Canada's Children".

Check our website for updates on both conferences and summer camps.

We will miss you, Lavona, and wish you well in all of your future endeavors.

REGION 4 Diane Gunter

Region 4 has been blessed with a wonderful CEO Mr. David Tooney, his belief is that as foster parents we work hard at taking care of the children in our care and we should not have to turn around and do Fund Raising so we can hold special events. So thanks to him we have been given a very generous amount of money to cover all of the costs of our child focused family events, Wetaskawin, Drayton Valley, Olds and Red Deer held Christmas Parties with the best attendance ever! Region 4 hosted a movie day at Carnival Theater on Feb. 16th and we had 190 for the event. Red Deer had a Ski Night in Innisfail with over 60 adults and children coming out, as well as a bowling day on March 9th with just over 60 registered. Olds is holding a Regional Event on March 23rd.

Plans for Region 4 Spring Training Retreat are being held May 31st, June 1st and 2nd at the AFPA Brownell Camp are well under way. RDFPA is covering the cost to bring Barb Lustgarten-Evoy from Ontario to do 3 sessions. We are very privileged to have her back again. One of her topics is 'Helping Children Thrive instead of just Survive, please mark the dates on your calendars, registration forms are going out mid-April.

Our Regional President Barb Robertson has put in notice that she will be resigning effective at our AGM June 1st. A call for nominations will be going out in April with the Spring Retreat Registration. Barb has done a lot for our Region and will be greatly missed, her and her husband Steve became the owners of the Circuit Cafe at the Red Deer Airport January 1st, this new adventure and fostering leaves them with very little time for anything else. Region 4 wishes them Good Luck.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding fostering in our Region please feel free to contact me at any time and I will do my best to answer them. If I can't I will put you in touch with those that can.

REGION 5 Rene Rajotte

We had our Regional Meeting on January 16th in Wainwright. The next meeting will be in Wainwright at the Nazarene Church on April 16th, 2013, the address is 1002 – 18th Street. The first part of the meeting will start at 10:30, and then we will break for lunch and have the second part of the meeting with the acting CEO there. Please plan to attend, this gives you a chance to bring forward any questions or concerns you may have. We would also like to hear any praise reports too!

Our region had a mini training conference on March 1st & 2nd in Camrose. I went to the supplemental training which was excellent. One session dealt with grief and the losses children face thorough out their years, another session was on how we as parents play such an important role in how we deal with our children's behavior and we can either escalate them or de-escalate them, it was very insightful and one other session was on policies and other questions you may have and where to find them in our many handbooks and guidelines we are given as foster parents. We had a period of questions and answers that were helpful, as well as a get together Friday night with games and food, it was a great opportunity to socialize with other foster parents. Thanks to all who helped put on the conference and a special thanks to Samara Stonehocker who supplied the games and food for our fun entertainment Friday night.

I would like to mention that Brian Holden will be retiring at the end of March; he has been a great CEO for our region, he was very open to listen to what the foster parents had to say and what their needs were. Good luck in the future Brian, thanks for your support. Larry Gazola will be our acting CEO for the next 6 months.

REGION 6 Linda Krauskopf

It's the start of an interesting new year ahead for Regional council and Foster Parents, OBSD is the new way fostering will be done in the future, so if you have a chance to go to any OBSD workshops I would advise you to attend one, that way you will be properly informed.

The agency "Changes" has been replaced with "Alta Care"; we hope that we will see fewer problems with the drives and supervised visits. Please inform your social worker right away if you have any problems with drives to ensure that the issues are resolved as quickly as possible

Regional Council had their elections recently and there are a couple of changes to the executive; Stacy Van Cinzel is now Co-Chair and Paulette Kopp is the secretary for the next two years.

We have arranged for a meeting of foster parents in Region 6 in hopes of recruiting more board members for Regional Council and to get input on some of the events Regional Council is helping to facilitate such as: Care Giver Conference, Care-Giver Appreciation, Citations Awards and the AFPA conference in Jasper. We also want to see if we can find a way of informing foster parents about what is happening in our region, provincially or nationally. The meeting will happen on May 9th at Lynnwood Community Hall, 15525-84 Avenue, 7:00 pm. Coffee will be served.

Regional Council has been meeting every second month with Karen Morin to discuss items of which foster parents have brought forward or the department is having problems with. We meet every second month with support workers and upper

management staff at Linkages. We also meet when needed with different stake holders around Regional Conference, AFPA Conference, Citations and Care Giver Appreciation. Regional Council discusses issues with the AFPA that we feel are important for them to take to the Ministry.

TREATY 7 Peter Strikes With A Gun

Oki,
Greetings to everyone, though we have not made many trips recently, therefore corresponding, I will remain connected to the principle of my duties as Board member; a brief moment to express the essential role that I need to remain firm to my source as studies and changes regulate new legislative directive based on current social desperation modifying the wrong increases the need for more dollar.

Within the past year Jeannie and I have assisted the Provincial ADM on social policy frame work, empowering custom and values, a framework that all members affected restored the values and responsibility, our unique need is the fundamental tool to restoration of the breakdown of custom and values.

A highlight for us was attending joint workshops in Banff. The youth in care topics were important , such as the language traditional values, history and family tree.

We attended a three day child care conference held in Calgary with presentations that included bullying. Our title was that of senior advisors. Within the past month we have attended two gatherings, one with a Treaty 7 elder and the second was with foster parents with our southern region. There were discussions on delivery of service, however issues relate to the abuse incurred with addictions was the main topic of discussion.

Our home is recognized as a place where families can come for information on social issues and cultural activities such as ceremonies, name giving and sweat lodge. We assist high schools in towns and cities; the majority of the students are non- native. Our six children all participate in native dancing, which brings good inspiration and the opportunity to meet new friends.

REGION 8 Mary LeGeyt

I'm writing this as I sit and watch it snow again. Spring will come hopefully sooner than later.

There has been a lot of training in our region this winter. Core training has been offered on a regular basis. The Fetal Alcohol conference, our regional conference and Nichi training came to our community. Twenty-four foster parents were trained in Crucial Confrontations; our supplies were paid by an outside source and our regional office paid for the trainer. This was great training and we would like to thank both parties.

Along with trying to get all our year-end paperwork done, there is a lot of planning going on for this calendar year. Grand Prairie Friendship Center hosted a Foster Parents Feast on March 27th. Planning for our fall conference is underway, so if you have any ideas for training or trainers, please let us know. Summer picnics are being planned at the regional offices and some Team Building Nights are going to be happening. Grande Prairie has had two recruitment nights in March and others are being planned around the region.

Our local advisory meetings are making changes in the region. Any foster parent can attend these meetings or the Regional Northwest Council Meetings. Get involved and let your voice be heard!

At the Northwest Council in June, we will be choosing our Foster Parents and Social Workers of the year. This award is given out at the AFPA conference in Jasper in November. At the June meeting, we will be discussing the funding to help some foster parents attend the Jasper conference, so if you are interested in attending please let your support worker know. If you have any questions don't hesitate to give me a phone call at (780) 568-2186.

My life as a foster mom

Sydney Crockett
From Friday's Globe and Mail
Published Thursday, Oct. 07, 2010 5:54PM EDT

I live with three boys all under the age of 10 and one teenage girl. Every day I listen to them say, "Look at me," "Watch me," "Watch this," "Are you watching?"

I put up with eye-rolling and short shorts. I nag about homework. I go to school plays, swimming lessons and the principal's office.

I am 57 years old and no, I'm not a late bloomer or a grandma. I foster. They come and they go. Sometimes they come in the middle of the night. Sometimes I am given notice they are on their way, sometimes not.

They can act tough or they can be crying but they all come with the same expression - confused and scared.

If they come in the night I stay up and play Monopoly or Sorry! with them until the sun comes up. You would be surprised how much some kids have to say after a glass of milk and a snack, and I can still be surprised how long some go saying nothing.

Over the six years I've been fostering I've had about 20 children, some for a few months, some for years. We usually have three to four kids at a time.

They go to supervised visits with their families and often come back so sad it would break your heart. On occasion they come back happy to be with me again, and that's an even bigger heartbreaker.

To say fostering is different than raising your own kids is an understatement.

I don't know who their friends are, who has had chicken pox, who has had vaccinations.

I do know it is now my responsibility to get them to the dentist and doctor, to buy new clothes and shoes, all without making things scary or overwhelming for them.

It's my responsibility to figure out who wants a goodnight hug and who doesn't, who wants to be rocked and who is scared for me to go near them.

I have learned not to sweat the small stuff. Once in a while the kids eat sugary cereal or hot dogs - food I was reluctant to give my own daughters. These children have more important things on their plate than arguing with me about what is a healthy food choice. If they arrived wearing a raggedy shirt, I wash it and let them wear it every day for a week if they want. As long as it's clean, it's fine.

... continued on page 11

FOSTER ALLEGATION SUPPORT TEAM MEMBERS (F.A.S.T.)

Alberta Foster Parent Association is responsible for the F.A.S.T. Program.

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Region 9

Region 9 is currently being serviced by FAST reps from other Regions. New reps from Region 9 are being recruited and will be trained as soon as possible!

Region 10

Region 10 is currently being serviced by FAST reps throughout the other Regions.

MHCC marks National Child and Youth Mental Health Day

It is estimated that 1.2 million children and youth in Canada are affected by mental illness each year. More than 70 per cent of adults living with a mental illness say the onset occurred before age 18.

The Mental Health Commission of Canada highlighted National Child and Youth Mental Health Day on Saturday (May 7), participating in a national conversation on mental health issues.

MHCC Vice-President of Knowledge and Innovation Geoff Couldrey spoke at the launch of Family Smart™ during National Child and Youth Mental Health Day on Saturday in Vancouver, BC.

“Children and youth are the future of this country and collectively we must do better for them, we must be more responsive to their mental health needs,” said Couldrey. Family Smart™, an initiative of the National Institute of Families for Child and Youth Mental Health, launched Saturday in Vancouver, BC, has developed a trademark to endorse child and youth practices, research, policies, programs and services that are making a difference to families in Canada.

The National Institute of Families for Child and Youth Mental Health is currently gathering input from families and those working and interested in child and youth mental health to help define criteria for Family Smart™.

Co-founder Keli Anderson said they are focused on giving a voice to families for child and youth mental health.

“Mental health challenges don’t affect just one person in a family - it affects everyone. Families need to be supported and families need to unite in understanding and supporting each other and work together with systems,” said Anderson, who is a member of MHCC’s Child & Youth Advisory Committee.

The MHCC has been working on a number of projects related to children and youth mental health including developing the Evergreen Framework, a resource for developing child and youth mental health initiatives, tackling issues such as stigma in youth, parenting skills, mental health and addiction services in school settings, etc.

MHCC also participated in a Canadian Mental Health Association event in Calgary, AB on Saturday marking the 60th anniversary of Mental Health Week.

The Mental Health Commission of Canada is a catalyst for transformative change. Our mission is to work with stakeholders to change the attitudes of Canadians toward mental health problems and to improve services and support. Our goal is to promote mental health and help people who live with mental health problems lead meaningful and productive lives. The Mental Health Commission of Canada is funded by Health Canada. For more, visit www.mentalhealthcommission.ca

The Institute of Families for Child & Youth Mental Health is an independent not-for-profit organization that works to improve child and youth mental health in Canada by involving families in consultation, education and partnerships.

Source: http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/Pages/National_Child_Youth_Mental_Health_Day.aspx

“To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.”

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson



One in three Canadians will experience a mental health problem in their life

Do you know how to help?

MHFA Canada for Adults who Interact with Youth Course

The Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training course was developed to help people provide initial support to someone who may be developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis.

MHFA Canada teaches mental health first aid skills. *MHFA Canada: for Adults who Interact with Youth* focuses on mental health problems and first aid for youth ages 12 to 24. Mental health problems often first develop during adolescence or early adulthood, with half of all mental disorders beginning by age 14, and 75 percent beginning by age 24.

Most mental disorders develop gradually. The early signs and symptoms of developing mental health problems will be different from the more established clinical profiles which are reflected later in life. The social, educational and family environments in which mental disorders occur in young people are also different from those later in life. Therefore, the information in this course is designed to be sensitive to the unique aspects of mental health problems in young people. It is meant to assist education professionals, health providers, parents and other adults in the identification of mental health problems and appropriate first aid intervention strategies.

The following *mental health problems* are covered: Mood Disorders, Anxiety disorders, Psychosis, Substance Use Disorder, Eating disorders, and Deliberate self-injury.

The following *mental health crisis situations* are covered: Suicidal behavior, Overdoses, Panic Attacks, Reactions to traumatic events, and Psychotic episodes.



CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION
Edmonton Region

DATE: Jan. 30-31, Mar 26-27, May 22-23, Sept. 17-18 & Nov. 19-20

TIME: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

COST: \$195.00

LOCATION: CMHA-ER

REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

Please visit our website at www.cmha-edmonton.ab.ca or contact (780) 414-6300

*Certificates provided to those who attend the entire 14 hours

www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca

Mental Health First Aid Basic Course - Calgary

Thursday, May 16 - Friday, May 17

Hull Child and Family Services 1847-48 street SE Calgary AB

Time: 8:45-4:15 pm

For more information, visit www.cmha.ca



This national awareness day, led by the Institute of Families in cooperation with partners across the country, seeks to help create public awareness and acknowledgement of the thousands of children, youth and families needing mental health support and care across Canada. Take part in an event or support our Green Ribbon campaign.

Why Green? In the 1800s, the colour green was used to brand people who were labeled “insane”. The children’s mental health community decided to continue using the colour green, but with a completely different focus. Green signifies new life, new growth and new beginnings. Therefore, we wear green ribbons to raise public awareness and support the mental health of all children, youth and their families.



AFPA Bursary Program

A bursary fund has been established to assist foster, adoptive and biological children of a foster family to continue education in either a college, university, vocational institution, or for other special educational pursuits.

These bursary funds are available to foster children, former foster children, adopted children, or a biological children of foster families who are associated with the Alberta Foster Parent Association.

The official application form can be found on the AFPA website, under "Programs", at www.afpaonline.com

All applications must be postmarked no later than June 1st.

DID YOU KNOW ...

Question: Is it ok for a foster parent to share photos of their family (those which include foster children) on Facebook (or any other social media, internet sharing)? If so, what are the guidelines for that?



Answer: Basically, foster families can share photos so long as they don't identify the children as being in care. They simply need to tag only first names to the photos and identify the children as their own (thus promoting family inclusion). That would not form a breach and the people seeing those photos would likely know the children are in care anyways. It is suggested that Facebook is the only social media avenue that foster families should be using.

You are INVITED To Join

The Capital Region Foster Parent Council
May 9th, 2013 at 7pm - 9pm
at Lynwood Community Hall, 15525- 84 Ave, Edmonton

Benefits of Membership with Regional Council

Advocacy

Advice

Support

- Being part of an integral and influential group, run by licensed foster parents FOR foster parents (Adoptive and kinship families are welcome)
- Working toward Retention of foster, adoption and kinship care homes
- Building relationships with Children Services, Authority, and Agencies
- Strengthening of Skills, Training and Communications
- Opportunities to be involved in planning and implementation in areas of Citation Awards, Caregivers Appreciation Events, and Annual Caregivers Conference
- To partner with Region 6 Authorities in areas for betterment of all caregivers (Ex: recruitment of homes for teenagers or infants, education of the public about the impact of foster care, adoption, and kinship care)
- Working towards better and attainable supports for caregivers

Please fill out the form below and:

(a) mail to: P. Kopp, Box 539, Bon Accord, AB, T0A 0K0

(b) faxing to 780-921-3621

(c) e-mailing contact info to hughkopp@shaw.ca

(d) handing in at the Registration Table at the Caregivers Conference at River Cree in April, 2013.

NAME(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone Number _____

E-Mail _____

Authority____ Agency____ Name:_____ Adoption____ Kinship Care____

OBSD Update

Outcomes-Based Service Delivery (OBSD) represents a new relationship with the contracted agency sector in how services are delivered for children and families. This relationship is based on the values of collaboration and shared practice and the measurement of common outcomes.

OBSD is currently underway in 16 sites across eight Child and Family Service Authority regions, and makes up about 13% of the active child intervention cases, a number that continues to grow as more sites begin using the OBSD model.

An evaluation of OBSD in 2012 noted that:

- OBSD supports strong collaborative relationships and flexibility in service delivery.
- OBSD sites demonstrated positive changes to the collaborative relationships with children, youth, families and caregivers.
- The ability to access flexible services along with collaborative planning with the service team supports a practice-focused approach to providing services and allows for creativity in meeting the needs of the child, family and caregiver.
- Professionals at all levels work more openly within OBSD.
- OBSD practice continues to evolve as relationships are strengthened through the use of shared practice and data is collected to support child-focused decisions
- Community partners are becoming increasingly involved.
- There are several promising outcomes from the practices being utilized within OBSD.

So what does OBSD mean for you as a foster parent?

OBSD allows for:

- services to be customized to meet the needs of the child you are caring for
- stronger engagement with community and family supports
- caregivers to remain a key partner throughout the integrated service planning.

The collaborative team approach, combined with flexible services to meet the unique needs of children and families, results in more families being supported while their children remain in their home. For children in care, they are able to return home in less time and are more likely to remain at home.

Foster care has always been and will always be a valuable and critical part of the child intervention system. The OBSD evaluation showed that when using this model, caregivers have more opportunity for input into planning for children in care within OBSD. The adaptable services and innovative approaches used in OBSD support foster parents in their role of caring for children and enabling their safe return home whenever possible.

As with any improvements in the child intervention system, caregivers are an essential source of input into what is working and what isn't. We need to hear from you and build on this important work together. Updates on OBSD, including caregiver experiences and the OBSD Annual Report, will be included in future editions of *The Bridge*.

For more information about OBSD, and to find out what is happening in your area, please contact Kim Spicer, Human Services at kimberly.spicer@gov.ab.ca.

5 Self-Esteem Boosters for ADHD Adults

Steal these winning strategies from ADHD adults who were feeling overbooked, always late, perpetually procrastinating, and generally inadequate.
by Ari Tuckman

In case you haven't noticed, none of us is perfect. But adults with attention deficit disorder (ADD/ADHD) struggle more than most in getting through life — and their self-esteem may take a beating for it.

What if you could turn those negative emotions around and feel good about yourself? You can find small ways to build your self-esteem while accepting your imperfections.

Before Jenny was diagnosed with ADHD, she was hard on herself for being unreliable and forgetful. When she understood how ADHD contributed to those shortcomings, she learned some strategies to overcome them.

Writing down appointments on a large poster board that she hung in her kitchen helped her remember get-togethers with friends. As Jenny started arriving on time for dates, she began to see herself as a punctual person who is on top of things — even if she still forgets to pick up the occasional item at the supermarket.

Feeling good about yourself starts by treating ADHD with the help of professionals who understand the complexities of the condition. It ends with building skills to help you achieve little victories over daily challenges. These tips will help you do that:

1. Choose your battles

To use a baseball analogy, the best way to improve your odds of getting a hit is to be smarter about what you swing at. There's wisdom in knowing when to walk away from a losing battle.

Sarah, a mother of two, who has been diagnosed with ADHD, decided not to volunteer to help out in her children's classrooms this year because she knew she was too busy to do a good job. Without this large time commitment, she could successfully meet other demands in her life — her part-time job, meal planning, laundry — rather than fail at all of them.

2. Just get it done

Holding yourself to very high standards tends to bring short bursts of enthusiasm, followed by long bouts of avoidance. Completing a project is often better than trying to perfect one that is late. You don't get partial credit for "almost done."

Ron kept pushing deadlines, requesting just "a little more time" to put the finishing touches on his reports. After a heart-to-heart with his boss, he realized his tardiness was affecting his coworkers' productivity. His perfect, but late, reports weren't appreciated by management. Ron learned to accept doing a good, rather than a perfect, job. He is now getting along better with his coworkers, and he just received a raise.

3. Do it now

People with ADHD often get pulled off into something else, or simply forget. Doing this over time can take a toll on their self-esteem. When you see something you need to do, address it right then, or create a reminder so you'll be sure to come back to it later.

When Tom started jotting down tasks on a small erasable board in his cubicle, he met deadlines and, in some cases, finished ahead of time. That earned him kudos from his boss. More important, it changed the way he thought about himself, at work and at home.

4. Expect difficulties

Those with ADD wrongly assume that everything comes easily to others. Some tasks may indeed be a cinch for people without ADHD, but that doesn't mean they don't struggle. Like everyone else, you will have setbacks and failures. Use them as an excuse to keep trying.

Cassie was a poor money manager, until she decided to leave her credit cards at home and use only cash for purchases. She overspent at times, and had to resort to the ATM, but she quickly got herself back on track after she did. What's more, her cash-only strategy gave her extra money to spend on dinners — and the confidence that she could put money away for her future.

5. Don't compare

When you're feeling down on yourself, it's easy to think of others as superhuman. For example, my friend Kevin exercises more regularly than I do, and my friend Bill is better at woodworking than I am. But I know more about woodworking than Kevin and I work out more than Bill.

In the end, we are not so different from each other. You are probably more aware of your own shortcomings than those of others. Keep that in mind the next time you start to be too hard on yourself.

This article comes from the Fall 2008 issue of ADDitude.

BROWNELL CHILDREN'S RETREAT



Brownell Children's Retreat has forty acres of natural habitat. Stroll through the terrain on a pleasant walk and enjoy all the natural flowers and beauty. Follow the pond and enjoy the aroma from being out in the natural environment. Relax and stay in the Main Lodge. A fire side lounge awaits you with all the comforts of home.

The Main Lodge has twenty rooms on two floors; it can accommodate ninety-nine people. Bathrooms are located on each floor with showers for both male and female occupants. Six Training rooms are available. Those who prefer to be out in nature and sleep in cabins will be excited to know that we have twenty three cabins available and twenty five full service RV sites. Children can enjoy playing baseball, soccer, and golf. Later they can try their hands at fishing in the pond or using their skills at the obstacle course. After a full day of events, enjoy having your meals in the Main Lodge.

This facility accommodates 250 people and can be rented for:

- family reunions
- weddings
- training events
- large business meetings
- children's camps

Visit our website at www.afpaonline.com for upcoming events that may be of interest to you or your family.

If you would like to make a booking, volunteer or donate to our camp, please call 780-429-9923 or toll free at 1-800-667-2372.



“The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.”

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

Alberta Foster Parent Association



May 24 - 26, 2013

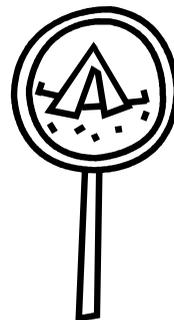
To be held at the AFPA Brownell Children's Retreat
Sundre, Alberta

Join us for an aboriginal cultural family weekend filled with stories, crafts, round dance, and various other cultural activities.

Call the AFPA office to save your spot in this incredible weekend ... Don't wait, space fills up quickly!



AFPA Brownell Children's Retreat Children's Summer Camps



Leader Training Camp:
Saturday, July 13 - Sunday, July 14

Wee Wet Wild Camp (ages 6-10):
Sunday, July 14 - Saturday, July 20

Adventure Camp (ages 10-13):
Sunday, July 21 - Saturday, July 27

Please note registration forms will be posted online at the beginning of May

Volunteers are needed!! If you'd like to volunteer, please contact Norm Brownell, AFPA President, at the AFPA

For more information, visit our website at www.afpaonline.com or call the AFPA office at 780-429-9923 or 1-800-667-2372.





kids these days ...

By Dr. David Rideout, CEO
North Central Alberta Child & Family
Services Authority

Memories of a Grandma

For the past 23 years, Albertans have been blessed with the Family Day holiday on the third Monday in February. The day is intended as a reflection of the values of family and home that were important to the first pioneers of the province. In recent years, two other provinces, Saskatchewan and Ontario, began celebrating Family Day - and this year British Columbia is doing so for the first time.

One of the most significant family roles is that of a grandmother, or a "kookum" as many of our Aboriginal friends call her. As a boy growing up in small town in Newfoundland, my grandmother lived right next door to us. I spent a lot of time at the home of that jolly, hard-working and loving woman I called "Gram." Sometimes it was because my parents were working or away; at other times it was just because I enjoyed being there.

Every Monday morning, Gram had her washing flapping on the line before anybody else in town did. Inside her white clapboard house was a cast iron wood stove where she worked her magic as a phenomenal cook. The big pot or iron skillet would often be simmering with food for all of us who happened to stop by for a meal because we knew there'd be plenty for everyone. If the way to a boy's heart is through his stomach, Gram always hit the mark.

Every Tuesday and Thursday, she cooked up a big "jigg's dinner" - potato, turnip, carrot, cabbage, peas, turnip greens, and a raisin bread pudding or doughboys cooked all together in a large pot with salt beef, and some kind of wild or store-bought meat and gravy roasting in the oven. Any leftovers were mashed into a hash for the next day. Friday was always fish day, with the species depending on what was available - usually cod, trout, capelin, or salmon. Saturday was always soup day, cooked in a huge pot so there'd been plenty to eat on Sunday. That was the day for church and rest. No cooking.

I'd often sit at the kitchen table and read a *Reader's Digest* or browse the latest Sears catalogue while my Grandfather sat there reading his favourite book, which was a big leather Bible. I even had a little room in Gram's house where I could steal away for a nap if I wanted, taking some of her homemade cake or cookies with me - along with one of my cherished Hardy Boy books or super hero comics.

My grandmother's influence is still evident in my life, even though she's been gone for over thirty years. Her home always provided a sanctuary, a safe haven, a place of total acceptance and love.

Every child needs a grandmother like mine—or if not a grandmother, another close relative who loves them, cares for them, and believes in their potential. A family member who connects them to their roots and their history, whose impact eventually extends right to the next generation of kids growing up.

Grandparents, aunts, uncles, or second cousin twice removed—it's important for a child to have that connection to an extended family.

Dr. David Rideout is a former teacher, principal, and school board superintendent. He is a father of two adult sons and the CEO of the North Central Alberta Child and Family Services Authority.

Feedback or comments are welcome and can be sent via email to david.rideout@gov.ab.ca

My Life as a Foster Mom ... Continued from Page 5

I am filling a need in our society that I truly wish didn't exist. I often find myself trying to understand how it can be that I'm up in the night with a child who isn't my own who is missing his mother or father or guardian.

They come with so much baggage. Most of it I will never know. Why does someone cry in the middle of the night? Why is someone terrified of the dishwasher? Why does someone hide food under the bed? Most of the time only the family knows and they aren't likely to tell anyone.

People say, "You're a saint for doing what you do," or "You took another kid?" The truth is that I like kids. I'm not a saint, nor is there something wrong with me for wanting to help out.

Our friends are well past the age of having to find a babysitter, so at times we are left out of social groups. A few of our friends have drifted away completely. They are uncomfortable with this job of mine and think we are leaving ourselves open to lawsuits. They question what motivates my desire to foster children.

It might be easy to throw up my hands and get out of fostering, but then I would miss taking a group of kids to the fair or watching the excitement on their faces when we go to the drive-in for the first time.

This "job" lets me indulge my inner kid while being a responsible grown-up at the same time.

It has also taught me a lot. One day a few years ago, the saddest face I had ever seen was dropped off at my door. She was only 3. On the third night she was here, still with her sad, scared face, I said to her, "Honey, what is it you're afraid of?"

She looked at me with the most forlorn expression and pointed her finger right at me. She was way more afraid of me, this stranger she didn't know, than her familiar but abusive home.

That's been the biggest lesson - when you are little, family is love and comfort, no matter what. Everyone just wants to be with their family, to be home.

I am lucky to have a husband who understands and is willing to help me make good citizens of kids who otherwise might be in the system forever. My family is compassionate and caring, but we were raised with opportunities that are often lacking for these children.

They need this system that will help them get home. A system that, while certainly not perfect, helps their families learn a few lessons while they've been away. Lessons such as how to feed them, send them to school, stop hitting them, stop doing drugs.

Fostering is tough and sometimes I can't remember why I do it. Then I experience a day that reminds me. Coming home from the beach this summer, we were all eating ice cream, tired and excited.

"Life is good, isn't it boys?" I said.

Looking up at me with his big, brown eyes, the five-year-old said, "No Cindy, life is good with you."

