

Keeping Information, Data & Services Accessible to All the Families We Serve

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES

Avoiding Burns Inside and Out

Did you know that 3 million burn cases are diagnosed in the US each year, according to the Mayo Clinic? To paint a visual picture, think of it this way: The Bay Area is home to 7 million people, which means the total number of burn cases each year is nearly half its population. Fortunately, there are precautionary measures resource families can incorporate into their daily routines to prevent burns and create a fun and safe environment for children in their care.



Identifying Burns

A burn is an injury that damages the skin or deeper tissues. Burns may be caused by the sun, hot liquids, fire, electricity, or chemicals, according to the Mayo Clinic. It is essential children's caregivers are aware of the different types of burns, so they can identify symptoms, prevent incidents, and properly treat burns.

Most burns are characterized by pain, swelling, blistering and, in severe cases, black leathery skin. Burns are classified as first, second or third degree based on size and severity.

"The first-degree burn is where the burn damages tissues in the epidermis, which is the top layer of the skin," said Dr. Jeffrey DeWeese, Burn Specialist at Bothin Burn Center at St. Francis Memorial Hospital. "Second degree is where it's the dermal, or bottom, layer. Third-degree is where the dermis and epidermis are injured."

First-degree burns are minor and cause minimal damage to the skin. Most first-degree burns heal within 10 days, leaving no scars. Second-degree burns, also known as partial-thickness burns, are more serious because they penetrate deeper into the skin and sometimes require medical treatment. These burns are accompanied by blisters and take roughly three weeks to heal. The most severe is third-degree burns or full-thickness burns, as they damage every layer of the skin and the nerve endings. What's tricky about these burns is that damage to nerve endings can't be seen and they might not be very painful initially. When in doubt about the degree of burns, care providers should seek medical care.

Third-degree burns require medical treatment and surgery. The healing time for these burns varies based on size, depth, and the patient's overall health. However, complications can lead to infections or even death.

Sunburns

One of the most common burns that people will experience is sunburn. "Some sunburns are second-degree burns," said Dr. DeWeese. "That's significant injury, and if somebody has blistering, they should seek medical care." Children or youth in your care who have

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Check It Out!

RFA Conversion

The new RFA is confusing, but with the right resources, the process can be much easier to wrap your head around. Learn how you can convert and two crucial dates not to miss on page 8

Take your test and survey online at: <https://goo.gl/BE38Xd>

Our May test winner is
Joyce Lee

sunburns should not scratch the area if it itches, especially if it becomes blistery.

During the summer, the sun is out for longer and it's common for families to barbecue and soak up the rays at the beach. While the fun shouldn't stop, care providers should remember that sunburns occur when a person is exposed to too much ultraviolet (UV) rays. When UVA rays penetrate deeply into the skin, they can cause melanoma. On the other hand, UVB rays cause sunburns and wrinkles.

Resource parents can protect children against sun damage by making them wear broad spectrum sunscreen, with SPF30 or higher, says Dr. DeWeese. These sunscreens should be water-resistant and sweat-resistant and should be reapplied throughout the day.

And everyone should use sunscreen. Although fair-skinned individuals are more susceptible to sunburns, there's a common misconception that dark-skinned people have built-in sun block and don't need it. This is a detrimental thought process, as it's much harder to detect skin cancer in the early stages for dark-skinned individuals.

During the summer, resource families should be aware of their children's environment when enjoying outdoor activities. For example, parents shouldn't allow children to play on hot equipment at the park or walk barefoot on hot pavement, as these surfaces can cause burn injuries.

Hot Water Burns

Burns caused by hot running water are called scald burns. According to the Burn Foundation, 500,000 scalds occur annually in the United States, and 17 percent of children who are hospitalized for scalds were injured by hot tap water. The most vulnerable population are children under the age of 5 and adults 65 and older because their skin is thin.

"Scald burns mostly occur in the kitchen or bathroom and occur in the very young or old, or people who have mobility issues," said Dr. DeWeese. "That might be someone with cerebral palsy, severe arthritis, or someone with seizure disorder who has a seizure and falls in the shower."

Resource families who are caring for children under the age of 5 should be vigilant when it comes to regulating liquid temperatures for drinking and bathing. During bath time, Dr.

DeWeese recommends that water temperature for children not exceed 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Never leave children unattended or unsupervised with younger siblings during bath time or at a sink where they can easily turn up the water to scalding temperature. Dr. DeWeese said that's a very cause for burns in the patients he's seen. He's also seen scald burns associated with multi-tasking individuals, such as a parent holding a hot beverage in one hand and a child in the other.

Kitchen Burns

The kitchen is one of the central parts of a home for culinary creations for both care providers and children. Kitchens are high-traffic and high-risk areas for burns, especially scalds, from steam or hot liquids. Most scald burns to children between the ages of 6 months and 2 years are caused by hot foods or liquids spilled in the kitchen, according to Stanford Children's Health.

Although the kitchen can be dangerous, there are ways children and youth can help prepare nutritious meals in safe and responsible ways. One suggestion from Dr. DeWeese is burn-proofing your kitchen. "There should be a no-child zone around the stove and sink," he said. "I tell people to put masking tape or some kind of tape on the floor in a big square around the stove and train your children never to go inside that area." Resource families should also keep cords to appliances, such as slow cookers and coffee makers, away from children's reach, and check to see where children are before handling hot liquids.

Treating Burns

The biggest misconception when it comes to burns is how to treat them. When treating a burn, care providers should always use cool water or cool cloth on the area. For example, if a child sustains a hot water burn on the body, resource parents should immediately remove the child's clothing and replace with dry clothes that are light and cool to alleviate symptoms.

"Don't put butter, toothpaste, baking soda or honey on burns" said Dr. DeWeese. "Any of these home remedies can make the burn worse." In addition, never treat burns with ice. Although ice is soothing, it can cause more harm to the skin by freezing the blood vessels and limiting blood flow in the burn area.

K.I.D.S.

Published bi-monthly for San Francisco County foster parents, resource families, NREFMs and kin care providers. To suggest a topic, submit an article, promote an event, or provide feedback, email Sharon.Walchak@sfgov.org.

Editorial Staff

Editors: Karen Stewartson Gallivan and Sharon Walchak
Amabel Baxley, Kimberlee Pitters, Heather Priebe

City and County of San Francisco/Family & Children Services
PO Box 7988 • 170 Otis Street, San Francisco, CA 94120

Helpful Phone Numbers

HSA Operator	(415) 557-5000
CPS Child Abuse Hotline	(800) 856-5553 or (415) 558-2650
Foster Care Ombudsman	(415) 558-2828
Transportation Duty Line	(415) 557-5376
Licensing/RFA/Recruitment Hotline	(415) 558-2200
Free Foster Parenting Respite Service	(415) 861-4060 x3035
Community Services	211
Non-emergency Government Services	311

FCS Agency Directory: www.sfhsa.org/174.htm

Newsletter Website: <http://www.sfhsa.org/1890.htm>

Ellen and Brandon Williams

September's Champions for Children are Ellen and Brandon Williams, who have been dedicated to fostering youths for almost three years. Ellen's personal experience as a teenager in the foster care system inspired her to become a resource parent. "I grew up in foster care with amazing foster parents, and we wanted to be able to provide an amazing home like I had growing up as a teen in the system," she said.

With one biological child of their own, a huge home and lots of room in their hearts, Ellen and Brandon decided to complete their family by becoming resource parents, but they were skeptical about the possibility.

"Being that we are so young, we assumed that nobody would want us to foster," said Ellen.

"We had this big house with all these extra bedrooms. We found our niche with teens and decided to try. It was a totally different experience than what was expected. The staff was willing to work with us. It was like parenting with training wheels. It was amazing."

Due to life changes and Brandon starting medical school in Southern California, the Williams were faced with a tough decision—relocate without one of their daughters. "It is very important for foster parents to know that life happens and it is OK to make decisions like this," said Ellen. "One of our foster daughters was going into her senior year of high school and wanted to finish school with her friends." Relocation has been hard for the whole family, including the Williams' younger daughter. "It was hard for us to leave her and very hard on her sister, too, who is also in our care," Ellen added. In the fall, the family will be reunited when their daughter moves to Southern California for college and lives



Ellen and Brandon Williams

with them while she works on weekends.

Ellen's advice to new foster parents: "Reach out for help. I see some foster parents have reservations and face adversity with the foster care system. Everyone is so helpful. Surround yourself with all the help and support you can get: CASA, social workers, trainings, etc. The help is there. Don't be afraid to ask and be honest with your struggle. It's so critical to get the help you need."

Ellen expresses her gratitude to the Human Services Agency and her husband. "He took on my passion," she said. "And watch us build our team together! We are the dream team."

The Williams also would like to thank Anka, Scott, Macario, Alexis, Wrap Around Services, and CASA for all their support.

The Williams have future plans, too. "Being that I am an EMT and my husband will be finished with medical school soon, we plan to take on medically fragile children," said Ellen. "We will have the resources to help families in need and we will do just that."

On behalf of the Human Services Agency, we thank Ellen and Brandon Williams for their continuous love, guidance, and support to San Francisco County youths.

Support the San Francisco Foster Youth Fund

Donate used items to Community Thrift Store at 623 Valencia Street, San Francisco, in the name of "SF Foster Youth Fund, Charity #160"! www.communitythriftsf.org.



July, August, and September

Birthday Shout-Outs!

Ramon Aguilar	Laura Isadore	Cathelene Marshall
Ana Azucena	Howard Johnson	Joshua E. Moorer
Karen L. Baker	Doretha Johnson-Vinson	Brian Oulman
Claudia Brodeur	Kurt Kilgore	Patricia Rivers
Vickey Byrd	Shirley King	Charles J. Roberts
Melinda Capiraso	Marlene Largaespada	Carmen Singleton
Yanick Constant	Deborah Lightfoot	Julien Swansen
Melody Daniels	Elizabeth Link	Jimmy L. Taylor
Lucy Dunkley	Dennis Lockett	Ravelle Taylor
Christine Hendrickson	Costella Logan	Betty Williams
Kimberley Hopper		Evelyn Yanez

Use the enclosed survey form to be added to the birthday list.

San Francisco Foster Parent Association Announcement

Join Us for Our Bi-Monthly Meetings!

Next Meetings:

Wednesday, October 12, 2016 • 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Wednesday, December 14, 2016 • 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Light dinner served

170 Otis St., 6th Floor, Conf. Room 2, San Francisco

Please join us at our bi-monthly meetings to meet other foster parents. We are a stand-alone and member-run nonprofit organization to empower ALL foster, adoptive, relative and non-relative care providers. Our goal is for all care providers to come together to achieve high-quality care for the well-being of our children and youth. Please call Lorraine Hanks at (415) 756-5240 to RSVP.

Greetings from the PPC Team!

A lot has happened since the May 2016 issue of the K.I.D.S. Newsletter. We celebrated our Annual Family Children Services (FCS) Resource Family Appreciation Event “Monte Carlo Night,” we updated the RFA Pre-Service Curriculum to include new directives and reduced the number of training hours, and we completed four cycles of RFA Pre-Service Training, one SA/HIV Infant Program training cycle and two ABCs of Baby Care.

Resource Family Appreciation Event

We celebrated the Value of Building Relationships during our Annual FCS Resource Family Appreciation Event “Monte Carlo Night” on May 20. Our evening included a wonderful keynote presentation by Regina Louise and beautiful vocals from FCS’s own Robert Manongdo, and we were honored with a special song by YsabelaMarie. We ended the evening in a “Monte Carlo Night” setting playing, dancing, and getting to know one another.



Gloria Anthony-Oliver and Pat Smith at Monte Carlo Night.

Special thanks to our donors whose support helped create a wonderful evening:

- Braid Mission—Sponsorship of gift cards
- Family Support Services of the Bay Area Respite Program—On-Site Child care
- PixCo Productions—Non-Profit Discount
- South San Francisco Conference Center—Non-Profit Discount
- Family Children Services leadership and staff—Sponsorship of raffle gifts

RFA Pre-Service Revisions

As mentioned above, we revised the RFA Pre-Service curriculum to include updates as described in the RFA Directives. In addition, we changed the structure of Pre-Service Training and reduced the hours of each cycle. We created a four-tier training program that you can see in the box at top right.

We piloted the new structure in July 2016 and it has been well received. We are looking to expand our advanced training options and need your help in identifying training topics. We want to hear from you about training that you would like to see offered. Please contact Amabel Baxley (abaxley@csufresno.edu) or Heather Priebe (hpriebe@csufresno.edu) with suggestions.

Since our last issue of K.I.D.S. Newsletter, we completed four cycles of RFA Pre-Service Training, three of which we used the

Revised RFA Pre-Service Curriculum

Tier 1

12-hour Core RFA Pre-Service Training:

- Module 1 Child Welfare Overview (3 hours)
- Module 2 Understanding Your Role on the Professional Team (3 hours)
- Module 3 Developmental Needs of Children in Foster Care (3 hours)
- Module 4 Positive Parenting (3 hours)

Tier Two

- Care provider shall complete First Aid/CPR training

Tier Three

Care provider shall complete 8 hours of advanced training prior to approval anniversary. Pre-approval/post-approval training options:

- Childhood Trauma & Traumatic Stress (3 hours)
- Loss & Transitions (3 hours)
- ABCs of Baby Care (3 hours)
- SA/HIV Infant Program (36 hours)

Tier Four

- Care provider shall complete 8 hours of post-approval training every year.



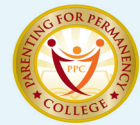
SA/HIV Spanish Series participants and graduates.

new tier-training program, one SA/HIV Infant Program training cycle and two ABCs of Baby Care.

As we move forward, we hope to expand the advanced training options. We plan on rolling out an RFA Mentor Program, and we are starting to plan for our Holiday Event in December.

The PPC team thanks you for all that you do and for your continued dedication.

Warm Regards,
Amabel Baxley, MSW, PPC Training Specialist



Parenting for Permanency College Calendar

Parenting for Permanency: A Journey of the Heart

Training: to enhance care providers' knowledge base and skills. *Support:* to elevate care providers' spirits and to create bonds of positive and healthy relationships. Register for English and Spanish Support Groups with Sharon Walchak at (415) 401-4313 or sharon.walchak@sfgov.org. Location for all support group meetings is to be determined.

ENGLISH SUPPORT GROUPS

Held every 3rd Tuesday of the month
5:30 pm refreshments • 6 – 8 pm meeting

September 20
Presenter:
Natalia Estassi

October 18
Presenter: Rocio
Rodriguez

November 15
Presenter:
Natalia Estassi

SPANISH SUPPORT GROUPS

Held every 3rd Thursday of the month
5:30 pm refreshments • 6 – 8 pm meeting

September 15
Presenter:
Judith Lefler

October 15
Presenter:
TBA

November 17
Presenter:
TBA

Parenting for Permanency College Trainings September–December 2016

PRE-SERVICE TRAINING SERIES OPTIONS

SEPTEMBER
September 10-17, 2016 RFA Pre-Service English Saturday Series
September 22-24, 2016 Advanced English

ABCs OF BABY CARE

SEPTEMBER
September 28, 2016 SA/HIV Infant Program ABCs of Baby Care Born Auditorium 170 Otis Street. San Francisco

SA/HIV INFANT PROGRAM TRAINING SERIES OPTIONS

SEPTEMBER
September 13-October 13, 2016 SA/HIV Infant Program English Tuesday/Thursday Series Born Auditorium 170 Otis Street. San Francisco

PRE-SERVICE TRAINING SERIES OPTIONS

OCTOBER
October 4-13, 2016 RFA Pre-Service English Tuesday/Thursday Series
October 18-20, 2016 Advanced English
October 1-8, 2016 RFA Pre-Service Spanish Saturday Series
October 15, 2016 Advanced Spanish



PRE-SERVICE TRAINING SERIES OPTIONS

NOVEMBER
November 5-12, 2016 RFA Pre-Service English Saturday Series
November 19, 2016 Advanced

ABCs OF BABY CARE

NOVEMBER
November 15, 2016 SA/HIV Infant Program ABCs of Baby Care Born Auditorium 170 Otis Street. San Francisco

Register Today!

To register and confirm training locations, please contact Heather at (415) 938-6555 or by email at hpriebe@csufresno.edu. Please note that if we do not meet the minimum number of attendees for each training we may need to cancel that series.

Dear Caregivers,

We at City College of San Francisco-Child and Adolescent Development Department thank you for participating in the Foster and Kinship Care Education Program (FKCE) during the 2016-17 year. This year we are beginning the classes during the month of August to make sure that the class meeting dates correspond to the published schedule in the fall 2016 catalog for City College Schedule of Classes. All classes will continue to be located at the Evans Campus, 1400 Evans Street, and room 107. Classes will begin with transitioning from summer to fall school schedules for youth and caregivers. Then we will take you through the process of out of home placement beginning with reporting and removal followed by classes that discuss the impact to our children's emotional, physical, cognitive and educational development. We are also pleased to continue the Adolescent Wednesday classes that

focus on concerns that confront not only the adolescent but you as the caregiver of this age group.

Brenda Wemiz is now in her second year as the Enrollment Specialist for the FKCE program and will continue to provide quality services supporting you with any questions relative to the Foster and Kinship Care Education and can be contacted at (415) 452-5605.

Our goal continues to be to provide you with current information to enhance, support, and meet your needs to enable successful care of the youth in your homes. We look forward to your continued support in making this another successful year and we encourage you to invite others to attend the classes.

Respectfully,

Bernadine Luckey, MSW, LCSW, Program Director, Foster and Kinship Care Education

City College of San Francisco

FREE CPR & First Aid Training Schedule

All classes are held at John Adams Campus, 1860 Hayes Street, Room 44, San Francisco. San Francisco foster parents MUST register by calling (415) 267-6523 or emailing fcstrain@ccsf.edu. Include the class number of the training session you would like to enroll in. Pre-registration is required; class size is limited.

Class #	Day	Date	Time	Class	Class #	Day	Date	Time	Class
CPR200i	Wed	9/21/16	8:30am - 12:30pm	CPR	CPR200k	Wed	11/16/16	8:30am - 12:30pm	CPR
FA200i	Wed	9/21/16	1:00pm - 5:00pm	First Aid	FA200k	Wed	11/16/16	1:00pm - 5:00pm	First Aid
CPR200j	Wed	10/19/16	8:30am - 12:30pm	CPR	CPR200L	Wed	12/14/16	8:30am - 12:30pm	CPR
FA200j	Wed	10/19/16	1:00pm - 5:00pm	First Aid	FA200L	Wed	12/14/16	1:00pm - 5:00pm	First Aid

FALL 2016 SCHEDULE

City College of San Francisco Child Development & Family Studies Department

Foster & Kinship Care Education

CCSF Evans Campus • 1400 Evans Avenue, Room 107, San Francisco

All classes meet the requirements for Continued Education for Licensed Foster Parents and Kinship Care Providers and specifically meet the mandated 8 hours of Continued Education. Certificates of Completion issued at the end of each session. Please register early by calling Brenda at (415) 452-5605.

TALK TIME TUESDAYS AT EVANS CAMPUS

Sept. 20	Sept. 27	Oct. 4	Oct. 11	Oct. 18	Oct. 25	Nov. 1	Nov. 8	Nov. 15
10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 1 pm	9 am - 2 pm	10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 3 pm
Impact of Removal and Placement	Grief & Loss/ Effects of Removal & Placement	Rights of Youth In Foster Care	Providing Trust, Attachment & Bonding	Stages of Child Development	Impact of Consistency & Follow Through	Anger Management— It's Not About You, Caregiver	Providing Emotional Support Building Self Esteem	Providing Educational Support Resources

ADOLESCENT WEDNESDAYS AT EVANS CAMPUS

Sept. 21	Sept. 28	Oct. 5	Oct. 12	Oct. 19	Oct. 26	Nov. 2	Nov. 9	Nov. 16
10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 1 pm	10 am - 1 pm
Understanding Adolescent Placements	Developing Trust	Identify Your Parenting Style	Age Appropriate Expectations	Effects of Stress on Brain Development	Positive Behavior Management	Preventing Allegations by Protecting Foster Youth Rights	Teaching Youth to Be Responsible	Independent Living Skills/ AB-12

The New Vaccine Law and You

It's **back** to school time and there's a long check list of things to do before school starts. As the new school year commences, resource families across California should pay attention to Senate Bill 277 (SB 277), which was signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown in June 2015.

The new law, which became effective July 1, 2016, mandates that parents have their children vaccinated in order to attend public and private schools and daycare facilities. In addition to mandatory vaccinations for school-aged children, SB 277 eliminates exemptions for religious and personal beliefs, which previously allowed parents to opt out from vaccinating their children based on such beliefs.

The vaccination law also applies to children who live with resource families. So what does this mean for care providers? Although the new law won't affect resource families much, since children in your care already adhere to vaccination schedules, there are many questions surrounding the topic that are useful to know.

What should I know about the new vaccination law?

- Religious and personal belief exemptions filed for children prior to January 1, 2016 will remain valid.
- Medical exemptions are still valid and can only be obtained from a medical doctor.
- Valid exemptions can be transferred between schools in California, so the vaccination process doesn't restart upon enrolling at a new school.
- Students exempt from the vaccination law include those in home-based private schools; students enrolled in an independent study program who do not receive classroom instruction; and students with individual education programs.
- Schools must record immunization status for all students, including those who have valid exemptions.
- Students can be turned away from school if they don't have proof of immunization. However, students can be given provisional acceptance to attend school, but must provide documentation on exemptions or show proof of immunization within a strict time frame.
- Similarly, students who are behind on their immunization schedule will be admitted to school if they aren't due for any doses. These students must also submit proof of immunization.
- The law also applies to homeless and foster children. Students who are being transferred into the California school system must be admitted immediately even if they do not have immunization records at the time of enrollment.



- There are two checkpoints for immunization: kindergarten and seventh grade. Students entering kindergarten must show proof of the following immunizations: Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Mumps, Measles, Rubella, Hepatitis B and Varicella (chicken pox). Seventh-grade students are required to show proof of Tetanus, reduced Diphtheria, and acellular Pertussis (Tdap), as well as Mumps, Measles, and Rubella.

The main important takeaway for resource families to remember is that the new vaccination law is in effect and children in your custody will need to show proof of immunization. Resource parents whose children aren't fully immunized should make an appointment with their children's primary care doctor and be sure to keep a vaccination record.

For resource families wanting to learn more about the new vaccination law and see answers to other frequently asked questions, please visit <http://www.shotsforschool.org/laws/sb277faq>.

RESPITE CARE

Do you need a break? Do you have an important appointment to attend? Try FREE respite care with the Family Support Services of the Bay Area. Family Support Services provides specialized child care to give parents and caregivers a break from the daily demands of caring for their children. Respite care is available day or night in your home or at the home of a licensed family day care provider. For more information about respite care or to request a respite caregiver, contact Bruce Williams at (415) 861-4060 x 3035 or Katrina at (415) 861-4060 x 3032.

Graduating On Time

Youths in foster care are less likely to graduate from high school. The odds against graduating are further compounded by the frequency with which they transfer homes and schools, as well as school district requirements that make it harder to graduate. On top of that, there's a race against time as youths age out of the foster care system.

Thanks to Assembly Bill (AB) 167, changes in the education landscape will make it easier for foster youths to obtain their high-school diploma. AB 167 makes amendments in the education code by requiring school districts to exempt foster care students from district requirements that exceed state graduation requirements if they transfer to the district, or transfer high schools in the 11th or 12th grade, and would not be reasonably able to complete

additional district requirements. AB 167, which became effective in 2010, was revised and also is referred to as AB 216 or AB 167/216.

"AB 216 is a great intervention to graduate and move to the next level of education," says Gloria Anthony-Oliver, Protective Services Worker and Education Liaison Between School Districts and San Francisco Human Services Agency.

Graduation requirements are a hot topic for resource parents who have students in high school. In fact, Anthony-Oliver says almost daily she encounters resource families and individuals who have issues related to AB 167/216. Resource parents can find out about eligibility requirements by contacting their children's school counselor.

"Once youth are deemed eligible via transcript analysis and approval of the parent or educational representative, they receive a signed document, which is transferrable to any school," says Anthony-Oliver. "AB 216 can only be canceled by the recipient."

Although AB 167/216 eliminates unnecessary roadblocks, there might be detractors for eligible students, such as not participating in extra curricular activities or immediately attending a four-year university.

Overall, the bill is a win for foster care students, allowing them to successfully advance to post-secondary opportunities. Anthony-Oliver says children who can get AB 216 eligibility are blessed and should grab the opportunity and run toward their future.

Licensing Regulation

Resource Family Approval Conversion

Resource families who want to continue being care providers for foster children and youth must comply with a new licensing regulation. Effective July 1, 2017, a state mandated Resource Family Approval (RFA) process will be implemented requiring foster family homes that are currently licensed, approved relative caregivers and non-relative extended family members (NREFMs) to undergo a new approval process.

The RFA's goal is to improve the process for care providers by reducing duplicative steps and preparing them through training to effectively care for the diverse needs of foster children. According to Assembly Bill 403, resource families must adopt the RFA process no later than December 31, 2019.

Licensed foster family homes, approved relative caregivers, and NREFMs within the county will receive three critical notices of conversion requirements and process from the San Francisco Human Services Agency no later than July 31, 2017.

1. A description of the RFA program.
2. Notification that RFAs are due by December 31, 2019 to provide continued care for foster children.
3. Description of the conversion process that will explain how licenses may be forfeited by law if conversions aren't completed by December 31, 2019.

It is important to note that licensed resource families who do not accept new placements during 2017 won't be allowed to convert to RFA. The county has a transition plan and will work with licensed

homes in 2017 to make RFA conversions. To get more up-to-date information on the new RFA process, please see the flyer enclosed in this newsletter.



Common Questions from Resource Families

Whether you're a seasoned pro or just starting out, resource families have questions. Here is your opportunity to get them answered. Send us your questions and we'll provide you with our best advice.

I need some time to take care of myself, what are my options for making sure I can get a much-needed break?

Everyone needs a break to decompress, spend time with family and friends, take care of important personal appointments, or simply just to rest! Respite care allows resource families to take time out for themselves, while ensuring their children are in a safe environment. Respite care providers receive the same training and screening process as resource families. Resource families seeking respite care can work with their child's protective services worker (PSW) in advance. Also, if you're planning on going away from your child for more than 24 hours, you will need approval from your child's PSW.

All of this RFA business is confusing me. I've been a licensed foster parent for many years. How does RFA affect me? The RFA is a new comprehensive process, which is designed to make the approval process much simpler for resource families. Conversion to the new RFA must be complete by December 31, 2019 or you will



forfeit your licensure or approval to operate. The San Francisco Human Services Agency will be working with resource families to ensure that they convert.

I have a lot of concerns about the child in my care. He's having a hard time with school and his behavior seems to be getting in the way of his progress. I've called his PSW and I haven't heard back from her. What should I do? Every PSW has a supervisor. If you don't

hear back from your child's PSW in what feels like a reasonable amount of time, you can call his or her supervisor. Another option is to call the hotline at 800-856-5553. Many think the hotline is meant only to report abuse or neglect issues; however, you can also use it to leave a message if you have tried other recourses and they haven't panned out.

We want to hear from you! This is a new section of the newsletter, so send us your questions.

Be Active for Health

September is National Yoga Month! Yoga is a great way for families to create a healthy lifestyle by incorporating exercise in their daily routines. Many people know that yoga helps individuals with relaxing, but other benefits include helping with mental focus, lowering blood pressure and cholesterol, and increasing flexibility.

Yoga is also a fun way for children to exercise, create deep

inner peace, and boost their self-esteem. Practicing yoga also helps individuals with their posture and balance. As a result, it encourages perseverance and physical endurance. Today, yoga is very accessible to the public with studios popping up all around town. In fact, many schools are integrating yoga in after-school programs and offering it to children with special needs.

Yoga is great for fidgety kids, who have a hard time unwinding and sitting still. It's also an effective way for children to relax before bedtime. But yoga isn't just for children—adults of all ages can practice right in the comfort of their homes. A major premise in yoga is to respect your body, which means you practice at your own pace. So strike a pose and stretch your mind and muscles this month.

Angela Ramos-Reyes, Your RFA Ally

Resource families and foster children have a new advocate on their team—Angela Ramos-Reyes, the new Program Manager for Family and Children’s Services (FCS). Mrs. Ramos-Reyes is a 15-year veteran, having experience working closely with management teams and supervisors to create professional development initiatives. Her wealth of knowledge with FCS, working with families, non-profits, and the San Francisco School District, make her poised to take on the role of Program Manager.

Ms. Ramos-Reyes’s goal for FCS is to ensure that resource families have the support that they need, to help with recruitment, retention, and adoption, as well as to support adolescents between the ages of 17 and 21 transition from foster care. Mrs. Ramos-Reyes, who is bilingual, is enthusiastic to take on her role and find

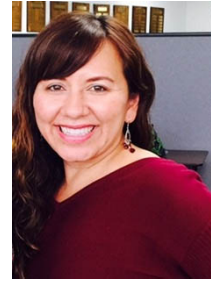
ways to break down the language barrier to better serve San Francisco’s diverse portfolio of resource families.

“I’m very excited to work with our caregivers and to really hone in on the permanency options for a lot of the children we have,” says Mrs. Ramos-Reyes.

When asked what she’d like to accomplish in her first 90 days, Mrs. Ramos-Reyes said she wants to develop and streamline the internal RFA process, get feedback and ideas from her colleagues and staff about permanency, retention, and recruitment, but most of all, she wants to get out in the community and meet resource parents.

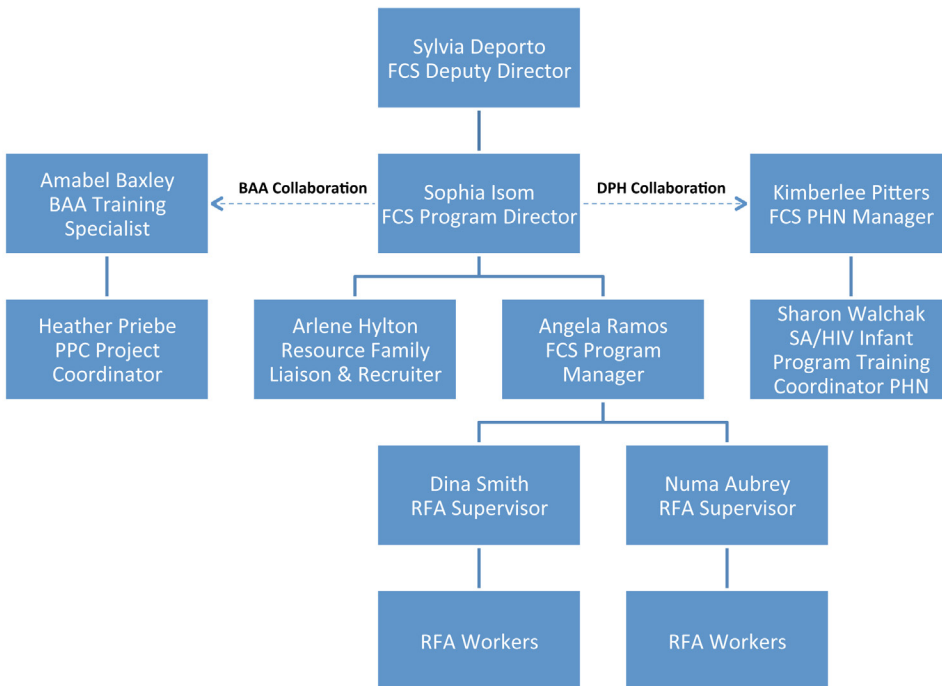
“I’m a very community-involved person, so I’m really looking forward to getting out there and building community partnerships with the community.”

In her past roles, Mrs. Ramos-Reyes has praised the power of partnerships when it comes to achieving results. True partnerships, she says, involve having difficult



conversations to drive transformation. When asked how she feels about her new role joining FCS RFA, Mrs. Ramos-Reyes said: “I’m just very excited. I have never seen so many dedicated people...I am really excited to work alongside them. I’ve seen how they just pull together and how they’re very committed, working all hours to support the kids and families and caregivers, so I am excited to be a part of that team.”

Resource Family Approval Staff Flow Chart



FCS= Family and Children's Services; RFA= Resource Family Approval; DPH= Department of Public Health; PHN= Public Health Nurse; BAA= Bay Area Academy; PPC= Parenting for Permanency College

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Marketing/Public Relations

Do you or anyone you know have marketing and public relations skills? We are developing a campaign to #KeepSFkidsinSF and could use your expertise! If you can help connect us with a marketing and public relations professional, please contact Arlene Hylton at 415-557-5067.

Trainings and Conferences

Are you a resource parent who is interested in gaining more knowledge and sharing your expertise? If so, volunteer to participate in trainings and conferences in California and across the US. All travel costs covered by the Human Services Agency. Find out if you qualify and add yourself to the volunteer list by contacting Arlene Hylton at 415-557-5067 or Arlene.Hylton@sfgov.org.

Let's Talk QPI

The month's QPI focus topic is geared toward children returning to school. Social Workers can use the information below to assist caregivers on how to communicate with schools, and the importance of foster youth's participation in extracurricular activities.

The ABCs of Communicating with Your Child's School

A - Ask questions whenever you have a concern. Good schools want involved parents who know what's going on in their schools. They know that sound support for their effort grows out of a solid understanding of what's happening and why. Never feel like you're intruding or interrupting when you have something to ask. Make a call. Visit your school. Send an email. However you do it, ask about whatever is on your mind.

B - Build your child's confidence with regular communication. Ask questions about what's going well and not so well in school. Compliment good effort. Encourage questions. Make conversation about school progress an everyday ritual.

C - Clarify language you don't understand. Some issues are complicated. Sometimes even simple matters sound complicated, even at schools. Don't be confused by jargon or abbreviations. Ask questions until you're comfortable with

what's being said. Examples: "When you say _____, what do you mean by that?" Or, "Can you give me an example of what you mean by _____."

D - Dig deeper into your child's schoolwork and understand what is going on. Partner with your child and with teachers to build a home-school learning team. Understand the short-and long-term learning objectives for assignments. Read over assignments. Review homework. Getting involved communicates to your child and to teachers that you care.

E - Email your child's teacher or principal. Check with your child's school to see if it's possible. Make sure you're on the email list to get school info, if your school maintains one. But use email wisely. It works best for short, uncomplicated exchanges. It's not good for resolving concerns. Personal meetings still work best for more serious matters.

Extracurricular, Enrichment and Social Activities

Every day, parents make important decisions about their children's activities. Resource parents are faced with making the same decisions for the foster children in their care. However, when resource parents make decisions they also must consider licensing or approval laws and regulations to ensure the health and safety of foster



children in their care. Every foster child is entitled to participate in age-appropriate and developmentally-appropriate extracurricular, enrichment, and social activities such as, but not limited to:

- School-sponsored field trips, events, or sports
- Sleep-over with friends
- Having friends over
- Scouting
- 4-H activities
- Babysitting

Participation in these types of activities is important to both the child's well-being, and in developing valuable life-coping skills. Resource parents should encourage the child to participate in appropriate extracurricular activities. Resource parents are empowered to approve or disapprove a foster child's participation in such activities without prior approval of the social worker, licensing or approval agency, or the Juvenile Court. The care provider's assessment of the appropriateness of the activity must meet the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard which is defined as: *The standard characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the child's health, safety, and best interest.*

This article was previously published in San Luis Obispo PEN Newsletter and was reprinted with permission.



Five Superfoods for Fall

What do brussel sprouts, beets, cranberries, rutabagas, and kale have in common? They are all superfoods that are in season during the fall. Superfoods are foods that are touted for having a high nutritional value in minerals and vitamins, which help to boost the immune system and keep individuals healthy.

This fall, as the air outside becomes cold and dry, it is much easier for the cold virus to live and spread, making individuals more susceptible to colds. But resource parents can protect themselves and their children by infusing superfoods into their diet. Eating healthfully means eating fresh, local, and what's in season to get the highest nutritional value and flavor from foods.

Five superfoods to try this fall

Beets: These deep purple gems are a great source of fiber and potassium, and help with blood flow and sore muscles.

Brussel Sprouts: These are rich in vitamins C and K, as well as folic acid.

Cranberries: Long known for its benefits to the urinary tract, cranberries are also loaded with antioxidants.

Kale: This leafy green is quickly becoming a substitute for lettuce

and other field greens—and it's no wonder it is, due to the high fiber, B6, vitamin C and potassium found in kale. Among the many health benefits, kale protects against heart disease and helps to lower blood pressure.

Pumpkin Seeds: Not only are pumpkin seeds fun to eat, but they are also high in antioxidants and zinc, which is great for boosting immunity and handling stress. Pumpkin seeds promote healthy digestion and help relieve headaches.

Superfood Salad

- 3 cups chopped kale
- 1 cup napa cabbage
- 1 cup chopped broccoli slaw mix
- ½ cup diced beets
- ¼ cup pumpkin seeds (sunflower)
- ¼ cashew or sliced almonds
- ¼ cup dried cranberries



Serving size: 4

Time: 10 minutes

Combine all ingredients in a bowl. Generously pour in your favorite balsamic vinaigrette dressing, gently toss, and then serve.

 **Activities for All**

Fun and Affordable Fall Traditions

In a few weeks, it will be fall—the weather will get cooler, the foliage around you will change color, and you'll be burrowing through your closets to find warm cozy sweaters. For many, fall evokes memories of family traditions like baking apple pies, knitting scarves, or apple picking. If you're a resource parent who feels like fall has snuck up on you and you're wondering what to do with your children this season, here are three fall activities you can enjoy with your family.

Frame Foliage. Fall comes with leaves galore on all over lawns, backyards, and walkways. Some neighborhoods are filled with red, yellow, brown and orange leaves from different varieties of local trees. One idea is to collect a variety of multi-colored leaves while taking a nature walk in your neighborhood or a nearby park, then put them individually or collectively in a pattern in an old picture frame. Framing foliage is a great way to bring a little of the outdoors inside and update your wall décor in a fun and economical way.

Paint a Pumpkin. Most families visit pumpkin patches to get just the right pumpkin for carving, but this year, why not get an imperfect pumpkin and paint it? Chalk paint gives users the creative latitude to write on different surfaces. Resource families can also experiment with stencils to create pumpkins that include monograms, classic calligraphy, or fun holiday shapes!

Nosh on Apple Nachos. During fall, lots of families visit apple orchards to pick apples. If you can't make it to an orchard this year, you can visit your local farmer's market and purchase apples. And, if all else fails, there's always the grocery store! This season, the point is to try something new with your apples—apple nachos. To make this treat, get a variety of different apples and cut them in slices. Arrange the slices in a circle on a plate, drizzle generously with caramel sauce (or another favorite), then sprinkle your favorite crushed nuts, chocolate chips, granola, or mini-marshmallows on top. Resource families also can modify this recipe to create healthy and delicious snacks for children with dietary restrictions.