

# Advisor

NEWSLETTER  
.....  
*Fall 2016*

## *Featuring*

**Working with a special needs child**

**How foster & birth parents can successfully co-parent**

**Help for back-to-school anxieties**

**Creating a stress free morning**

**Social Media Q&A**

**School safety**

## *Plus*

**Foster Family Week**

**Direct Deposit information**

**FASD Network**

**Petty's Kitchen recipes**



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## 2016 National Foster Family Week

Every fall, Canadians honour the contributions of approximately 35,000 foster families across the country.

This year, National Foster Family Week will be celebrated October 16-22.



**SEPTEMBER 30, OCTOBER 1 & 2, 2016**

Founded in 2009, Culture Days raises the awareness, accessibility, participation and engagement of Canadians in the arts and cultural life of their communities. With the support of volunteer groups at the national, provincial and local levels, hundreds of thousands of artists, cultural workers, organizations and groups, volunteers and supporters self-mobilize to host free participatory public activities that take place in hundreds of cities and towns throughout the country over the last weekend of September each year.

The seventh annual Culture Days weekend will take place September 30, October 1 and 2, 2016, and will feature thousands of free, hands-on, interactive activities that invite the public to participate "behind-the-scenes," to discover the world of artists, creators, historians, architects, curators, designers and other creative people in their communities.

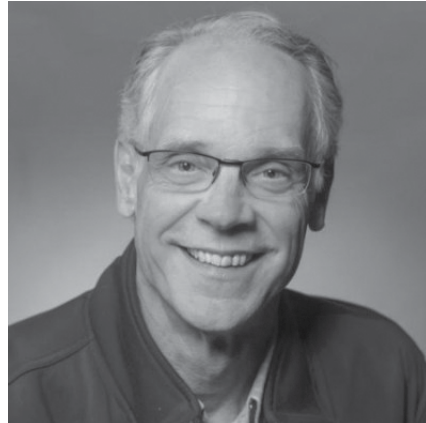
Culture Days is a collaborative initiative that welcomes your participation. Everyone can play a role in Culture Days! Whether you are already passionate about arts and culture or curious to discover new cultural experiences, an artist, arts or cultural organization, community group, municipality, library, school, citizen, or business person, you can participate in and contribute to Culture Days!

For more information visit <http://www.saskculture.ca/programs/saskculture-programs/culture-days>

# Message from our Chairman of the Board

I am happy to inform you that a significant milestone has been reached. The SFFA in partnership with MSS and Governor State University are taking PRIDE training on line and supplementing the online training with in classroom check-ins and group activities throughout the training. In addition, we are the first association in Canada to offer PRIDE training from our SFFA training centre in Saskatoon. The time line for this launch is November 2016! We can also be thankful to SaskTel for their donation of the video conferencing equipment in our office. This is a huge benefit to us as the costs for this equipment is not small. The training room, boardroom and the Executive Directors office will all be equipped with the ability to have face-to-face meetings over video conferencing.

Another first is MSS allowing an outside agency the SFFA, to access their internal video conference environment. For those even familiar with technology, this is a huge benefit. Deb's vision is to allow foster parents who are not able to be at home and may be traveling or remote to use any computer, tablet or smart phone to participate in any training that is being offered. Again, this is another first in Canada for a foster family association like ours. This strategy is designed to improve the onboarding of new foster homes quicker and more efficiently so that we can address the shortfall of homes as well as provide continuing education to our foster families looking to increase their



knowledge and skills. Stay tuned more to come on PRIDE online!

I have represented the SFFA on the CFFA board of directors for the last two years. Our involvement in the CFFA for the last number of years has been somewhat tenuous. On behalf of the SFFA, I have been hosting the bimonthly conference calls as up to last fall there had been little to no communications between the fall AGM and springboard meeting. The time commitment is more than I had thought it might be but I think this has been beneficial to some degree however, there is still a lot of work to do there. This fall's AGM will be an important one for the CFFA as the bylaws, and policies and procedures are under scrutiny by the provinces. At each conference there is a day planned for what is called "National Working Group." This is to be where delegates bring ideas that the CFFA should pursue on behalf of the provinces. I have been asked to facilitate this session this year as in the past year very little action has taken place from these meetings. I hope to have a

positive report for you in the next newsletter.

The board will be meeting in November for our fall planning session. This is an important meeting as we discuss the future of the SFFA and how we need to govern the organization, including how we prepare for the AGM in 2017. I would remind everyone that you can submit ideas and suggestions to the SFFA anytime through your delegates.

It has been a year now since the board communicated the alignment and enablement of the leadership teams. It would appear that for the most part the leadership teams were able to find their own ways of working with the new structure, and have found that it is very enabling. The freedom to plan, organize themselves and action their ideas without bureaucracy has been a benefit.

I am very pleased with the work of the SFFA in meeting with and communicating with our foster families. By them doing their work well, the board is able to concentrate on the direction that we need to lead this organization in, as when the board gets distracted from this our organization suffers.

Thanks for your continued support of the SFFA and the board of directors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Harris". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Kevin Harris  
Chairman of the Board, SFFA

**CHAIRPERSON**  
Kevin Harris

**DIRECTORS**  
Tara Switenky  
Herman Goertzen  
Konota Crane  
Tim Adams  
John Quong  
Justin Reves



## We need your e-mail

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](mailto:wayne@sffa.sk.ca)

**THANK-YOU!**





# 8 important tips for working with a Special Needs Child

by Karen Wang

**N**ow that my 11 year old son is able to participate in more community activities, I am often asked, "Do you have any tips for working with Louie?"

As the population of children with special needs continues to grow, more and more scout leaders, soccer coaches, religious education instructors, librarians, music teachers and other adults are finding themselves working with these children for the first time.

Many of these adults are volunteers who generously give their time and expertise; others are highly trained in their field, but have little or no knowledge of disabilities.

Here are eight important tips you should pass on to people who will be working with your special child.

## 1. Interact

The biggest mistake that adults make when they meet someone like Louie is failing to interact with him. Usually they try asking him a question (he hates questions, he won't answer), then the adult gives up and starts talking to me. One time a person shouted questions at him from across a field and couldn't understand why Louie ran away!

The same rules of polite conversation apply to adults and children. First, introduce yourself and explain how you are connected to the child. Depending on the child's special needs, it may be necessary to take the child's hand, place a hand on the child's shoulder or even touch each other's faces to make a proper introduction.

Then explain the activity that you will be doing with the child. Explain the different steps of the activity, including the beginning and the end – while making as much eye contact as possible.

## 2. Observe

Some children with special needs perceive sensory input in different ways and may be unable to verbalize discomfort. Remember that all behavior is communication. Always keep a lookout for these differences and think about what the child's behavior is communicating to you. If you're not sure what you're seeing, ask the child's parents or other adults for advice.

## 3. Use Common Sense

My son had a negative experience in an adapted swimming class many years ago. The children in the class ranged in age from 3 to 18, and the two instructors had the children sit on the edge of the pool with their feet in the water while they took turns working individually with each child.

There were several problems with this plan. First, the water was deep and the children sitting at the edge were in constant danger of falling in. Second, the children were shivering while they waited for their turn, which heightened their anxiety and overall discomfort. Third, the younger children all cried when one of the instructors swam up and suddenly scooped them into the water away from their parents.

All of these problems could have been avoided easily with common sense: put safety first and arrange the environment for physical and emotional comfort. By contrast, the Inclusion Basketball League at the Friendship Circle was a model of common sense and positive support. On the first day, pairs of children practiced passing the ball to each other to build up

their confidence. Adults circulated around the gym to make sure everyone was safe and having a good time. Children who needed a break had space to relax. During the game that day, each child had a chance to throw the ball and score.

#### 4. Be Flexible

Some adults say that they will not change the way they do things to accommodate one person in a group. But the whole point of teaching is to use a variety of methods to help another person understand and master new skills. For example, if a child refuses to let go of a parent, bring the parent into the activity for a few minutes to reduce anxiety, then fade out the parent.

If a child does not have the appropriate motor skills for an activity, help the child go through the motions and assign a buddy to help the child practice on the sidelines for a few minutes. In a religious education class, a child may have difficulty understanding some concepts; but when those same concepts are presented in a game or hands-on art project, they make more sense.

#### 5. Be Consistent

If a set of rules is presented to the group, apply those rules consistently to everyone. Years ago I signed up my son for a preschool martial arts class. On the first day, the instructor explained to students and parents that if a child was having any type of behavior issue, he would ask the parent to sit with the child.

Throughout the lesson, my son Louie was squirming and had difficulty understanding the rapid directions. I waited for the instructor to wave me in. Instead the instructor told my son that he would have to leave the class if he could not sit still. After class I waited for all of the other families to leave so that I could have a private conversation with the instructor about his inconsistency.

When I signed up Louie for a pottery class a few years later, Louie had an instructor who stated all of his expectations and the day's schedule at the beginning of class. The instructor kept track of the students like Louie who needed extra support and assigned teaching assistants to sit with those students. My son flourished in this classroom because of the instructor's consistency – even though the instructor had no previous experience with students with disabilities.

#### 6. Use Visual, Auditory or Tactile Cues

Having the right cues in an environment can mean the difference between participation and non-participation

for many children with special needs. I bring a camera everywhere and get photos of my son's regular routines and favorite places. Louie sorts through the photos in an album or on the computer; sometimes we make the photos into a storybook about an activity.

We also use index cards with simple written instructions to help Louie remember the rules for appropriate behavior – if your child does not read, substitute a hand-drawn cartoon or other picture for the words.



“ If a child does not have the appropriate motor skills for an activity, help the child go through the motions and assign a buddy to help the child practice on the sidelines for a few minutes.

Yesterday I was volunteering in the school library and I heard a first grade teacher softly singing instructions to her students. As soon as she started singing, every single student became quiet and attentive. Other auditory cues are clapping, snapping or whistling. I used to have a neighbor who whistled a unique tune to call his children home to dinner every evening. It worked every time – his children responded by whistling the same tune as they ran home.

Tactile cues such as gently touching a person's shoulder, offering a blanket or other soft fabric, or providing silly putty are easy ways to mark a transition and get a person's attention. On a few occasions I have seen people try to grab or push Louie to get his attention during an activity, which is never a good idea. He loses his balance easily, and it only confuses him without re-directing his attention.

... continued on next page

# Misbeliefs about FASD

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder continues to be a disability that is not well-known. Despite being identified as a diagnosis for decades there continues to be contradicting information distributed to the public resulting in associated stigmas and misconceptions.

Through our years of service the Network has identified several false beliefs about FASD.

- **Belief:** All people who have FASD have below-average IQ. THIS IS NOT TRUE. Some individuals may have below-average IQ, some have average or above-average IQ. Each individual is affected uniquely.
- **Belief:** Individuals with FASD will outgrow their difficulties. THIS IS NOT TRUE. FASD is a lifelong disability.
- **Belief:** The behaviour problems of an individual with FASD happen because of bad parenting. THIS IS NOT TRUE. The primary disabilities that accompany FASD can mean that an individual does not always behave as others expect them to.
- **Belief:** An individual with FASD has brain damage so there is no point in helping them. THIS IS NOT TRUE. If individuals with FASD are supported through-out their lifetime they can succeed.
- **Belief:** Individuals with FASD are unmotivated or unwilling to take responsibility for themselves. THIS IS NOT TRUE. Individuals with FASD are not trying to be difficult. There is usually an underlying reason for the behaviour.
- **Belief:** Mothers know that they could harm their babies by drinking but they don't care. THIS IS NOT TRUE. Pregnant women do not purposely harm their babies. Some women do not know that they are pregnant right away. Some women are dealing with addictions, trauma, abuse or mental health issues.



FASD Network of Saskatchewan  
510 Cynthia Street, Saskatoon, SK S7L 7K7  
Toll Free: 1-866-673-3276  
Email: [fspsupervisor@sasktel.net](mailto:fspsupervisor@sasktel.net)  
Website: <http://www.skfasnetwork.ca/>

## 7. Have a plan. And a back-up plan.

You know what they say about the best-laid plans. In the world of special needs, there is always a Plan B, and usually a Plan C. Make sure that there is space to calm down and move freely if things go badly. Think about what each participant can do instead of focusing on what they can't contribute.

## 8. Be Positive

A positive attitude is the single most important quality for anyone who works with children with special needs. I've seen highly trained specialists unable to interact with Louie because of their negative attitude and assumptions. But some people with no experience or knowledge of his disability have jumped right in and changed his life for the better. That's why we keep signing up for more activities.

<http://www.friendshipcircle.org/blog/2012/10/15/8-important-tips-for-working-with-a-special-needs-child/>

# How many children can be placed in my home?

The number of children placed in the home must be based on the assessed capacity of the foster home and the needs of the children. The maximum number of children that can be placed in a foster home at any given time is four, except under the following conditions:

- The placement of sibling groups
- Placement of children in a home in which they have lived previously
- Short term emergency placements
- Provision of short term respite

No more than two of the above circumstances are allowed at any time as the basis to exceed four children. When exceeding the number of four children, age must be considered as a factor. If four preschool aged children are in the home, no more than two may be under 24 months of age or if no other preschool children are in the home, three children under 30 months of age may be placed. Exceptions will only be made with Regional Director approval or designate approval, which will require review and renewal every two weeks.

Source: Ministry of Social Services



# “Have you registered for Direct Deposit yet?”

The Government of Saskatchewan is encouraging families to enroll in Direct Deposit for monthly maintenance payments. Registering for Direct Deposit will ensure a fast, easy and secure ways to receive payments. Direct Deposit will ensure payments are not delayed due to postal service interruption, lost or stolen cheques and saves time in not having to go to the bank.

If you would like more information on how to sign up for direct deposit, contact your worker at the Ministry of Social Services.



## Saskatchewan Ministry of Social Services Regional Offices

### Centre Service Area

Saskatoon .....	(306) 933-5961
Kindersley .....	(306) 463-5470
Rosetown .....	(306) 882-5400

### South Service Area

Regina Service Centre .....	(306) 787-3760
Moose Jaw Service Centre .....	(306) 694-3647
Swift Current .....	(306) 778-8219
Yorkton .....	(306) 786-1300
Estevan .....	(306) 637-4550
Fort Qu'Appelle.....	1-800-667-3260
Weyburn .....	(306) 848-2404

### North Service Area

Creighton .....	1-800-532-9580
Prince Albert .....	1-866-719-6164
La Ronge .....	1-800-567-4066
Melfort .....	1-800-487-8640
Nipawin .....	1-800-487-8594
North Battleford .....	1-877-933-9911
Lloydminster .....	1-877-367-7707
Meadow Lake .....	1-877-368-8898
Buffalo Narrows .....	1-800-667-7685
La Loche .....	1-877-371-1131

## Child & Family Programs Monthly Maintenance Payment Dates

Month Being Paid	Date Maintenance Cheques Mailed/ *Direct Deposit Released	Youth Allowance Cheque Mailed/ *Direct Deposit Released
<b>**IMPORTANT NOTE:</b> If using direct deposit, it <u>may take up to 3 additional days</u> before the funds are deposited in your bank account depending on your Financial Institution.		
October	November 2, 2016	October 26, 2016
November	December 2, 2016	November 25, 2016
December	January 4, 2017	December 28, 2016

**Monthly Maintenance Schedule** applies to Regular Foster Care, Extended Family Care (Person of Sufficient Interest, Place of Safety & Alternative Care) and Assisted Adoption monthly maintenance.



**I**t can be quite difficult having a foster child in your home. He or she may have been placed in your home because of abuse or neglect from his family. Perhaps he was in danger from parents who were abusing themselves. Whatever the reason for his placement into the child welfare's custody, your foster child has most likely come to you with some emotional problems and is struggling with the loss of his family.

As a foster parent, it is part of your job to help your foster child deal with these issues, and help him adjust to his new environment, as well as develop a positive and loving relationship with him.

However, there is another part of your role as a foster parent that can be extremely difficult: co-parenting. When a foster parent shares the nurturing of a foster child alongside the birth parents and caseworker, reunification tends to happen at a quicker and more successful rate. Co-parenting sees you, as a foster parent, working alongside



the biological parents of the child living under your roof and with your family. This may be the more difficult part of your job. Not only will the foster child benefit from this improved relationship, but hopefully, the biological parents will also benefit as they learn positive parenting skills from the foster parents.

# How can foster parents & birth parents successfully co-parent?

There are a number of strategies that will reduce the stress that you, as a foster parent, can use when working with birth parents.

## **DO be a role model**

As a foster parent, you will be a role model for countless people, as many eyes will be upon you. Not only will you be a role model for your foster children, but for the public as a whole. Foster parenting will be on display for all to see as you undertake your role as a

should act, as well as how to treat their own children. When your foster child meets with his birth parents for visitations, he should be well dressed, clean, healthy and looking his best. His hair should be combed with nails cut. After all, you are sending a message that he is worthy of your best attention and care.

## **DO answer questions honestly**

Upon meeting the birth parents for the first time, there are bound to be questions from both you and the birth parents. Your foster child's family members will want to know what kind of family their child is living with, what his home life will be like, if he is being taken care of and many other concerns. After all, their child has been taken away from them, against their wishes, and placed in a strange home. They will have many concerns and may not be as courteous as you might like.

Be prepared for them to be hostile, rude, angry or even distant. Remember that they are hurting and have been through a traumatic experience with the removal of their child. Respectfully encourage them to ask you as many questions as they would like. It is important

foster parent. Perhaps others will be impressed by your role and will wish to become a foster parent, or in the very least, help out. For birth parents and family members, you might be the best example of a good parent. Everything you do as a foster parent will send signals to the biological parents on how a parent





that you answer their questions as honestly and openly as possible, treating them with the utmost integrity, kindness and politeness. Remember that you are modeling good adult behavior to them, as well as to your foster child.

### **DO ask about their child**

Your foster child's biological parents and family members will know him better than anyone. And your meeting with them will offer you the opportunity to learn a great deal about him, as well as acquire important information you might need. A list of prepared questions will help you gather the information you need.

When you ask questions about their child, you are showing the birth parents that you are interested in him and his well being. By indicating with your questions that his parents are the experts, you will begin to form a relationship, one that will benefit all involved.

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### **DON'T pass judgement**

Maybe you disagree with their parenting style. Maybe their morals and values differ completely from yours. Maybe they have said mean things to you. But it is vital that you

do not prejudge them before you meet them.

Consider that many biological parents of foster children were abused themselves, and they know no other way when raising children. Also disturbing is that some birth parents were foster children and are just repeating the cycle they went through as a child. Certainly, there are reasons why their children are in care that we may never understand. Not only can we stay positive and keep a good attitude, we can also treat our foster child's birth parents with the same dignity, respect and kindness that we would want displayed towards the children, or towards us.

### **DON'T ignore them**

Your foster child's family will likely be very curious about you. If they have not already asked questions about you and your family, take time to share with them some information. Let them know that you are excited to have their child in your home for the time being. Tell them about some of the traditions in your home. Reassure them that their child will not only be safe in your home, but will be cared for and given plenty of positive attention. The more assurance birth parents have that

their child is in a good home, the better the relationship will be between the two of you.

### **DON'T be unprepared for visitations**

For foster children, visitations have many positive attributes. To begin with, your foster child's visit with his biological family members will likely reduce his sense of abandonment by them. Hopefully, his sense of self-worth and importance will be bolstered, as he feels reassured that his parents will continue to love him, something he may very well doubt and struggle with internally.

By expressing his feelings to them, he may continue to heal emotionally. His birth parents may also reassure him that he is in a good home with you, and that he needs to listen to you and follow your rules, thus strengthening his own relationship with you. In fact, the children who visit with their birth parents on a regular basis are less likely to exhibit behavioral problems in your home and in school. As their level of anxiety decreases, they will become better adjusted to placement within your family.

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### **Summary**

As a foster parent, it is crucial to remember that your foster child's biological parents are people in need. There are reasons why their child is in foster care and under your supervision. These parents may lash out at you and the caseworker. They may have treated their own child in cruel and horrible ways. Yet, they still deserve your kindness and sympathy, not your anger. By working with them and showing them kindness and compassion, you will not only help them, but you will also teach your foster child an important lesson in love and humanity.

<https://expertbeacon.com/how-can-foster-parents-and-birth-parents-successfully-co-parent/#.V8OQ8Tp32-I>



**SASKATCHEWAN YOUTH IN CARE & CUSTODY NETWORK  
PRESENTS:**

# Back to Our Roots: Pathways to Education, Advocacy and Rights

**October 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> , 2016**

Living Skies Retreat & Conference Centre (formerly St. Michael's Retreat)  
Lumsden Valley, SK

**REGISTRATION/DROP-OFFS 5PM-7PM OCTOBER 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2016**  
**PICK-UP AT 1:00PM OCTOBER 23<sup>RD</sup>, 2016**

Come join us at **Living Skies Retreat & Conference Centre** for a fun-filled Provincial youth conference! Our conference will focus on advocacy, education and rights.

Our Conference is open to young people and alumni of care (custody and foster care—including PSI) between the ages of 14-24 years old.

## **REGISTRATION FEE:**

**\$250.00**

**Please Note:** Please contact your caseworker for more details. Space is limited, so please register early.

## **NO REFUNDS ON CONFERENCE REGISTRATIONS**

INCLUDED IN YOUR REGISTRATION FEE IS YOUR ACCOMODATIONS FOR  
FRIDAY October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016 UNTIL SUNDAY October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016.  
ALL MEALS ARE INCLUDED.

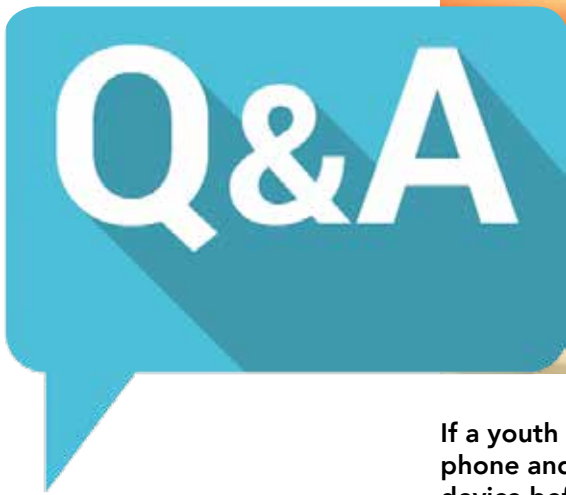
## **FEES DO NOT COVER TRANSPORTATION**

If you are having trouble finding funds to attend please do not hesitate to call the office, as we may be able to assist in finding funding.

IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT THE SYICCN OFFICE VIA TELEPHONE; 1.888.528.8061 OR EMAIL; [INFO@SYICCN.CA](mailto:INFO@SYICCN.CA)

# Foster care & social media questions

**M**any foster parents have asked if there are any specific things that they should know about social media, networking and texting. There are a few basic principles that foster families should apply.



Here are a few frequently asked questions:

## **How should I maintain confidentiality about the youth placed in my home on social networking websites like Facebook?**

As an approved foster parent, you must always maintain confidentiality about any youth placed in your home and their family. This means that pictures and any information about the youth placed in your home and their family should never be posted or written anywhere others have access to that information. This is especially important online for social media and social networking sites like Facebook.

## **If a youth in care owns a cell phone and/or portable gaming device before they came to my home, can they use those items all the time in my home?**

If a youth owns something like a cell phone or handheld gaming device, those items belong to the youth and may not be damaged or destroyed.

## **Are youth in care allowed to have e-mail, Facebook accounts, blogs or YouTube accounts?**

Yes, youth in care are able to have online accounts as long as they meet the minimum guidelines for the website. However, foster parents don't have to provide accessibility to the internet in their home. Many parents have opted to set up specific rules and guidelines about internet access for youth in their home.

## **A youth placed in my home is posting pictures and information about himself on a social networking website. Is this allowed?**

Yes, youth in care are allowed to post pictures and information about themselves anywhere anytime they want. Youth in care do not have to follow the confidentiality guidelines that licensed foster parents need to, except when it pertains to other youth in care in the home.

## **Am I allowed to develop or use a "Family Internet Safety Agreement" as a foster parent?**

Yes! Parents need to stay educated about social media and have some household rules or guidelines for family members. Ideally, members of the youth's team will be part of the agreement, so that everyone is clear on what is expected.



## **"Like" us on Facebook!**

**The SFFA now has a Facebook page! "Like" Us on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) to find out about special events, to connect with other foster parents and for daily inspiration to support you in your journey as a foster parent!**



# 30+ School Lunches for picky eaters

**M**y big boys went back to school last week, and this year they are both attending school all day long. That means that this year I get the dubious honor of preparing school lunches for two picky eaters each day. Lucky me?

In order to make my life a little easier, I sat down with these guys and compiled a list of all the foods that they will eat at lunchtime. Naturally they don't agree on 100% of the foods on the list, but at least it's a start! I thought it might be worth sharing if you also find yourself staring vacantly into the pantry and then whipping up the gazillionth peanut butter and jelly sandwich of the year. Variety is nice.

Our lunch list is actually made up of two lists—one for the main compartment (entrée) and one for the two smaller compartments (side dishes). Chose an item from the main list and two from the side list, and you've easily created a healthy meal that is sure to please the pickiest of eaters!

## Main Dish:

1. Turkey & cheese wrap (in a tortilla)
2. Ham & cheese bagel sandwich
3. Peanut butter & jelly/Peanut butter & honey sandwich
4. Cream cheese & cucumber sandwiches
5. Cream cheese & jelly wrap (in a tortilla)
6. Chicken nuggets
7. Pasta – ravioli, tortellini, or spaghetti w/ choice of sauces
8. Pizza – on bagels/english muffins
9. Hard boiled eggs or egg salad sandwich
10. Tuna sandwich
11. Quesadillas
12. Deli meat & cheese kebabs
13. Mac n cheese
14. Muffins (zucchini, apple, banana, etc.)
15. Chicken skewers & rice cubes
16. (DIY Lunchables) Crackers, meat & cheese
17. Breakfast for lunch – waffles, pancakes, french toast
18. Breakfast burritos – eggs, bacon, cheese, potatoes
19. Peanut butter and banana sandwich on graham crackers
20. Mini burgers/turkey burgers
21. Taquitos
22. Pot stickers & egg rolls
23. Build-your-own mini pizzas (lunchable style) – english muffin, sauce, cheese & pepperoni
24. Calzones (aka Pizza Pockets)
25. Grilled cheese sandwich
26. Chicken burrito
27. Bagel dogs
28. Mini bagels with cream cheese


29. Pizza quesadilla
30. Fruit nachos
31. Pinwheel sandwiches – turkey & cream cheese rolled up
32. Fruit & cheese skewers



## Side Dishes:

1. Applesauce
2. Fruit – strawberries, bananas, grapes, blueberries, melon, pears, etc.
3. Veggies – carrots, celery, broccoli, peppers, etc. – add a side of ranch, peanut butter or hummus for dipping!
4. Veggie Straws
5. Whole grain goldfish crackers
6. Cheese – string cheese, Babybel, etc.
7. Pretzels
8. Craisins or raisins
9. Nuts – peanuts, almonds, pistachios, cashews, etc.
10. Dry cereal
11. Crackers – Ritz, saltines, graham crackers
12. Yogurt
13. Popcorn

Source: [www.happinessishomemade.net/30-school-lunch-ideas-for-picky-eaters/](http://www.happinessishomemade.net/30-school-lunch-ideas-for-picky-eaters/)



*Recognizing and acknowledging your child's fears will help you both look for easy and workable solutions.*

# 5 ways to help young children with back-to-school anxieties

by Connie McCarthy

**A**s fall approaches, most young students are excited about starting a new school year. They are ready to go. However, some children experience anxiety about going to school. This can affect the entire family. Morning routines can be interrupted and getting him on the bus or dropped off at school can become an ordeal.

Why does this happen? There could be various reasons:

- Fear of separating from a parent or caregiver
- Concern that the work will be too hard
- Fear of missing what's happening in the family, when they are away at school
- Worry about responsibilities outside the classroom—for example, getting lunch in the cafeteria
- Fear that other children might tease or bully them

Here are five simple ways to help your young child ease school anxiety:

- If the problem is separation from a loved one, try a technique that worked extremely well in my 1st grade classroom. Have the student bring a photo of a family member, sibling, grandparent, or even a special pet. By keeping the photo on the desk or table, the student was able to have family close by for comfort. Ask your child's teacher if this is allowed.
- If possible, bring him to his new class before school starts. Let him see the space and, if the teacher is there, meet his new teacher. Check out the lunchroom and recess areas as well.
- If you know of another child or children who is going to the same class, see if you could set up

a playdate so your child will know at least one familiar face.

- Have him practice letter recognition and letter sounds, number recognition to 50, writing his name, and other basic skills for academic confidence.
- Label jackets, lunch boxes, backpacks, etc., so that your child can easily identify her own belongings. This eliminates worry about finding her own things at the end of the school day. (Safety note: Be sure to label items on the inside, as you do not want a stranger to be able to call your child by name.)



Recognizing and acknowledging your child's fears will help you both look for easy and workable solutions... and keep your morning school routine running smoothly!

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# Creating a **stress-free** SCHOOL MORNING ROUTINE

*“Where are my shoes?” “I can’t find my backpack!” What parent hasn’t heard these words? School and workday mornings can be stressful for everyone, but a rough morning can have a day-long effect on your child.*

**O**rganization is key to success in the morning! Make important items easy to locate. If you child can easily find necessary items, the morning “rush” will ease, and self-esteem will soar.

**Make bedtime the same time every night** during the school week, even if your child doesn’t go to sleep right away. This establishes a bedtime “pattern.”

**Allow enough time for a nutritious breakfast.** Studies show that children who eat a balanced breakfast do better in school, are more attentive, and are better behaved. A mix of protein and carbohydrates is best. Carbs (cereals, fruits, and breads) give a quick energy boost, and protein (milk, eggs, meat, and peanut butter) sustains your child until lunch.

**Prepare backpacks the night before.** If your child has homework, make sure she immediately puts it

in her backpack upon completion. This eliminates the “My mom forgot to put it in my backpack” excuse!

**Try choosing two outfits of clothing the night before that you both agree will work.** Put each entire outfit in a large plastic bag and in the morning, let your child choose which “bag” to wear that day, knowing that the clothes in the other bag can be worn the next day. This empowers your child to make choices and usually takes care of two days at a time.

**Set aside at least 15 to 20 minutes to read together at bedtime.** This can be done by a parent or an older sibling. This short period of individual attention usually calms a child and eliminates the “getting up” questions that often follow just going to bed.

**If your child misplaces belongings such as sneakers, for example, try tracing an outline of the sneakers** onto construction paper or contact

paper. Then tape the tracings to the child’s closet floor. At bedtime each night, make sure the shoes are sitting on their “feet” in the closet. (The same can be done for lunch boxes, backpacks, boots, etc.)

**Try color-coding** bureau drawers. Use small colored stickers or pieces of construction paper. Socks in the “red” drawer, shirts in the “yellow” drawer, etc. Color-code the closet as well. Hang all the “pinks together, hang all the “blues,” etc. This makes finding clothes so much easier!

**Encourage your child to talk about the upcoming school day.** Planning the tasks your child will accomplish will put him in the right frame of mind to tackle the day.

A good morning routine can instill the importance of organization in your child, and help him or her stay organized and focused during the school day.

Source: [www.schoolfamily.com/blog/2009/08/20/tips-for-a-stress-free-school-morning-routine](http://www.schoolfamily.com/blog/2009/08/20/tips-for-a-stress-free-school-morning-routine)





Saskatchewan Home Based Educators presents:

## Parenting Children with Special Needs

*A workshop for parents, teachers, caregivers, families and all those who love a child who needs your special attention and advocacy to learn and thrive. Join with others to share your experiences, learn new skills, and build a support network of like-minded people.*

**Southside Pentecostal Assembly - 41 Birchwood Road, Regina**  
**Fri. October 21 (7 – 9 pm) and Sat. October 22 (8:30 am – 4 pm)**  
**Breakfast, Lunch and Coffee breaks are provided**  
**Presenter – Kim Skidmore**

Workshops will include:

- **Meet The Family** - The experiences of a Mom of children with special needs.
- **Challenging Behaviours** - Now What Do I Do? - Maintaining family dignity parenting children with challenging behaviours.
- **Strategies That Work** - Guiding children towards many successes each and every day.
- **The Importance of Now** - Wrap up of life lessons.

**Kim Skidmore** is an experienced workshop presenter who has worked with the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association and with children with FASD. She is the proud Mom of 17 children, ages 4-41, who have joined the family via birth, adoption, foster care and guardianship orders (PSI). The majority of Kim's children have special needs. Kim is a strong advocate for her children and firmly believes parenting should be less stressful and more fun - not only for the parents but for the children as well.

### **Session 1: Friday 7:00 pm** **Meet Kim and Her Family**

Kim will introduce her family and share some of her experiences as the Mom of many children with special needs. This will be an interactive session with participants sharing some of their parenting experiences.

### **Session 2: Saturday 8:30-10:00**

#### **Challenging Behaviours...Now What Do I Do?**

Parenting children with challenging behaviours can leave even the most seasoned parents frustrated and exhausted. Kim will address a range of behaviours from toilet training to lying and share

strategies she has used that helped her children (and her) maintain their dignity.

### **Session 3: 10:30-12:00**

#### **Strategies That Have Worked For Me**

From placemats to transitional objects Kim will share strategies she uses with her children to guide them towards many successes each and every day.

### **Session 4: Saturday 1:30-3:00**

#### **The Importance of Now**

Kim will wrap up her sessions with a summary of what 41 years of parenting has taught her.

**45 SHBE Members / \$75 non members**

**For more information [www.shbe.info](http://www.shbe.info)**

**To Register, please e-mail Charles at [caudette@shbe.info](mailto:caudette@shbe.info)**

**Registration deadline October 20**



# SCHOOL SAFETY

*Suggestions for what parents can do to keep kids safe at school. Advice for parents on making sure their kids stay safe at school and while traveling to and from school.*

**F**or most of the year, children spend more time at school than anywhere else other than their home. Kids need a safe and comfortable environment to learn to the best of their capabilities. By doing the following, parents and other adults can help make sure children have a positive school experience.

## IN THE CLASSROOM

- Talk to your children about their day. Sometimes children won't tell you right away if they are having problems at school. Ask your children if they see anyone bullied, if they are bullied, or if anything else makes them feel uncomfortable. Look for warning signs, such as a sudden drop in grades, loss of friends, or torn clothing.
- Teach children to resolve problems without fighting. Explain that fighting could lead to them getting hurt, hurting someone else, or earning a reputation as a bully. Talk to them about other ways they can work out a problem, such as talking it out, walking away, sticking with friends, or telling a trusted adult.
- Keep an eye on your children's Internet use. Many elementary schools have computers with Internet access. Ask your children's school if students are monitored when they use the Internet or if there is a blocking device installed to prevent children from finding explicit websites. Talk to your children about what they do online – what sites they visit, who they email, and who they chat with. Let them know they can talk to you if anything they see online makes them uncomfortable, whether it's an explicit website or a classmate bullying them or someone else through email, chat, or websites.
- Ask about the safety and emergency plans for your children's school. How are local police involved? How are students and parents involved? What emergencies have been considered and planned for?

## TRAVELING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

- Map out with your children a safe way for them to walk to school or to the bus stop. Avoid busy roads and intersections. Do a trial run with them to point out places they should avoid along the way, such as vacant lots, construction areas, and parks where

there aren't many people.

- Teach children to follow traffic signals and rules when walking or biking. Stress that they should cross the street at crosswalks or intersections with crossing guards when they can.
- Encourage children to walk to school or the bus stop with a sibling or friend, and to wait at bus stops with other children.
- Teach children not to talk to strangers, go anywhere with them, or accept gifts from them without your permission. Tell them that if they see a suspicious stranger hanging around or in their school they should tell an adult.
- Help children memorize their phone number and full address, including area code and zip code. Write down other important phone numbers such as your work and cell phone on a card for your children to carry with them.

## ON THE BUS

- Have your children arrive at the bus stop at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to pick them up.
- Make sure children know to stand on the sidewalk or on the grass while waiting for the bus.
- Teach children to make sure they can see the bus driver and the bus driver can see them before crossing in front of the bus. Tell them to never walk behind the bus.
- Be aware that often bullying takes place on the school bus. Ask children about their bus - who they sit with, who they talk to, and what the other kids do. Let them know that if they see someone being bullied, or are bullied themselves, they can talk to you, the bus driver, or another trusted adult.
- If you'd like to work towards making your children's schools safer on a larger scale, consider implementing Be Safe and Sound. This campaign provides a model for how parents, students, and school staff can work together to make schools safer and more secure.

Source: [http://www.npc.org/topics/school-safety/copy\\_of\\_school-safety](http://www.npc.org/topics/school-safety/copy_of_school-safety)

# Why attending your school's Open House matters

Usually, during the first month or so of the school year, elementary schools schedule an open house or "meet the teachers" night. This is a very important event, and all parents should participate, if at all possible.

It's important because you will get to meet your child's teacher, who will be a very influential person in your child's life during this year. The teacher should provide you with an outline of the upcoming school year. You will learn what is expected of your child, and what is expected of you, to ensure success in the months ahead. You should be given examples of elementary grade-level "expectations." These are educational fundamentals your child must master during the year ahead to be fully prepared to move on to the next grade level.

An open house should also provide other essential basic educational information. If this is not part of the general opening presentation, don't be afraid to ask about the following matters. Good teachers always allow time to answer questions you may have, such as:

- How often should I meet with you during the school year?
- What is the homework policy for this grade?

- If we need to communicate, do you prefer email, written notes, or phone calls?
- What extra resources are available in this school if my child falls behind?
- What resources are available if my child advances well beyond his or her classmates?
- What is the most important thing we can do at home to make sure this school year is successful?

Don't confuse an open house with a private parent conference. At an open house, teachers will not have time to discuss on your child's specific issues. A separate private meeting should be scheduled if your child needs special attention early in the school year.

An early school year open house can be an enjoyable and enlightening experience for parents. Since everyone wants the best for your child, this event is an important way to start the school year.

Source: <http://www.schoolfamily.com/blog/2015/09/18/why-attending-your-schools-open-house-matters>

## Teen Mornings

by Elizabeth S. Leaver

Adolescents are famously sleep-deprived. As with younger children, try to instill a regular bedtime, which should help the mornings go more smoothly.

Tweens and teens generally require more time to get ready in the morning, so build in enough time—at least half an hour—for personal hygiene and dressing.

In addition to homework and backpack, make sure your child gathers any other needed items, such as school library books or outfits for sports practices, the night before. Almost nothing waylays a

morning more than hunting around for items like that at the last minute.

Try to make sure older children have their homework completed in enough time to allow them to wind down for a while. Likewise, try to instill a habit of no electronics (cell phones, video games, etc.) for at least an hour before bedtime.

Don't expect too much. While it would be nice if your child were able to make her bed and tackle a few chores before school, it might not be realistic. Focus on what absolutely must be done to reduce the chaos and forget the rest for now. In time, once a routine is in order, you might be able to add back a small chore or two.



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## FOR MATH & SCIENCE LEARNING FUN



**T**he various shapes, colors, and sizes of falling autumn leaves and acorns offer hands-on opportunities for science and math fun.

Here are four ways to use the season's bounty to practice important skills:

**Estimation:** Have your child help you rake some leaves into a small pile. Ask her to guess how many leaves are in the pile. Once she gives you her estimation, help her sort the leaves into piles of 10. Count by tens, and any leftover ones, to see how many were in the pile. Talk about how close her estimation was. Try this activity four or five different times, over the course of a few weeks. See how her estimation skills improve with practice.

**Sorting and classifying:** These are important skills for both math and science. Use leaves to practice. Ask your child to sort a small bunch of leaves by color, size, or shape. Or

give him ten leaves of varying sizes. Ask him to sort them left to right, by smallest to largest, or by largest to smallest.

**Practice simple addition and subtraction:** Have your child collect 10 leaves or acorns. Use them to show various ways to make 10—for example, three on the left, seven on the right. Then on a piece of paper or small notebook, help her write the number sentence to match what the leaves show ( $3 + 7 = 10$ ). Do this for different ways to make 10. For subtraction, help her collect 10 leaves or acorns from the ground. Put them in a row. Have her take some away. Let her count the acorns that are left. Take away different numbers of acorns each time. Help her write the number sentence to match; for example,  $10 - 4 = 6$ .

**For closer scientific study:** Let him pick one favorite leaf. Bring it inside and help him place it between two pieces of  $8\frac{1}{2}$ " x 11" white paper. Take the wrapper off a darker

color crayon. Have him rub the top paper, using the whole side of the crayon. As he rubs the crayon, he'll feel the bumps, lines, and edges of the leaf. An image of the leaf will appear on the paper! This image will help him clearly see the stem, veins, and shape of the leaf. Use this to start a discussion of how water and minerals come through the stem and veins to help the tree stay nourished and grow. Write the name of the type of leaf on top of the paper. Hang up his beautiful art rubbing. On another day, try it again with a different type of leaf. Use the rubbings to compare and contrast.

These hands-on ideas for using familiar objects will bring math and science to life and help your child visualize these skills in a new way!

Source: <http://www.schoolfamily.com/blog/2015/11/12/use-fall-leaves-for-math-and-science-learning-fun>

## SFFA's newest staff member introduces herself

**M**y name is Katie Cooper and I am the Recruitment Consultant and newly appointed First Aid Coordinator here at the SFFA. In the six months I have worked here I have had the opportunity to help many perspective foster families with their dream of welcoming additional children into their life. On a daily basis I deal with a wide variety of people and hear many per-

sonal stories, which always leave a lasting impression on me. I received my diploma for Administrative Assistant at Saskatoon Business College in 2015, and have been able to utilize my skills to the fullest extent while working for the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association.

In my personal time I enjoy playing with my dog Motley and my cat Enzo, who are a big part of my life.

I also enjoy spending time with my Husband. We have a variety of hobbies which include fixing up cars, travelling, watching home improvement shows, and advocating for animal rights.

I look forward to the challenges of taking on a new role here at the SFFA and look forward to meeting existing foster parents and helping new ones alike.





# Recipes from *Petty's Kitchen*

*I've begun to write some EASY (and somewhat healthy) recipes in each Advisor edition. I'm a big fan of healthy recipes with simple ingredients you would find in your own cupboards.*

*- Hayley Petrow*



I absolutely LOVE this recipe! It is so easy and only takes three ingredients! I've made this for potlucks, birthdays, family dinners and never had a complaint! Once the meat is thawed there is less than a minute of prep time—can't go wrong!

## *The Most Simple Pulled Pork in the Slow Cooker*



- 2 lbs Pork tenderloin
- 1 1/2 cup Root beer
- 1 1/2 cup BBQ sauce (no need to be exact, just mix in how much you desire)

- Place pork tenderloin in slow cooker and pour root beer over meat.
- Cook on low for ~6-7 hours until pork has been well cooked.
- Drain slow cooker, and shred pork (easiest way is with two forks).
- Stir in how much BBQ sauce you desire and serve!

Instead of a second recipe, I thought this might be a neat addition. During the summer I love growing fresh herbs, and preserving them is the best way to continue using them throughout the year! This would also make a cute present for a teacher or friend who likes to cook!

## *Preserving Low-Moisture Herbs: Air Drying Method*

Materials: low moisture herb(s) (such as dill, marjoram, rosemary, summer savory, thyme, and bay), string, paper bags, and air tight containers.

- STEP 1: pick herbs. I always like to pick them with their root-system still attached, but it's fine either way.
- STEP 2: Don't wash them, instead gently shake off dust/bugs/dirt. Pick off any dead or discolored parts.
- STEP 3: gather about 6 stems together, and tie together with string from the bottom. You can either hang them as they are, or put them in a paper bag. When using a paper bag, tie the opening of the bag with the stems and make holes in the bag so air can still move through it.
- STEP 4: hang them upside down in a warm room with good air flow.
- STEP 5: it usually takes my herbs about 2 weeks to completely dry out, but I've read about it taking as long as a month.
- STEP 6: once they have dried, separate the stems from each other. Beginning at the bottom of one stem, take your thumb and index finger and slowly run it up the stem. The leaves should fall off. For bigger-leaved herbs, you may just want to pick the leaves off individually.
- STEP 7: gather the loose leaves and store in an air tight container. Store in a cool, dry place away from sunlight.



\*Herbs have a shelf life of one year. If you're herbs are losing color they have probably expired



## Transitioning a Child with Special Needs Back to School

*The phrase "back to school" inspires both joy and trepidation. When a student has special needs, those emotions are magnified and the checklists are multiplied. There's nothing simple about the transition from vacation to school, but there are several methods to reduce anxiety and increase optimism for the new school year. The Friendship Circle has asked for insight from special education teachers, therapists and parents to get the school year off to a great start.*

*Gearing up for the school year is a team effort. Working together, parents and teachers can develop a system of communication and visual prompts to support the student. School visits, play dates and social stories can mitigate the student's anxiety. Maintaining consistency and involvement throughout the school year nurtures a positive relationship between the home team and the school team. When the right supports are in place, the transition back to school can be surprisingly smooth. This guide aims to provide important tips and tricks to ensure a smooth transition back to school.*

Publish Date: 2014/08/05

Pages: 48 pages

Price: \$3.99

E-book available @ <http://www.friendshipcircle.org/blog/ebooks/a-parents-guide-to-transitioning-a-child-with-special-needs-back-to-school/>



## Foster Family Toolkit

Education, advocacy, and a place to turn for advice...

It is the goal of the SFFA to help provide a safe and comforting environment for every child in foster care. The right support can make all the difference.

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<http://www.sffa.sk.ca/foster-family-toolkit/>

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