



# The Quarterly

## NFPA 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention

*FACES of Virginia Families will soon be hosting the National Foster Parent Association (NFPA) 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention. Members of the NFPA Board have indicated that Virginia is raising the bar for the quality of the convention. FACES has also been working diligently to keep the cost down for attendees and arranging for special events and discounts in the area.*

Here is what you can expect at this year's event.

On Thursday, a Science to Parenting Academy will kick-off the convention. Nationally recognized scientists, clinicians, and researchers will present their work and discuss its implications on parenting.

Thursday late afternoon we will host a National Walk Me Home event to support the advocacy and educational work of the National Foster Parent Association. Consider forming a team to show your support for our National Voice!

On Friday, the day will start with a national dialogue on youth trafficking as well as a plenary session on food security, nutrition and behavior. The afternoon will provide you with a selection of 31 different topical workshops and small group discussions. That evening we will be celebrating all foster, adoptive, and kinship families with Your Just Desserts Heroes Gala and DJ Dance Party (a FACES tradition) at the Half Moon Celebration Center overlooking the Elizabeth River.

Saturday begins as a Breakfast with the American Bar Association's President-elect and adoptive parent, Paulette Brown. A legal panel will follow the breakfast presentation as



2015 NFPA  
Annual Convention  
June 25-28, 2015

Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel

well as a session on communications strategies for the child advocate. The Virginia Department of Social Services is co-sponsoring a luncheon for Virginia attendees only. In the afternoon, there will be 21 workshop selections. Our day will close with the option of attending a Picnic in the Ballpark and watching the Norfolk Tides (AAA team for Baltimore Orioles).

Sunday will be a day for laughter as we close at breakfast with the Fostering Comedy Team of Matthew Hoffman and Claudia Fletcher.

Register and reserve your room here: <http://nfpaonline.org/convention2015>

See you in Norfolk!

# FACES Quarterly Report to Members

FACES of Virginia Families is pleased to present this report to our members, funders, and subscribers regarding a few of our activities in the second quarter of our fiscal year.

**Ambassadors:** The FACES Ambassadors have been hard at work this quarter. Each Ambassador works a maximum of 30 hours per month. In that time they have visited with staff of 26 public agencies and 8 private agencies. They have attended 3 roundtable meetings involving agency staff in 3 regions; supported 21 families calling our WarmLine call; distributed 500 rack cards to public and private agencies and 300 postcards; and hosted 11 Wednesday FACEBOOK chats. In addition, our member's FACEBOOK posts are always responded to as they are posted by at least one Ambassador. They have started 2 new Trailblazer programs in Hampton and Roanoke County and introduced Trailblazers to 13 agencies.

**Camp FACES:** We have contracted with Highroad once again for our 4<sup>th</sup> of July camp weekend. In addition, Fairfax County DSS has requested to partner with us and offer a day camp for their adoptive families. We will be hosting that day camp on July 25 at Hemlock Adventure Center.

**Educational Services:** The NFPA Convention is less than 6 months away. The schedule has been completed and on-line registration is now available at [www.nfpaonline.org](http://www.nfpaonline.org). Don't miss this incredible event not only for the training hours but the support and friendship you will treasure for a lifetime. What do you get when you cross a convention with a vacation...a Conven-cation. The hotel is extending the reduced rate of \$90 for two days before and after the convention, so that

Every warrior of the light has been afraid to enter a combat.  
Every warrior of the light has betrayed and lied in the past.

Every warrior of the light has lost faith in the future.  
Every warrior of the light has trodden a path which was not his own.

Every warrior of the light has suffered because of unimportant things.  
Every warrior of the light has doubted that he is a warrior of the light.

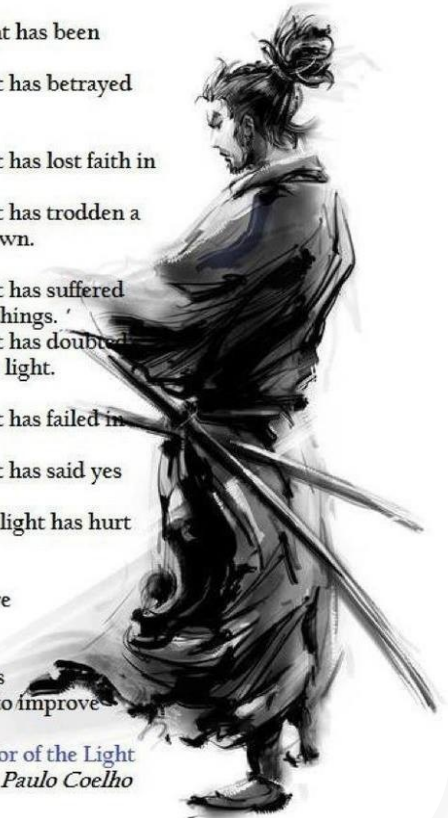
Every warrior of the light has failed in his spiritual obligations.  
Every warrior of the light has said yes when he meant no.  
And every warrior of the light has hurt someone he loved.

This is why he and she are Warriors of the Light...

They had endured all this without losing the hope to improve

*The Manual of the Warrior of the Light*  
by Paulo Coelho

*London, 2000*



you can take more time to enjoy the eastern region of Virginia.

FACES is once again partnering with Formed Families Forward for a Spring Forward event in Northern Virginia. Plans are underway for this family fun and learning day, April 11.

**Giving Tree Depot:** Our consignment store has provided approximately \$500 in donated clothing to families in need this quarter and raised \$7,356.68 in funds to support our work. The store, also, collects funds for the William Perry Scholarship Fund and in this quarter we raised \$54 in change collected from customers after their sale.

**Board of Directors:** The Board met to discuss public policy positions and the funding opportunity made available from the Meyer Foundation. FACES accepted an invitation to submit a proposal to improve leadership and volunteer recruitment as well as financial sustainability and marketing.

## In Our Own Words

By Cate Newbanks

I was recently having a sit down with a young woman I had come to know through Camp FACES. She was living in with a loving and remarkable foster family that regularly comes to Camp FACES. She let me know she wouldn't be coming back to our camp, because her aunt wanted her to come live with her. That night at the campfire she approached me and let me know that she had really wanted to sing during the talent show. I asked her what song we wanted to sing. I asked her if she would like to sing it now and she did. Her heart was in every word. I know I will never forget that moment. She sang Carrie Underwood's song, "Temporary Home."

"This is my Temporary Home, it's not  
where I belong  
Windows and rooms that I'm passing  
through  
This is just a stop on the way to  
where I'm going  
I'm not afraid because I know this is  
my temporary home. "

At the end of that wise message, this

young woman looked at me, both of us with tears in our eyes, and she said, "I just want to belong. I think I will belong when I go to live with my Aunt."

Children need to belong in order to develop connections that will sustain them through their life's journey. Kinship care is one way for us to give children back a feeling of belonging within our social structure following the devastation of childhood abuse, neglect, or abandonment. These are traumatized children needing an anchor, a constant.

In the late 1970s, a permanency movement was established in the U.S. It was based on research documenting that children need continuity of parenting, commitment by a parent to provide the continuity, and the legal and social status that comes from having a family of one's own. Children's sense of belonging as well as social and cultural identity comes from permanency, typically developed with birth parents. When birth parents are not able or willing to

[Continued...](#)

## Medicaid Information

### Coverage for Former Foster Care Youth

Beginning July 1st, 2014, Medicaid coverage became available to eligible former foster care youth who were receiving Medicaid and foster care services in any state at the time of their 18th birthday and are currently under age 26. Any young adult who was formerly in foster care at the time of their 18th birthday can apply online at [www.commonhelp.virginia.gov](http://www.commonhelp.virginia.gov) or by calling the Cover Virginia Call Center at 1-855-242-8282 or they can print the [paper application](#) (Spanish version available [here](#)) and send by mail or fax to their local Department of Social Services (LDSS) or visit their LDSS in Person. For more information click [here](#). Find out more information on [Covered Services for Former Foster Care Youth](#).

### Managed Care and Child Welfare

This powerpoint may help explain how Medicaid works when covering children in foster care, including mileage reimbursement for travel to medical appointments. [http://www.dmas.virginia.gov/Content\\_atchs/altc/altc-prsnt1.pdf](http://www.dmas.virginia.gov/Content_atchs/altc/altc-prsnt1.pdf)

One of the best feelings in the world is knowing your presence and your absence both mean something to someone.

-unknown

provide permanence, there is an obligation to kindle or rekindle connections to their extended families. That is the premise of kinship care: children should grow up with relatives, members of their tribes or clans, or anyone who has a kin-like relationship

When British social psychologist Henri Tajfel wrote the "Theory of Social Belonging," he explained the essential role of family in social structure. His theory, based on observation of people and interactions, was that social identity is an important source of self-pride and esteem. It is our self-identity that gives us a sense of belonging to the social world. Our first experience with social identity stems from our birth families or our first caregivers.

Family foster care was intended to be a temporary, short-term solution to keeping children safe and nurtured while members of their birth families or relatives or adoptive parents could be prepared and supported in providing permanency. Family foster care is not intended to provide the components of permanency, which according to the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) is defined as a safe, nurturing relationship intended to last a lifetime.

This in no way diminishes the importance of family foster care. Foster parents are SUPERHEROES! Every foster parent that I have had the privilege to meet has impressed me with their selfless, unending dedication and love for the children in their care. They are champions for children. They development meaningful and important relationships with children in spite of the heartbreak that they often experience when the children they have nurtured and protected are moved to new homes intended to last a lifetime, such as parents or with kin or adoptive parents.

Kinship parents need SUPERHEROES, too. They need foster parents in their corner helping them get to know the needs of the child that has been separated from them sometimes for years. These kinship

### Resilience: Tips for Parents and Teachers

This [link](#) will provide you with the 10 tips and other helpful information about raising resilient children. As a side note, one of the authors is a presenter at the NFPA convention. Here is one tip.

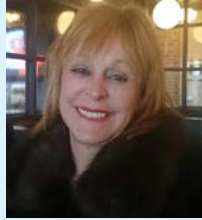
**Accept that change is part of living.** *Change often can be scary for children and teens. Help your child see that change is part of life and new goals can replace goals that have become unattainable. In school, point out how students have changed as they moved up in grade levels and discuss how that change has had an impact on the students.*

caregivers need foster parents able to mentor them through the rough patches. Most kinship caregivers do not get the benefit of training on essential topics like trauma, drug exposure, or even the inherent dangers of the Internet community. Foster parents can be the lifelines for kinship caregivers by both sharing valuable parenting strategies as well as the particular challenges the children are experiencing. The development of such a relationship extends agency training investments in foster parents and helps bridge the transition for children from family foster care to kinship care.

When a role is defined for both foster parents and kinship caregivers in the permanency pathway we may find less resistance and more resources for children. There is value in both foster parenting and kinship caregiving. By joining together at the family engagement table we can ensure that children receive the care and support they need. There is room at this table for all who care for children and each can add intrinsic value to a child's resilience, health, and development. Foster parents can be more than a temporary home...they can be that bridge to permanency that allows children continuity and social belonging...they can be the mentors that birth parents and kinship caregivers and adoptive parents need to ensure children experience their place of belonging.

Shop [Amazon SMILE](#) for  
FACES of Virginia Families

## A Sit Down with Virginia's Adoption Champion, Deborah Johnston



When you first meet Debbie Johnston you are immediately at ease and quickly become engaged in a heartfelt conversation. Debbie not only has a passion for the healthcare industry and her healthcare corporation, Care Advantage; she has a passion for helping people no matter their age or their need. Her passion has taken her to Richmond, California where she, in her role as Secret Millionaire, aided families living in that crime-stricken community. She spends other days working to raise awareness and bring healing to those who have confronted domestic violence. And, now the Governor has asked her to channel her own experience as someone adopted through a kinship care placement to help raise awareness about the need for adoptive families for children and youth in Virginia's foster care system.

She does not take the assignment of Adoption Champion lightly, anymore than she does any other causes that have become near and dear to her. She is all in when it comes to helping children experience permanence through adoption. Some might call her boots on the ground...as she looks for ways to get involved and opportunities to speak out for the children and youth looking for forever families. You may find her at the Capitol advocating for the Extension to 21 funding or touring a facility and meeting the youth waiting for their forever family. One place you won't find her is sitting behind a desk twiddling her thumbs.

And you WILL find her at the 45<sup>th</sup> Annual NFPA Convention in Norfolk where she is helping to sponsor our Heroes Gala and will be the Mistress of Ceremonies!

Follow Debbie at [www.facebook.com/DebbieJohnstonRN](https://www.facebook.com/DebbieJohnstonRN)

## Tips for Parents of Children experiencing Bullying

- **Recognize the Signs** – Kids are often reluctant to approach an adult or to report bullying behavior because of a sense of shame or embarrassment. It's important to keep your eyes open for any signs of bullying so that you're able to recognize them and begin to help your child solve the problem.
- **Be Available** – While pushing or pressuring your child to open up about any trouble he's having at school is likely to make him even more reluctant to talk, it's imperative that your child know you're there and available to listen to him whenever he does need to talk to you. When he's not being pressed to talk about being bullied, he may be more willing to open up. **Ask Questions** – Make sure that you take the time to learn what sort of abuse your child is suffering from, why it's happening and what you can do to support him through it.

**Discourage Retaliation** – It's imperative that you not only abstain from encouraging your child to retaliate against bullying peers, but also that you take a *Continued, page 6*

Questions about court responsibilities to birth parents? Check out this resource from the Virginia Courts. [A Handbook for Parents and Guardians](#)

### Ricotta Cheesecake *from Wilma Vance*

7 eggs  
1 ¼ cups sugar  
36 ounces whole-milk ricotta cheese  
9 ounces sour cream  
4 ½ tablespoons cornstarch  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
¾ teaspoon baking powder  
2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
Finely grated rind of 1 lemon

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Grease a 13 x 9 inch baking pan.
2. Using a stand mixer with a whisk attachment and large mixing bowl, beat eggs and sugar until light and almost fluffy - about 5 minutes at high speed.
3. Add Ricotta and beat until smooth at medium speed.
4. Add remaining ingredients and beat until well combined.
5. Pour into prepared pan and bake 1 hour - until golden and puffy.

Cake will rise during baking and fall once cooled.

# The Quarterly's Website Feature

Whoever said that nothing in this world is FREE, never found Cenpatico U on the web!

Cenpatico provides a exhaustive series of webinars for foster families and for families dealing with child and youth mental illnesses. The webinar are conducted by qualified mental health practitioners as well as doctors.

We are pleased the Cenpatico is a major sponsor of the NFPA 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention being held here in Virginia.

We encourage you to check out their listing of FREE webinars and register for at least one, soon!

<http://www.cenpaticou.com/foster-care-edu/>



Check out their upcoming webinar series

*Beginning On March 3 and concluding on March 31...a trauma informed care for caregivers series.*

*Bullying, continued from page 5*

an obvious stand against it. Retaliation will only cause your child to land himself in trouble, and can often backfire in terrible ways.

- **Save Harassing Communications** – Make sure that any emails, private messages on social networking sites, texts or voice messages that contain harassing statements, threats or other proof of bullying are saved for reporting purposes.
- **Speak With School Administrators** – In persistent cases of bullying, the best course of action is to calmly approach school administrators to discuss the matter. Though it can be understandably difficult for you to keep your emotions under wraps during these conversations, it's important to remember that you're more likely to get the results you're looking for if you maintain your composure and remain calm.
- **Teach Him How to Block and Report Cyberbullies** – Social networking sites, email providers and other Internet-based communication portals almost always have "Block and Report" options, which can help to prevent some harassing messages from reaching a bullied kid. Make sure that your child knows how to block social networking profiles, email addresses and phone numbers from contacting him.
- **Get Him Involved in an Activity or Hobby** – Helping your child find a hobby that he's interested in and getting him involved in activities outside of school can not only help to distract him from the taunts of his classmates, but also

can boost his confidence when he discovers that he's skilled in a particular area.

- **Nurture His Self-Esteem** – Your child's self-esteem takes a battering when he's taunted by bullies, making it imperative that you do everything you can to help him rebuild it. Make an effort to let him know that he's an important, treasured part of the family, and that he's loved very much and cannot be replaced.
- **Consider Counseling** – In particularly severe or long-term cases of bullying, your child may require the services of a counselor to work out his feelings and begin to recover. Remember that years of being bullied are the equivalent of being abused for that period of time, and may require some assistance for your child to overcome.

To put bullying into perspective, imagine that the children committing these acts against their peers were adults. Physically harming someone or intimidating them in order to take their money is robbery and assault. Slander, libel, harassment, assault and even sexual assault are all crimes that adults are charged with, but are often considered little more than a childhood rite of passage when they're committed by other kids. Bullying is no laughing matter, though, and should never be taken lightly.

Reprinted from <http://www.aupaircare.net/blog/10-tips-for-parents-of-kids-who-are-being-bullied/>

Read more about bullying and the steps you can take at: <http://kidshealth.org/parent/emotions/behavior/bullies.html>

## FACES Legislative Actions

Members of FACES of Virginia Families have much to be proud about when it comes to shaping policy in Virginia. It may be worth giving you a summary of actions you have taken that resulted in changes to law and policy in Virginia.

In our first year, we developed and advocated for a foster care rights and responsibilities compact which would serve as a signed agreement between families and agencies. We believe that while this is now in place, there is much work to be done to educate everyone on the use of the document. We will be working to develop a webinar.

<http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title63.2/chapter9/section63.2-900/>

We began working as a coalition with Voices for Virginia's Children and the Virginia Poverty Law Center the following year and continue to do so, today. As a part of those coalition efforts we worked on the passage of several initiatives to help Virginia implement the federal Fostering Connections Act. Here is a listing:

Sibling placement. <http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title63.2/chapter9/section63.2-900.2/>

Educational Stability.

<http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title63.2/chapter9/section63.2-900.3/>

\*Exceptions for specific barrier crimes when placement is with a relative. (see F.)

<http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title63.2/chapter9/section63.2-901.1/>

Annual credit checks for youth over 16.

<http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title63.2/chapter9/section63.2-905.2/>

Allowance for youth in foster care who sign out of foster care to have 60 days prior to their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday to sign back in to foster care.

<http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title63.2/chapter9/section63.2-905.1/>

\*Removal of Independent Living as a goal, except as necessary for refugees and asylees.

<http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title63.2/chapter9/section63.2-906/>

Provision of certain appeal rights for foster parents (does not include placement as that is prohibited as an appeal right by federal law).

<http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title63.2/chapter9/section63.2-915/>

Established specific conditions in which a child can be removed from Kinship Foster Care placement in order to improve stability. (see D.)

<http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title63.2/chapter9/section63.2-900.1/>

Expanded Medicaid coverage to youth from foster care until 26.

This initiative is in the Virginia State Plan for Medicaid and is currently in force. Learn more at [www.coverva.org/main\\_programs.cfm](http://www.coverva.org/main_programs.cfm)

*For the past 4 years we have advocated in our coalition to extend foster care to 21. This has been a small steps initiative. This year it is in the Governor's budget and we await its fate.*

\* Signifies a department initiative that we advocated for and assisted in passage.