

Building Connections

A Newsletter for Resource Families

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Teen Day : Dream4Real

By Mimari Hall and Faye Kimura

The Family Court of the First Circuit, through the efforts of the Judiciary's Standing Committee on Children in Family Court, has been holding a very special event, *Teen Day: Dream4Real*, twice a year since 2010. The program is organized to encourage youth to attend their court hearings and begin planning for a future of hope. Part of the day's activities includes giving youth information about available resources that will help them when they transition out of care. The foster youth's resource caregivers, social workers, GALs, and CASAs are also invited to attend.

The event kicks off with a welcome from Senior Family Court Judge R. Mark Browning. Throughout the day, former foster youth share their experiences of growing up in foster care and encourage youth to pursue their dreams; they emphasize the importance of planning for a successful future and encourage the younger foster youth to make good use of the many opportunities that are available to them. Prizes and incentives are given out to further enliven the program, and each youth leaves with a backpack or duffel bag filled with useful items and a \$20 gift card. A healthy lunch is served to model nutritious food choices.

Representatives from resource and support organizations provide valuable information for youth and adults alike. After a brief presentation from each organization, the participants visit courtrooms in which representatives from resource organizations are available to answer any questions and register youth for services.

To help take the mystery out of court, a mock hearing is held in one of the courtrooms. There is a Q & A during and after the hearing when foster youth and resource families are invited to ask judges questions about the court hearing experience and for judges to discuss why it is important for the youth to participate in their hearings.

When youth and social workers were asked if hearing from the former foster youth was helpful for them, there has been an overwhelmingly positive response. Some of the individual comments are below, the first two from current foster youth and the third from a social worker:



- I cried, it made me so happy because sometimes people like me feel like giving up, but there are people that have gone through the same things as I did and they are doing great things. One is going to law school! I can't use my experience as an excuse now because if they can do it, I can do it.
- It was good for me to look at successful people coming out of CPS – they're not bad kids like everyone says they are.
- We're always looking for what will flip the switch for the kids. I think these speakers really helped a lot of the kids.

(Continued on pg. 5)

HUI HO'OMALU STATEWIDE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Hui Ho'omalua Statewide Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) provides support to the resource family community through identifying ongoing needs, facilitating communication and by sharing resources.

The Building Connections Newsletter is published four times a year to provide information regarding foster and adoptive care to resource families, service providers, and to the public.

This newsletter may be viewed on the following websites:

www.hawaii.gov/dhs/protection/social_services/child_welfare/foster

www.pidfoundation.org

Partners in Development
Foundation

2040 Bachelot St.

Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817-2433

If you would like to receive this newsletter, please call:

441-1125 (O'ahu),

888-879-8970 (Toll Free) or

E-mail: RAC@pidfoundation.org

GO GREEN!

Want to help our environment? Contact us today and request an electronic copy!



Your Children Are What They Eat: The Effect of Diet on Children's Behavior

By Stephanie Jurgenson, Board Certified Holistic Health Coach

Why care about what your children eat? A child's brain is affected by what they eat more than any other organ. Eating healthy foods and avoiding a few key ingredients can help regulate a child's attitude, improve school performance, promote better sleep and improve overall health.

Kid-friendly guide to healthy eating. Dr. Bill Sear, a world-renowned pediatrician and author, developed **Traffic Light Eating** – a concept that toddlers through teenagers can follow. **Green light foods** are **go and grow foods**, and generally can be consumed in any amount. **Yellow light foods** may be eaten nearly every day, but can **slow you down** if over-consumed. You should **stop and think** before eating **red light foods**, as they lack nutritional value and do harm. Some examples:

Green light foods: Fruits, vegetables, leafy greens, water

Yellow light foods: Chicken, fish, whole grain bread/pasta/cereal, brown rice, nuts, yogurt, milk, juice

Red light foods: Fried chicken, ice cream, soda, hamburger, foods with "no" ingredients (see below)

A few additional tips for using nutrition as medicine for your child's behavior:

Brainy breakfast. A proper breakfast will result in more stable behavior, improved brain function, less anxiety, better test scores, and support weight control. Key elements include protein, carbs with fiber, low sugar, and healthy fats.

Healthy fats for healthy brains. Omega 3 fatty acids, found in fish, avocado, flax seed, nuts, etc. are a necessary part of brain development and function. These healthy fats allow for faster communication between nerve cells, stabilize and elevate mood, increase attention span, and decrease aggression during times of stress.

Play every day. Besides being physically healthy, play is emotionally healthy. Exercise releases "happy hormones". Fidgety children should be encouraged to be active...play **WITH** them.

Hydrate with water. Children will think more clearly and have more energy when properly hydrated. Hydrating with sugary drinks doesn't quench thirst! Sugar can cause tantrums, foggy thinking, and impair the immune system for hours at a time. TIP: Dilute 100% fruit juice with water (gradually increase dilution to more water than juice).

Know the No's. A few ingredients have such negative affects on children's behavior and health that it is suggested you avoid them altogether; any food containing them is a **red light food**. These ingredients include high fructose corn syrup, hydrogenated oils (trans fats), and artificial flavors & colors.

Before making major changes to your diet, it is best to check with your medical professional.

This training will be offered again! See the Calendar of Events on page 13 for details!

References and Additional resources:

**LEAN Kids*, William Sears M.D., Peter Sears M.D. and Sean Foy, M.A.

Eat Healthy, Feel Great, William Sears, M.D., Martha Sears, and Christie Watts Kelly

www.stephijurgenson.com, Stephanie Jurgenson Health Coach website



Katherine's Delicious Spinach~Green Pea Casserole

Make Topping:

You will need 4 to 6 pieces of bread and ends – broken into big chunks.

Put half of bread into vita mixer or food processor.

Put lid on, put on lowest speed and use the pusher to make bread crumbs.

Save to pour onto top of casserole.

In large pot (*use a deep pot so you can stir easily*), sauté 1 ex-large sweet onion and 6 to 8 cloves of garlic in 1/3 cup coconut oil (chop them in food processor first so they are coarse). You can add kale about half way through cooking if desired. Stir fry till pretty cooked. Add in 2 lbs of frozen chopped spinach and frozen peas.

For Sauce, put:

2 cups of cooked garbanzo beans or 1.5 cans, rinsed

½ cup nutritional yeast

½ cup water

½ Tbl turmeric

½ cup organic coconut oil

Blend it on low and the go to high so it is like a sauce.

Add:

¾ cup Braggs amino acid

Put Braggs in last, and empty out fast so it doesn't eat out the rubber seal of the vita mixer.

Pour sauce into the large pot, stir it all together.

Spray Pam on two glass 9" X 13" baking pans and pour half in to each pan.

Finish with Topping:

Spread prepared bread crumbs on top of casseroles.

Sprinkle little bit of coconut oil over the top of bread crumbs and Spread it with spatula.

Bake at 350° oven for 20 or 30 minutes until it is bubbly. Let it sit a bit and it will set up.



Not Your Common Joe

By Paul Brennan



Joe Rice

Who was this outsider who arrived in Hawai'i a mere 17 years ago to take over a prestigious private school? Did he possess the qualifications to see its expansion into a full educational institution, spanning pre-school to high school? Would this visionary leader be able to bring sufficient sustained, practical initiative, high standards, and perseverance? Could he relate to the larger community in raising the necessary funds to see the expansion of the school campus incorporating a middle school, elementary and preschool? Could he lead his school to competency in technological advances and teaching innovations, alongside Iolani and Punahou? If so, where did such accomplishments come from?

Joe Rice is a story waiting to be told . . . which is exactly what he plans to do now that he has retired from Mid-Pacific Institute and moved to Washington state. Joe's story, told succinctly, begins in Tacoma, WA, born to a teenage mother. His military father abandoned his mother when he learned she was pregnant. Two stepfathers later, Joe realized that life was a continuous journey, especially a struggle, as their migrant family (11 children) moved from orchard to orchard. "We were on welfare forever," he reflects now some fifty years later. Picking grapes, apples and walnuts was part of Joe's vagabond youth, but his most indelible impressions were with his alcoholic stepfather. Joe's mother was continually beaten by him, and Joe, wanting to protect her, also found himself to be the object of his father's inebriated rage. Eventually, as a teenager, Joe was placed in a resource home.

Looking back in retrospect, he philosophically puts it in perspective: "Hate consumes you," he says. "I never was able to make peace with my father, but I've changed these negatives into positives through service to the communities where I've lived." Joe set his goal to be a social worker, but education became his ticket to liberation and service. Motivated to learn, he graduated from Tacoma Community College, then the University of Washington, working at whatever jobs he could to pay his bills. Along the way, he quickly acknowledges, there were many supporters of his personal goals, like the woman during his senior year in high school who fought to keep him from being drafted.

Instead of a military career, Joe joined the Peace Corps so he could help educate others less fortunate than he. His training brought him to Hawai'i and equipped him to serve two years in Afghanistan and then two more in the Micronesian islands of the Marianas. Here he married and later, as a government employee, established the Hawai'i English Program in the South Pacific, which brought him often to Hawai'i. His home state of Washington eventually provided him with further experience in the classroom, and then as an administrator in an elementary school. Especially satisfying was his work in establishing a school for migrant children, building upon his own personal experience. Thereafter, encouraged by that success, he sought to do a similar task in El Salvador, but was thwarted due to political unrest.

Hawai'i was destined to be his crowning achievement in educational development, and Mid-Pacific Institute the fortunate location of his vision and ambitions. In 1996, he accepted the position of President and CEO at MPI. Here, over the past 17 years, he has energetically and creatively been increasing the school's technological competence, along with teaching innovations, designed especially to promote problem-solving and focused research through self-directed projects. What was formerly only a campus for high school students has now incorporated a middle school, an elementary school and a preschool. Taking risks has never been challenging for Joe, given his life experience in having to adapt for survival. He knows firsthand the need for change, and was successful in leading his own life journey through it--unpromising as it often was--and then his own school which he loves so much.

Now, Joe Rice has returned full-circle to the state of his birth and formative development, to care for his family . . . and to reflect. Eventually his story, especially the pain and lessons from his childhood, will be told openly, honestly, and without regret. One of his final efforts before leaving Hawai'i was to establish a scholarship fund for "kids just like myself." Besides his legacy at Mid-Pacific Institute, Joe served on the Board of Family Programs Hawai'i, wanting to directly be involved with youth with challenged pasts and to be an inspiring role model for staff as well as youth.

Hawai'i has benefitted greatly from this tireless worker, this voice not afraid to speak up, this visionary who knew from whence he had come. He was not "your common Joe," but your most uncommon soul who could lead because of his past. "All of these things molded me," he often said. Throughout his career he spoke unapologetically, and he did so with his own personal touch. Hawai'i will continue to be blessed.

Welcome to FPH's Resource Family Support Services Corner

By Lorie Naftel, RFSS Family Resource Specialist

Resource Family Support Services (RFSS) is funded by the Department of Human Services



FAMILY PROGRAMS HAWAII

Ask the Warm Line



Lorie Naftel

It has been a busy couple of months preparing for the Statewide Annual Conferences, but I was grateful for the many new resource families that called the Warm Line for the first time. It was a great way of introducing the support service to the callers since many asked the question, "What is the Warm Line and what do you do?"

The Warm Line is an additional support for resource caregivers that offers referrals that can help with childcare subsidies, enhancement funds, respite and other resources as needed. We also maintain and provide a resource manual for families online at www.FamilyProgramsHawaii.org. If you have any questions regarding the children in your care, the Warm Line has a wealth of information and contacts that can assist. The Care to Share project, which matches items needed by resource families for children in their care with donors who want to donate their items to a family, is operated by the Warm Line. We also provide information about upcoming trainings, and alternative trainings which can be taken to fulfill the DHS training hours requirement. We can also help you borrow video copies of past trainings. The Warm Line also assists with registering families for trainings, support groups, and other events organized by Family Programs Hawai'i Resource Families Support Services and other partner agencies and committees. The Warm Line is available statewide via a toll free number at 1-866-545-0882 or on O'ahu at 545-1130, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. I'm looking forward to hearing from you!

Care to Share



For an up-to-date list of items by island, check out Care to Share at www.FamilyProgramsHawaii.org, under "Resources"

Do you have a question? Contact the Warm Line (Mon-Fri 8:30 am—5pm)

545-1130 (O'ahu) ★ 1-866-545-0882 (Toll-free for Neighbor Islands)

E-mail: WarmLine@FamilyProgramsHi.org

*This program, brought to you by
FPH's Resource Family Support Services (RFSS),
is funded by the Department of Human Services*

Do you have something that a family could use? Do you care to share?

Then here's a great opportunity to help children in foster care and their generous resource, adoptive or guardianship families. "Care to Share" is a way for people to share their gently used items with resource, adoptive or guardianship families who need your support.

Items that are in high demand include:

- ♦ Children's desk
- ♦ Clothes for 7 yr old boy size 14-15 (junior)
- ♦ 2 double bed frames and mattresses
- ♦ Feeding booster seat with tray
- ♦ Bunk beds
- ♦ Desk lamp
- ♦ Twin beds with mattress
- ♦ Children's dresser
- ♦ Toddler bed
- ♦ Computer chair
- ♦ Trundle bed (hideaway bed)
- ♦ Dressers
- ♦ Bed sheets (twin)

Examples of items currently available include: Luggage, potty chair, strollers, high chair, and women/children/newborn clothing in specific sizes.

Teen Day: Dream4Real (cont.)

When asked what they most liked about Teen Day, the youth have said:

- Seeing people I knew and meeting new people.
- I liked it all but especially meeting new friends who can understand me. We've stayed in touch.
- Having fun with people I didn't know. It was a good experience.
- I met kids that go through what I go through. I saw twins from my school and I never know they were in foster care. It was helpful. Honestly, it was good. It was the highpoint of my summer.

The planning committee for this event includes former foster youth, Judiciary representatives from both the Family Court of the First Circuit and the Intermediate Court of Appeals, the Court Improvement Project, the Hawai'i Department of Human Services, a guardian ad litem, and community organizations. A goal of the committee is to have Teen Days held throughout the State.

For upcoming Teen Day Events, visit www.ittakesanohana.org and click on their calendar.



Tips to help you put into practice concepts that were presented at this year's annual Foster Care Conference

Neurobiology of Trust and Mistrust

by Juli Alvarado

Learning to trust, or mistrust, others, is a lesson that begins very early in LIFE. Trust vs. Mistrust is a lesson that does not require thinking or language; it is an emotional experience. The development of basic trust in other people begins before we have language, before birth.

This is a lesson that relies on what we call implicit memory; facial expression, tone of voice, body language, eye contact, the gentleness or harshness of a touch. The youngest child knows whether he is wanted or not, whether he can trust this caretaker or not.

When our youngest children learn that they cannot depend on the caretaker, when they are handed off in adoption, placed into another foster home, shipped off to a friend's apartment for the night, this youngest child learns to defend himself from the caretaker he cannot trust. This 'caretaker' is now a new resource caregiver, adoptive mom or dad, aunt or uncle, grandparent or friend; and our youngest child knows better than to trust and be hurt again. "Our" youngest, and oldest child, and all of them in-between will require the highly Emotionally Regulated Parent in order to rebuild the neuronal connects needed to trust. These connections can be rewired through brain based parenting and targeted clinical interventions. Nobody is beyond the hope of healing.

Given the regulated environment, the regulated parent with a trauma informed and regulated clinician for support, no child is beyond the hope of attachment and healing. Emotional Regulatory Healing is a response to 'our' children wounded through the trauma of abuse and neglect, as well as the trauma of adoption.

This week, begin with Slow and Low: speak quietly, slow down your body movements; lower your tone of voice, sit down and slow down more with your children. As you calm your body and brain, so too, in time, will your children calm theirs.

Do this for one full week and watch the transition from Chaos to Calm begin in your home.

OUTSTANDING DHS WORKER!

Do you know a DHS-CWS worker(s) that you would like to a knowledge for his/her exceptional work? Share their name(s) with us and what makes them so special so we can let others know how wonderful they are!



Help! Looking For Stories!

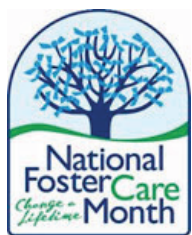
Would you like to share some helpful tips? Got an inspirational story to tell? Know of some useful resources in your community?

These are just some of the many possibilities that you can contribute to this newsletter. Please send them over so we can all benefit from each other's wisdom!

We would also appreciate any feedback, comments and suggestions on ways that we can improve this newsletter so that it is useful to you. What would you like to see in it? Topics of interest?

We look forward to hearing from you!





2013 NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH EVENTS

May was National Foster Care Month. Wonderful events took place statewide, all with the same goal, to honor and thank the compassionate people who make a difference in the lives of Hawai'i's children and families.



★ O'AHU ★

PACT Keiki Day

Every year Parents and Children Together (PACT) looks for volunteers to help them sell a special edition of The Honolulu Star Advertiser's Parents and Children Together Keiki Day newspaper to raise funds for their programs. On May 8, 2013, the Foster Care Training Committee (FCTC) assisted in this community endeavor. Through this committee, there were representatives from the Department of Human Services, Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center, Family Programs Hawai'i – It Takes An 'Ohana, Catholic Charities Hawai'i and Partners in Development Foundation. There was much support from patrons who bought papers, provided additional donations, tooted their horns and gave thanks for the services provided to children and families. It was a fun day for a worthy cause.



A Day on Secret Island

On May 4, 2013, resource families, former foster and guardianship youth spent the day at Kualoa Ranch's "Secret Island" to celebrate National Foster Care Month. Families enjoyed canoe paddling, volleyball, kayaking, swimming, standup paddle boarding, snorkeling, relaxing on the beach and meeting old and new friends. This was a day for our 'Ohana to relax and enjoy the beauty of our precious 'aina. Resource caregivers and adopted parents reported:



"Now days, it's so hard to find a place to take the kids where everyone can enjoy together, but you guys did it! Secret Island was perfect! It was such a wonderful event! My youngest commented that it was probably one of the top 10 days of his life! My teen daughter enjoyed playing a little volleyball, cruising on the hammock, and going on a boat ride. My middle one loved stand up paddling, played with new friends, and even got to connect with his biological sister who was adopted by another family! Thank you so much to everyone who made this event happen!"

"I would personally like to Thank you and everyone involved in this past week-end Secret Island Event for the Resource Families. My two girls remembered from last year how fun it was to meet other kids there and the bonding was more memorable than ever. The staff again was "Outstanding" in providing our safety and assurance that we were also fed well. We can never Thank you enough for what all of you do for the children of tomorrow. Again, you are all the Guardian Angels in their Hearts."

With almost 50% of children in foster care being Native Hawaiian, this event also helped resource families connect the children in their care to their cultural roots.

The Foster Care Training Committee, who planned this event, would like to thank our community partners, Wells Fargo Hawai'i, the Glue committee and Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center, for helping make this great event possible!

★ KAUAI ★

NFCM Proclamation Event

Kauai Mayor, Bernard Carvalho Jr., presented a beautifully framed proclamation to celebrate National Foster Care Month. Represented were resource caregivers, social workers, and auxiliary support service staff.



★ MAUI ★

Whole Foods Display and Sign Waving Events

This year, Whole Foods offered Hui Ho'omalulu the opportunity to have an informational table at their Kahului store for the entire month. We had a great spot in the store where the majority of folks walk by on their way out and/or to grab utensils for their delicious grocery gatherings. The table had a colorful display of pictures, information, and blue ribbons to celebrate those who foster and to encourage others to inquire about fostering.

In addition to the month-long display, we also had two great sign-waving events that were bursting with color and enthusiasm from our partners at Catholic Charities, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and the Department of Human Services - Child Welfare staff, as well as some wonderful resource caregivers -- all willing to show their support for Maui's Foster Care Community. We had new signs to wave and many folks returned the gesture by honking horns and sharing their appreciation for all of those who foster! Mahalo nui loa, Maui!!



★ WEST HAWAII ★



Workshop For Resource Caregivers and Sign Waving Events

During National Foster Care month, the Department of Human Services, Partners in Development – Hui Ho'omalulu, Family Programs Hawai'i and Catholic Charities Hawai'i provided a free workshop to Resource Caregivers at the West Hawai'i Civic Center on Hawai'i Island in Kailua-Kona. The presenter was Alice Bratton who spoke on positive supports for challenging behaviors, regarding children with emotional and behavioral challenges. Participants were also presented with a certificate of thanks from Child Welfare Services for their efforts in foster care. Mostly all who attended the workshop rated it excellent and meaningful, indicating they would definitely recommend it to others. In addition to the workshop, representatives from various agencies in the community, including Caregivers and foster youth, participated in a sign-waving activity to thank resource caregivers and highlight foster care and child abuse prevention.

★ EAST HAWAII ★

Mahalo Dinner and NFCM Proclamations

Each year the month of May is recognized across the country as National Foster Care Month. The East Hawai'i Friends of Foster Families showed appreciation for the dedication of resource caregivers who care for children and youth by hosting a Mahalo Dinner.



The East Hawai'i Friends of Foster Families consists of Partner agencies: Department of Human Services, Neighborhood Place of Puna, Catholic Charities Hawai'i-SRF, Catholic Charities Hawai'i-NOP, Hale Kipa, Hawai'i Behavioral Health, Partners in Development Foundation-Hui Ho'omalulu, The Salvation Army-Family Intervention Services. These agencies recognize the tremendous efforts of success in regards to those committed to the foster care mission.

This year's annual dinner was held on May 10, 2013 at the Church of the Holy Cross. The Resource Caregivers in Hilo were presented with a proclamation recognizing May as National Foster Care Month by Mayor Billy Kenoi. Kevin Dayton, the Executive Assistant to Mayor Kenoi and also a licensed resource caregiver, presented the proclamation on behalf of the County of Hawai'i. Senator Kahele also presented a proclamation on behalf of the State Senate.

'Ohana Connections Corner: New Family Engagement Manual

Dear Reader,

Thanks to a Federally funded, three year grant awarded under the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, EPIC 'Ohana recently created a manual entitled: Maintaining Connections: The Values Behind Family Engagement Practices Within the Child Welfare System.

Maintaining Connections is not a typical "how to" manual which outlines the technical steps and procedures of a particular program. Instead it is a manual which articulates the values that inform EPIC's work and honors the Hawaiian cultural influences and mainland perspectives that permeate it. It's a "how to" manual of a different order: one that speaks of the impulses behind the actions – the heart of the work – rather than the nuts and bolts of it. For those of us at EPIC, it is an articulation of the ground that we stand on.

Below is an excerpt from one chapter: Value 1: Children have a right to know and be connected to their families. To read the entire chapter and manual go to: <http://www.epicohana.org/resources/grant%20manual%20web.pdf>.

While Maintaining Connections depicts EPIC's values, we know those values are rooted in the aloha spirit of Hawai'i – the spirit each of you embodies daily in your care of Hawai'i's foster keiki and their families. To each of you, the staff at EPIC say "mahalo" for the work you do and for being such outstanding partners in our efforts. We know it really does take a community 'Ohana to diminish the heartache and damage of child abuse and neglect.

After reading this excerpt or the manual, please feel free to contact EPIC with any comments, questions, or concerns. We always welcome feedback and the opportunity to grow.

Once again, mahalo and aloha,

Wilma Friesema and the EPIC 'Ohana Manual Writing Team
808/748-7921

Maintaining Connections: The Values Behind Family Engagement Practices Within the Child Welfare System

Value 1: Children have a right to know and be connected to their families.



Throughout the world it's universally accepted that families are the building blocks of society. It's within our families that we feel loved and a sense of belonging; where we learn the intimate dance of give and take and are encouraged to become healthy, responsible adults. It's within our families that we learn to be an individual yet part of a group – which is an essential stepping stone to becoming a positive citizen.

In the Hawaiian tradition, family has always been central to a sense of identity and spirituality. Traditional Hawaiian practices and teachings wove a deep relational wisdom into the daily lives and spiritual practices of its people. From the Hawaiian perspective, an individual no more stands alone on this island than a tree stands alone in a forest. Each of us is interconnected with the community surrounding us, and with our ancestors who have provided the seed and spark of life.

In the Hawaiian beliefs, *Akua*, the great spirit, is transmitted through one's ancestors and it is through them one is given the breath of life. Ancient Hawaiian chants were often recitations of the names of ancestors throughout many generations; invoking ancestors' names called in their strength and spirit. It also showed respect and appreciation for the past while acknowledging the present is but a precursor to the future. Who a person is today is born from the past and will impact the generations that follow.

Within the rich and complex Hawaiian traditions of honoring ancestors, there is one teaching, in particular, that captures the essence of 'Ohana Connections and family engagement work. That is the teaching of the *piko*.

Piko literally means belly button or umbilical cord, but it also refers to the essence or center that binds us to our family and ancestors. On a physical and metaphorical level it is the cord of life; providing us with nutrients from our mother, but also genetic, cultural, and spiritual nutrients passed down from our elders through our parents. It's the unspeakable primal connection we feel with our blood kin that courses through the very cells of our body. Just as developing fetuses cannot grow without an umbilical cord, children cannot adequately grow without a strong *piko* or attachment, and adults rarely thrive without a sense of belonging and rootedness. The *piko* is at the heart of our deepest sense of security and belonging. Through it we get our family's values, history, and love.

(Continued on pg 9)

'Ohana Connections Corner (cont.)

According to Hawaiian teachings, unresolved emotional issues, unbearable stress, drug abuse, or other personal limitations create knots, or *hibia*, in the *piko* which limit the flow of positive, nurturing energy and create an imbalance within relationships. Though there is still a family attachment, despite the hurt and tangled emotions, the quality of the connection is compromised, sometimes with only a thread of positive connection remaining.

The ancient Hawaiians developed a way to address this problem. As islanders, they were highly attuned to the necessity of *pono* (balance) in all aspects of life so they developed the *ho'oponopono* to work through the *hibia* within relationships. As a practice of reconciliation and forgiveness, the *ho'oponopono*'s purpose is to untangle the interpersonal knots of misunderstanding and conflict so connection and harmony can be restored. While the content of the conflict is important, the real focus is on healing the relationship.

The work of family engagement can be summed up as the attempt to identify the *piko* and undo the *hibia* in that family's *piko* so that they can, once again, be attached and secure in their connection with each other. We've found the greater the disconnection – the more profound the abuse or neglect, or the longer the family has been apart – the larger the *hibia* in the *piko*.

In cases of significant disconnect, 'Ohana Connections work provides close and on-going support to the youth and families to work through their *hibia*. This is especially true when there have been years of separation and fears of re-engaging with the Child Welfare System and/or possible family rejection are running high. Stressing the reality and validity of the family's connection or *piko*, despite the many years of separation, is an important foundational piece. A former therapist and *ho'oponopono* practitioner, who often worked with our staff, would tell families, "The *piko* is your tie to each other. No piece of paper, no order from the state can sever your *piko*. Only the family members can make that choice for themselves."

This was an especially powerful message for Kealoha and her daughter, Pua. Pua was 16-years old when EPIC's Connections Specialist began working with her. Pua had entered care when she was six, and was in contact with only one sister who was living on the mainland. The last time she had seen other relatives was at her father's funeral when she was seven. At that time she didn't know if she wasn't living with family because it wasn't "allowed" or because they had rejected her.

An internet search located 42 relatives who lived on O'ahu and Maui. The family was excited about reconnecting with Pua, and after much prep work visits were set up with cousins, aunts, and grandparents on both islands. A highlight was when Pua, who believed her maternal grandmother had died long ago, discovered grandmother was still alive. "Is it really you, *Tutu*?" Pua asked as she hugged her grandmother tight.

Though all the new connections were very exciting, Pua confided she really wanted to see her mom. The Connections Specialist located Kealoha, Pua's mom, and met with her several times. Kealoha was doing well; she was sober, working, and trying to find housing, but, she admitted, she struggled to maintain a stable life due to intermittent domestic violence and drug use. She was getting support and counseling, she said, which helped her feel optimistic that this time could be different.

Pua's treatment team voiced concerns about Pua reconnecting with her mom, but they also knew it was important. Pua's therapist, the *ho'oponopono* practitioner, suggested he and the Connections Specialist use *ho'oponopono* to create a safe space for a first meeting and to set the stage for further healing to occur.

The treatment team agreed. To begin, the therapist and Connections Specialist met with Pua and Kealoha separately to talk about the painful past, the *ho'oponopono* process, and what the mother and daughter hoped would be the outcome.

The preparatory meetings with Kealoha were especially important. Pua had some hard questions she wanted to ask her mom; it was likely much hurt and anger would be expressed. When Kealoha was forewarned of the questions she became defensive and minimized her role in her daughter's suffering. This alarmed the therapist as he feared Kealoha might invalidate her daughter's experience, which would be yet another injury to Pua.

The therapist and Connections Specialist addressed Kealoha's fears and pain underneath the defensiveness. They assured her the *ho'oponopono* wasn't about judgment; it was an opportunity for healing. The best way she could help, they said, was for her to listen to her daughter with an open mind and heart, and take responsibility to whatever degree she could. They empathized with Kealoha's guilt and the burden she had carried, while stressing this was an opportunity to right some past wrongs.

Kealoha softened and said she understood. She agreed the Connections Specialist, whom she trusted, could remind her to stop and listen to Pua if she became defensive.

The day of the *ho'oponopono* arrived. Kealoha and Pua ran to each other and hugged without a breath of hesitation. They both cried and said they were sorry. Kealoha reassured Pua she had nothing to be sorry about. "It was me who failed you," she said.

(Continued on pg 10)

'Ohana Connections Corner (cont.)

When they were ready, the *ho'oponopono* began with a *pule* (prayer) asking for guidance, wisdom, and support so mother and daughter could heal their wounds. The therapist talked about the *piko*, and the profound bond that Kealoha and Pua shared. He also talked about the *hibia* and the purpose of the *ho'oponopono* session.

The time came for Pua and Kealoha to talk about what happened. Pua was scared to speak up; Kealoha encouraged her, saying nothing said would be wrong or too much. Gradually Pua began to describe the childhood abuse and subsequent pain of being in foster care. "Why did you hurt me so much?" Pua cried. "Why didn't you take better care of me?"

Kealoha started to make excuses, but with a gentle reminder she quickly caught herself. As she listened, she responded to Pua with more and more empathy and stated clearly that Pua had just been a child. She and Pua's father had failed, she said, and she was deeply sorry. Kealoha then shared some of her own childhood abuse experiences. This was done, not out of defensiveness, but as a way to give Pua a fuller understanding of the family's pain and to share that she intimately knew the heartache of abuse.

The time of forgiveness followed. The therapist shared how highly the ancient Hawaiians valued forgiveness; once forgiveness was granted and received the matter was considered truly settled. But, he explained, both the request for forgiveness and the granting of it had to be sincere in order for *pono* to be restored. He acknowledged that for Pua and Kealoha, with their long history of separation and hurt, forgiveness would likely be a long process. That day they were taking a beginning step, a choice of direction for both of them.

Kealoha admitted her wrong-doing and directly asked Pua for her forgiveness. Pua tried, several times, to say it was her fault, but Kealoha firmly told her she had been a child and she was innocent. Pua, through her tears, told her mom she loved her and that she was choosing to forgive her. Kealoha cried, and said she loved Pua too and always had. Kealoha went over to Pua and held her tight as her daughter broke down and wept.

When Pua's tears were spent, they shared their gifts and a prayer was offered. Food was shared, and a plan for their next contact was made. They both expressed gratitude for the *ho'oponopono* – a new experience for both of them – and said it had felt comforting and powerful to have their ancestral tradition be part of their coming together. As everyone ate and talked story the *ho'oponopono* came to its own natural end.

Pua and Kealoha continue to have contact, four years later. They've had many ups and downs as they work through the old *hibia* in their relationship and contend with newly created ones. The *ho'oponopono* did give them a positive start, however, and helped them reclaim their love and attachment to each other.

EPIC strongly adheres to the truth so simply and elegantly captured in the concept of the *piko* – families are innately attached and will continue to have that unspoken bond unless one or the other has chosen to let it go. EPIC also believes in the empowerment of the family inherent in the idea of the *piko*. Even in families where parental rights have been terminated, many youth, like Pua, continue to have strong emotional ties to parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. This strong emotional tie is extended to, and includes, *hānai* (adopted/nourished) relatives as well.

As we practice and promote the engagement of biological and *hānai* relatives, working through the *hibia* in the family's *piko* is often a bumpy and challenging process. Safety concerns, personal limitations, mental health needs, and unrealistic expectations are continually addressed each step of the way. Through the ups and downs however, we find adhering to the fundamental truth so eloquently captured by the ancient Hawaiians gives our work its own kind of *piko*. As we respect and embrace the importance of family connections, we draw on and find strength in that deep reservoir of traditional Hawaiian values that elevate one's family ties to such an essential ingredient for personal balance and well-being.

Advertise in the Newsletter—Promote Your Business

100% of the proceeds will be used towards supporting our resource families

Display advertisements with borders: business card size = \$30;

1/4 page = \$50; 1/2 page = \$75; full page = \$115.

Send information to: **Hui Ho'omalua—RAC, 680 Iwilei Rd., Ste. 500,
Honolulu, HI 96817**

Phone: 441-1125 (O'ahu) ★ 888-879-8970 (Toll Free)

Fax: 441-1122 ★ E-mail: RAC@pidfoundation.org

RAC reserves the right to accept, reject or edit advertisements, articles and notices of events based on publication schedule, space limitations, and appropriateness.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

How long have you been a resource caregiver? We would like to honor you by printing your name and current years of service in our newsletter. We know you are out there but we need your help. Please send your name and years of service to:



RAC@pidfoundation.org

(O'ahu) 441-1125

(Toll Free) 1-888-879-8970



The 6th Annual Conferences for Resource Families

The 6th Annual Conferences for Resource Families, "Pathways to Healing: Understanding the Trauma Behind the Behavior" took place this year in West Hawai'i, East Hawai'i, Maui, Kaua'i, and O'ahu during the months of May and June. Our speakers from Project Kealahou, a program of the Department of Health, presented information on Trauma-Informed Care, a way of looking at behaviors and experiences of children and youth who have experienced some form of trauma. Tia Roberts, Paula Quealy, Crystal Brown, Kerry Causey, and Brandee Aukai spoke of how viewing situations from a trauma-informed lens can help us find appropriate solutions and help children heal. Becoming trauma informed involves a purposeful understanding of how behaviors are connected to a person's trauma history. Responding in a trauma-informed way can be the world of difference between helping a child feel safe versus unsafe and between helping a child heal versus re-traumatizing them.

Our speakers also discussed the importance of self care. Because doing this work and hearing traumatic stories can have an impact on us, it is important to recognize the signs of vicarious trauma and its slow changes of our own behaviors and attitudes. Families learned that committing to self care can help us manage our own stress, and keep us motivated and inspired in helping children on their paths to healing.

If you are a resource, adoptive, guardianship, or kinship family and you were not able to attend this informative conference, please contact our Warm Line at 545-1130 (or toll free at 1-866-545-0882) to find out how you can borrow a DVD copy of this training. DVD copies will be available for lending in August.

Thank you to the Department of Human Services and all the collaborative agencies that helped make this conference possible. The child-care on each island and simultaneous teen training on O'ahu would not have been possible without the help of our generous and dedicated volunteers and partners. Thanks to 'Ölelo Community Media for taping the O'ahu conference so we can reach many more families. With much gratitude, thank you to all the families and service providers who attended the conference. Your commitment to the children and families in your care is admirable and sincerely appreciated!

See you at next year's conference!

'Ohana Rewards

Want to know how you could receive a \$200.00 gift card?

Would you like your name to appear in a future RAC newsletter?

All you need to do is help us find more homes for Hawai'i's keiki in foster care like these individuals!

Mahalo to...

**Carol Evans
&
Jade Lam**

Call Hui Ho'omalulu today at 441-1117 or 1-888-879-8970 (toll free)

facebook

"Hui Ho'omalulu - Finding Loving Homes for Hawai'i's Children in Foster Care"

Hui Ho'omalulu is now on facebook! "Like" us for updates on training, resources, and of course RECRUITMENT information. Tell your friends about us! Help us spread the word about the need for more Resource Caregivers. Don't forget, \$200 'Ohana Rewards for referrals!



PATCH publishes a quarterly newsletter -- Training Tracks, to inform the community of our upcoming trainings around town, and provide the latest child care news and information to professionals and the public. PATCH offers over 100 FREE child care workshops open to all caregivers such as family child care, preschool and infant and toddler staff, before and after school care programs, parents, resource caregivers, medical professionals, babysitters and informal child care. Please visit our website for the latest news and training schedule:



www.PatchHawaii.org

or contact your local PATCH office

O'ahu: 808-839-1988

Maui: 808-242-9232

Lāna'i & Moloka'i: 1-800-498-4145

Kaua'i: 808-246-0622

Hilo: 808-961-3169

Kona: 808-322-3500



Adoptive Families Needed Through Wendy's Wonderful Kids

We are featuring Amy in this newsletter who is currently in foster care and legally free for adoption. Please help spread the word.

Amy is a 15 year-old girl in need of an adoptive home that can embrace her unique qualities. She wants to be loved and cared for and desperately wants to belong and be accepted. She is of Hawaiian and Caucasian decent and is a Christian.

Amy has a great smile, is friendly, loving, thoughtful, and sweet. She is funny and has a good sense of humor with a great belly laugh. Amy is outgoing and talkative and will stop to chat with anyone. She loves to read and particularly enjoyed the Twilight series, the Hunger Games, and books by Ellen Hopkins and Cassandra Clare. Amy also loves listening to music of all kinds, enjoys movies, doing art work, hanging out with friends, and going to the beach. Like many other teens, Amy enjoys getting manicures, pedicures, and make-up. Onion rings and li hing mui treats are some of her favorite foods.

Amy loves animals, little children, and the elderly. She is protective and loyal to those she cares about. She tries to make people feel better.

Amy has struggled in school and does better in a small group with 1:1 instruction, preferably in an alternative academic setting. She reads at a high school level, while she struggles in math, which is her least favorite subject.

Amy has challenges with impulse control. In the past, she lashed out before thinking and has difficulty calming down once she is upset. With proper guidance, Amy may learn different coping strategies.

Amy would like a family who is nonjudgmental. As she has been so negatively and harshly judged all her life, she needs someone who is patient and calm, nurturing, and straight-forward. Amy does not like dishonesty. Amy also has a tendency to test for genuineness, so a family will need to be committed even during difficult times. She needs a family who will treat her with respect, while still being able to set appropriate rules and follow through with consequences for her.

Amy needs a family who will support her through present and future decisions that need to be made in her life. A family with few children that can provide extreme patience, structure, consistency, predictability, calm mannerisms, and role modeling would best meet her needs.

If you are interested in learning more about Amy, please contact Katie Joosse at Family Programs Hawai'i at (808) 540-2552.

National Reunification Month Event

By Nicole Isa-Iijima

On June 28, 2013, the State of Hawai'i held its first ever National Reunification Month Event. National Reunification Month, recognized by the American Bar Association, Center on Children and the Law, and other national organizations, celebrates both the importance of and successful reunification of families involved with child welfare services. Though the national movement recognizes that reunification is achievable through collaboration among the family and the community, Hawai'i's event emphasized a "team effort" theme. A family, who had been involved with child welfare services but has since successfully reunified, was honored along with Maui Child Welfare Services and other team support members.

Hawai'i's inaugural event, held on the island of Maui, was graciously hosted by the Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center. Special tribute was paid to Simeon U'u and his family, Maui CWS worker Christina "Satyo" Dosland, and key support persons, including Lois Torikawa, social worker at Waiawa Correctional Facility; the court, resource caregivers; attorneys; the children's GAL; and community service providers such as the family's therapist, parent educators, and community shelter staff. The theme of this year's event was "Reconnecting Hearts," highlighting the DHS' primary goal of successful reunification for families through a collaborative approach.




The event was attended by various dignitaries, including Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran (Wailuku, Waihe'e, and Kahului) and Jo-Ann Ridao, Director of the Maui Department of Human Concerns, representing the office of the Maui Mayor Alan Arakawa. Governor Neil Abercrombie also signed a proclamation that was presented to the U'u family and Ms. Dosland/Maui CWS. The proclamation recognized National Reunification Month, underscored the importance of reunification as the preferred outcome for families involved in child welfare services, and emphasized the "team" approach to effectuate successful reunification.

At the event, the DHS emphasized its primary mission of reunification and strengthening families, and highlighting the importance of collaboration and partnerships when working with families. In a video featuring the U'u family and Ms. Dosland, Simeon talked about being in the child welfare system for two years before truly understanding that he could lose his parental rights to his children. Simeon discussed having faith that he and his children would be reunited and attributed the family's achievement to relationships with both his CWS social worker and the social worker at the Waiawa Correctional facility, and other support persons. Ms. Dosland discussed how service providers, such as the children's therapist, the Parent Educator, and the resource caregivers were vital in ensuring the family's success. This video can be found at: www.epicohana.info/news.aspx?newsid=25. By viewing the video, resource caregivers can receive .50 ongoing training credits. Call Family Programs Hawai'i's Warm Line at 545-1130 (O'ahu) or 1-866-545-0882 (Toll Free) or DHS licensing with any questions regarding the credit.

The coordination of the event itself was a collaboration of various agencies and community organizations, including the DHS; the Judiciary; EPIC 'Ohana, Inc.; Partners in Development Foundation; Family Programs Hawai'i-It Takes An 'Ohana; and the William S. Richardson School of Law. A big Mahalo, also to the Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center, Maui for hosting the event, donating lunch and providing all around assistance the day of the event; and to Maui High School and the law school for recording and editing the video of the U'u family and Ms. Dosland; as well as the Maui Children's Justice Center; the Maui Ocean Center; Carol Sullivan, Malu Productions, Inc., and U'alena for their generous donations.

The State of Hawai'i DHS plans to continue the collaborations and hold annual National Reunification Month celebrations to honor families who were successfully reunified and their support team members.



Calendar of Events

O'AHU

- Aug 9 (Fri) Windward Resource Families Support Group:** 6:00pm-8:30pm. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531 ext. 245.
- Aug 23 (Fri) Central O'ahu Resource Families Support Group:** 5:30pm-8:00pm. O'ahu Veterans Center. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531 ext. 245
- Sept 13 (Fri) FREE Training & Childcare: Kids Are What They Eat—How Food Affects Your Child's Behavior:** 5:30pm-8:00pm. Goodwill 'Ohana Career and Learning Center (Kapolei). Open to all resource, adoptive, kinship, guardianship, and permanency families. Receive 2 DHS approved training credit hours. Childcare limited to registered children, ages 3-12, based on availability. Dinner will be provided for families during the first half hour. Training and childcare will begin after dinner. RSVP and register for childcare by 9/6/13 at 527-4925 or e-mail rae.inn@catholiccharitieshawaii.org.
- Sep 20 (Fri) Wai'anae Resource Families Support Group:** 5:30pm-8:00pm. 'Ohana Ola Kahumana. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531 ext. 245.
- O'ahu Quarterly Trainings for Resource Families:** Date and topic TBA. Trainings will take place in 2 locations on O'ahu. All currently licensed resource families will receive a flyer in the mail. Adoptive, guardianship, and kinship families can check the calendar on our website, www.FamilyProgramsHawaii.org for dates/times.

MAUI COUNTY

- Aug 15 (Th) Maui Resource Families Support Group:** 5:30pm-8:00pm. Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center in Wailuku. RSVP to FPH at 1-866-545-0882 (toll free to the Warm Line)
- Every Mon P.A.R.E.N.T.S.—** 6:00pm-8:00pm. Old Kihei Library. Videos & discussion on parenting techniques. Call Trudy @ 879-3595 for more information.



WEST HAWAII

Kona Resource Families Support Group and Training: Date and topic TBA. Support Group will be held the hour before the training. All currently licensed resource families will receive a flyer in the mail. Adoptive, guardianship, and kinship families can check the calendar on our website, www.FamilyProgramsHawaii.org for dates/times.

KAUA'I

Kaua'i Resource Family Pau Hana and Training: Date and topic TBA. Talk Story will be held the hour before the training. All currently licensed resource families will receive a flyer in the mail. Adoptive, guardianship, and kinship families can check the calendar on our website, www.FamilyProgramsHawaii.org for dates/times.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Part-time/On-call Co-trainer and childcare provider wanted to assist PIDF with HANAI trainings. Trainings generally done on weekday evenings and Saturdays, approximately 11 hours for the full training. Current and previous resource caregivers or former foster youth may apply.

HUI HO'OMALU

A Program of Partners in Development Foundation

See www.pidfoundation.org/about/careers

Email resume & application w/cover letter to:

HR@pidfoundation.org

or fax to 440-6619

PIDF is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer

Welcome & Mahalo to Haryson Lum

You may have noticed that this newsletter has a new look.

Haryson Lum, an intern from Kamehameha School's Kāpili 'Oihana Internship Program, has been helping Partners in Development Foundation – Hui Ho'omalua Program with various tasks while learning more about foster care in Hawai'i. Mahalo Haryson, for all your help and creating a beautiful newsletter!



PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

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Statewide Resource Advisory Committee

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441-1125 (O'ahu)
888-879-8970 (Toll Free)

Fax: 441-1122

E-mail:

RAC@pidfoundation.org

The concept for the Statewide Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) was created by the Department of Human Services (DHS) as a means to support the resource family community. Hui Ho'omalua facilitates this committee comprised of adoptive parents, resource caregivers and various community agencies, all dedicated to providing services and support to Hawai'i's keiki and the resource families who care for them. The purpose of the RAC is to identify ongoing needs, facilitate communication, share resources, provide information through a statewide calendar of events and a quarterly newsletter and report on local projects and other topics of interest to benefit Hawai'i's resource families.

This committee, the newsletter and many of the represented agencies are supported and funded by Department of Human Services contracts.

RAC Committee Members:

Catholic Charities Hawai'i—Hui Ho'omalua

Department of Human Services

EPIC, Inc. 'Ohana Conferencing

Family Court

Family Programs Hawai'i—Hui Ho'omalua & It Takes An 'Ohana

Resource Caregivers

Adoptive Parents

Hawai'i Foster Youth Coalition

HOPE INC, Inc.

Partners in Development Foundation—Hui Ho'omalua

University of Hawai'i, School of Social Work