

# Building Connections

## A Newsletter for Resource Families

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October 2015

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## Celebrating Success: National Recognition Highlights Healing

By Wilma Friesema, MFT

Partners in Development Foundation—Hui Ho'omalū

Hilo, HI. For the people in Joyce-Lynn Ganon's life, stopping to smell the plumeria was never sweeter than on June 26th, 2015. In honor of this year's National Reunification Month approximately 80 family members, friends, service providers, and members of the judiciary joined together at the 'Imiloa Astronomy Center, UH Hilo, to celebrate the happy restoration of the now Ganon-Sanborn 'ohana.

Joyce's celebration was just one of many held across the country. Originally spearheaded by the American Bar Association's Parent Attorney Project in 1999, the purpose of the National Reunification Month is to celebrate families who have completed a difficult journey. It's a journey that starts with the pain of child abuse or neglect, traverses the mazes within the legal and social services systems, and, after much hard work, ends with a healthier and safer intact family.

That's the journey Joyce began in 2007 while living on Lāna'i. Her dark odyssey started because of domestic violence. Like many women in her situation, she often thought of leaving her husband, but apologies and hope for a better future kept her home. She felt too ashamed to turn to family.

The lingering stress of the domestic violence took its toll, however, and Joyce's emotional well-being deteriorated. Contending with the abuse and caring for her two-year old son was overwhelming. The situation came to the attention of Child Welfare Services (CWS) and her son was taken into foster care because of safety concerns. That was a turning point for Joyce; she left her husband and went home to family on the Big Island.

For many families, CWS involvement is a sobering confrontation that demands change. Many, like Joyce, do take action and change. They learn from their mistakes, and begin the healing process from the services and supports CWS offers. Each year, in Hawai'i, about 1200 children are taken into foster care. Of those, approximately 67% are reunified with their parents after services are completed.

Joyce was pregnant when her son was taken into care; five months later she gave birth to a beautiful baby girl. Because of CWS, she received parenting classes and therapy. Meetings, or 'Ohana Conferences, were held which pulled together Joyce and her family, service providers, and the court advocate to address the safety needs of the children and the direction for Joyce's next steps. With her community of supporters Joyce thrived; within a year, her Family Court Judge, Judge Lloyd Van De Car, determined it was safe for both her baby girl and son to live with her. CWS closed her case in 2008.



**Joyce-Lynn Ganon**

*Continued on pg. 3*

## 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](http://www.hawaii.gov/dhs/protection/social_services/child_welfare/foster)

[www.pidfoundation.org](http://www.pidfoundation.org)

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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](mailto:RAC@pidfoundation.org)

## GO GREEN!

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



## OUTSTANDING DHS WORKER!



### Puafisi Tupola East O'ahu CWS Worker

It Takes An 'Ohana's Advisory Committee (IAC) would like to acknowledge Puafisi Tupola as an outstanding CWS worker. Families tell us that Pua is always there for them and that she really loves the children and youth she works with. Several families mentioned that Pua cares for the children and youth as if they were her own and works tirelessly to find them forever families.

Pua also gives moral support to her coworkers as well as assists them to complete documents and more. Additionally, Pua is always improving her skills. Currently she is working on getting her masters in social work.

This work is clearly Pua's passion, not a job. That is why we are sending a big MAHALO to Pua for all the work she does at the East O'ahu Child Welfare Services Unit 1. Pua, you are truly appreciated!

Do you know a DHS-CWS worker(s) that you would like to acknowledge 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!

## Taking Care of Babies

By Wilma Friesema, MFT

Partners in Development Foundation—Hui Ho'omalua

"You have to be willing to lose a lot of sleep," Priscilla Aguilar tells me when I ask about fostering infants. Priscilla has been on the fostering frontline for 15 years, and has taken care of many babies and toddlers. She definitely knows the ins and outs of caring for vulnerable keiki. As a stay-at-home, home-schooling, mother of five, she began fostering to help others in need.

Despite the sleep deprivation, fostering is gratifying, Priscilla says, because infants respond so quickly to tender loving care. Nearly all the babies she's fostered had developmental needs; however, their fast developing brains overcame set backs at a remarkable rate. One baby, developmentally delayed by six months, overcame his delays within two months under Priscilla's care. In no time, he was rolling over, sitting up, and standing—all the developmental milestones for a child his age.



Fostering infants is not about long-term relationships. Priscilla estimates 90% of the children under her care have been reunified with their parents or extended family. While saying good-bye to the babies can be difficult, knowing it is safe for them to go back to their families is also rewarding. On a personal level, Priscilla feels fostering gives her a deep appreciation and understanding of people and their circumstances. She recommends fostering to anyone who wants to genuinely make a difference.

## 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!

Email: [RAC@pidfoundation.org](mailto:RAC@pidfoundation.org)





## Celebrating Success: National Recognition Highlights Healing (cont.)

As with many families, Joyce's success story didn't unfold in a straight line. In 2009 CWS resurfaced. Joyce, now with another baby boy, was again experiencing domestic violence and struggling with parenting responsibilities. Having her children return to foster care was devastating. Joyce felt like giving up, but with the support of her step-father, Keith Simeona, other family members, and professional service providers like social workers Patrice Bell of CWS and Ken Kawau-chi of Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center, Joyce took responsibility for her choices and vowed to get violence out of her life.

Another key supporter who entered Joyce's life was Vanagan Sanborn. Joyce and Vanagan met after her children were taken into care, but from the beginning it was different from her other relationships. Though they struggled, there was never any violence. Vanagan was positive and encouraging and helped Joyce return to health and stability. In 2012 they had a baby boy who was not taken into foster care. Within that same year, all the children were returned to Joyce's home and CWS closed the case. Joyce and Vanagan are engaged to be married this October.



Joyce-Lynn Ganon, Vanagan Sanborn and family

Three years after her case closed, it was Joyce's continued success that was celebrated at the 'Imiloa Center. It was a joyous occasion that rivaled a graduation for the amount of lei that draped the necks of the family and celebrants. Judge Van De Car had high praise for Joyce, and for everyone in the room who had helped and encouraged her and the children along the way.

Though the saying "it takes a village to raise a child" has almost become a cliché, for parents involved with CWS it often does take a community to heal their family. Abuse and neglect, in its many forms, can tear apart the fabric of a family's life; reweaving the family cloth to create new and healthier patterns of relating takes courage, patience, tenacity, and an investment of hope on everyone's part.

This is what National Reunification Month gatherings across the country celebrate: people coming together can make the world safer for children and their families. Joyce's journey, like so many others, is one where love transcended tragedy, and a family, once again, became free to create a safe and positive future together.

At the end of this, Hawai'i's 3rd Annual Reunification Month celebration, Joyce danced hula to the song Mele 'Ohana. Nervous at first, she pushed through her stage fright to dance with beauty and grace. It was the perfect summation of a long, difficult journey. Despite fears and struggles, she had persevered to create a better life for herself and her children. As she danced, her joy and gratitude was expressed in every fluid, elegant gesture and movement. For all the service providers, court personnel, and personal supporters present, Joyce's dance, Joyce's story, was a reminder of every community's power to create a better future for vulnerable children and parents. It's a story that can give hope to us all.

A video about Joyce's journey is available on youtube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7NUcgdjBBc>

If you wish to become a resource caregiver and help families like Joyce's please visit the Partners in Development website: [www.pidf.org/programs/hui\\_hoomalu/about](http://www.pidf.org/programs/hui_hoomalu/about).

The next Annual Reunification Month Celebration is slated for June 2016 on the island of O'ahu.

## 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

*Mahalo for your dedication and heart for Hawai'i's keiki and families!*

## BUILDING A BRIDGE: Strengthening connections between parents and foster parents

by Denise Goodman

*Denise Goodman, a consultant to the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Family to Family initiative, works with public and private child welfare agencies nationwide to support parents and foster parents in working collaboratively.*

*Please note that although this article mentions "foster parent", in Hawai'i they are referred to as "resource family" and "resource caregiver."*

### **Q: What are the benefits of positive connections between parents and foster parents?**

A: I've seen that when parents and foster parents work together, kids go home more quickly and stay home. Kids in foster care also get better care when the parent and foster parent exchange information about the child and work together to make visits positive. Kids also feel less worried about their families. Many kids are worried about loyalty—if they like the foster parent, does that mean they can't like their parent anymore? They feel better if they see the foster parent and parent getting along.

Reunification is also easier for the child if the relationship with the foster parent doesn't end, even if contact with the foster parent is just a birthday or Christmas card, a phone call, or occasional stopping by. The foster parent can become an ongoing support to the parent after reunification, someone who is an expert about their child. When things are tough and the kid is acting goofy, the parent can call and say, "What do I do?" The foster parent is able to say, "This worked for me." That can help prevent the child from re-entering foster care.

For the social worker, it can make a case easier if the parents and foster parents click. Being a social worker can be a grueling, difficult job, with everybody making demands and neither parent wanting you in their lives. Good relationships are booster shots that keep you going.

### **Q: What are the challenges of building positive connections?**

A: Lot of times when you say to families and staff, "We want the foster parents to work with the parents," they freak out. They have a lot of fears. The care giving family may be concerned that they won't be able to keep the child safe. They worry that the parent will show up uninvited, or will be jealous or upset that their child is not at home. They worry that they won't get along because they don't have the same parenting style.

Parents have their own fears and stereotypes. They are worried that the foster parent will look down on them or that their child will like the foster parent better than them. Sometimes it's even harder to get along when it's a kinship placement, because of family politics.

I find it's a harder sell for staff than for families, though. Staff are concerned that they'll have more problems to deal with. It's true that it's not always perfect dealing with real people's concerns and fears. But the reality is that many caregivers and parents are already doing this behind the agency's back. They live in the same neighborhood and run into each other at Wal-Mart or at court and work through the awkwardness on their own.

### **Q: How can parents and foster parents build connections?**

A: I talk about a concept I call "the bridge"—you can agree together about where you need to be on that bridge and move forward in baby steps to cross it. You don't have to start with face-to-face meetings. There are a lot of ways to have contact: exchanging notes about the child, talking on the phone, or attending school meetings or doctor visits where the parent can provide useful information about the child.

When you both naturally feel ready to move to the next level, you can begin meeting in neutral territory. Once you get past the awkwardness and everyone feels comfortable, the foster parent can take the child to the parent's home for visits, or let the parent come to her home. These steps are case-by-case, moment-to-moment decisions made in partnership with the social worker, parent and foster parent.

### **Q: How can the child welfare agency help?**

A: The system has to value the relationship. Staff and caregivers have to be trained to understand, "This is our practice and expectation." It helps if foster parent recruitment makes the expectation clear. If you have a recruitment campaign that basically says, "Rescue children from their abusive parents," you're going to have a harder time than if it says, "Help children and their families."

It also helps if you have strong parent advocacy and parent advocates, so that parents are supported in being active participants in their lives and cases, not just told, "Here's your case plan, just do it."

You need structures in place, like an "icebreaker" meeting soon after placement where the parent and foster parent meet and talk about what the foster parent needs to know to take good care of the child. The foster parent can ask about the child's favorite foods or activities. The foster parent may say, "Johnny keeps asking me why he's in foster care. How can we handle that?"

Parents and foster parents can talk about how to have good visits. Would the parent like to bring the child a snack? Would the parent like to do the child's hair? Can they talk before the visit so that the parent can ask about the child's activities, like, "I heard you went to the zoo. Tell me about that." They can discuss how to end visits in a positive way. The more you can talk and agree up front, the smoother things will go.

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**A. F. T.  
A Fostering Thought**

## Turning the Tables

By Dr. Paul Brennan

*This is an account of a seemingly-impossible vision, ending ultimately in a strikingly-beautiful accomplishment. Although the subject is a table, its lessons apply naturally to our human efforts to salvage young lives. Read on . . .*

The shade of this monstrous monkeypod covered nearly all of the parking lot at 15 Craigside. It may have been one of the first species of *samanea saman*, introduced to Hawai'i in the 1880s. I often had seen this tree with exceptional canopy when attending meetings at the Hawai'i Conference United Church of Christ. Its planting, I knew, had probably preceded the first campus of Iolani School on the same location early in the 1900s. Could it be that this tree had witnessed the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai'i in 1893? Possibly. Could it be that this vantage point in Nuuanu, alongside historic cemeteries—scene of so many of the newcomers' residences—might have heard the earliest conversations about competing business ventures and alternative governments? Possibly.



Consequently when the UCC property changed hands in 2006, and I was granted permission to remove the tree, before major demolition was done, I was determined to save for posterity at least a portion of this exceptional tree. I only wanted "that slice down the center" I told the saw miller, "from natural edge to natural edge" for an "organic" table, plus enough wood for a leg assembly. The honeybees that had well-fortified their extensive home in the trunk and branches would prove to be but the first of many challenges in the long process of seeing my vision become reality. Over the next eight years I would come to appreciate what I had undertaken.

**RECOGNITION** - Every builder must make choices about the resources he or she has to work with. Because my slab stretched upwards from the base of the trunk to just above the first branch—a distance of about 8 and ½ feet—I was satisfied that would be sufficient size for the table top. Because it was 5" thick I felt it was sufficiently strong and could be straightened. But I did not envision that a stress fracture was in the heart of the trunk, caused by the heavy first branch which the trunk was supporting. The slab had integrity but would need stabilizing; this, I projected, would give special character to the furniture it would become, a conversation piece about life itself.

**DRYING** - The wetness of the interior showed me quickly how much air-drying would be required. So finally after eight years the moisture content had diminished to the point where it could begin to be worked. Some 200 pounds made a considerable difference in the slab's handling. Now in finished form only six men are needed to lift what weighs some 500 pounds. Previously it was a task for fork lifts.

**FLATTENING** -The flattening of one side of the slab was the biggest challenge of all. Efforts by hand would not have been sufficient because of its size. I trucked it to three large cabinet shops, and only at the last, Martin and McArthur, was there even a willingness to attempt to put it through their machines. The trunk's irregular shape in its width (roughly 4.6') became the issue of concern. Finally, after six years of drying on their racks, they called to inform me that the slab was "too wide". Helpfully they offered to cut it down the middle—"remove only two or three inches"—then glue it back together. I gratefully declined, remembering that radical surgery of that kind was neither the answer to human problems. After sitting at my house for several months, the solution for flattening dawned: maybe it could patiently be routed down on a fabricator's table. So placing it on a flat table designed for marble countertops, a commercial router guided by a computer methodically began the smoothing process, using a 3/8" bit. After one-half day's effort and many passes, my table was beginning to happen!

**STABILIZING** - While still on that flat table, I squeezed three cartridges of the best furniture epoxy available right down the entire stress fracture. I could almost hear the trunk of the tree, now "my baby", breathe a sigh of relief: "Now we're back together again!" and "There's no danger we'll ever fall apart!" The next day another fork lift rolled it down to another workshop, where the effort in earnest to produce a beautiful table could proceed.

**DESIGNED** - The sanding of the slab, from 40 grit to 400 grit, lasted an entire week, and once the true grain—from black to chocolate brown to yellows and reds—popped into focus. Now I could begin to visualize what the leg assembly should look like. Four solid legs, appropriate to the 3-and-one-half inch thickness of the slab, were turned on my lathe, and secured by a connecting trestle with pins. All of this wood, made from the very same tree, exhibiting the same color spectrum, forms a unity, and now purposefulness, that it never had before.

**APPRECIATION** - The entire effort, aside from the first seven years, spanned a period of about three months early this year, and then came an invitation to enter the table in the Fall Hawai'i Wood Show. Now completed, the hundreds of visitors have largely expressed comments like: "This should be at the entrance of a grand hotel where locals and visitors alike can truly appreciate it!" "This table has a story!" "I love that black stripe right down the middle. It's just like the struggles we all know!" Where it finally ends up remains to be seen, but it will be appreciated.

**POSTSCRIPT:** *Conceiving the task, and persevering with the task, would not have been possible without the benefit of knowing and working with foster children. Their example kept me focused and enabled me to understand what I was trying to accomplish in this whole effort. Just as they in every case have had to work "to turn the tables" on their own backgrounds, to reverse the conditions constraining them, so I have seen this effort through, fulfilled that the natural grains of this generally unappreciated wood could shine through in all its splendor. Many of these youth I introduced to hammers, saws and rulers—teaching them how to build simple things, so that now they can build the bigger things of life. May their grains continue to shine!*



## Get Ready for the 2016 Legislative Session

by Judith Wilhoite

*It Takes An `Ohana* (ITAO) Advisory Committee (IAC) continues to work at improving the experiences of resource families as well as children and youth in foster care. Here is a sample of legislation IAC will support during the 2016 Session:

- ♦ *Prudent Parenting* - IAC will work with DHS as they design Hawai'i's response to the federal *Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act*.
- ♦ *Sex Trafficking* – IAC will continue work on this issue in light of the fact that a high percentage of children that are bought and sold for sex are foster children.
- ♦ *UH SW and DHS Master's Program* – There is a push to bring back this effective program to increase the number of Masters of Social Work staff at CWS. Both DHS and the UH School of Social Work support this legislation.

To stay informed about and become involved in the latest in legislation advocacy, go to [www.ittakesanohana.org](http://www.ittakesanohana.org) and sign up on the right hand side of the webpage under *ITAO Newsletter*. Choose *Legislative Update* and you will receive an e-mail with updates. We make the process as easy as possible for you by sending you step-by-step directions when action is needed. We hope you will join us!



### Adoptive Families Needed Through Wendy's Wonderful Kids

Ricky is a three-year-old boy who is easy to fall in love with. He has a sweet smile and warm brown eyes. Developmentally, Ricky functions as a six-month-old and prognosis for future development is guarded. Ricky was born with multiple medical conditions that result in him requiring extensive care and support at this time. Ricky currently requires a tracheotomy to stabilize respiration and a g-tube to improve nutritional intake.

Ricky currently resides in a medical care facility in hopes to move in with his Forever Family at the beginning of next year. He would greatly benefit from having regular visits and contact with a loving, attuned caregiver. Ricky needs someone to hold him, rock him, read stories to him, and talk to him as he grows stronger and older. Ricky does recognize voices and his heart rate will settle in the arms of a favorite nurse or caregiver – a signal that communicates Ricky's need for love and connection.

Ricky is enrolled in pre-school through the Department of Education. His morning school routine is a favorite time of the day for Ricky. His teachers are working on improving his muscle strength and coordination, increasing his flexibility, and stimulating his senses. He enjoys visual and audio stimulation.

Ricky's Forever Family must be comfortable in a medical setting and be willing to learn about the many conditions that impact his health and wellbeing. Besides providing Ricky with a stable source of love and affection, a Forever Family must be willing to make important medical decisions about Ricky's care. In order to do this, they must accompany him to his medical appointments and participate in care team meetings.

A Forever Family for Ricky must be willing and able to provide daily care to him in a home setting with the support of a home health agency. A Forever Family does not need to have an extensive medical background but must be able to understand and follow medical instructions in regards to medications, equipment, infection control and other matters related to Ricky's health and wellbeing. Comprehensive care training will be provided by his current team of doctors and nurses.



Forever  
Family

If you are interested in learning more about Ricky and his need for permanency, please call Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter, Brigitte Tokuda, at (808) 540-2552 or email her at [Brigitte@familyprogramshawaii.org](mailto:Brigitte@familyprogramshawaii.org).

**There may be times when you, as a resource caregiver, have a question or concern and are not sure where to go for help. We will be presenting scenarios in each newsletter as a way to highlight different situations and suggestions on "Who Ya Gonna Call?"**

# Who Ya Gonna Call?

You're getting ready to go to the bank to deposit your foster board reimbursement check. You have your keys in hand and reach for the check that you put on the table...but it's not there! As you're trying to remember where you might have left it, you look down and see your dog sitting in the middle of what looks like confetti and looking rather guilty. Pull out your handy dandy "Who Ya Gonna Call" list that was in the January 2015 Building Connections Newsletter and look under *Check: late, lost, stolen, or overpayment*. Your child's Social Service Assistant will be able to help with the "dog ate my check" situation.



## Holiday Blues Tips List for Foster Youth

*by Youth of The Hawai'i Foster Youth Coalition*

The Holidays can be a very hard time for those separated from their families or who don't have families. Lots of people talk about how stressful the holidays can be. But foster youth REALLY understand just how tough it can be for young people in foster care. How do we know? Because we've been there. So, we've put together these tips for youth in foster care, developed by young people who know first-hand what it's like.

- ✧ Connect with your biological families by sending holiday greeting cards. Be respectful of a resource family's privacy and check with them to see if you should place the return address of their house on the envelope or if you should use an alternative, like the address of the DHS (some people may have concerns about the safety of the home if too many people have the address).
- ✧ Get involved with youth/peer support groups. Contact the Hawai'i Foster Youth Coalition at 808-545-5683 or at fosteryouthspeak@gmail.com, YES Hawai'i at 808-462-2144 or FosterClub, a national network for young people in foster care, at www.fosterclub.com.
- ✧ Connect with a church. If you belong to a church, check into all the holiday activities that might be going on and join in! Activities around the holidays might include social gatherings, caroling, volunteer efforts, and more.
- ✧ Stay connected with friends and hanai family.
- ✧ Engage in Traditions. You might want to start new traditions of your own.
- ✧ Do some volunteer work in the community.
- ✧ Make homemade gifts.
- ✧ Express your feelings to someone you trust.
- ✧ Make a scrap book for bio family.



More tips from FosterClub's youth (fosterclub.com):

"If you are sad or anxious about the holidays, just try to fully embrace the family you are with. Try to embrace their traditions and ways of doing things, you might enjoy yourself. It is ok to miss your family, try to get some contact with them. Just try to have fun and enjoy the things that you will be doing."

— FosterClub member Deborah, age 21, in foster care over 13 years

"Know when you are an adult you will illustrate the importance of family and do everything you can to spend time with the ones you love. Because of your bummed holidays in care I know you will go the extra mile to make holidays as special as possible. You will see the joy in your children's eyes; acquire recipes from friends, and share stories with supportive adults.

This part of your life may be painful and it will also be short. You will be one of the most fun people to spend a holiday with because you will most likely want to do as much as possible to make it as significant as possible!

Now that I am an adult I have already created new holiday traditions with my partner. We always play a board game on New Year's Eve and I make special fudge for my friends and family. Christmas is one of my favorite times because my friends come home from college and we have get togethers at my place.

I am sure you too will create your own traditions. Our experiences can make us stronger, brighter and more motivated individuals!"

— FosterClub member Shawn, age 21, in foster care 4 years

### **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.





## Welcome to FPH's Resource Family Support Services Corner

By April Lum, RFSS Family Resource Specialist

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



April Lum

## Ask the Warm Line

### What is respite and how does it work?

If you are providing foster care and need a break or are going on vacation, respite funds may be available to you as a reimbursement. You would need to arrange for someone to provide the care, be willing to pay them at the time of care and provide DHS the respite provider's full name, date of birth and social security number for a background check. DHS has a limited amount of funds per fiscal year, which are available on a first come first serve basis. Each resource caregiver is allotted 10 days per child, per year, and reimbursement payments are \$25.00 per day, per child. All respite reimbursements must be pre-approved. You should contact the foster child's social worker or social service assistant to utilize the respite funds.

## Care to Share

A project of Family Programs Hawai'i – Resource Families Support Services

"Care to Share" is a way for people to share their gently used items with families who have opened their home to children through fostering, adoption, or guardianship.

**Are you a resource, guardianship, or adoptive family in need of some help?** This is a practical place that can assist your family in finding needed items for the children in your home.

**Do you have something that a family could use, such as a crib, luggage, children's clothing, baby items, a bed, toys, etc.?** **Do you care to share?** You have a great opportunity to help children in foster care and their generous resource families. Give us a call to add your item to our list.

Call the Warm Line,  
for more information:  
545-1130 (Oahu)  
1-866-545-0882  
(toll-free for neighbor islands)  
E-mail: WarmLine@FamilyProgramsHi.org

Items that are currently needed include:

O'ahu - twin beds, bunk beds, dressers, toddler bed, couch

Hilo – twin bed, dresser

Kona – bunk bed



## Resource Family Basics

Did you know, as a resource caregiver...

A purchase order or reimbursement for clothing, shoes, and diapers are available up to \$600 per year, per child. Contact the child's social service assistant or social worker before purchasing any clothing for reimbursement. The social worker may also request clothing from the child's parents.

You can find this information under the *Clothing Allowance* section on the Resource Family Basics document. This is just one example of the wealth of information you can find on the Resource Family Basics to help resource families! Learn about different financial assistance, services, and resources, that are available and so much more! Go to the website below to see all that it has to offer!

<http://humanservices.hawaii.gov/ssd/files/2014/02/RESOURCE-FAMILY-BASICS-02-10.pdf>





## Teen Days

By Judith Wilhoite

Teen Days are celebrations for youth that provide current and former foster youth an opportunity to hear inspiring, motivational stories that come from young adults who were once at-risk youth, meet other foster youth and learn about community resources that can help them as they begin planning a bright future. Many Teen Days also include a mock hearing to prepare youth for attending their court hearings and provides an opportunity to meet and talk with Family Court judges.

Teen Days began in 2010 on O'ahu as a project of the Judiciary's Standing Committee on Children in Family Court. Teen Days are now held on Neighbor Islands, too. They are modeled after O'ahu's Teen Day, however, each island's event is unique to its location and are projects of the Hawai'i Youth Opportunities Initiative (HYOI) Hawai'i Helping Our People Envision Success (HI H.O.P.E.S.) Youth Leadership Board (YLB).

Foster youth receive gift cards, prizes and more importantly, information regarding programs that offer support in many areas. Delicious food is always served and door prizes are announced throughout the celebration with a grand prize awarded at the conclusion of each event.

Youth's resource caregivers, CWS workers, and GALs/CASA are invited to ALL Teen Days. This helps youth allies to understand the importance of youth attending their hearings, learn about resources available to youth, and understand the needs of youth as they prepare for adulthood. So, don't delay – register your Youth and yourself today!

### Details of Upcoming Teen Days

#### Oahu: Teen Day XII: Dream4Real

- December 18, 2015 (Friday)
- 11AM to 4PM
- Ronald T.Y. Moon Kapolei Courthouse
- Open to Youth age 14 to 17 in foster care, legal guardianship, or who have been adopted from foster care.
- To register, download flyer with registration form at [www.ittakesanohana.org](http://www.ittakesanohana.org) or contact youth's social worker, GAL or CASA. Call Judith at 808-540-2543 for more info.

#### Kona: Teen Day II: Applications to Success

- December 22, 2015 (Tuesday)
- 10 AM to 2 PM
- Location: TBD
- Open to Youth ages 14 to 21 currently or formerly in foster care or legal guardianship and to youth adopted from CWS.
- To register, contact Sharla-Ann Fujimoto at 808-936-4399 or [sfujimoto@epicohana.org](mailto:sfujimoto@epicohana.org). Download flyer with more info at [www.ittakesanohana.org](http://www.ittakesanohana.org).

Youth will learn about Imua Kākou, how to apply for jobs, have a talk story session with local business owners / managers of stores around town, and be introduced to valuable resources they can utilize in our community when they are preparing for the world of work.

#### Maui: Teen Day

- January 4, 2016 (Monday)
- 9AM to 1PM
- Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center
- Open to Youth ages 14 to 21 currently or formerly in foster care or legal guardianship and to youth adopted from CWS.
- To register, contact Paula Higuchi for application and registration at 242-4363 or [paulah@bgcmaui.org](mailto:paulah@bgcmaui.org). Download flyer with more info at [www.ittakesanohana.org](http://www.ittakesanohana.org).

Youth will learn about their rights as a foster youth, new laws that affect them, programs that can provide scholarships as well as meeting face-to-face with the Honorable Keith Tanaka, Maui's family court judge.



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 web-site for the latest news and training schedule:

[www.PatchHawaii.org](http://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



## Upcoming Training on Grief, Loss, and Trauma

Family Programs Hawai'i is excited to present their next statewide training titled, "Giving Grief Guidance: Navigating Loss and Trauma" with guest speaker Cynthia Rollo-Carlson, MSW, MA, LCSW, LADC, CT. Cynthia currently teaches at the University of Southern California graduate school of social work. She is also a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with complicated grief and loss as her specialty. Cynthia is not only an academic and clinician, but also shares her story of survival and hope following the traumatic death of her husband in 1997 when her children were 8 and 10 years old. She later married her current husband, Doug, who adopted and co-raised her boys. Cynthia and her husband spend half of the year in Pahoehoe, HI where their son Zachariah resides and spend the other half of their year in Northern Minnesota.

Her training will be presented in November on O'ahu, West Hawai'i, and Maui and presented in January 2016 in East Hawai'i and Kaua'i. It will address how grief and loss are connected to various types of childhood trauma. Cynthia will be providing tools to caregivers so that they can help foster children navigate their grief and process. The training will help families understand different responses to loss and the resulting adaptive behavior. It will also address the psychological safety for caregivers, biological children in their family and the foster children through the transitions of children entering and exiting the family unit.

It's a training you won't want to miss! See the calendar on page 11 for specific dates and locations. Call the Warm Line to RSVP or for more information.



## RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT

### Have you heard about Hawai'i Youth Opportunities Initiative?

The mission of the Hawai'i Youth Opportunities Initiative is to ensure that young people — primarily those between ages 14 and 26 — make successful transitions from foster care to adulthood. They do this by working with public and private partners on the state and local level to improve policies and practices, promote youth engagement, apply evaluation and research, and create community partnerships. Their work creates opportunities for young people to achieve positive outcomes in permanence, education, employment, housing, health, financial capability, and social capital.

For more information, please contact Statewide Initiative Coordinators Delia Ulma (808) 748-7052 or Jeanne Hamilton (808) 218-6875 or visit [www.epicohana.org](http://www.epicohana.org).



## '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!**

If you can refer, help, cheer, and see your referral to the finish line to become licensed, you could earn a **\$200 gift card** of your choice and be listed here as an 'Ohana Rewards recipient!

Henrilyn Akima  
Ti-Marie Hulihee  
Kauai Keola  
Jennie Maikui  
Esther & Brad McDaniels  
Lorelei Ramos  
Perpetua Ramos

Call Hui Ho'omalu today at 441-1117 or 1-888-879-8970 (toll free) for more information!

## November is National Adoption Month so it's time to celebrate!

Who's Invited: ADOPTIVE FAMILIES  
(no friends or extended family members please)

Where: ICE PALACE HAWAII  
4510 Salt Lake Blvd. B6 Honolulu, HI 96818

When: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22

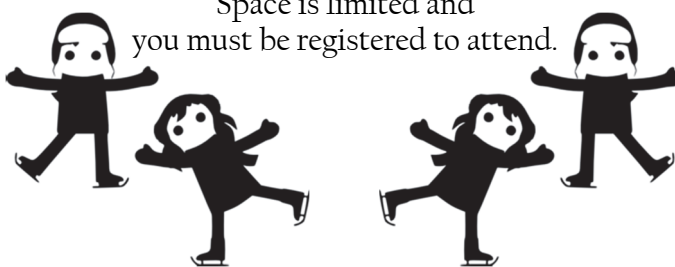
Time: 6:30pm-9:00pm

Cost: FREE!!!

Adoptive families may register online at <http://bit.ly/NADHawaii>

Check the flyer or call Rae at 527-4925 for password or for more information.

Space is limited and you must be registered to attend.



# Calendar of Events

## O'AHU

- Nov 5 (Thurs)** **Giving Grief Guidance: Navigating Loss and Trauma Training.** 5:30pm-8:00pm. Catholic Charities Hawai'i. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531 ext. 245 by 10/29.
- Nov 7 (Sat)** **Giving Grief Guidance: Navigating Loss and Trauma Training.** 5:30pm-8:00pm. New Hope Leeward – Kapolei Campus. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531 ext. 245 by 10/30.
- Nov 10 (Tue)** **Addiction in Foster Care Training.** 5:30pm-8:00pm. Waimanalo District Park. RSVP to the Warm Line at 545-1130 by 11/3.
- Nov 13 (Fri)** **Windward Resource Families Support Group.** 6pm-8:30pm. Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center, Ko'olau Poko Unit. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531, ext. 245 by 11/6.
- Nov 20 (Fri)** **Wai'anae Resource Families Support Group.** 5:30pm-8:00pm. 'Ohana Ola Kahumana. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531 ext. 245 by 11/13.
- Nov 22 (Sun)** **National Adoption Month Celebration at Ice Palace.** 6:30-9:00pm. A fun evening of ice skating for adoptive families. For more information, call the Warm Line: 545-1130.
- Dec 6 (Sun)** **2015 Holiday Party.** 10am-2:30pm. Special party for all resource, guardianship and adoptive families at Neal Blaisdell Center Exhibition Hall. For more information, call the Warm Line: 545-1130.
- Dec 17 (Thur)** **Central O'ahu Resource Families Support Group.** 5:30pm-8:00pm. O'ahu Veterans Center. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531 ext. 245 by 12/10.
- Dec 18 (Fri)** **Teen Day XII: Dream 4Real** - An event to lend a guiding hand to current and former foster youth ages 14 and older. 11:00am-4:00pm. Ronald T.Y. Moon Kapolei Courthouse. RSVP to ITAO at 540-2543 by 12/11.

## EAST HAWAII

- Nov 14 (Sat)** **Hilo Resource Families Support Group.** 12:00pm-2:30pm. Haili Congregational Church. RSVP to the Warm Line at 1-866-545-0882 by 11/6.

## KAUAI

- Nov 19 (Thur)** **Kauai Resource Families Talk Story Time.** 5:30pm-8:00pm. Lihu'e United Church. RSVP to the Warm Line at 1-866-545-0882 by 11/12.

## MAUI COUNTY

- Nov 20 (Fri)** **Giving Grief Guidance: Navigating Loss and Trauma Training.** 5:00pm-7:30pm. J. Walter Cameron Center. RSVP to the Warm Line at 1-866-545-0882 by 11/13.
- Dec 17 (Thur)** **Maui Resource Families Support Group.** 5:30pm-8pm at Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center. RSVP to the Warm Line at 1-866-545-0882 (toll free) by 8/13.

## WEST HAWAII

- Nov 18 (Wed)** **Giving Grief Guidance: Navigating Loss and Trauma Training and Talk Story Time.** 5:00pm-8:00pm. Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity. RSVP to the Warm Line at 1-866-545-0882 by 11/11.
- Dec 22 (Tue)** **Teen Day II: Applications to Success** - For current and former foster youth ages 14 to 21. 10:00am-2:00pm. Location: TBD. RSVP to Sharla-Ann Fujimoto at 936-4399 or email at sfujimoto@epicohana.org.

Funding for FPH support groups, trainings, and annual conferences is provided by the Department of Human Services

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

**Part-time Co-trainers Needed.** *Resource Caregivers/Former Foster Youth in Maui, Kauai and O'ahu* are needed to co-train new Resource Caregivers in the HANAI curriculum. Your experience is invaluable to a new family just learning about providing foster care. Come and share what you've learned/experienced over the years with others!!! Trainings are generally held intermittently on some weekday evenings and some Saturdays. Training and compensation provided.

**Part-time Child Care Providers needed in East Hawaii, West Hawaii, Kauai, and O'ahu** to provide child care (i.e., during trainings), in the evenings and weekends on an occasional basis. Training and compensation provided.

**Part-time Recruitment Assistants needed in West Hawaii and O'ahu** to staff various recruitment booths and share information with potential applicants about the need for additional Resource Caregivers. Times will vary and may include evenings and weekends, on an occasional basis. Training and compensation provided.

**HUI HO'OMALU** - A Program of Partners in Development Foundation

See [www.pidfoundation.org/about/careers](http://www.pidfoundation.org/about/careers)

Email resume & application w/cover letter to: HR@pidfoundation.org or fax to 440-6619

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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*

*Partners in Development Foundation—Hui Ho'omalua*