

Building Connections

A Newsletter for Resource Families

Volume 11 | Issue 3

January 2018

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The Song of warmth
Many Sisters, many laughs.
Music playing sweet sounds to calm
the heart.



Dark rooms lit with warm lava lamps
and phone screens to relax the mind.

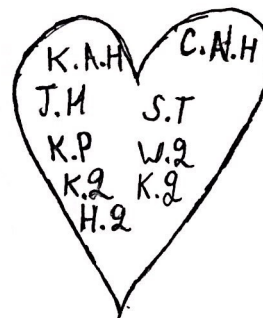


Bon fires Dancing like us as we dance
under the moon light.



Cooking and cleaning as one family.
Learning lessons from each other to be
closer.

A family where love and kindful
hearts are always welcome.



This poem was written by a foster youth on Kana'i. She wanted this to be shared with the foster care community in Hawai'i. It is a beautiful reminder to Resource Caregivers, service providers, social workers, and all who work to support children in foster care of the heart of what we do. Children are always observing, learning, and loving.

Happy Holidays and Mahalo for all that you do.

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 quarterly by Partners in Development Foundation, 2040 Bachelot St., Honolulu HI 96817-2433, 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

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!



Circles of Support

By

Wilma Friesema, EPIC `Ohana, Inc.

For teens, becoming an adult is exciting but also laced with pressure. Who am I? What career do I want? How am I going to make it on my own when I turn eighteen?

These questions put even more pressure on teens in foster care. Without a strong safety net, staying on track is like walking on a tightrope and missteps can quickly become disasters. If foster youth age out of the system without a safety net and plan for their future, drug use, unemployment, and unstable housing can easily become their reality.

EPIC `Ohana, Inc. offers a unique program that helps foster youth navigate the transition to adulthood. E Makua Ana Youth Circles is a youth driven process that empowers youth to clarify their goals and identify supportive people and resources. The "Circles," as they're called, are meetings that bring together people, who are important to the youth, to help the youth plan for his or her future.

The youth help to create the Circle from the very beginning. They choose who will attend, what food will be served, how they want the meeting to start, and how it will end. While there is a format that the EPIC facilitator follows, it is the youth who chooses a plan of action. The group is there to brainstorm, identify available resources, and lend a helping hand when they can.

We hear resource caregivers describe this as a positive process that helps the youth in their care to dream about possibilities and create a roadmap to attain that dream. They also like that youth can have multiple youth circles, called "re-circles", helping to keep everyone on track.

Studies have shown that resiliency isn't solely an innate capacity; it can be cultivated and enhanced by people and processes that are optimistic, strength-based, collaborative, and individualized. When Youth Circles and re-circles become a transitional tool for the youth over several years, the youth start to think differently – about themselves and their abilities, about how they want to make it in the world as an adult. The process helps them think about options and resources, and the actions they have to take in order to access that assistance. It helps them and their resource caregivers through the maze of information, deadlines, and commitments they must make which can have an impact and real consequences for their lives.

Below is a small sampling of participants' feedback when asked what was most useful at a youth circle:

- *"Discovering things about me that I didn't even know about myself." – youth*

Continued on pg. 3

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!

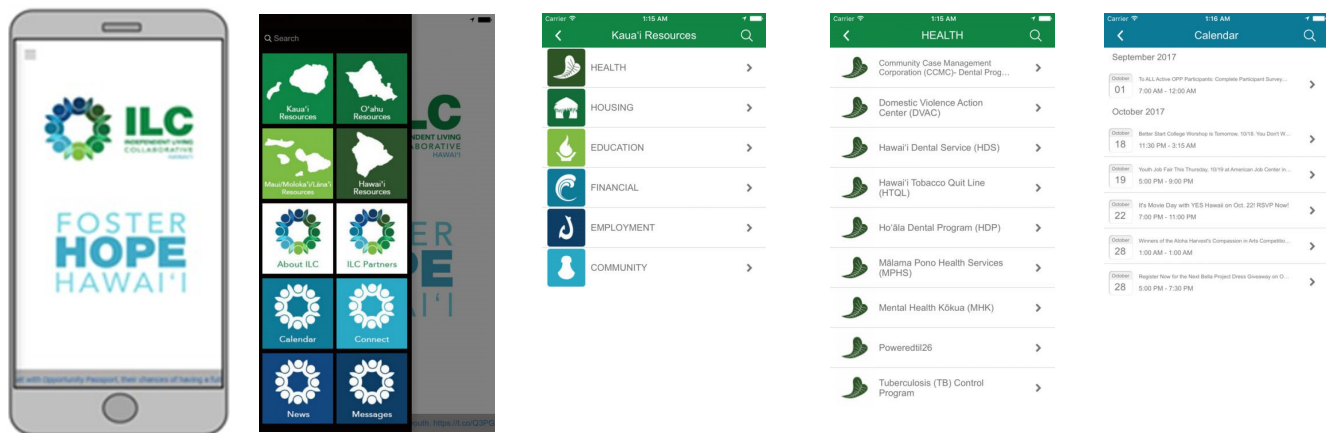


- *"I loved the written plan for my foster son that came to us after the youth circle. It really helped guide us through his senior year, which is truly a stressful year in the life of any teenager and their caregiver."* – resource caregiver
- *"Allowing youth to hear what people felt about her & also to have it reinforced to her that she has a good support system in place for success. It helped to hear about the different programs available to youth."* – supporter
- *"The things I found most useful about the re-circle were talking about housing and financial aid/scholarships when moving to Oahu. And the way we were all comfortable with each other."* – youth
- *"It really did help detail the plans of what youth wants to do in the future, which I believe really brought him closer to accomplishing his goals."* – youth's sister
- *"That everybody cared about what I had to say; they were there for me."* – youth

Youth Circles is a tool that encourages that resiliency. It's available to all foster youth ages 14 through 26, for however many times they may need it. Transitioning into adulthood is rarely easy, but with enough support foster youth can make it and thrive. Be sure to use this amazing tool to help you with the foster youth in your home!

Youth Circles is funded by Hawaii's Department of Human Services. For more information about EPIC, Inc. and Youth Circles please visit our website: www.EpicOhana.org or contact Mitchell Odo at 808-748-7055 or modo@epicohana.org.

DOWNLOAD THE APP! Foster HOPE Hawai'i IT'S FREE, AND FULL OF INFO! HERE'S A PREVIEW:



Information is island-specific; find detailed information on topics such as Health, Housing, Education, Employment. There is also a Calendar with important dates for college deadlines, community happenings, and more! The app is updated regularly, and you can set it up to receive alerts of upcoming events and new resources.

The **Foster HOPE Hawai'i** app is one way the State of Hawai'i is working to empower youth who are in the foster care system and the many adults who support them. The Independent Living Collaborative, which implemented and maintains the app, is led by EPIC 'Ohana and includes Hale 'Opio, the Salvation Army, Hale Kipa and Maui Youth and Family Services.

National Adoption Day Highlights

By
Mindy Chung, Family Programs Hawai'i

This year's National Adoption Day was another huge success! The celebration took place on Sunday, November 19, 2017 at Ice Palace. Over 350 children and families shared that they had a ton of fun! Families were able to spend quality time together as they skated, caught up with friends and met new people as well. When asked, families were eager to share their stories on how adoption had changed their lives, and what a privilege it has been for them to provide a home full of love for a child/ren in need. I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce you to two such families:



The Schlupp family's story is one that will melt your heart away. They believe that their two adopted children came into their life for a greater purpose, and that purpose was from God. The Schlupps feel blessed to have adopted a boy, age eleven, and his little sister, age nine. They also have a biological son who is now six years old, and gets along very well with his new older siblings. In case there was a question if these children were supposed to be with them, listen to these coincidences: The day the children came into the Schlupp's family was Mrs. Schlupp and Mr. Schlupp's mother's birthday. The Schlupp's eleven year old adopted son and their six-year-old biological son share the same birthday. It was meant to be! The Schlupps believe that anything is possible, and love that their children will grow up knowing God and that they are greatly loved.

Another amazing family is the Keola family. Their goal has always been to keep families together. Because of this value, they now have fifteen children in their home ranging from ages thirty four all the way down to two months old, many of which are siblings. As they shared their passion for family with me, Mrs. Keola said, with a huge smile on her face "and this just happened" as she gestured to all her Ohana.

Mahalo to the Schlupp and Keola families and all families who open their hearts and homes to children in foster care who need forever homes. We celebrate you!



Adoptive Families Needed Through Wendy's Wonderful Kids



Forever
Family

Jason is a 17 year old male of Hawaiian/Filipino ancestry who is currently in his sophomore year at Farrington High School. He has a strong sense of doing what is right, and is passionate about treating people with respect and looking at situations through a "glass half full" perspective. He is someone that is sought after by his friends for advice, and he has become quite comfortable with the role of being a problem solver. His dream job would be to become a Navy Seal, and it is his ultimate hope to be able to serve his country in this capacity. Jason spends most of his free time with his girlfriend and his girlfriend's mom attending military concerts, going to movies, hanging out and just having fun with one another.

Jason continues to have a strong connection with his biological mother, and because of this his mother's rights have not been terminated as of yet. Jason understands that his mom does not have the capacity to care for him in the way that he may need, but still believes she did the best with what she had. He often wrestles with his desire to have a family and feeling guilty for entertaining this thought. Maintaining Jason at Farrington High School is believed to be paramount to his success, as this is the place where he is currently excelling.

Wendy's Wonderful Kids seeks to find good homes for great kids in tough situations. If you are interested in learning more about Jason and his need for permanent, nurturing connections, please contact Mindy Chung, Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter, at (808) 540-2552 or by email at mchung@familyprogramshi.org.

Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard: Common Question

The following is an excerpt from the *Don't Say "NO" Until You "Know"* guide, which was developed by the State of Hawai'i Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Services and our community partners. The guide presents common questions and answers for Resource Caregivers on providing normalcy for children/young people in foster care to participate equally in age or developmentally appropriate extracurricular, social, and cultural activities as their classmates and peers. These Q & A's can be found within the Normalcy Guidelines provided by your DHS licensing worker.

Question: What liability does a Resource Caregiver and identified Child Caring Institution staff have in allowing a child/young person to participate in age-appropriate activities?

Answer: A Resource Caregiver and identified Child Caring Institution staff are **not liable for harm** caused to a child/young person who participates in an activity approved by the Resource Caregiver, **provided that the caregiver has acted in accordance with the reasonable and prudent parent standard**. Additionally, the caregiver is required to promote normalcy for the child/young person to the fullest extent possible and shall allow the child/young person to participate in age-appropriate activities at home, in school, and in the community (Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (P.L. 113-183/H.R. 4980 Section 111 Supporting Normalcy for Children in Foster Care).

Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) §346-17 Child placing organizations, child caring institutions, and resource family homes; authority over, investigation of, and standards for. **"Qualified Immunity"**-As defined in HRS 346-17 Any resource caregiver or child caring institution issued a certificate of approval pursuant to this section shall be immune from liability in a civil action to recover damages for injury, death, or loss to a person or property that results by authorizing a child in the caregiver's or institution's foster care to participate in an extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, or social activity; provided that the authorization is in accordance with the reasonable and prudent parent standard as defined in title 42 United States Code section 675 (10) (A).



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?**

It's flu season in Hawai'i! Fall and Winter months are the most common outbreak months. If your child in placement becomes ill or gets injured, notify the Child's Social Worker, contact his/her regular Doctor as needed and call 911 or head to the ER if needed.



Resource Family Basics ~ FYI

There is a Mandatory Ongoing Training Requirement for all licensed resource families with a minimum of six (6) training hours per family required annually or 12 hours over a two year licensing period.

The Department provides funding to support resource family training for DHS foster home licensure through Hui Ho'omalū. Ongoing training is provided by Family Programs Hawaii (Hui Ho'omalū).

An approved ongoing training list is available through your licensing worker or the Warm Line.

Online training is available, you may call the Warm Line to register.

Community Workshops are listed at www.ittakesanohana.org or you may call the Warm Line.

Speakers and workshops on a variety of topics of interest are available throughout the year, many at little or no cost, especially those presented by the collaborative Foster Care/Training Committees.

Meet your Mandatory Ongoing Training Requirement by utilizing FPH's Vimeo online access! (Refer to this edition, "Ask the Warm Line" section)



'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

*Congratulations Tyrell & Rocky Kim
Enjoy your Target gift card!*

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

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 all you do for
Hawai'i's keiki and families!*

Advertise in the Newsletter—Promote Your Business

100% of the proceeds will be used towards supporting Hawai'i's 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'omalū—RAC, 680 Iwilei Rd., Ste. 500, Honolulu, HI 96817

441-1125 (O'ahu) ★ 888-879-8970 (Toll Free) ★ Fax: 441-1122 ★ Email: 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 Salome Bala, RFSS Warm Line Family Resource Specialist
Resource Family Support Services (RFSS) is funded by the Department of Human Services



Salome Bala

Ask the Warm Line

Happy New Year! Thank you to all of the statewide resource caregivers who called the Warm Line to inquire about trainings, Care to Share, support and referrals. This past quarter there were numerous inquiries on how to earn training hours for re-licensure. As you may be aware, we provide a DVD lending library, where you can borrow DVDs of past quarterly trainings and annual conferences, mailed directly to your door. For those who just can't make it out to the training or conference in your area, or those who live in an area where there is no convenient way to access these live trainings, **we are excited to offer another way that you can view vid-**

eos of past quarterly trainings and annual conferences. Introducing VIMEO online training access! www.vimeo.com This is a great way to meet the Mandatory Ongoing Training Requirement! (Reference "Resource Family Basics ~ FYI" Section)

Q: What is Vimeo?

A: Vimeo is an online video streaming service that is similar to YouTube.

Q: Do I need internet access to watch the trainings on Vimeo?

A: Yes, you will need a internet connection.

Q: Which trainings are available on Vimeo?

A: All of the trainings that were available for viewing through our DVD library are available on Vimeo. Actual movies, such as the *Blindside* or *Antwone Fisher*, are not available on Vimeo.

Q: Are the trainings free?

A: Yes, there is no fee to access the trainings on Vimeo.

Q: Am I able to access the trainings myself, or do I need to call the Warm Line to access them?

A: You will need to call the Warm Line to access any of the trainings online, whether it is the trainings offered through Vimeo or training via Foster Parent College. When you call the Warm Line to access any of the trainings on Vimeo, a letter will be emailed to you with a link to the training and instructions on how to access the training, as a password is required. For those interested in accessing Foster Parent College, an account will be set up for you by our staff so that you will not need to pay the fee.

Q: Are these trainings still available via DVD, in case I don't have access to the internet?

A: Yes, they are still available via DVD. Please call the Warm Line to request that they be sent to your mailing address.

Q: Can I watch them even if I don't need training hours, and would just like to learn something new that may benefit my family?

A: Yes! Of course, if you are an adoptive parent, legal guardian, or permanent custodian and looking for resources and information that you think may benefit you and your family, you are more than welcome to view our DVD trainings.

If you would like to view one of our past quarterly trainings of annual conferences, either online or on DVD, or if you would like to know what DVDs are available to view please call the Warm Line at either 545-1130 or toll free at 1-866-545-0882.

Family Programs Hawai'i 19th Annual Holiday Party

By

April Lum, Family Programs Hawai'i

What a joyous occasion it was to see over 1500 children and families gather together on December 3, 2017 for Family Programs Hawai'i's 19th Annual Holiday Party on Oahu! After 19 years of the community coming together to hold this festive event, the Annual Holiday Party has become a tradition for many resource families on Oahu. It is a time for the children to see their friends or siblings, for caregivers to network and see old friends and of course make new friends, and a time for families to take their yearly picture with Santa Claus.

Families were asked to share a memory or what they liked best about the Annual Holiday Party. Here is what some had to say about the event:

"During our daughter's first time here, she met another girl sitting at our table. They connected instantly and she always looks forward to seeing her every year! Seeing their smiles and squeals of joy is worth so much."

"We liked seeing the happiness on my kids faces and the joy they get to have when not feeling like a 'foster child'."

"This event helped us as a family to know that we weren't alone. It helped us bond with other families with similar situations of raising and building confidence in our children whom we care for."

This event would not be possible without the help of our generous donors and over 800 volunteers, for which we are so grateful. Also, we wish to say a special Mahalo Nui Loa and Happy Holidays to all the Resource Families who open their hearts and homes to care for Hawai'i's precious keiki.



Calendar of Events

O'AHU

- Jan 19 (Fri)** **Waianae Resource Families Support Group:** 5:30pm-8:00pm. Maili Learning Center. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531 ext. 245 by 1/12.
- Feb 9 (Fri)** **Windward Resource Families Support Group:** 6:00pm-8:30pm. Kailua District Park - RSVP to FPH at 521-9531 ext. 245 by 2/2.
- Feb 22 (Thur)** **Central O'ahu Resource Families Support Group:** 5:30pm-8:00pm. Aiea United Methodist Church. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531 ext. 245 by 2/15.
- Mar 16 (Fri)** **Waianae Resource Families Support Group:** 5:30pm-8:00pm. Maili Learning Center. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531 ext. 245 by 3/09.

EAST HAWAI'I

- Jan 20 (Sat)** **Hilo Resource Families Support Group:** 12:00pm-2:30pm. Christ Lutheran Church. RSVP to the Warm Line at 1-866-545-0882 by 1/12.
- Mar 17 (Sat)** **Hilo Resource Families Support Group:** 12:00pm-2:30pm. Christ Lutheran Church. RSVP to the Warm Line at 1-866-545-0882 by 3/09.

WEST HAWAI'I

- Jan 29 (Mon)** **Kona Resources Families Support Group:** 5:30pm – 8:00pm. Kealahou High School. RSVP to the Warm Line at 1-866-545-0882 by 1/22.

KAUAI

- Feb 1 (Thurs)** **Kauai Resource Families Talk Story Time:** 5:30pm-8:00pm. Lihue United Church. RSVP to the Warm Line at 1-866-545-0882 by 3/25.

MAUI COUNTY

- Feb 15 (Thur)** **Maui Resource Families Support Group:** 5:30pm-8:00pm. Kahului Union Church. RSVP toll free to the Warm Line at 1-866-545-0882 by 2/08.

Please check the Resource Families Support Services page at www.familyprogramshawaii.org for updated information on future events.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Resource Caregivers are needed to assist with Co-Training Hanai sessions and recruitment activities!

Part-time Co-trainers Needed. *Resource Caregivers/Former Foster Youth on 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. Pay rate: \$15.00/hour.

Part-time Child Care Providers needed in West Hawai'i, Kaua'i, O'ahu and Maui to provide child care (i.e., during trainings), in the evenings and weekends on an occasional basis. Training and compensation provided. Pay rate: \$15.00/hour.

Part-time Recruitment Assistants needed in West Hawai'i, Kaua'i and Maui to staff various recruitment booths and share information with potential applicants about the need for additional Resource Caregivers. Training and compensation provided. Pay rate: \$15.00/hour.

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

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Statewide Resource Advisory Committee

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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