

RAFFT News



READY... SET... GO!!!

The little girl to the right demonstrates the reaction that we sometimes get from some of our families when they receive an email update on their in-service training hours. We understand that panic feeling because it happens to all of us at times! Despite our best intentions to get a certain thing done, something comes up and we put it off. Then other things come up and we put it off again. So....

Social Services ask all foster parents to complete. Here are some key points:

- Five of the ten hours should be face-to-face with a trainer. Those could be at a training that we offer or classes in the community through schools, churches, etc. If the class relates to child welfare topics, parenting children, or topics that help you as a foster parent, we will see if we can count the hours that you attend. Examples of these are first aid classes, CPR training, or ways to handle stress. Classes about nutrition for children, or classes directly related to foster care and adoption are other options.



child welfare related movies. For credit, send us a certificate of completion for an on-line course or a brief paragraph summarizing the topic.

- We are attaching a list of our current books and videos from the RAFFT Lending Library with this newsletter. To check something out, please call Debbie Laton at :

540-507-7852

*The training year ends
12/31/16.*



It's a new year, and a fresh start to obtaining the ten (10) hours of yearly in-service training hours that the Virginia Department of

Blankets from the Heart

We would like to send out a huge thank you to Heather F., an area student, who completed a community service project for our foster children. She assembled pink and blue tote bags and filled each one with a soft and comfortable blanket, and a stuffed animal, doll, or toy. There is a note attached to each bag that reads:

This Blanket

This blanket was made to be specifically yours,

To give you comfort and peace,

To bring you joy, hope, and a soft place to land,

And the courage to dream some great dreams.

For You with Love



RAFFT

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KIDS PAGE

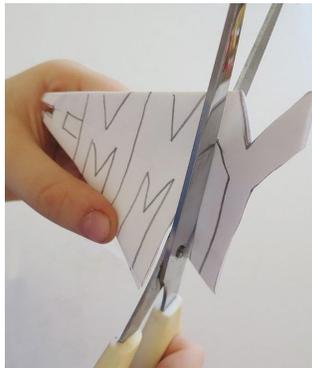
Name Snowflakes

What you need:

- Round white paper (longer names require bigger sheets of paper)
- Pencil
- Scissors

How you do it:

- Fold the paper in half and then into quarters and then in halves again (which is actually an eighth & a good math lesson)



Name snowflakes!

- Use a pencil to write the name across the folded circle in block or bubble letters
- Make sure the top and bottom of each letter touches the folded edges of the paper.
- The letters also need to touch each other at at least one point. Don't leave a space between them.
- Cut the non-letter space

away, being careful to not cut all the way between the two letters. Some letters (like B and P) can be challenging to cut in the middle so large pieces of thin paper will work best.

- **Supervise children with the scissors at all times and assist them when needed!**
- Open the finished snowflake. It will show the name and other letters will repeat as part of the design.

From Christie @ Childhood 101 parenting blog and found on Pinterest.com

Paint with Ice

What you need:

- Liquid tempura paint
- Ice cube tray
- Craft sticks
- Paper
- Plastic wrap



How do to it:

- Help child pour paint into ice tray cubes

- Cover the tray tightly with plastic wrap & help the child poke a hole and stand up a craft stick in the middle of each paint cube.
- Carefully put in freezer until the pain is frozen solid
- Time to paint!
- Help the child pop their chosen color out of the tray

- Holding the craft stick, the child can swirl the paint over the paper. As it melts, it will leave a lovely trail of paint.
- As they paint, you can talk to them about the process of freezing & melting. They can also explore mixing colors together to make new colors.

Taken from education.com

Fish for Numbers (or Letters) Game

What you need:

- Construction paper in various colors
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Magnet
- Paper clips
- Dowel or small stick
- String to form fishing line
- Glue

How do to it:

- Cut ten fish shapes, about 6 inches long of different colors
- Write different numbers from 1 to 10 on each fish
- Punch a hole in each one near the mouth area. Slide a paper clip through each one to attach.
- Tie a string to the dowel to make a fishing rod.



- Glue the magnet to the end of the string and let it dry thoroughly.

- To play: Scatter the fish so that the numbers are visible. Tell you child: "I'm hungry for a number 4 fish!" and watch him/her lower the rod until the magnet catches the paperclip. You can also do math addition games.

By Hannah Boyd on pinterest.com

Keeping Children Safe in Social Media

The entire country is reeling from the recent shocking murder of Nicole Lovell, a 13 year old girl, who was allegedly killed by two students at Virginia Tech. It is sometimes difficult for parents to keep up with current safety protocols for keeping children safe in the social media world. This latest tragic death began on an anonymous messaging app for smart phones that kids can download for free. This tragedy shows how very important it is for parents to proactively monitor closely their child's use of the various web accessible items including computers, smart phones, tablets, and gaming systems. The good news is that there are many wonderful sites available to inform parents and children about

internet safety. If you search "child internet safety" on the internet, you will find many options to check out. Here are some good sites aimed at keeping children safe in the social media world. Hit control click to access:

- <http://www.netsmartz.org/>
(from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children)
- <https://kids.usa.gov/online-safety/index.shtml> (from the U.S. General Services Administration)
- <https://www.ncjrs.gov/internetsafety/children.html> (from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service)

- From the Federal Bureau of Investigation:
 - ⇒ <https://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/parent-guide>
 - ⇒ <https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2012/october/new-cyber-safety-website-for-teachers-students>
 - ⇒ <https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2015/june/fbi-safe-online-surfing-internet-challenge/fbi-safe-online-surfing-internet-challenge>

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

At a recent VDSS regional meeting, our policy specialist recommended **no face shots of foster children on Facebook**. We are in the process of developing a full media policy guideline for foster parents. Please feel free to share your thoughts and questions with us. We welcome your feedback on the topic. Thanks!

Substance Abuse Training

We plan to offer a special training on Substance Abuse in April. This session is the last of a four part training collaboration that began in October 2015 with Dr. Arezoo Khanzadeh, a Licensed Clinical Psychologist from National Counseling Group, and Lisa Dolan, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Lead Social Worker for the Spotsylvania County School System.

This training will be presented by Mike Hawkins, a certified Substance Abuse Counselor at National Counseling Group. Mr. Hawkins has more than twenty years of experience working with

children and families and has very current information to share regarding substance abuse issues in our area.

The increasing levels of substance abuse in families that social services agencies work with is reaching crisis levels throughout the state. Children are being seriously impacted through abuse, neglect, and sometimes prenatal drug exposure. We hope you will be able to join us for this very important training. Three hours of training credit will be given



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW:
MONDAY, 4/18/16
6-9PM
SPOTSYLVANIA SOCIAL
SERVICES**

Please note: This training date was rescheduled from April 7th due to a scheduling conflict for our speaker. A flyer with complete details will be sent by email to all of our foster parents next weeks. When you receive the flyer, please call us to RSVP.

RAFFT Lending Library

As noted on the first page, five of the ten in-service training hours can be completed at your own pace by completing on-line courses, reading books, or watching child welfare-related themes. We also maintain a small Lending Library of books and some videos. All of the materials are available for our foster families to check out, review, and return. If you check out a book or movie from our lending library, please write a short paragraph about what you read or

watched and how it relates to caring for foster children. Email your paragraph to Jan, Marilyn, or Debbie and we will add the hours to your training log.

We have attached a copy of all of the current items in the Lending Library with this newsletter. Please return items promptly when you finish, so that others may use them too. Thank you!





The Moon and the Stars

Taken from Swings Hanging from Every Tree– compiled and edited by Ramona Cunningham

Once I cared for a small boy who was afraid of the dark. The use of a night light didn't help him because it created shadows he imagined to be evidence of something out to hurt him. Leaving the light on in the room proved to be too distracting, because he wanted to get up and play with everything in sight. As I explored options for providing some measure of comfort for him I landed on the idea of glow-in-the-dark stars.

We affixed the moon and several stars to the ceiling and walls of his room and left the light on for awhile before he went to bed. When he did go to bed the stars glowed all around him, and he was thrilled. He would tell me stories of what he imagined, dreams of going up there and flying through space. He would fall asleep and the light of the stars would gently fade until the next night.

When he left to go home he took his stars with him. Well, he took all but one. I kept that one and I hung it on my wall near my bed and each night when I turn out the lights to go to sleep I see it, and I see him in my mind. I wish him well and go to sleep knowing I gave at least one child the moon and the stars.

*By Susan, foster and adoptive grandparent, and
former foster family recruiter and trainer*

Editor's note: I love this one!- Jan

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