

YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU

Foster Parent Quarterly

*This quarter's article is written by Terri Pinder, YSB Licensing worker. She attended a one-day training on **Trust Based Relational Intervention**, better known as **TBRI**, on October 5, 2017 at the Community Christian Church in Naperville, Illinois. Inside this newsletter are a few of the highlights to the training that day.*

Foster Parents of the Quarter

Brian and Jessica Stoffer have been foster parents since May 2, 2013. The couple wanted to help their two daughters learn about caring for others outside of the family (which also includes a lovable boxer who welcomes all children who come into their house). At the interview for the home study, their youngest daughter told the license worker that she already has a sister so she really wanted a brother too.

The Stoffers took the 2 youngest children of a sibling group of all boys of Mexican descent. Their daughter was delighted to finally have two younger brothers. Eventually their goal changed from fostering to adopting the boys. Once it was official, they found a place to get paper *picados* (die-cut banner flags) with each of their adopted names and adoption dates on them. These *picados* now hang in a frame on the wall.

Eventually the family fostered the boys' younger sister, who was born later, and adopted her. She has her own *picado*. The Stoffers' elder daughters have asked for their own *picados* but have been told that they don't come with an adoption date.

The Stoffers promote the agency by recruiting others to join the foster families of YSB, including their next door neighbors who are now licensed. The Stoffers have also taken advantage of a local support group called **RePlanted**, which is designed to be a resource for foster care parents, safe family parents and adoptive parents.

During RePlanted's large events/conferences held in the Spring and Fall, the Stoffers have directed people who do not belong to an agency yet towards YSB staff in attendance in hopes that their homes will join the YSB family. Recently, one of those families from Glen Ellyn was licensed by YSB. During monthly meetings, this organization breaks out into smaller groups of about 10 to 15 adults each. The Stoffers belong to the Glen Ellyn group which has "adopted" YSB's Glen Ellyn office by caring for its staff. Highlights of their many activities include bringing breakfast pastries and donuts into the office, spending the better part of a day cleaning the counseling rooms, play/visit room and kitchen, and sending a care package/basket for the staff to enjoy. They are currently planning to treat the staff to lunch.

The Stoffers are a family who seek the care and support they need to continue to care for the children, who promote YSB in the various activities of their lives, and who enjoy letting the professional staff know just how much they are appreciated by caring for them. Thank you from everyone at YSB!

Jan. 2018



"Like" the agency wide Facebook page or visit our agency

website at www.ysbiv.org.

If you would like to join our Foster Parent Facebook page please contact Kelley Lumpkin for an invite. She can be reached at kelleyl@ysbiv.org

TBRI/Trust Based Relational Intervention, a 1-day training

***“Stay Calm ... no matter what
See the Need ... behind the behavior
Meet the Need ... find a way
Don't Quit ... if not you, then who?”***

The quote above is from Dr. David Cross, director of the Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development at Texas Christian University. It is simple instructions to the adults caring for and reaching out to the traumatized child also referred to as “children from hard places”. The quote is a place to start for the healing of the children in our care.

TBRI has a piece of its origins in Dr. Cross observing and taking notes on the interactions between one of his doctorate students, Karyn Purvis, and her child clients. Dr. Purvis is now deceased. People who knew her called her a child whisperer/people whisperer. Those notes became the basis for the book, *The Connected Child*. That book and various neurological studies on what trauma does to a person's brain functioning developed TBRI. Other universities created and developed responses/techniques looking at the same neurological studies. TBRI gives a broader base of techniques to use in combinations to help the child heal and considers working with a child's level of understanding.

The children from hard places includes the foster care child and the adopted child but also includes those who have had other traumas come into their lives such as: surviving a natural disaster, medical traumas (early birth, early surgeries, etc), stressful pregnancies (feeling mom's stress in utero), having a genetic disorder/damage, etc.

For the foster child and/or the adopted child, they are usually in the child welfare system for abuse and/or neglect. As devastating as abuse is physically, emotionally and sometimes sexually, the intellectual message to the physi-

cally abused person is simply, “I don't like you”. Meanwhile, the neglected person receives the message, “You don't exist.” So a neglected child is going to respond by trying to get you to acknowledge that they do exist or withdraw into themselves because they are now convinced that they don't exist.

There are the 5 B's of Trauma that were reviewed quickly.

Starting with the “Brain”, there is the “upstairs brain” for our reasoning, learning and thinking and there is the “downstairs brain” which includes the autonomic systems and the emotional systems. Within the emotional systems is the amygdala (fear center). For the healthy secure person, the amygdala sends out a chemical stimulant that gets our attention with a fight, flight or freeze response and is normally just momentary. For the child from hard places, they are responding to the stimulus from the amygdala 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This means the upstairs brain is turned off and the child cannot be reasoned with, learn anything new or think through what they are doing. The TBRI systems suggests ways to overcome the fears and turn the parts of the brain for learning, understanding and thinking back on.

The next B is Biology. In 2015, some researchers found medical proof that childhood maltreatment and survivors of war trauma both had biologic alterations occur in their bodies. These alterations affect how a person responds to the world about them and their body's growth. Some of these alterations were passed down to the next generations. So this can have long lasting effects developmentally and into the generations to follow. Maybe a child in your care is one of those generations that follow which may mean that the parent(s) need the same care and understanding through TBRI.



After that is the B for Behavior. This is an area that many focus on without regard for the other B's. In 2005, a researcher named Van der Kolk suggested that to aim for a more rational approach to therapy for the children with complex trauma histories to a diagnosis called "developmental trauma disorder". This could reduce the re-diagnosing and multiple diagnosis the children may get when they get a new therapist and/or diagnostician with the variety of treatments for anxiety, depression, mood disorder, ODD, RAD, ADHD and PTSD. It can also adjust our response from punishments to looking for what the child is communicating, even when it is not good or clear communications.

The 4th B is Body. This B's focus is on how our sensory experiences inform us about the world about us. So with the 5 basic senses you need to ask yourself: is the child sound sensitive? Is the child taste sensitive? Is the child sight/light sensitive? Are certain smells triggers for bad and/or scary memories?

The final B is Beliefs. Beliefs will be how we think about ourselves, others, our self-esteem, our self-awareness (how we fit into the world) our ability to regulate ourselves (self-control) and self-efficacy. Trauma will affect each of these areas as we interact with the world around us. This is where the child may be perfectly safe but does not feel safe. After all, they have been around for just a short time, yet have learned that "adults" equal danger. Even the babies have learned such from stress of their mother while in utero, hearing mom yell or someone yell at mom, etc.

This continued on to explain that the children from hard places have hidden disabilities due to the trauma and need the same grace as children with more visible disabilities and/or illness (i.e., has a cast, in a wheelchair, carrying an inhaler, in bed with a fever, etc). Sadly, there are wounds to their neurological pathways, both the physical brain and the mind (thinking processes), and we need to recognize and identify these hidden disabilities to be able to start helping with the healing.

Start building connections through eye contact, healthy touch and a playful voice to invite them away from their fear responses. Then you will want to empower them by giving them a voice. Ask them to use their words to tell you what is going on. Ask questions with a soft gentle voice. Then use correcting not punishment. The preferred correction is to give them a "do-over" so they can do whatever correctly instead of the incorrect manner. This is to build a different neuro-path or "muscle" memory in the mind.

There was an additional 2 days of workshops for the Refresh! Chicago conference including: workshops just for dads; one for single parents and one on how to start "Me Too!" small groups in your area. For more information contact Re-Planted ministries at www.replantedministries.org.

How many of us remember Fred Rogers from the TV show, "Mr Roger's Neighborhood"? In many articles, he is described by friends and family as being a gentle, soft hearted man especially when it came to children. Here is a quote of his that was found. "We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It's easy to say 'It's not my child ... my community ... not my world ... not my problem'. Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people, my heroes."

Are you ready? Be the hero



Trainings:

Save the dates:

*April 13 and 14, 2018
Empowered to Connect
conference on at Chris-
tian Community
Church, 24035 W.
Riverwalk Court,
Plainfield Illinois.*

*Refresh Chicago
2018 ,October 5-6,
2018 at Wheaton Bible
Church (on North Ave.
in West Chicago Illi-
nois).*

*Behavior Modification
will be held in Jan. Feb
and March offices.
Training dates to be
determined. Watch for
mailer.*

Recruiting:

*If you know of some-
one who might want to
be a foster parent, call
Kelley at 630-820-
6303 ext 114.*



We've Got Cabin Fever!

Welcome to Cabin Fever time. Too cold to let the kids play outside? And are they too noisy according to your ears for them to stay indoors? Start making plans now if you have not already done so. What can you do to entertain the children in the house? Can you pull them away from their tablets from another game of Angry Birds? Away from Minecraft? Or some other game that has caught their attention? Do you have board games and cards in the home? Do you have a karaoke machine to have a singing contest? What indoor activities or outdoor events for the not so dangerous cold days are available in your area through the parks, forest preserves, animal parks, museums, etc.? Be sure to check their websites for free days.

Some ideas to play alongside the kids include: Have a movie night complete with popcorn, drinks and other munchies; Have a beach party on the living room floor with picnic blanket or towels and a picnic lunch and don't forget to dress the part; Have breakfast for dinner; Cut out paper snowflakes; Make paper airplanes or paper boats then try them out; or any other ideas of things that are fun for you that you can teach the children. Most children will treasure the moments that you did something with them, side by side.

When you do go out, be sure that you and the children are properly bundled up to prevent frostbite and hypothermia. Please keep everyone, including yourself, safe. Carry enough healthy snacks and water to keep everyone healthy while burning those extra calories to keep warm. The cold winter weather needs lots of re-hydration just like the hot summer weather. Be sure that you have safety gear in your vehicles like emergency shovels, sand/salt, ways to stay warm (i.e., blankets, medical hot packs), emergency flares/reflective items, etc. Carry properly charged phones, tablets and/or laptops so that emergency help can be contacted easily, if needed.

Teamwork needed

The QA (quality assurance) staff have asked for you to be notified of needing the well child checks done on the children. We have put that notice in the last 2 newsletters at their request. What was forgotten is to have a record of the children being given the **flu shot**. Please forward that documentation to your child's caseworker so that DCFS will see that it is done when they check our files. Thank you for being such great teammates on this matter.

