



SAVE THE DATE

OFCA Annual Conference
Parenting in a Time of Change:
Finding a Harbor in the Storm

June 25 -26, 2010
Fort Rapids Indoor Water Park
Columbus, Ohio

NFPA Issues Valuable Tax Guide

The National Foster Parent Association has issued the 2009 Tax Benefits for Foster, Adoptive Parents and Kinship Caregivers. This resource guide provides valuable information regarding tax benefits. It explains basic rules and offers tips on ways that foster and adoptive parents and kinship caregivers can claim deductions and credit available to them. Give a copy of this guide to your tax preparer, and discuss the qualifications for any of the benefits discussed in the guide.

Throughout the United States, thousands of foster, adoptive, and kinship families are working hard to make life better for themselves and their families. With the jobs they hold and inadequate foster care reimbursements, many simply cannot earn enough to achieve their goals. However, this year, eligible families can get as much as \$5,657 from the Earned Income Credit (see page 12) and even more if they also qualify for Child Tax Credit (see page 18). To see if your family may qualify for these and other tax credits, go to: http://www.nfpaonline.org/uploads/2009_federal_tax_benefits%281%29.pdf.

H.B. 446 Standards for Residential Care

On February 8th, State Representative Marian Harris (D - Columbus) introduced legislation to require any private out-of-state residential centers to which Ohio abused, neglected, dependent, unruly, or delinquent children are placed to comply with the same standards that are applicable to in-state residential centers.

Ohio children who have been adjudicated as abused, neglected, dependent, unruly, and/or delinquent can enter the legal custody of a county children services agency or a juvenile court. These custodial agencies assume responsibility for the children. For children who are unable to return home, the custodial agency may place them in a variety of settings including an out-of-state residential center. Ohio law and regulations set forth protections for children in residential centers. However, when children are placed across Ohio's borders, Ohio law and regulations do not 'follow' the child in his or her placement. Instead, the other state's laws apply, which may afford fewer safeguards than Ohio's regulations. To view the bill, go to: http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=128_HB_446.

OFCA's Input Requested on Ohio's Family Engagement Plan

The Ohio Family and Children First (OFCF) Cabinet Council and the Ohio Department of Education has invited OFCA representatives to participate in a meeting to provide feedback on the Ohio Family Engagement Strategic Plan. The session will be held in Columbus Ohio on March 19th. If you are interested in representing Ohio's resource families at this important meeting or would like more information, please contact OFCA at OFCA@OFCAonline.org.

Scholarship Opportunity for Youth Adopted from Care

Children's Action Network and the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption have partnered to create a national scholarship program, Fostering a Future, sponsored by Capital One, to benefit youth adopted from foster care. Applications are being accepted through April 20, 2010. Applicants must:

- have been adopted from the United States foster care system after the age of 13
- be graduating high school seniors.
- maintain or improve qualifying grade point average throughout applicant's senior year
- demonstrate financial need

To download an application, go to childrensactionnetwork.org or call 800.525.6789.