

# Wright County Human Services Child Foster Care

January 2012

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<http://www.co.wright.mn.us/departments/humanservices/childfoster.asp>

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## Facebook and Suicide Prevention

When you think about Facebook, one may think about reconnecting with friends and family through posts and pictures. According to statistics listed on Facebook, there are more than 800 million active users. Of this, more than 50% of users log on in any given day. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and Facebook have collaborated to help those in crisis.

As reported in the 12/13/11 press release:

There is a new service which enables Facebook users to report a suicidal comment they see posted by a friend to Facebook using either the [Report Suicidal Content](#) link or the report links found throughout the site. The person who posted the suicidal comment will then immediately receive an e-mail from Facebook encouraging them to call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or to click on a link to begin a confidential chat session with a crisis worker.

According to Surgeon General, Regina M. Benjamin, MD, MBA, "Nearly 100 Americans die by suicide every day - 36,035 lives every year. For every person who is murdered, two die by suicide. These deaths are even more tragic because they are preventable."

To read the press release in its entirety, please go to:  
<http://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/advisories/1112125820.aspx>

### Suicide Prevention Resources:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
- SAVE, Suicide Awareness Voices of Education <http://www.save.org/>

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*"Fostering is the  
hardest job you'll ever  
love."*

*~ Unknown*

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## SAFE SLEEP EXPECTATIONS FOR INFANTS HAS CHANGED

### REDUCE SIDS - NO BLANKETS

As a Child Foster Care Provider, you are trusted by parents, Wright County Human Services (WCHS), and the Court to protect the health and safety of children in your care. You have made the commitment to follow the licensing laws and in turn have reassured professionals that children will be well cared for. As your Wright County licensors, it is our job to support and ensure that providers are maintaining licensing standards.

One of these important standards is the practice of preventing sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). The following statistics are from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP): about one in five SIDS deaths occur while an infant is being cared for by someone other than a parent, SIDS is the leading cause of death for infants between 1 month and 12 months of age, and SIDS is most common among infants that are 2-4 months old. However, babies can die of SIDS until they are 1 year old. As we do not know what causes SIDS, safe sleep practices should be used to reduce the risk of SIDS in every infant under the age of 1 year.

Licensed providers are required to follow the SIDS protocol as stated in Minnesota Statute 245A.1435. In the past, the AAP and SIDS training allowed for providers to practice “feet to foot”. The baby’s feet to the foot of the crib with a thin blanket tucked around the mattress.

**This practice is no longer recommended by the AAP and SIDS trainers.**

The AAP new recommendation states that “blankets may be hazardous, and use of blankets is not advisable”. Providers are able to use sleep sacks or other clothing designed for sleep in lieu of blankets.

**WCHS is in agreement with the AAP recommendations and starting March 1, 2012 will enforce the new standard of no blankets with a correction order or negative licensing action.**

According to the AAP the new standard of **no blankets** will help to reduce the above noted statistics and reduce the risk of SIDS. By maintaining these licensing standards, you will help to change the practices, beliefs, and attitudes of others in order to protect children. The full recommendations of the AAP, including further best practices for infant sleep, can be found on the Wright County Child Foster care website under provider corner.

*Please contact either Jill Marzean or Kris Carlson with questions.  
You will receive further information in the mail.*

*More information can be found on the Child Foster Care website under Provider Corner.*

## Medication

Have you ever heard of these medications: Strattera (atomoxetine), Concerta (methylphenidate), or Abilify (aripiprazole)? Do you have questions about the medications children in your care are taking?

Although Google is a convenient way to research items, the search may not always produce reliable results. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has a resource page on their website that lists common medications and general information about each. Also on this page are links to medication information from the National Institute of Mental Health and the US Food and Drug Administration.

If a child in your care is taking a prescribed medication, it would be appropriate for you to communicate with the professional prescribing the medication in order to provide appropriate care to the child. \* *Please note that if a professional prescribes medication, this must be approved by the placing social worker and parent (depending on the parent's custody status) prior to a child taking the medication.*

*See the complete list of medications and resources at:  
<http://www.nami.org> , Inform Yourself, About Medication*

## Relatives as Parents

**Are you a relative caregiver?....You are not alone!**

Child Care Choices Relatives as Parents Program offers monthly Support/Discussion Groups. Dinner and child care are provided at each group

**St. Cloud** -Meets the second Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm.

**Cokato**- Meets monthly, call for upcoming meeting dates.

A Support Group Can...

- Be a place where people can be understood.
- Be a place where feelings are validated.
- Lessen isolation.
- Be a time away from the problem.
- Be a safe place to admit fears, frustrations, and guilt.
- Be a place to share what is confidential.
- Put the situations in perspective.
- Be a place to share resources and information.
- Be an opportunity to form new relationships.
- Be a place for problem solving.

*For more information about groups or for other questions,  
contact Crystal at 320-251-5081*

## 2012 Reminders

Now that we are in full swing of 2012, it is a good time to review your training and household items that need yearly attention. Some of those items and time requirements are listed below:

### Required Training:

Annual Training Hours	Each license holder is required to obtain 12 hours of training each year of licensure
Mental Health training	Each license holder is required to obtain 1 hour of mental health training each year. This training must be approved by your licensor.
SIDS and Shaken Baby	This training is required if you are caring for children aged 5 and younger. This training must be renewed every 5 years.
Car Seat training	This training is required if you are caring for children under age 9. This training must be renewed every 5 years

### Finding Training Options is Easy!

Wright County Human Services offers two opportunities each month to obtain training hours. We provide the Resource Family Training series presented through the MN Department of Human Services as well as either a support group or training night through the Therapeutic Foster Care program. These trainings are free, local, and open to all Wright County child foster care providers. Details about each training event are provided on our website at:

<http://www.co.wright.mn.us/department/humanservices/cfcmeetingtraining.asp>

Wright County Human Services also has a resource library available to you. Currently, we have the Foster Parent College DVD series as well as a few books and other resources. Many of the Foster Parent College DVDs have been approved to fulfill the mental health training requirement! Throughout the next year we hope to continue to expand this library not only to meet more of your daily training needs but also to provide you support and learning tools.

### Annual Household Requirements:

To maintain compliance with MN child foster care licensing rule, the following items must be completed on at least an annual basis.

- Providers must either have their fire extinguisher serviced or purchase a new extinguisher. The fire extinguisher must be kept in the kitchen area and be size 2A10BC or larger.
- Well water must be tested
- All pet vaccinations must be up-to-date and copies of their records provided to the agency

## Guardian ad Litem

The child in your care likely has a Guardian ad Litem (GAL). What does this mean? The Minnesota Judicial Branch website states the following:

The Minnesota Guardian ad Litem Program provides advocates who represent the best interests of abused and neglected children in court. Guardians ad Litem are professionals who are paid staff people or volunteers and are appointed by the Juvenile or Family Court to represent a maltreated child's best interests in court proceedings.

The Minnesota Guardian ad Litem Program seeks justice for children by:

- Ensuring no child falls through the cracks of our child welfare or family court system because of a lack of an effective Guardian ad Litem to look after their interests.
- Ensuring the most vulnerable children (pursuant to federal and state mandates) are the top priorities of the entire state court system.
- Providing competent, cost-effective, and professional service by Guardians ad Litem, supervisors, and managers.
- Working as a unified and cohesive team to realize common goals and share statewide resources, ideas, and strategies.
- Providing fair and equitable treatment of Guardians Ad Litem.
- Being accountable, ethical, and professional as individuals and as a system.
- Being sensitive to, and competent in, areas of culture, race, ethnicity, gender, and the long-term impact of violence and abuse on child development.

More information can be found at: <http://www.mncourts.gov/?page=149>

## Tribute to Foster Parents

*Thank you for all that you do for children!*

- ❖ *You open your homes and hearts 24 hours a day, every day, to children you haven't even met.*
- ❖ *You know your family will grieve each and every time a child enters and leaves your home, but having the child in your lives makes it worth it.*
- ❖ *Even though you realize you can't heal the child's pain, you strive to be a part of the healing.*
- ❖ *You do not look to yourself for the absolute knowledge in caring for the children, but you look to others for support.*
- ❖ *You see the strengths in children when others see their weaknesses.*
- ❖ *Your inner faith is enhanced as you see children grow and flourish. Even the slightest smile of a child is a victory. Their small steps are major successes.*
- ❖ *You understand and aid a child returning home to a healthier family. You do what you can, even if you may not agree with the decision. You understand most of us want to be with our own families.*
- ❖ *You will make many mistakes, but you learn from them and keep on striving to do the best you can.*
- ❖ *You are humble to the praises of others for what you are doing because you feel this is what we all should be doing. It is your normal way of life.*
- ❖ *Your arms never close to a child and your heart holds them forever.*

Reprinted from the NC Division of Social Services and the NC Family and Children's Resource Program