



# Advocacy News

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Healing Children by Empowering Families  [WWW.DCFAPAC.ORG](http://WWW.DCFAPAC.ORG)

## EMPOWERED Foster Parents Can:

- Access critical services
- Advocate with schools and service providers
- Participate as full team members
- Identify and utilize support networks
- Increase chances for stability and permanency for the children in their homes

Margie Chalofsky, *Executive Director*  
 Marilyn Egerton, *Deputy Director*  
 Elizabeth Jenkins-Sahlin, *Program Coordinator*  
 April Lampkin, *Development Consultant*  
 Robert Robinson, *Administrative Assistant*

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## FAPAC gives deepest thanks to Freddie Mac Foundation and Renette Oklewicz



### A CHAMPION FOR OUR REGION'S CHILDREN

A graduate of California University of Pennsylvania, Renette Oklewicz began her professional career as a social worker helping foster children. The majority of her 13-year social work career was spent working at the Allegheny County Children and Youth Services where she initiated an unprecedented effort to find adoptive homes for older, hard to place foster children, previously thought unadoptable. Her efforts resulted in countless (CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

## FAPAC Gives Thumbs Up!

Beginning June 2014, childcare service will be made available during many of CFSA's foster parent in-service trainings. As trainings are publicized by CFSA's Child Welfare Training Academy (CWTA), they will identify which trainings will provide childcare. Foster parents will need to register in advance and provide any identified special needs so that Georgetown Nanny, the organization providing the childcare, can provide appropriate services.

FAPAC has long been advocating for childcare for agency trainings. We are delighted to acknowledge CFSA's Child Welfare Training Academy (CWTA), under the leadership of Karen Fenton-LeShore, Joi Reece, and Deputy Director Andrea Guy, for this great move forward. Applause goes to Aretha Tinch and Erin Teagle for the work to make this a reality!



# HAPPY NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH!

# FAPAC Thanks Its Own (Children!)



“Has everyone completed their homework?”

“Yes!” all the kids chimed.

“Great! Let’s have snack and then, after, we can do some arts and crafts. How many of you like art?” asks Danielle.

Danielle, affectionately known by her loved ones as Yaya, is a dedicated FAPAC childcare provider and event volunteer. Similar to two other FAPAC helpers, Patrick Chalofsky and her older brother Larry, Yaya is in a unique category of FAPAC helpers—for Yaya, Patrick, and Larry all share a personal and very special connection to FAPAC.

As the children of FAPAC’s Deputy Director, Marilyn Egerton, Yaya and Larry bring the meaning and context for FAPAC’s work to life in a very poignant way. Yaya came to Marilyn and her husband Eddie just shy of six months old. Having spent the first four months of her life in the hospital, a premie with a poor prognosis of surviving and living an independent and functional life, Yaya has been volunteering with FAPAC since the young age of nine. Now 21 and a student enrolled at the University of the District of Columbia, Yaya has overcome many obstacles and assists regularly at FAPAC, volunteering where needed, and serving as FAPAC’s senior child care provider, providing child care for families participating in FAPAC trainings.

Larry came to Marilyn and Eddie at the young age of 11. With the odds stacked against him, he was placed for what was originally supposed to be a weekend. As many foster parents know, especially those who have been around a long time, those “only for a weekend” placements often end up being anything but short-term. In Larry’s case, this emergency placement turned into a life-time commitment with the

Egerton family. Today, a 32 year old, loving father of three, Larry is also an adult member of the FAPAC family, coming in to assist with maintenance services, set-up and clean-up of events, and any other way he believes he can be helpful to his mom and the organization to which she is dedicated.

Patrick Moore Chalofsky, the adopted son of FAPAC’s Executive Director, Margie Chalofsky and her husband Neal, came to the Chalofsky family at 7-months old, a few days after Thanksgiving 1993. Placed when an emergency disrupted his prior placement, Margie reminisces that baby Patrick appeared to study everyone with intensity in order to decide who he could trust. She also remembers the joy she felt when it became apparent that he had begun to fully trust her and Neal and their three older children.

Patrick and his story are very significant in the history of FAPAC’s existence. After a lengthy adoption process, Margie felt much gratitude to the private agency that supported his adoption, and thus left her career to work for that agency, entering the work world of child welfare. It is her experiences as Patrick’s foster/adoptive parent that directly led her to become the founding director of FAPAC, and fitting that Patrick also has become a FAPAC assistant. A young man who is passionate about driving and would like to find a career in which he could direct that interest, Patrick has become the go-to-guy when FAPAC needs errands done—picking up signs for events, food for training, or holiday supplies before the annual party. He also helps in set-up and clean-up of events and administrative tasks as needed.

Yaya, Patrick, and Larry are daily reminders of why the work we do at FAPAC is so important. Every child deserves a safe and stable environment that nurtures personal growth and development. At FAPAC, we provide foster, adoptive, and kinship parents the training and support they need to work within the system and we encourage them to provide the safe and stable environment needed for the children in their homes to succeed. Each year, we serve approximately 1,700 families through systemic advocacy, training, and group/individual support.

Most of us like to think of childhood

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)



# CFSA Update

## Dear Families

This CFSA insert has become a regular part of the FAPAC newsletter. Due to an expansion of our partnership with CFSA, FAPAC has committed to keeping DC's foster, kinship, and adoptive parents updated on important changes at CFSA that impact our community. We are excited to offer you more regular updates about procedures, policies, and other information. In the near future we hope to post developing policies on our website for your review and comment. Visit our website at [www.dcfapac.org](http://www.dcfapac.org) and stay tuned!

Sincerely,

Margie Chalofsky,  
FAPAC Executive Director

## Lessons on Communicating "Signals of Care" by Dr. Abyssinia Washington

On a recent trip to the pet store, I found myself drawn to the hermit crabs. I often look for metaphors for life and living in the animal kingdom and these hermit crabs really reminded me of some of the foster children I have interacted with. Here they were, moving along with all of their armor and baggage on their backs. This fascinated me so I left the store with two hermit crabs and everything I needed to create the perfect environment for them in my home. And so I did. They had shelter, a place to eat, drink, sleep, and climb for amusement, extra shells for additional coverage and another crab for companionship. Everything, a hermit crab could want or need, right? Then why wouldn't they branch out of their shells a bit and move around? Interact with me a bit? Show me you appreciate all that I've done

for you! My frustration turned to resentment and I decided to put them in a quiet spot, out of my way and turn of their lamp. Moments later, I could hear rocks moving around. As I slowly approached their dim, quiet habitat, I could see what I hadn't seen before. They finally felt comfortable and safe to leave their armored shells. While I thought that I had provided them with all they could need to be "at home," they needed other **signals of care** that I had missed in order for them to climb out from some of their armor and baggage.

So clearly, there is no comparing a child and a hermit crab, but I do think the principle behind how **signals of care** are given and received is relevant. I also think that many children come to us weighed down and armored by their (CONTINUED ON CFSA | 2)

## HAPPY FOSTER CARE MONTH FROM CFSA

In honor of National Foster Care Month Child and Family Services Agency would like to extend a heartfelt **THANK YOU** to ALL resource parents and their families.

# New Information About Youth and Drivers Licenses

It is the mission and intent of the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) to protect all youth served by CFSA. This mission is especially crucial during the teenage years when youth experience new levels of independence, including the privilege of operating a motor vehicle. CFSA supports youth between the ages 16 ½ - 21 to have an opportunity to participate in a driver's education program for the purpose of obtaining a drivers license.

## General Guidelines

1. The Agency may pay for the cost of a youth's initial driver's education course up to \$500.00.
2. The Agency will pay for the youth's drive time hours up to 40 hours as needed.
3. Youth shall be responsible for any additional costs associated with obtaining their driver's license, including additional courses.

## Lessons on Communicating "Signals of Care" by Dr. Abyssinia Washington (CONTINUED FROM CFSA | 1)

past trauma experiences. The Trauma Systems Therapy model tells us "Following a trauma, the role of the social environment is to support the child's regulatory capacities so that he/she can effectively manage the ensuing emotions." Communicating safety and security to a child that has been traumatized often times is not in what we might say, it can be more subtle than that. It may mean that we have to find ways to become more attuned to their past experiences, their unspoken needs as well as find ways to reassure them that their new environment is safe and nurturing.

### Some ways we might communicate these signals of care include:

1. Learning about what "triggers" of danger, insecurity and shame a child may have.
2. Assessing and monitoring their environment to minimize events or situations that might be a "trigger" for them.
3. Exercising and modeling patience when frustrated.
4. Supporting and encouraging small steps toward engagement and attachment.

4. All requests for a driver's education course or drive time hours shall be reviewed by the Program Manager for OYE on a case-by-case basis.

## Eligibility Requirements

1. The youth must be at least 16 ½ years of age.
2. The youth must demonstrate social and personal responsibility while being in compliance with all known requirements of their case plan, including social worker visits, and regular attendance at school and/or employment.
3. CFSA reserves the right to refuse to pay for a driver's education for any youth with a history of involvement with the juvenile justice system.

5. Demonstrating positive regard, appreciation and fondness for the child.

The child internalizes these, and other important non-verbal messages of care and support over time so that little by little they start to emerge from their shell.

If you have a signal of care that has worked with the child or children in your home, or have suggestions as to how the agency could support you in this process, please let me know so that we might include your input in future newsletters. I can be reached at [Abyssinia.washington@dc.gov](mailto:Abyssinia.washington@dc.gov).



# Child Care Announcement

The Office of Well Being proudly announces exciting changes to CFSA's child care service provision. For the first time in fourteen years, the daily child care subsidy rates are increasing in DC and out-of-state. In addition, CFSA, in cooperation with OSSE, is eliminating the bureaucracy associated with obtaining child care vouchers. A new, more streamlined process will be coming soon. Both of these great improvements promote the Agency's Four Pillar Strategic Agenda. We believe that increasing child care subsidy rates will provide more options for families and will help facilitate and support the temporary safe havens provided by resource parents. Further, by streamlining the process families will be able to access care more efficiently. These changes are just the start of the many ways CFSA intends to encourage early learning opportunities for children to promote overall well-being.

**CFSA daily rates for child care subsidies will increase April 1, 2014 by an average of 39%.**

CFSA has updated its daily child care subsidy rates for center-based and home-based child care, in DC and out-of-state for the first time since 2000. The new rates are effective April 1, 2014 and are listed below. Child care providers have been notified of these new rates.

**CFSA is instituting a more streamlined process to obtain OSSE vouchers.**

OWB is also working closely with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) to decrease paperwork needed for OSSE vouchers, accepted by some DC-based providers. Stay tuned for more updates on this initiative.

Please contact the following offices with any questions related to child care services and payment.

**For Questions about Child Care Services:**  
Tia Clarke, Office of Well Being, 202-442-6144

**For Questions about Child Care Payments:**  
Accounts Payable contacts are listed below.

FIRST LETTER OF THE FIRST NAME OF THE HOME-BASED PROVIDER OR FIRST LETTER OF THE BUSINESS NAME      POINT OF CONTACT

C, E, K, O, Q, R	Sherita Hawthorne, 202-671-4415
B, D, J, T, X, V, Y	Vicki King, 202-671-4478
H, L, N, M, U, Z, G	Toyin Sobowale, 202-671-4373
A, F, I, P, W, X	Brenda Young, 202-671-4362

## Daily Child Care Rates Effective April 1, 2014

	CENTER DC	CENTER OUT OF STATE	HOME DC	HOME OUT OF STATE
Infant (Full)	\$54.41	\$39.00	\$35.00	\$30.58
Infant (Part)	\$32.65	\$19.50	\$21.00	\$15.29
Pre-School (Full)	\$42.00	\$24.59	\$28.00	\$22.63
Pre-School (Part)	\$25.20	\$14.29	\$16.80	\$11.31
School Age (Full)	\$32.00	\$17.56	\$25.80	\$16.16
School Age (Before)	\$14.40	\$10.54	\$11.61	\$9.70
School Age (After)	\$14.40	\$10.54	\$11.61	\$9.70
School Age (Before & After)	\$19.20	\$14.05	\$15.48	\$14.05

# Important Policy Clarification: How to Select Back-Up Providers, Baby Sitters, and Sleepovers

We are attempting, through this article, to dispel the confusion and mixed messages given about babysitting, back-up providers, and the ability of foster parents to approve sleepovers with friends. Please note that private agencies sometimes have their own policies that may be stricter than those at CFSA. We recommend that if you have a question about your agency's policy, you show them the CFSA policies below and ask if they apply to the parents in your agency.

The following are key points from the CFSA's policy on *Supervision and Self-Care of Foster Children* [Effective Date: 4-08-2013], the CFSA administrative issuance *Overnight Stays* [Effective Date: 2-21-2006] as well as the CFSA Quick Reference Guide, *Travel with Resource Parents and Overnight Stays* [Effective Date: 2-21-06]:

1. If a child in foster care requires a babysitter on a continual basis, the babysitter must be 16 years of age or older, and trusted by the resource parent based on experience and interactions.
2. For short-term occasional situations when it is necessary for the resource parent to be absent from the home, the resource parent may select a trusted individual to babysit.
3. Resource parents must ensure that babysitters are well informed of the following information (at a minimum):
  - Any known allergies of the child
  - How to manage medical and physical conditions of the child
  - The emotional and behavioral needs of the child
  - Age appropriate activities and any restrictions on activities
  - Visible posting of emergency numbers including 911 and local numbers for the police, fire departments, poison control, foster parent's cell phone number, and other important information as determined by the resource parent and social worker
4. When the resource parent is away from the home on an occasional basis, substitute care may be provided by a babysitter or a substitute care provider who is not a licensed or certified provider.
5. Any regular or daily substitute care must be provided by a licensed day care provider, a licensed resource parent, a certified substitute care provider, or the equivalent according to the jurisdiction where the supervision will occur.
6. For regular or daily substitute care in the home, a discussion must take place between the social worker and the resource parent regarding the child's individual needs and development of a suitable plan for the child's care during the time the resource parent is not going to be at home.
7. The social worker and resource parent must produce a written plan that should include but not be limited to contact information of those who will provide substitute care, including emergency numbers.
8. A child 8 years of age and younger must not under any circumstance be left unattended or allowed to self-care for any period of time.
9. No child under the age of 16 shall care for another child without an adult in the home.
10. Foster parents may approve overnight slumber parties for children in their care as long as the overnight location is within 100 miles of the District of Columbia and the overnight time frame is less than 2 nights. The foster parent has authority to approve such overnights in situations that s/he assesses to be safe and appropriate.
11. The foster parent must still notify the child's social worker of the child's location whenever a child in care spends a night away from the foster home. If the resource parent does not reach the social worker, s/he may leave a voice mail detailing the child's location.

To read the policies in their entirety, please visit CFSA's online policy manual at <http://cfsa.dc.gov> or FAPAC's website at <http://dcfapac.org>. If you ever have any questions or concerns regarding policy, please feel free to contact the Policy Unit at [cfsa.policies@dc.gov](mailto:cfsa.policies@dc.gov). As usual, we are grateful for all of your dedication to the children in the District's foster care system.



## FAPAC News:

FAPAC is pleased to be working with CFSA to build more successful outcomes for teen moms in foster care. At the end of March, we hosted a meeting between CFSA and foster parents to brainstorm ways to expand the number of families willing to foster teen moms and their children. In partnership with CFSA, we will host an important

dialogue/dinner with foster/adoptive parents in May. This dialogue will allow us the opportunity to hear both perspectives as to how to best support teen mom placements in foster homes and to help improve future outcomes for their families.

## Did You Know?

FAPAC depends on the generosity of every individual and organization that is touched by our work. Together, we can ensure that FAPAC can continue to provide critical information, training and support to families and advocate on critical issues that assist children and families. Please consider becoming a FAPAC supporter. No gift is too small. Every dollar helps and is used

to support FAPAC's mission and the families we serve.

Please help us to continue our important work by mailing your donation of any size to Foster & Adoptive Parent Advocacy Center; 6200 Second St. NW Washington, DC 20011, or by donating on our website at [www.dcfapac.org](http://www.dcfapac.org). Thank you!

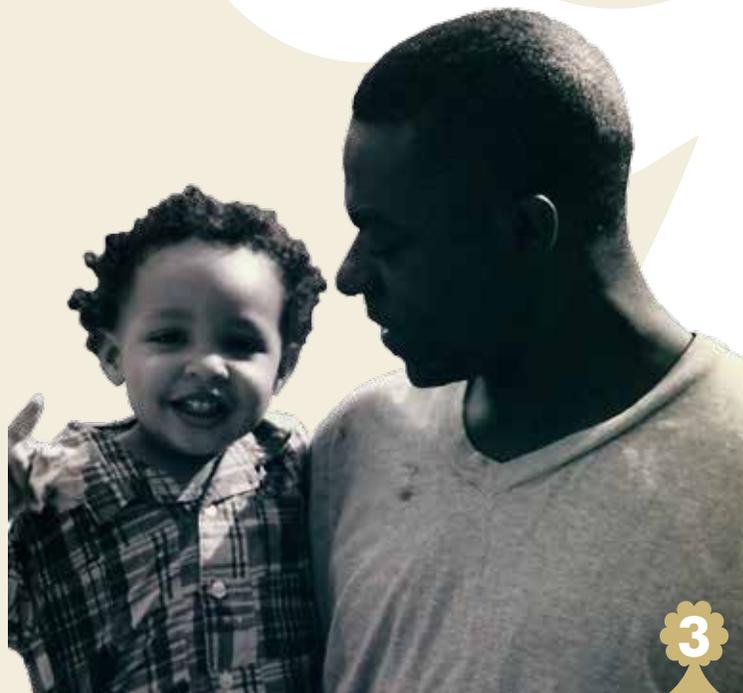
## FAPAC Thanks Its Own (Children!) (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

as a time of being able to rely on others in our world to fully care for our needs. Although the children who come to us may not have started life on easy paths, caring foster, kinship, and adoptive family homes can become the grounding place for healing to start. As necessary as love is, on its own, it is not enough.

Parenting children who have experienced trauma and loss requires love, but also requires skill, services, and support in order to meet their very complex needs and to also maintain our own sense of well-being so that we can hang in there for the long haul. This is FAPAC's goal, mission, and reason for being.

Yaya, Larry, and Patrick's stories highlight the critical work many DC families toil in each day. There are so many stories that we could have featured, but these are our children and our stories. During this May's Foster Care Month, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude to the

many many, many, foster, kinship and adoptive parents doing this hard, exhausting, meaningful, wonderful, difficult and exhilarating work every day.



numbers of foster children, who would have otherwise left foster care with no family, having a permanent family.

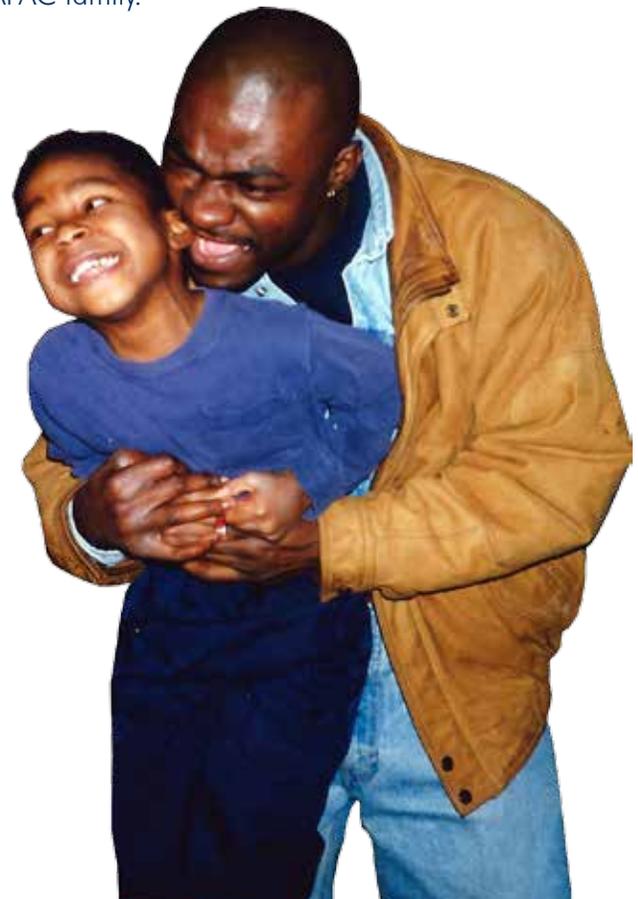
*“I always knew I wanted to focus my career on helping children.”*

For the last 23 years, Renette has worked as Director, Foundation Programs, for the Freddie Mac Foundation, helping our region’s children and families in need. As the first program officer and founder of the Foundation, she has been a valued and committed partner of dozens of nonprofit organizations whose missions are focused on permanency for children in foster care—including FAPAC. Renette and the Foundation have been dedicated supporters and advocates of FAPAC for the last 14 years, and over the years, their support has enabled us to develop programs that benefit all of our families and children.

Renette has used her position as Director, Foundation Programs at Freddie Mac to create new initiatives, change community service delivery systems, and develop sustainable collaborations to affect needed change on a national level. One of her proudest accomplishments was leading the funding of the Children’s Hospital Child and Adolescent Protection Center which added a new wing to the hospital focused entirely on children who are victims of abuse. Other significant accomplishments include the creation of a city-wide parenting education program in the District of Columbia; the development of a county-wide child welfare reform initiative in Montgomery County, Maryland; and the development of the successful national Wednesday’s Child, a televised recruitment program airing in five major American cities, which has resulted in the adoption of over 2,000 hard-to-place foster children. Renette’s work in adoption has resulted in her being named, in 2010, by Congress as an Angel in Adoption, and she has been recognized for her work both in the region, and nationally, for her efforts to improve adoption policy and practice, increase access to post-adoption services, support for foster and adoptive families, and resource family recruitment.

Without the Freddie Mac Foundation, our founding funder, FAPAC would not have been born or survived. For this financial support and belief in the potential of our work, we owe an amazing debt to everyone who currently works at the Foundation or has worked there since our inception in 2000; however, Renette’s support has greatly surpassed financial. Over the years, Renette has served as a shoulder, a cheerleader, an advisor, and a friend. As the Freddie Mac Foundation winds down its assets, we want to acknowledge all the wonderful work that Renette has done for us and for all the other grantees whom she has touched. We are forever grateful to the Foundation, but more importantly, to Renette, for without Renette’s commitment to foster children and their families and her belief and support of FAPAC, we would not be here to serve DC’s children and families.

Renette, we thank you as a true champion for our region’s children and will always consider you a member of the FAPAC family.



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