

October 2020 Month End Report

This report covers the month of October.

“A child sees himself through the eyes of the adults in their lives; we need to see them well.”

Unknown

We have managed back to school, figured out how to support on line learning, or working in a cohort. We have decided how to manage thanksgiving and Halloween; next it will be Christmas quickly followed by New Year's. Which we diligently hope will be happy.

As we have been dealing with COVID for over 8 months now I expect we are all seeing the same thing; we have passed through the duck and cover mode of home isolation. So now are beginning along with the rest of the country to try and figure out how we can do all the things we need to do or love to do in a way that is safe and reduces the risk of catching or transmitting the virus.

We know the role we have in child welfare puts us in a unique situation within the COVID dynamics of society. As the general population is trying to stay in their “bubbles”; for us foster families it is more like a bubble bath – to quote our acting President Elaine Pratt.

As you each are learning new ways to manage the child welfare features of your lives we hope you will connect with the board members and share you successes. Then perhaps we can share what you are finding is working for you with the rest of the province. We are all better off if we can participate in the community of foster families and grow together.


Thanks

Vanessa

Ongoing Initiatives & Projects

This item has been moved to the end of the report.

Letters and proposals

-  The secondary letters of support for the OSAP related work we began a few months ago are currently in process, there are letters to go to our child welfare partners as well as one for federal contacts.

Head Office
340 Kingsway, Welland, Ontario, L3B 3N9
fpo@fosterparetnssociety.org
905-892-1591

- 👤 FPSO participated this month in the OACASD “Dress Purple” campaign we prepared two submissions for inclusion in their social medial campaign. (these are attached to this email)

Meetings Attended:

- 👤 OACAS residential advisory committee continues to meet every other week – attended by Elaine Pratt
- 👤 Foster Family Advisory committee: now meeting every other Tuesday evening attended by Elaine Pratt, Vanessa Milley, & Sarah F as well as other foster parents from within Ontario. – The advisory continues to discuss the variety of challenges and changes that arise pertaining to COVID 19.
- 👤 This month a focus group within the advisory was slated to discuss what areas should be covered by the study that is being prepared. The focus group’s goal was to help frame in what the study is aiming to capture regarding foster parents experiences during COVID. The study was initially understood to be a survey, but at this point it is more of a conversational information gathering study that in time may become the foundation for a future survey.
- 👤 We hope if you are contacted to participate in the study you will agree to a short virtual interview.
- 👤 October 15 – Vanessa Milley & Elaine Pratt met with designates from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities regarding the OSAP letter we drafted to cover our concerns about the details of the application package that we feel negatively impact foster families.
- 👤 The designated let us know the OSAP application package and the program are reviewed each year and they will be doing this review as the year ends and the next one begins. They let us know that they will take our recommendations into this year’s review and share our concerns with those participating in the review.
- 👤 The designates also let us know that OSAP has a federal component and we would be wise to also send our letter to contacts federally,
- 👤 The letter is being adjusted a bit for the federal recipients. We have a contact that is helping us ensure our federal letter is sent to those in a position to help us.

Pending meetings

- 👤 AGM November 19
- 👤 Training November 12 – details below & on the website

Connections to our members

All via email – however there have also been many phone calls during this time period from both FPA leadership and individual foster parents.

- 👤 October 1 – Ombudsman’s Newsletter
- 👤 October 1 – call for examples regarding individual member’s challenges with the OSAP application form for inclusion in our discussion pertaining to our letter.
- 👤 October 2 – Distribution of the Foster Parent Wellness Study – this is a foster parent survey through Brock University, if you have not yet participated in this survey please do. If you are willing to be interviewed for the survey please let us know and we will forward your contact information. The study information for participation is also attached to this email).
- 👤 October 6 – PAD Meeting reminder
- 👤 October 7 – Distribution of the September Month End report

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- 🕒 October 14 – PAD Meeting connection details
- 🕒 October 15 – PAD Meeting agenda
- 🕒 October 15 – Distribution of the FPSO third quarter financial report
- 🕒 October 20 – connection coordinates for virtual training for those registered

Conference

- 🕒 Conference has been moved to May 2021

Training

- 🕒 November 12, 7:30 - How to Cultivate an Effective Relationship With My Child's School
- 🕒 The first two trainings on education by Katherine Noel were very well received. Those who chose to participate learned a great deal regarding how to navigate the education system on behalf of children and youth.
- 🕒 Registrations for all trainings must be sent through the head office. Registration for training is required in order to receive the meeting connection details and a training certificate for participation.

*** NOTE we are working on setting up some training for the New Year, if you have any topics of interest you would like us to look into please let us know. ***

Charitable status

- 🕒 The 2019 January 1 through June 30 HST rebate has been submitted and received in the amount of \$285.79 – This is quite modest, but it is reflective of how very restrained the Board of Directors has been regarding spending, and instead of spending on new items or meetings, existing bills have been paid off and meetings have been all held virtually.

Private Membership .

- 🕒 The membership letter for private members will be going out with the public sector dues invoice letters.

Website

- 🕒 No new website activities this month, only the standard additions of reports, notices, financial third quarter report, the Dress purple campaign and other housekeeping details.

Fundraisers

- 🕒 No new fundraisers at this time
- 🕒 If anyone has recommendations of fundraisers please contact Operations & Services Chairperson Norm Lalonde @ careyprice6131@gmail.com

Contact

fpso@fosterparetnssociety.org
Milley17@sympatico.ca
 905-892-1591,
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Ongoing Initiatives & Projects

These items remain a constant focus of the FPSO, and will be forwarded at every opportunity.

- 🔑 Provincial Advocacy in the areas of;
 - Raising the Image of foster parents.
 - Standardizing the foster care per diem rates for foster parents and reimbursable amounts for the children in care across the Province based on the Toronto CAST model.
 - Advocating for a child welfare system that is centered on The Best Interest of the Child.
 - The Rights of the child as designated by the United Nations.
 - The rights of the caregivers
 - The Benefits and Strength of one voice.
 - Collaboration with other partners in the Child Welfare field.
 - Recognition of the Skill level into Regular, Specialized and Treatment Levels of the foster parents ability to parent different children recognizing the different needs and challenges of the children coming into care.
 - Protection to the foster parent specific to CPIN including:
 - Information written about foster parents and how it is stored.
 - Securing our financial and medical information on CPIN.
 - SAFE, financial, medical
 - Foster parent privacy
 - Legislation;
 - Supports for Children and youth with Special Needs.
 - Gathering of adoption disruption and breakdown statics – to better inform adoption practises.

Acronyms:

FPSO – Foster Parents Society of Ontario

AGM – Annual General Meeting

PACY – Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth

PAD – Presidents' Advocates' & Directors

OARTY – Ontario Association of Residential Treatment for Youth

ORCA – Ontario Residential Care Association

CAST – Children's Aid Society of Toronto

CPIN – Child Protection Information Network

SAFE – Structured Analysis Family Evaluation

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