



May/June 2020 Month End Report

This report covers the months of May and June.

“I have learned that raising children is the single most difficult thing in the world to do. It takes hard work, love, luck, and a lot of energy, and it is the most rewarding experience that you can ever have.”

Janet Reno

Here we are since our last month end report ready for summer, so far it is shaping up to be a hot one. Maybe July will bring more cooling breezes and a bit more rain. I expect by now most of us are in Phase 2 of this strange COVID 19 world we are still wading day by day through. For those of you who may still be in Phase one or have bounced back into Phase one, we wish you all the safety possible. For those of us in Phase two – please keep washing your hands and wearing your masks.

Most of us have had or are having conversations about our foster children visiting, we know the families need to connect but we also know everything has to be done safely. We very much respect and value the Agencies who are supporting the foster parents as the day to day caregivers to set the pace and boundaries on the access so they can feel safe.

FPSO continues to recommend access visits follow public health's current guidelines, follow the lead of the foster family and their comfort with the safety risk management, and also be in line with agency staff and workers.

Back in April the board had agreed to move conference to Plan (B) with the moving of the entire conference to late August; well ... that is not going to work out. None of the college facilities including the one we were going to be using can have any outside events booked for the rest of 2020 (just announced July 1). So Plan (C) it is. Plan (C) is to move the entire conference to May 2021, We are working on putting in place some one day training opportunities for the fall. We are also putting in place some “town hall” meetings for Presidents and some for Advocates. We are working to maintain as much connection as we can manage during all of the COVID isolation. We would love to gather together and network, but we will have to be satisfied with a video conference.

The details and dates will be sent out in a separate email.

Thanks

Vanessa

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Ongoing Initiatives & Projects

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

Letters and proposals

- 👤 Over the past two months FPSO became aware once again that OSAP was requiring the inclusion of foster home per diems under the family income section of loan and grant applications in situations where the foster parent themselves is the applying student and also when the foster parents legal child is the applicant. FPSO has responded to this concern with the preparation of a letter that was distributed to all members informing them of this challenge; and encouraging them to have conversations at the local level. We have also prepared a letter and mailed it to the authorized authorities within the province who may be in a position to change the requiring of foster parent per diems as income on the OSAP application forms.

Meetings Attended:

- 👤 OACAS residential advisory committee that included designated representatives from all aspects within Child Welfare and those connected to Child Welfare – this advisory is meeting **every Tuesday** during the day. FPSO is represented by Elaine Pratt FPSO First Vice-President; acting President. Who has not only participated as a member of the main advisory group; but also participated in the sub-committee that put forward specific issues facing caregivers. The advisory is meeting electronically and is focused on COVID 19 related challenges and concerns.
- 👤 Foster parent advisory committee: Attended each **Tuesday evening** by Elaine Pratt, Vanessa Milley, Krista Ray-Caddick, we are also joined by some of our members Nancy B, Sarah F, and Kate M; as well as other foster parents from within Ontario. This foster parent advisory committee is doing our collective best to represent all of our members regarding details and experiences connected to the COVID 19 Pandemic and how it affects the foster family. If you have any perspectives related to the challenges facing foster families, please contact any of the committee delegates as we may be able to include your perspective as we meet each week. We are also interested to hear from you regarding things that have changed due to the pandemic. Things that you feel worked so well that they may be of benefit to carry forward into our new normal.

Pending meetings

- 👤 Soon to be posted
 - Presidents Town Hall Meeting
 - Advocates Town Hall Meeting

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.

- 👤 May 1 – Ombudsman's newsletter
- 👤 May 5 – Youth in Care day Event Notice
- 👤 May 6 – FASD Training opportunity

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- 👤 May 13 – FPSO 2020 first quarter financial report to members
- 👤 May 20 – FPSO April Month End report
- 👤 May 21 – Training opportunity – Autism during the pandemic
- 👤 May 21- request for information from DAGSY institute – they were looking for information from foster parents regarding some of the questions or challenges foster parents may be having as they parent specific children during the pandemic. Most notable ASD, ADHD, LD, & DD. The goal was to gather the information from foster parents and develop a specific training for foster parents focused where a need was identified.
- 👤 May 29 – Letter to members regarding OSAP applications
- 👤 June 18 – Webinar – Navigating learning from home
- 👤 June 25 – Newsletter – Commissioner for Children and Youth

Conference

- 👤 Conference has been moved to May 2021
- 👤 FPSO is working on putting together some day trainings in the fall
- 👤 FPSO will be working on some electronic members meetings
- 👤 FPSO hopes to make plans for an online AGM.
- 👤 FPSO will continue making decisions in line with current Public Health directives, recommendations and guidelines.

Charitable status

- 👤 The 2019 Yearend financials will be submitted with an application for the 2019 HST rebate. This work will be with the new FPSO accountant.
- 👤 The FPSO Accountant will also be managing the historical HST/GST rebates for 2016, 2017 & 2018.

Private Membership .

- 👤 This mail out was waiting till June to confirm the conference planning, however with conference now bumped to May 2021, the mail out will focus on membership and current work and training plans of the board.

Website

- 👤 Pay Pal is now the online payment for FPSO
 - We will be able to use paypal for any donations, dues payments, conference registrations and fundraisers.

Fundraisers

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

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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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