

Keeping In Touch

October is... Family History Month

Everyone Has History

Brooke Brunner

Sometimes children do not have written records or photos from their past. In this case, the foster parent can ask the child questions or have the child answer questions written on a page and save the responses in a journal. The questions below are samples just to get you thinking. You can have the child re-answer them every year. It may be interesting to see how they grow and change emotionally.



- My room/house/neighborhood/yard looked like...
- My best friend is ...
- The thing I like best about being in foster care is...
- The thing I don't like about being in foster care is...
- The thing I like about being adopted is...
- The thing I don't like about being adopted is...
- I feel ____ today.
- I wish I could...
- If I could grow up to be anything in the world I would be a...
- If I could live anywhere it would be...
- My favorite song is...
- My favorite TV show is...
- At my birth home we used to ____ as a family every weekend.
- My birth mom/dad's laughter sounds like...
- My birth grandparent's names are...
- I would love to visit...
- When I think about the day I moved into my foster home I feel...
- When I think about my birth home I feel...
- My favorite memory of my birth mom and dad is ...
- During the holidays we...
- I had a ____ for a pet. His name was _____. He looked like _____. We used to _____.
- The meal I loved the most at home was...

- I miss...
- I want...
- School is...

These items are offered as suggestions. You can add to them, or change them completely. The important thing is to create a sense of identity and value for the child.

Tucson's Teens Need YOU

Did you know that 65 Tucson Teens spent the night in group homes and shelters last night? Did you know that many Tucson Teens who are in foster care are sent to Phoenix each week because there are not enough Foster Care beds in Tucson to care for them? In Tucson there is a critical shortage for foster homes for older children and teens aged 10 to 18 years. Have YOU ever thought of being a foster parent? Do you have extra love in your heart? Do you have extra room in your house? If you are aged 21 or over, able to take care of your own financial responsibilities without relying on foster care reimbursement, have a bed and dresser available for each additional child, can pass a home inspection and

Casa de los Niños Foster Care Program

Special points of interest:

- > Strengthening family bonds
- > Teen Pregnancy
- > Healthcare assistance
- > Urgent Need for Foster Families for Teens
- > Family Resources

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Halloween Safety Tips

When buying or making costumes make sure they are made from fire-retardant materials. Never use cotton sheets or pillow cases that can catch fire easily. Avoid baggy or overlong costumes that children can trip or fall over. Do not have children wear full face masks that may impair their vision. Face painted masks are often best. Use glow sticks, flashlights, or reflective tape when Trick-or-Treating. This will make children visible to passing motorists. Children should NEVER go Trick-or-Treating alone. Children should only Trick-or-Treat at well lighted houses. Children should NEVER go into a house. Also, they should stay away from dark houses or alleys. Parents should check all candy before it is eaten. Throw away any candy that looks like it has been opened or tampered with. Battery powered lights for Jack-O-Lanterns should be used instead of candles that can cause a fire.

“Be sure the child does not interpret this activity as threatening or intimidating and understands that it is a game.”

Top 10 Five Minute Bonding Activities

By [Carrie Craft](#), About.com Guide



These activities are not for every foster/adoptive parent or every foster/adoptive child. Only do what is comfortable for you and your foster/adopted child.

Keep in mind:

- Child's Age - Chronological and Emotional
- Child's History of Abuse and/or Neglect
- Comfort Levels

Please note that I'm not promoting these activities as a way to create an instant bond between you and your child. Bonding is a process that takes time. These activities are ideas that will help start the process of bonding.

1. Brushing Hair

This can be a great and easy way to spend time with a child. It also involves a safe touch, which is so important to creating a loving bond.

2. Read a Story

Not only will you be increasing your bond by spending time together, you'll be increasing the child's vocabulary and other literary skills.

3. Sing Songs

We used to have a tradition of singing songs before tucking our daughter into bed, favorites included Old Macdonald, London Bridge, and many different Sunday School songs. Also try songs like "This Little Piggy" where each line of the song is sang as you tickle a toe, involves appropriate, safe touching with a child who may be fearful of touch due to past abuse.

4. Clapping Games and Rhymes

Remember the games played on elementary playgrounds? If not here are some Web sites with words. Fun activity involving safe touch.

Chants, Clapping Games, and Jump Rope Rhymes

- Please remember to use your best judgment in choosing which rhymes to teach your child as some are not appropriate for young children.

5. Bed Time Routine

A routine can include tucking in with a soft blanket, hugs and kisses, a short story, song, or prayer. Keep in mind the comfort level of all involved. If a history of sexual abuse exists or you don't know the child's history, protect yourself against allegations by having another adult with you at bed time.

6. Staring Contest

Maintain direct eye contact, the first person to look away or blink loses. A fun game for older children and a great way to have eye contact which helps build attachment. Be sure the child does not interpret this activity as threatening or intimidating and understands that it is a game.

7. Hand Games

More safe touching activities like Rock Paper Scissors, Bubble Gum Bubble Gum in a Dish, or Thumb Wrestling. Some of the above links will take you to pages filled with more game ideas.

8. Paint Finger and Toe Nails

More appropriate for girls - this is a sweet way to spend five minutes. Consider allowing the child to paint your nails.

9. Rocking

This is one bonding activity in which you must calculate emotional age, history, and comfort levels. My son was 12 when he came to us as a foster child, but he needed and welcomed being held and rocked. I spoke to his therapist before rocking him and had no trouble in doing so. He was extremely small for his age, which made rocking him easier. **Be aware of sexual arousal with older children and activities**

that involve such closeness.

10. Lotioning

Applying lotion to a child's hands and feet can also be part of a bed-time routine. Children of color will benefit from having lotion applied to their legs, arms, face, and back.

Caution: Consider child's sexual abuse history, age, and comfort level with this activity. Some abused children can misinterpret different kinds of touch. Be aware of sexual arousal. If you sense that any activity is upsetting to the child - stop. Document the incident, tell the therapist at your next meeting.



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background check, perhaps you would qualify to be a foster parent. For additional information about becoming a foster parent for an older child or teen, contact the Casa de los Niños Foster Care Recruiter, Brooke Brunner, 520-326-8250 x109 or at brookeb@casadelosninos.org. It is never too late to change a life.

Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program—CMDP

CMDP Mission Statement

“The comprehensive Medical and Dental Program (CMDP) promotes the well being of Arizona’s children in foster care by ensuring, in partnership with the foster care community, the provision of appropriate and quality health care services.”

For more information, contact CMDP at:

800-201-1795 or

<http://www.azdes.gov/dcyf/cmdpe/>

CMDP Goals -

- Proactively respond to the unique health care needs of Arizona’s children in foster care
- Ensure the provision of high quality, clinically appropriate and medically necessary health care, in the most cost effective manner
- Promote continuity of care and support caregivers, custodians and guardians through

- **HIV testing of adolescents, ages 13 and older may be done when ordered by healthcare providers. Youth, ages 13 and older, do not need an adult’s consent to HIV testing. HIV testing for children 12 and under requires consent by their legal guardians.**

Preventive Care

Teenage Pregnancy and Foster Care Youth

Many studies show that teens in foster care have higher rates of pregnancy than other teens. Many teens in foster care may have risky sexual behavior leading to teen pregnancy. These youth are also more likely to have given birth and to have more pregnancies at a young age.

Girls have usually been the major focus of efforts to prevent teen pregnancy. However, it is important to work with teen boys and young men as to their responsibility in pregnancy prevention.

CMDP covers prescription and non-prescription forms of birth control including:

Contraceptive drugs (birth control pills)

Supplies or devices prescribed by a physician, including condoms

Diaphragms

Oral contraceptive drugs (pills)

Injectable (shots for birth control)

Spermicidal (sperm killing) such as foams, creams, jellies and suppositories

The cost of non-prescription supplies, if they are ordered or written on a prescription

Contraceptives that are placed under the skin (implantable)

Postcoital emergency oral contraceptives (for use within 72 hours of unprotected sex)

CMDP covers the cost of testing for all sexually transmitted diseases including:

- Syphilis
- Gonorrhea
- Chlamydia
- HIV

- ▢ http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/home_family/foster_families.html
- ▢ <http://www.nfpainc.org/>
- ▢ <http://library.adoption.com/articles/foster-parenting-and-adoption.html>

Web Resources

Creating History with Your Foster Children

<http://familycrafts.about.com/od/holidays/p/FamilyHistoryMonth.htm>

http://www.grandmascraftguides.com/Family_Corner/

<http://www.helium.com/knowledge/186328-how-to-teach-kids-about-the-importance-of-family>

<http://library.adoption.com/articles/prime-time-family.html>

Do you have a special story to tell or words of wisdom to share with other foster parents? We are looking for newsletter article submittals for future newsletters. Please submit your entry electronically to kathym@casadelosninos.org or mail to the

Foster Care Office at

40 N. Swan Rd, Ste 45

Tucson, AZ 85711

Visit us on the web at
Casadelosninos.org for
 more training opportunities

Training Opportunities

**Casa de los Niños Foster
 Care Program**

Affordable On-line Training for Foster Families

<http://www.fosterparentstest.com/store/index.htm?Submit2=Click+for+Online+Training>
 Includes topics such as:

- Allegation Prevention Emergency Preparedness
- Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting
- The Foster Care Experience Foster Family Home Renewal Readiness
- What Can I Expect? Behavior Problems Easing Transitions
- Foster Parents & Birth Parents - Working Together for Children Saying Hello and Goodbye
- Parenting Children Across Racial & Cultural Lines Ethical Dilemmas & Decision Making
- Managing Chronic Conditions The Truth About Bedwetting Advocacy in Education




And many more. *Check out this fantastic resource.*

October 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6 PS MAPP Training	7	8	9
10	11	12	13 PS MAPP Training	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 PS MAPP Training	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 PS MAPP Training	28	29	30

**Save the date
 12/4/10 Foster
 Parent Holiday
 Potluck**



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