

## **Foster Parent Ombudsman Report**

*November 22, 2011*

- On behalf of Secretary Dallas and all of us at DHR, I send warm wishes for a safe and happy Thanksgiving Holiday.
- Congratulations to MFPA for successfully completing the last grant and plan of work. Also the 990 has been filed with the IRS. Kudos to Arnie, Gloria, Cindy, the accountant, and the Finance Committee for their hard work. Now to get going on the next cycle which ends on 06-30-2012.
- To date, I have received 339 responses from the Maryland Public Foster Parent Local Department Assessment. A copy of the jurisdictional breakdown is attached. To make the results more statistically valid, I have contacted some of the counties with little or no responses to get more data. I will be sending each jurisdiction their respective comments from the survey. Once the additional assessments are received, the data will be collated and I will report the results. Please urge your foster parents to send in this important “report card.”
- The Quarterly Report from U of M on the Foster Parent Satisfaction Survey is also attached. This sample was just from continuing families and had a small response sample of 19, half of which had no knowledge or comment about their local association or MFPA.
- The proposed revision of the COMAR chapter involving resource parents will be published by the Secretary of State in the Maryland Register on December 16. There will be 30 days for public review and response. We have discussed this previously, but 2 major changes are the ability of a local department to close your home if you have not had a placement in three years or the placements you are willing to accept is not meeting the needs of the children coming into care; and, an increase in the annual requirement for in-service training to 10 hours a year (up from 6).
- The next Foster Parent Panel for new child welfare workers is on 12-08-2011. We are now working on the 2012 schedule.

- Michele Burnette and I attended the NFPA Affiliate and Board Meetings earlier this month. I believe they have truly turned the corner for the better, they ended the fiscal year with a modest profit and have really enhanced communications and outreach. I serve on the Public Policy Committee which goes hand in hand with my work as your Foster Parent Ombudsman.
- Pat Molineaux has announced that she will be retiring in January. She has been a great champion of foster parents and MFPA, and she will be missed.
- The deadline for information to be included in the next Foster Parent News is 01-20-2012. Please send me anything you would like to share.
- It is still my hope that someone will come forward to run for the position of President-Elect. This is crucial to the future of MFPA. Why not consider it or talk to a leader from your local association about it?
- I look forward to talking to you on the conference call meeting Wednesday, 11-30, at 7 PM. There is no meeting in December. However, my challenge to you is to make every effort to attend our scheduled in-person meeting on Friday, 01-06. There will be a lot of important things discussed including Foster Parent Appreciation, in which MFPA has an important role. Please mark the dates. Have a great Holiday Season... John