

DCFS

Connections

Back to School 2015

Care * Commit * Connect



ARKANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF
**HUMAN
SERVICES**

DCFS Connections
Back-to-School 2015

Danielle Barlow- Editor

Director's Note... from Cecile Blucker

August is Back to School for a number of you as parents! It's Back to School for the children and youth we have in foster care. This can be a scary time for our children and youth – it may be a new school for them, a school outside of where they were removed, fear of attending school as a foster child, just attending school in general! Education is very important to all of us. As such we are fortunate to have an Educational Specialist, Sherry Rogers, on board for DCFS. Her role is to advocate for our children and youth; work on the relationship between DCFS and the local school districts; be a support to you as a caseworker on educational issues; have access to our foster children and youth's educational records, know the educational outcomes for children and youth, etc. It is important that we know as much about our foster children and youth's education as we know about our own children's educational status.



Often times our children come into the system behind educationally and we want to ensure we are able to assist them in catching up with their peers. It's also important that we recognize the fear, the challenges, the anxiety and the excitement our children and youth may be feeling. It's important that children have the proper clothes, shoes, school supplies and tools needed to start the school year! We need to not only provide them with the material items needed, but we need to be there for them as well – supporting and encouraging them. Our foster parents and providers play a huge role in this as well but as the caseworkers whether you are the primary worker or the secondary worker – regardless of our official position title – we all play a critical role in how the children and youth feel about their first day at school and school in general going forward! It is all of our responsibility to ensure the children and youth in foster care have positive educational experiences just like we would want our biological children and youth to experience.

I would encourage you to think about how important it was to you to have everything you needed for school. For those of you who have children and youth, how important it is to them to have everything they need for school. Our foster children and youth deserve the same! Education is the key to success. We want our foster children and youth to be afforded every educational opportunity to be the best they can be. We all play a vital role in that. Thanks to each of you for what you do each day in making a difference and having an **IMPACT** on a child or youth!



TRAUMA ACROSS THE AGES: TRAUMA AND ADOLESCENTS

BENJAMIN A. SIGEL, PH.D., & KARIN L. VANDERZEE, PH.D.

What is Trauma?

Trauma refers to a stressful event such as sexual or physical abuse, neglect, a tornado or fire, a motor vehicle accident, violence at home or in the community, death of a family member, or removal from a home. All adolescents who have experienced abuse and neglect have potentially experienced a traumatic event.



How Common is Trauma?

Research indicates that more than two-thirds of children and adolescents experience a traumatic event by their 16th birthday. Furthermore, one in four girls and one in six boys experience sexual abuse. Evidence suggests that adolescents are particularly susceptible to the experience of trauma with approximately 50% experiencing physical or sexual assault or witnessing serious violence. Moreover, sexual victimization occurs more frequently in adolescence than in adulthood.

How Can Adolescents Be Affected by Trauma?

Experiencing or witnessing trauma may make an adolescent feel scared, upset, sad, or even angry. Adolescents who have experienced trauma are at high risk for poor outcomes. They are at greater risk for *multiple forms* of mental health and other difficulties, such as Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, substance use, self-harm, risk-taking behavior, problematic sexual behavior, poor peer and caregiver relationships, and aggression.

How Can You Help Adolescents?

Adolescents who have been exposed to traumatic events need a safe and structured environment that meets both their physical and emotional needs. Once in place, the adolescent may need specialized treatment for trauma-related symptoms. If a child on your caseload has experienced any of the traumas listed above or others, refer them to a trained therapist who can conduct a trauma assessment to determine whether trauma-focused treatment is appropriate. A thorough trauma-focused assessment will consist of a detailed clinical interview that involves identifying potential traumatic events that the adolescent has experienced and assessing the timing of the development of PTSD symptoms in relation to these events. The trauma-focused assessment should include the use of evidence-based standardized assessment measures of PTSD symptoms, such as the UCLA PTSD Reaction Index for DSM-IV or DSM-5, the Child PTSD Symptom Scale (CPSS), or the Trauma Symptom Checklist for Children (TSCC). Re-administering these assessment measures periodically will also help a therapist monitor a child's treatment progress.

The most widely available and effective treatment for adolescents with trauma histories is Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), which has been recognized by the federal government as an effective treatment. Therapists across Arkansas have been trained by ARBEST to provide this evidence-based therapy to the families in our state.

What is TF-CBT?

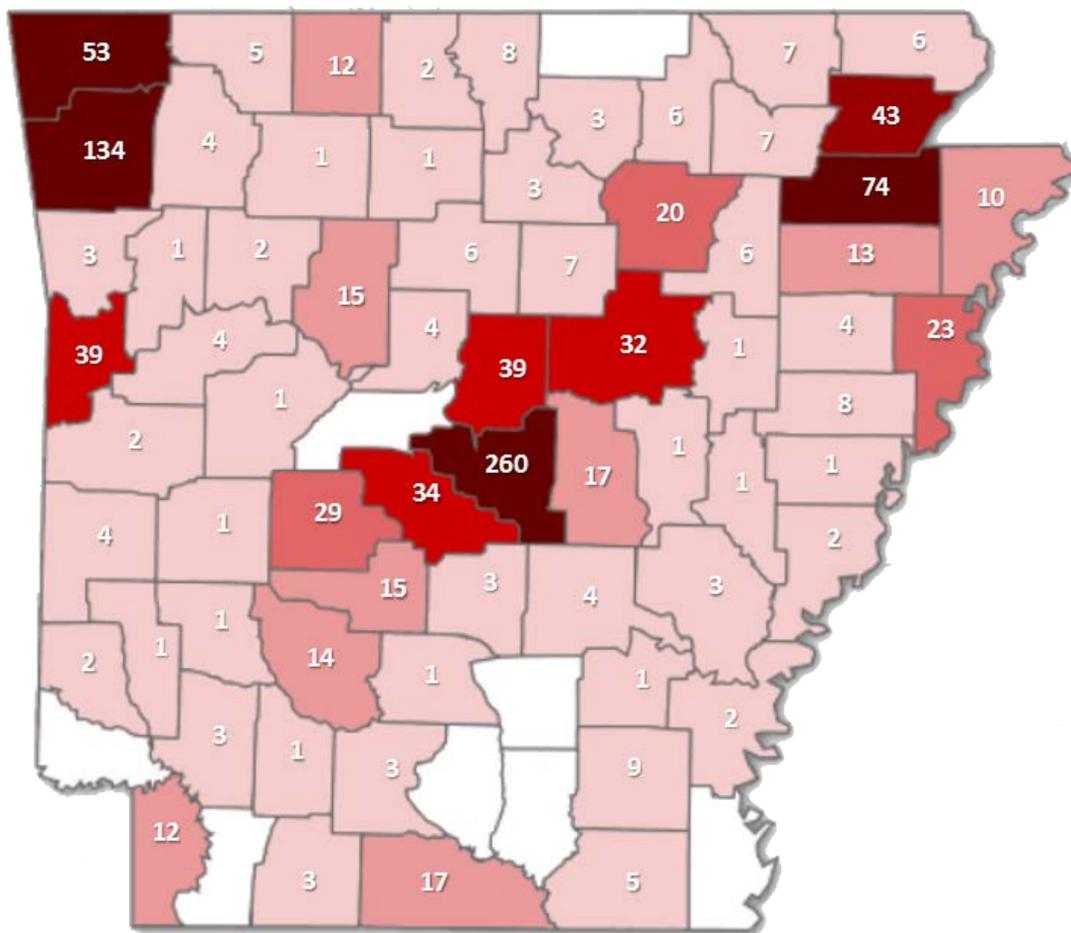
Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy was developed almost 20 years ago to provide education about trauma, teach coping skills, and develop the tools children, adolescents, and families need to heal. TF-CBT is a brief treatment of 12-16 sessions that can help children and adolescents begin their recovery quickly. The treatment can be used with children ages 3-18. Through TF-CBT, children and caregivers learn new skills to process thoughts and feelings about trauma and new ways of managing stress.

Where Can I Find a TF-CBT Therapist in Arkansas?

Over the last five years, ARBEST has trained more than a thousand Mental Health Professionals in TF-CBT. To find a TF-CBT certified therapist in your area, visit <http://arbest.uams.edu/>

If you need more help locating a TF-CBT therapist, or know someone who might want TF-CBT training, contact Chad Sievers at cmsievers@uams.edu or 501-526-8317.

1,061	1,061 MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN ARKANSAS BY COUNTY WHO HAVE COMPLETED TWO-DAY TF-CBT TRAINING
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MEET A FEW OF OUR WAITING CHILDREN!

Jabria – Age:15



Jabria is a lovable child with a heartwarming smile. Jabria is all girl! She loves to shop and do all things girlie such as paint her nails! She says that in the summer she enjoys going on picnics', playing basketball and going to the park. Jabria likes to keep a clean room and says that her main chore at home is to keep her room tidy. In school, Jabria's favorite subject is P.E. and music class, because she likes to stay active. Jabria loves to draw.

Jabria needs a loving supportive family who can give her the stable life she deserves. Parents need to be nurturing, active and fun. It would be beneficial for Jabria to have contact with her other siblings after she is adopted.

Jabria's adoption specialist is Lillie Owens
lillie.owens@dhs.arkansas.gov

Haille – Age: 11



Haille can be a very sweet young lady. She loves animals, especially horses and would love to be in a home where there are animals around. Haille has also expressed interest in taking piano lessons and would like to be able to participate in a music program.

Haille needs a very structured and stable home environment. She would do best in a home with two parents who are very consistent in discipline. She needs a family that will be patient with her. Haille needs to have a family that is completely committed to her. Haille will need to continue to participate in counseling.

Haille's adoption specialist is Kimberlee Yates
kimberlee.yates@dhs.arkansas.gov

"I have four children. Two are adopted. I forget which two " -Bob Constantine

ARKANSAS' FASD 3RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE

BY STEPHANIE STONE

Arkansas' 3rd Annual Conference on FASD will be held on Tuesday September 15, 2015 at Pleasant Valley Church of Christ in Little Rock, Arkansas. Registration is from 8-9am. Conference is from 9am-4pm. Prices are \$60 per person, \$25 for biological/foster/adoptive parents. A limited number of scholarships available upon request if caring for a child with an FASD. Key Note Speaker: Melinda Ohlemiller, MA, Chief Executive Officer of Nurses for Newborns Foundation. Melinda is part of SAMHSA's Expert Panel on FASD and the parent of a young adult living with FASD.

For more conference information, please contact cfrangel@uams.edu



TUESDAY, SEPT. 15, 2015 **ARKANSAS' 3RD** **ANNUAL** **CONFERENCE ON** **FASD**

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders are the most common cause of *preventable* developmental disabilities. Make plans to attend our 3rd Annual Conference to learn more about supporting individuals with FASD's and their families.

Location:

**Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ**
10900 Rodney Parham
Rd.,
Little Rock, AR.

Registration:
8:00-9:00am

Conference Time:
9:00am-4:00pm



MORE INFORMATION TO
COME!



FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT:

Carol Rangel

cfrangel@uams.edu

(501) 258-1014

PAJAMA PROGRAM IN AREA 9

Lisa Turner Community Engagement Specialist for Area 9 has been working with the pajama program headquarters located in New York for pajama donations to area 9 foster children in care. The director of the Pajama Program Diana Imhof was generous enough to send two separate shipments of donations for the foster children in care. The first shipment was winter fleece for boys with a total of 600 pieces ages 12 months to 4t the second shipment were girls fleece sizes 6 months to 5t with 240 pieces and 70 pieces of summer pajamas. The pajamas were distributed to 6 counties due to Cross, Crittenden, and Poinsett already being a part of the pajama program. The counties that received donations were Jackson, Woodruff, Stone, Independence, White, and Cleburne. The ARCCC program would like to express our thanks to the Pajama program for their generosity to help the children in care. If you are interested in finding out more information about the Pajama Program to contact your area's Community Engagement Specialist.



WELCOME TO THE PERMANENCY CORNER

BY SALETHIA WEATHERSPOON

The permanency teams have been working extremely hard to identify life-long connections for the youth of Arkansas. In August, September, and October, Cindy Hamilton who is our consultant from the Casey Family Programs will be on-site to assist us in our quest to expedite permanency for our youth. Cindy and Salethia will be presenting on the topic of finding permanent homes for youth during the Child Abuse and Neglect conference. Their presentation will be September 2nd from 1:15-2:45.



DCFS' WHO'S WHO AND WHO'S NEW!



MEET JULIE GRAY – IN-HOME SPECIALIST

Julie graduated from the University of Phoenix, Colorado Springs in 2007 with a Bachelor's of Science in Human Services and Management. She then worked for Bethany Christian Services as a Foster Care Coordinator, Adoption Coordinator and Birth Parent Counselor in Colorado Springs, Colorado. In 2010 she moved to Arkansas and was a stay at home mom until 2012 when she was hired as a Program Eligibility Specialist with DCO in Jacksonville. She was then hired as a FSW in the Centralized Inquiry Unit for DCFS in 2014. This past May she was selected to be the In-Home Specialist. Julie states "I am excited to be on board with DCFS and help make a difference in the lives of children and families throughout Arkansas!"

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 04/25/1982, Toledo, Ohio

LAST BOOK I READ: "I Love You Stinky Face" by Lisa McCourt, to my youngest son last night before bed.

FAVORITE QUOTE: "Consult not your fears, but your hopes and dreams. Think not about your frustration, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in, but with what it is still possible for you to do." Pope John XXIII

ON THE WEEKEND YOU CAN FIND ME: At home with my two boys! ☺

THE BEST ADVICE I EVER RECEIVED WAS: Always try to stay positive.

FAVORITE JUNK FOOD: Chocolate

IF I COULD DO IT OVER AGAIN, I'd: Laugh more!!

ONE THING PEOPLE DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME: I was a "Rock-ette" for the University of Toledo.

FAVORITE CHILDHOOD MEMORY: Going on the boat with my dad to watch fireworks in downtown Toledo!

ONE WORD TO SUM ME UP: Loyal

WELCOME OUR NEWEST DCFS TEAM MEMBERS!

Dulce Martinez
Debra Reynolds
Tarneil Miller
Steven Burnett
Tanya Seward
Robert Criner
Lindsey Carter
Douglas Nendick
John Loeschner
Olie Thompson
Heather Cronwell
Charlette Yancey
Denise Kucginski
Mia Simmons
Tenia Watson
Patricia Ford
Shuntoria Walls
Belynda Sisemore
Jennifer Kelley
Onequa Scott

Marquita Richardson
Bradford Gray
Stephanie Meeker
Ana Ortiz
Tara Bean
Amy Majors
Ashley Rodenburg
Kristin Brumley
Katlyn Young
Paula Gentry
Ryna Faulkner
Sha Andrews
Angela Scott
Traci Moreland
Angela Tjemeland
Katie Wells
Imani Tidwell
Ashley Baker
Megan Palmer
Erica Williams

Tasha Washington
Kevin Taggart
Kathryn Dykes
Summer Corker
Stacie Chalupka
Beverly Snell
Lorie Hutto
Tiffany Walker
Wilma Olvey
Shatobeca Moutry
Sandra Marfoglio-
Hinton
Timothy Oliver
Shirley K'Nuckles
Melanie Chandler
Yvonne Cusick
Willie Allen
Sadi Wilson
Jeffery Parker
Marchell Whitmore

Ginger Elder
Latosha Savage
Whitney Bond
Ladawn Hines
Karen Pearson
Kimberly Murray
Cynthia Pineda
Carrie Baker
Jordan Lim
Bryttany Brown
Sherell Coleman
Daniela Salamo
Christina Sutton
Kasha Shannon
Jeanne Cooper
Casha Harmon
Danielle Lockamy
Wesley McLaughlin
Evangela Jackson

NURTURING THE FAMILIES OF ARKANSAS™

BY SHARON LONG

What is Nurturing the Families of Arkansas?

NFA is an evidence-based child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment program that features:

- activities to foster positive parenting skills and self-nurturing
- home practice exercises
- family nurturing time
- activities to promote positive brain development in ages 5-11
- ongoing assessment strategies for facilitators and parents

Within 30 days of a referral, a Comprehensive Parenting Inventory will be completed in the family's home to determine strengths and needs. Understanding of the existing family knowledge, attitudes, and history will then be used to create a Nurturing Family Plan.

The 16 sessions can be delivered in group-based settings, home-based settings, or a combination of settings.

Skills addressed include:

- Developing a positive self-worth
- Developing a sense of caring and compassion
- Providing children with dignified discipline
- Increasing self-awareness and appropriate family roles
- Developing a healthy sense of empowerment
- Humor, laughter and fun!

Who can be referred to Nurturing the Families of Arkansas?

- Non-court involved Protective Services Cases can be referred.
- At least one child in the family is 5-11 years of age.
- Substance misuse is not currently an issue that will prevent a parent's participation.
- At least one of the eight FAST items related to NFA Parenting Constructs received a 2 or 3 rating. (Note: FAST does **not** have to be formally completed in CHRIS before referral occurs.)

➤ If the family meets all referral criteria, FSW will discuss with Supervisor the appropriateness of NFA referral as a case plan service.

➤ Once approved by Supervisor, FSW will discuss the program with the family.

➤ Once family has agreed to participate, FSW Supervisor may directly email referral to: Sharon Long, MidSOUTH Lead Parent Trainer/Programmatic Lead at sjlong@midsouth.ualr.edu. Please include:

Family Case Number

Family Name

Family's County of Residence

Family Case Worker Name and Email

➤ Within 72 hours, NFA will contact FSW to gather further information and to begin setting up the first home visit.

➤ Subsequent sessions are tailored to meet the specific needs of the family.

Arkansas is excited to be a part of a growing international community of families who have embraced the importance of raising children with respect, compassion and integrity – always keeping the well-being of children as the primary goal of parenting.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders

September is Awareness Month

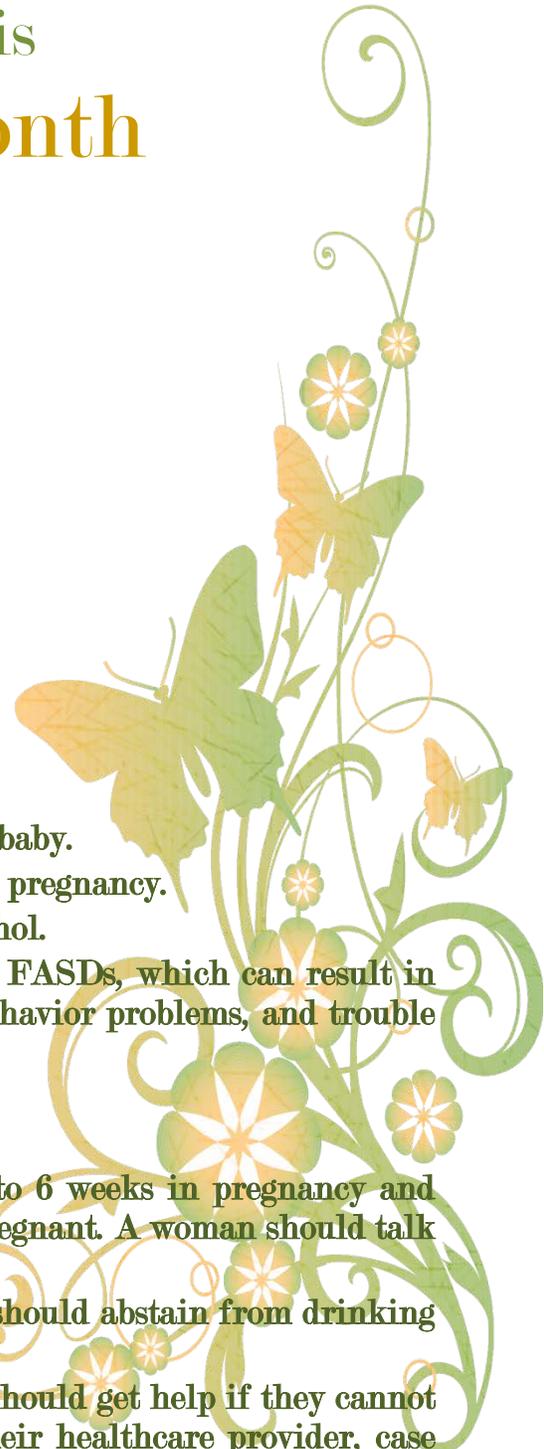
On **Wednesday September 9, 2015 at 9:09a.m**
Join Division of Children and Family Services
as we promote awareness of the risks of drinking
alcohol during 9 months of pregnancy!
We challenge you to join us and the National
Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome by
utilizing social media (i.e. Facebook,
Twitter, Instagram) to spread awareness
using hashtag **#FASDay**.
(www.frfasd.org/fasdday.html)

What are the facts?

- ~ FASD's are 100% preventable.
- ~ When a pregnant woman drinks alcohol, so does her baby.
- ~ There is no known safe amount of alcohol use during pregnancy.
- ~ There is no safe time during pregnancy to drink alcohol.
- ~ An estimated 40,000 babies are born each year with FASDs, which can result in birth defects, intellectual or learning disabilities, behavior problems, and trouble learning life skills.
- ~ FASD-related difficulties last a lifetime.
- ~ About half of pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned.
- ~ A woman may not realize she is pregnant up to 4 to 6 weeks in pregnancy and expose her baby to alcohol before she knows she is pregnant. A woman should talk with her obstetrician.
- ~ Pregnant women and women trying to get pregnant should abstain from drinking alcohol.
- ~ Pregnant women and women trying to get pregnant should get help if they cannot stop drinking. Women are encouraged to contact their healthcare provider, case manager, local Alcoholics Anonymous, or local alcohol treatment center.

(Information derived from www.nofas.org)

For more information contact Stephanie Stone at stephanie.stone@dhs.arkansas.gov



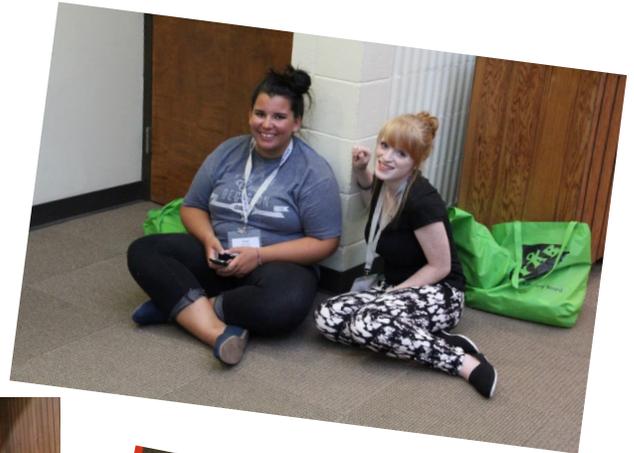
TEEN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2015

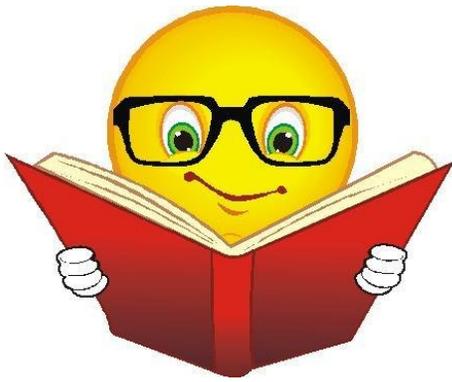
BY KANDIS ROMES

This year's "Teen Leadership", conference was held at the Arkansas 4-H Center in (Ferndale) Little Rock, Arkansas. We had a total of 182 youth that participated along with a host of chaperones, and DCFS staff that attended on both days of the conference. This year's conference we wanted to make sure that the youth learned new material as they went through each workshop as well as have fun while they were there. This year's workshops consisted of "Independent City", which the youth learned the proper way to budget, job preparedness, education, and housing. We had six more workshops which the youth learned "Team Building Skills", "Driving Lessons" which consisted of life's ups and downs, "Being your own Advocate", "Smart Money", "Creative Vision Board", and one of the most important workshops "Aging out at 18 Why Not 21"? The Youth Advisory Board hosted a Talent Show for Monday night's entertainment and the youth had a blast! We had several youth to participate and they had many talents from singing, dancing, playing instruments, and giving there life testimony. Military, business, and college recruiters were also present at the conference. Overall this year's conference was a huge success and we look forward to next year's conference.



TEEN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2015





HELPFUL LINKS

[How to Work Alongside Teachers to Help your Child in Foster Care](#)

www.fosterparentcollege.com/info/connections

www.midsouth.ualr.edu

www.americanhumane.org/protecting-children

www.arkansas.gov/reportARchildabuse

www.fosterarkansas.org

www.dhsshare.arkansas.gov/pages/default.aspx

www.arkleg.state.ar.us/assembly

www.nctsnct.org

www.fema.gov/kids

www.childrendefense.org

www.fosterclub.com

www.ppcwg.org/communications-overview.html

www.fosteringconnections.org

<http://drjohndegarmofostercare.weebly.com/index.html>

www.childwelfare.gov

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Pesto Chicken Florentine

allrecipes!



Prep
20 m

Cook
35 m

Ready In
55 m

Recipe By: MINERFAMILY

"Extremely rich combination of chicken, spinach and creamy pesto sauce. Serve with crunchy bread and romaine salad--it's the best!"

Ingredients

2 tablespoons olive oil	1 (4.5 ounce) package dry Alfredo sauce mix
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped	2 tablespoons pesto
4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves - cut into strips	1 (8 ounce) package dry penne pasta
2 cups fresh spinach leaves	1 tablespoon grated Romano cheese

Directions

- 1 Heat oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add garlic, saute for 1 minute; then add chicken and cook for 7 to 8 minutes on each side. When chicken is close to being cooked through (no longer pink inside), add spinach and saute all together for 3 to 4 minutes.
- 2 Meanwhile, prepare Alfredo sauce according to package directions. When finished, stir in 2 tablespoons pesto; set aside.
- 3 In a large pot of salted boiling water, cook pasta for 8 to 10 minutes or until al dente. Rinse under cold water and drain.
- 4 Add chicken/spinach mixture to pasta, then stir in pesto/Alfredo sauce. Mix well, top with cheese and serve.

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Link to recipe: <http://m.allrecipes.com/recipe/16723/pesto-chicken-florentine/>

Questions, comment, suggestions? Please contact: Marilyn Counts, marilyn.counts@dhs.arkansas.gov