

Introducing the Newly Appointed DHS Director & Deputy Director

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Rachael Wong

Rachael Wong was appointed by Governor David Ige in January 2015 and currently serves as Director nominee of the State of Hawai'i Department of Human Services (DHS). Previously, she was the Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Health-care Association of Hawai'i where she advocated for the state's hospitals, nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, and medical equipment suppliers. She has served as Executive Director of Kōkua Mau (Hawai'i Hospice & Palliative Care Organization) and the Hawai'i Consortium for Integrative Care.

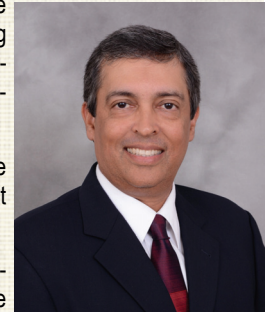
Rachael earned a bachelor's degree in East Asian studies and a certificate in women's studies from Princeton University, a master's degree in public health from University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, and a doctorate in public health from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She serves on numerous local and national boards and committees.

Pankaj Bhanot was appointed by Governor David Ige in January 2015 to serve as the Deputy Director of the State of Hawai'i Department of Human Services. Prior to moving to the Director's office, he served as the BESSD Administrator from April 2007-December 2014. Pankaj also served as the Deputy Director from December 2010-January 2012.

In the earlier part of his DHS career, Pankaj served as Employment and Child Care Program Administrator from March 2002-March 2007 and Food Stamp Employment and Training Specialist from September 1999-February 2002.

He is nationally recognized for his expertise and leadership in business process reengineering efforts to streamline the eligibility determination process in Hawai'i and was the DHS Employee of the Year in 2006 and State and DHS Manager of the Year in 2013.

Pankaj earned a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Delhi in 1986; LL.B. degree (equivalent of a J.D. in U.S.) from University of Delhi in 1990, LL.M. degree from Cornell School of Law in 1991, and did post graduate research in Public International Law at the University of Nottingham School of Law in the United Kingdom from 1993-1997.



Pankaj Bhanot



Imua Kākou – Move Forward Together

By Laurie Tochiki, EPIC 'Ohana President & CEO

On July 1, 2013, Governor Abercrombie signed into law Act 252, Voluntary Care to 21. With youth input, the program established by Act 252 was named "Imua Kākou" which means "move forward together." On July 1, 2014 the first young adult was brought into the program on Maui island, and now there are 96 young adults in the program. For instance, nineteen year old Noel Morris enrolled in Imua Kākou and has found it to be very helpful. The financial support is great, but perhaps more important is the support of her caseworker, and the Imua circles for planning and problem solving. Going to court is a plus too. She says it is nice to know that the judge really cares about how she is doing.

Think about your teenager at 18, or think about yourself at 18. Were you fully ready to pay rent, purchase a vehicle, pay tuition, find health insurance, and pay all of your bills? For some young adults at 18 the answer is yes, but for many, even those who have not been in the foster care system, the answer is no. Young adults who have experienced foster care struggle even more. They may not have family to live with, or help with that emergency loan. And, as a result, the outcomes for our former foster youth are not good – few complete a college education, men and women become parents before they are ready, and some end up homeless, or incarcerated. Imua Kākou lends a helping hand to make a better path for young adults.

Continued on pg. 2

**HUI HO'OMALU
STATEWIDE RESOURCE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Hui Ho'omalua Statewide Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) provides support to the resource family community through identifying ongoing needs, facilitating communication and by sharing resources.

The Building Connections Newsletter is published four times a year to provide information regarding foster and adoptive care to resource families, service providers, and to the public.

This newsletter may be viewed on the following websites:

www.hawaii.gov/dhs/protection/social_services/child_welfare/foster

www.pidfoundation.org

Partners in Development
Foundation

2040 Bachelot St.

Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817-2433

If you would like to receive this newsletter, please call:

441-1125 (O'ahu),

888-879-8970 (Toll Free) or

E-mail: RAC@pidfoundation.org

GO GREEN!

Want to help our environment? Contact us today and request an electronic copy!



OUTSTANDING DHS WORKER!



**Sandra Davenport
West Hawai'i CWS Licensing Worker/SSA**

It Takes An 'Ohana's Advisory Committee (IAC) would like to honor **Sandra Davenport** for her exceptional work. Sandy is known for having a real heart for the kids involved in the system as well as for their birth parents and for treating everyone with respect. One resource caregiver told us that, "I've never had a child who didn't want to go with Sandy. She is compassionate and connects with the keiki in a really good way that is positive for the children."

Resource caregivers went on to express that Sandy does her best to problem solve, that they can depend on her to call them to let them know what's going on, and will allow them to work visits and appointments into their family's schedules. Sandy is always full of energy and never complains even after she has put in long hours. Sandy was described to us as "Awesome!" many times.

Sandy works for the West Hawai'i CWS Unit 1. She is officially a SSA but is currently working as a temporary Licensing Worker in Kona. Mahalo nui loa to Sandy for going above and beyond to help children in foster care and those who care for them.



Sandra Davenport

Do you know a DHS-CWS worker(s) that you would like to acknowledge for his/her exceptional work? Share their name(s) with us and what makes them so special so we can let others know how wonderful they are!

441-1125 (O'ahu) ★ 1-888-879-8970 (Toll Free) ★ RAC@pidfoundation.org

Imua Kākou (cont.)



Imua Kākou Hearing on Kaua'i

Young adults who were in foster care at the age of 18, or who were placed in legal guardianship or adopted at the age of 16 or older may be eligible for monthly living assistance payments. For those young adults who were in foster care at age 18, Imua Kākou also provides case management and support services to the age of 21. Case management services for those young adults in Imua Kākou is provided by Hale Kipa on O'ahu, Salvation Army on Hawai'i Island, Maui Youth and Family Services on Maui, Moloka'i, and Lāna'i, and Hale 'Opio on Kaua'i. For those young adults who were adopted or in guardianship at the age of 16 or older, the benefits are payment benefits only. In addition to the monthly payment benefits, Imua

Kākou participants also receive medical and dental insurance.

To be enrolled in Imua Kākou, the young adult must:

- 1) Sign a Voluntary Agreement with the Department of Human Services and Family Court to enter into the program,
- 2) Meet monthly with an assigned Case Manager,
- 3) Meet at least ONE of the following criteria:
 - Be working on completing a high school diploma, GED or equivalent, or;
 - Enrolled part or full-time in post-secondary education (college) or vocational school, or;
 - Participating in an employment program, or;
 - Working at least part-time, 80 hours a month, or;
 - Be identified/certified as medically disabled.



**Noel Morris,
Imua Kākou Participant**

For those young adults who were in foster care at 18, Family Court is required to have oversight, and participants will have periodic court hearings, in addition to face-to-face meetings with a case manager. The hearings and meetings are very young-adult friendly. The Judges, Child Welfare Workers and Case Managers are very supportive and full of aloha!

For information and a list of DHS, and service provider contacts, go to imua21.org and the contacts page. **IMUA KĀKOU!**

KS Alumnus is an Advocate for Foster Care

By Jessika Garcia

This article, published on March 12, 2015, was written as a feature story for the KSBE.edu website highlighting a Kamehameha Schools Bishop Estate (KSBE) alumni who is a former foster youth, and is being reprinted with permission. This story can be found on the KSBE website at: <http://www.ksbe.edu/imua/article/ks-alumnus-is-an-advocate-for-foster-care/>. Please note that although this article mentions “foster families” and “foster parents”, in Hawai‘i they are referred to as “resource families” and “resource caregivers.”

Native Hawaiian keiki make up nearly 50 percent of Hawai‘i’s 1,330 foster care children.

Kamehameha Schools 2001 alumnus, Kaimana LeBlanc, was a foster child from age 5 through 18. Thanks to two loving foster families he found direction in life and today is a husband, father, business owner, and community volunteer. He also aspires to be a foster parent.

“Foster parents aren’t there to replace the child’s real parents,” says LeBlanc. “They are there to help the child succeed in the time they are with the foster family. My foster families have made a huge impact in my life and because of their example, I now know what I want in my life today.”

Native Hawaiian foster parents needed

Hui Ho‘omalu – a statewide initiative aimed at recruiting, training and supporting resource families – is currently seeking Native Hawaiian families to become resource caregivers for Hawaiian children in foster care.

“Our goal is to meet the child’s needs,” says Stephanie Helbush, community relations manager of the Partner in Development Foundation, which oversees the initiative.

“The idea of placing a child that is identified through his or her connection to the Native Hawaiian culture will help the child feel more comfortable.”

LeBlanc felt very comfortable under the care of his foster families and is grateful that they taught him Hawaiian cultural traditions including Polynesian seafaring, fishing and diving. They also instilled in him the true meaning of ‘ohana.

“Being part of a family means giving unconditional love, encouragement, and support to one another, regardless of the situation or circumstance,” he said.

While growing up in foster care, LeBlanc also gained a giving heart. In addition to running his business – Odds and Ends Handyman Service – he takes time to share his story with the community as part of the Heart Talk Speakers Bureau. The group, made up of foster parents and former foster children, inspires others to help Hawai‘i’s keiki.

“The saying, ‘It takes a village to raise a child,’ rings true for children in foster care,” says Helbush. “Get involved with the kids as a coach, mentor or volunteer. The community needs people to be aware that this problem exists and that some children don’t have a trustworthy role model to look up to.”

To learn more on how you can become a resource caregiver through the Partners in Development Foundation’s Hui Ho‘omalu initiative, please call (808) 441-1117, toll free: (888) 879-8970 or visit the foundation’s website, www.pdf.org.

The Partners in Development Foundation is a Kamehameha Schools early education collaborator that impacts keiki and families through its free Tūtū and Me traveling preschool program. The foundation’s Ka Pa‘alana program is also one of 10 partners at the KS’ new Early Learning Complex in Mā‘ili which serves families on the Wai‘anae Coast. The foundation partners with Catholic Charities Hawai‘i and Family Programs Hawai‘i to deliver foster support services.



KS Kapālama 2001 alum and former foster child, Kaimana LeBlanc, is an advocate for foster care. Thanks to loving foster families, he found direction in life and today is a husband, father, business owner, and community volunteer. Above are LeBlanc, his wife Jasmine and their sons Jacob, Nathan and Elijah.

May is National Foster Care Month

Mahalo!!!

*to Hawai'i's Resource Caregivers
who have opened their hearts & homes
for our keiki in foster care &
Changed a Lifetime*



Bake Sale Fundraiser

On February 10, 2015, the Glue Committee had another successful Valentine's Day themed Bake Sale fundraiser! All of the money raised goes towards supporting statewide events for Hawai'i's resource families and youth in foster care.

We were very fortunate to once again partner with and receive an abundance of help from our Dole Cannery neighbor, **Hawai'i Information Service (HIS)**. They held pre-bake sale fundraisers that included an Aloha Friday Lunch fundraising event with **Toshiba Business Solutions Hawai'i**, and they also solicited and obtained donations, provided baked goods to sell, helped to spread the word, got 100% of their staff to participate AND all funds raised were provided to the Glue Committee!



HIS Gang

The day was filled with so many delectable goodies! There was an array of tantalizing homemade treats such as cookies, brownies, cupcakes, organic popcorn, banana bread, rum cakes, and lemon bars, all of which drew in the crowds. The success of this event wouldn't have been possible without the help, support and donations of many individuals, organizations, and companies!

A BIG MAHALO to everyone who came out to support this event and to the following donors for their generous contributions:

Mahalo!

**Catholic Charities Hawai'i
Child and Family Service
Department of Human Services
Family Programs Hawai'i
FCTC Committee**

**Glue Committee
HAPA Committee
Hawai'i Information Service
Partners in Development Foundation
Toshiba Business Solutions**

SUPPORT Foster Care
change a lifetime

BAKE SALE
February 10, 2015 (Tuesday)
7:15 am - 1:00 pm
Shops at Dole Cannery, 2nd Floor Atrium

Treats in time for Valentine's Day!

BROWNIES & BARS! RICE KRISPIE TREATS!
BANANA BREAD! COOKIES!
AND SO MUCH MORE!

ALL proceeds earned will be used for events that directly support Hawai'i's foster keiki & the resource families who care for them.

For more information, contact
Partners in Development Foundation-Hui Ho'omalulu Program
Carol 441-1125 or Richele 441-1127

This event is brought to you by the Department of Human Services, Partners in Development Foundation, Catholic Charities Hawaii, & Family Programs Hawaii!

'OHANA REWARDS

Want to know how you could receive a \$200.00 gift card?

Would you like your name to appear in a future RAC newsletter?

All you need to do is help us find more homes for Hawai'i's keiki in foster care!

If you can refer, help, cheer, and see your referral to the finish line to become licensed, you could earn a **\$200 gift card** of your choice and join this list of folks who have received their 'Ohana Rewards:

Kerisa Baker
Ralphielyn Gaston Lovell
Candace Mazur
Lily Nahoopii
Stacy Wesanen & Derek Kamahoahoa



Call Hui Ho'omalulu today at 441-1117 or 1-888-879-8970 (toll free) for more information!

June is National Reunification Month

The State of Hawai'i, Department of Human Services (DHS), Judiciary-Family Drug Court, UH Law School, EPIC 'Ohana, Partners In Development Foundation, It Takes An 'Ohana, Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center, and various other community stakeholder groups in the child welfare field will come together to plan Hawai'i's third annual National Reunification Month event. National Reunification Month, recognized by the American Bar Association, Center on Children and the Law, and other national organizations, celebrates both the importance of and successful reunifications of families involved with child welfare services. The national movement recognizes that reunification is achievable through collaborative partnerships between the family, child welfare service providers such as social workers, attorneys, guardian ad litems & CASAs, etc., and other community supporters. The State of Hawai'i takes this a step further and emphasizes a "team" effort among not only the family, child welfare services and the family court, but also community services providers and resource caregivers (formerly known as foster families).

Hawai'i's event will honor all families and those supporting reunification. In keeping with the theme of "team collaboration," however, a special tribute will be paid not only to a family who was reunified, the Child Welfare Services, and Family Court, but also other key support team members, without whose support, the family's reunification may not have occurred. This "by invitation only" event, taking place on June 26, 2015, is significant as it not only honors families, child welfare services, and support persons and organizations, but is also an example of DHS' progress in achieving its mission to strengthen families and to safely reunify children with their families.

A heartfelt Mahalo to all DHS staff, 'Ohana, Resource Caregivers, Guardian Ad Litems, CASAs, Community and Service Providers, and all who support Hawai'i's families in helping to reunify children in foster care with their families. Reunification is a team effort...everyone working to best meet the needs of every child in foster care.



MOTHER'S DAY FOR OUR CHILDREN

by Timothy J. Callahan, PsyD

Many times an event or critical incident occurs which "triggers" a reaction in an adopted child or the adoptive family. The trigger could be a sound (police or fire sirens), a smell (cigarettes smoke, particular foods cooking, laundry soap), or even changing seasons (anniversaries of past losses). Other critical incidents or triggers may be more predictable, and many can be anticipated. Mother's Day is one of the more common triggers.

Many adopted & foster children struggle with issues of divided loyalties to birth and adoptive or foster mothers as Mother's Day approaches. Strategies to "de-fuse" this trigger include:

- ♥ Help the child make a Mother's Day card for the birth mother. In many cases, the cards can be shared. If contact with the birth mother is not an option, the cards can be kept in a special album.
- ♥ Ensure that the child understands he does not have to stop thinking about or loving the birth mother while in foster care or even after an adoption. The child can love multiple people, including mothers, at the same time. He does not have to choose. In the same way that mothers can love more than one child, children can love more than one mother, all at the same time. Love felt for one person does not diminish love felt for another person.
- ♥ Understand that a child who does not have a conscious memory of a birth mother will still have a strong sense of loyalty to the psychological presence of the birth mother. A bond to an idealized, fantasy birth mother may be even stronger than a relationship with a real person.
- ♥ Support and empathize with the child's grief for a lost mother. Mother's Day is a difficult day for any person who has lost a mother figure.



AN EXCERPT FROM WOUNDED CHILDREN, HEALING HOMES

Welcome to FPH's Resource Family Support Services Corner

By April Lum, RFSS Family Resource Specialist

Resource Family Support Services (RFSS) is funded by the Department of Human Services



Ask the Warm Line



April Lum

With the end of school just around the corner, families have been asking, "What summer programs are available for the children in my home?" There are many programs offered across the state that will keep your children busy, entertained, and active. Here are a few ideas, as well as information on each county's summer program offered through their parks and recreation department. Funds for registration fees may be available through your social worker or call the Warm Line for more information.

O'ahu

Honolulu City & County Summer Fun Program runs from June 12 to July 24, 2015, Monday – Friday from 8:30am to 2:00pm, with some sites offering the Summer Plus program with extended hours. The Summer Fun Program is open to children in Kindergarten through the 6th grade. There is a \$25 registration fee plus activity fee (based on location). For more information, visit www.honoluluparks.com or call 373-8013 (East Honolulu), 522-7074 (West Honolulu), 675-7130 (Leeward), and 233-7300 (Windward).

Kama'aina Kids summer program runs from June 8 to July 31, 2015, Monday – Friday. The program runs from 8:00am to 2:30pm, however, the center is open from 6:00am – 6:00pm at various locations across the island. For more information, visit

www.kamaainakids.com or call 262-4538.

For a list of other options, visit www.honolulufamily.com to view their 2015 summer programs guide or call 534-7544 for more information on where to pick up their current magazine issue.

Kaua'i

County Summer Enrichment Program runs from June 15 to July 24, 2015, Monday – Friday from 7:30am to 5:30pm, for children ages 5 – 11 years old. Cost is TBD. For more information, visit www.kauai.gov/summerprograms or call 332-7630.

Kaua'i Academy of Creative Arts summer program runs from June 22 to July 17, 2015, Monday – Friday with various classes running from 8:00am to 12:00pm and/or 12:30pm to 4:30pm. Students must have completed the 1st grade to participate. Classes are \$265 for half day or \$500 for full day; financial assistance is available. For more information, visit www.kauaicreativearts.org or call 634-9850.

For a list of other options, visit www.kauaifamilymagazine.com to view their upcoming summer issue, coming out the first week of May.

Maui County

County Summer PALS Program runs from June 9 to July 21, 2015, Monday – Friday from 7:00am to 5:00pm at various sites throughout Maui County. For more information, visit www.mauicounty.gov/PALS or call 270-7403 (Maui), 553-3204 (Moloka'i), 565-6979 (Lāna'i).

Boys & Girls Clubs of Maui has various programs running throughout the summer and is open Monday – Friday from 8:00am to 6:00pm with six different clubhouses located across the island of Maui. Cost for an annual membership is \$5 for the first child or \$10 for a family of two or more children. For more information, visit www.bgcmaui.org or call 242-4363.

For a list of other options, visit www.mauifamilymagazine.com to view their upcoming summer issue, coming out the first week of May.

Hawai'i County

County Summer Fun Program runs from June 8 to July 17, 2015, Monday – Friday. Hours of operation vary by site and are open to those that have completed Kindergarten – 6th grade. Cost for the program is between \$90-\$120 plus activity fees. For more information, visit www.hawaiicounty.gov/pr-recreation or call 961-8740.

Boys & Girls Club of the Big Island will have summer program information available via their website www.bgcbi.com or by phone at 640-6036.

There may be times when you, as a resource caregiver, have a question or concern and are not sure where to go for help. We will be presenting scenarios in each newsletter as a way to highlight different situations and suggestions on "Who Ya Gonna Call?"

Who Ya Gonna Call?

You come home and, for the 15th time, your cat has been painted blue...again. While Blue's Clues is a famous cartoon show, the cat isn't taking to it well. Pull out your handy dandy "Who Ya Gonna Call" list that was in the January 2015 Building Connections Newsletter. Look under *Behavior Problems of Child* and find some direction. Perhaps the Child's Social Worker, Licensing Social Worker, or Therapist can provide you and your blue cat with some guidance, resources and support.



**A. F. T.
A Fostering Thought**

MODELING

By Dr. Paul Brennan

I never thought I was modeling material until the art teacher suggested it. Models, after all, come in only those shapes and sizes deemed appropriate and attractive by our culture. It's all about physicality and I thought I had nothing to offer. Models, I reasoned, give our society standards of perfection—physical standards—by which the rest of us can admire and try to emulate.

But wait, reasoned my teacher-friend. It's the "character" that your face suggests. So, two years ago I agreed to sit in the model's chair while some 15 portrait artists went to work on me. There was nothing I could do to prepare for each of the four sessions: "what you see is what you get". Sitting perfectly still for three hours (half-hour sessions with 5 minute intermissions), I couldn't hide anything, just be my natural self. Each of the artists painted or sketched what they saw—the aging, the lines, the shadowed eyes, that "character" that defined who I was, from their unique perspective.

Nearly two years went by . . . and I thought my modeling career was ended. But then came another call from my artist-friend. "My portrait class just finished with a very pretty girl, and now we need somebody different." I chuckled to myself as he continued: "Do you think you could come and sit for another four sessions? What you did before was perfect, and I want this group to be challenged too by your face, that elderly, wise demeanor that you convey."

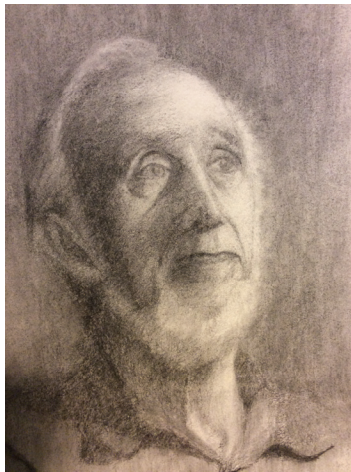
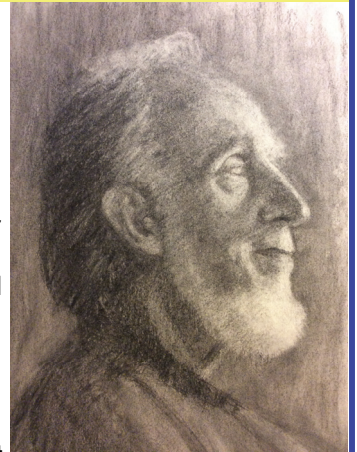
So now I'm sitting back in the model's chair, flattered—yes, but reflecting on the life of modeling I've been privileged to express in various places. My posture there, rather than holding still, was extremely active, engaging in life in all of its varied forms. In Papua New Guinea, as a researcher, as an expatriate from a far-away country, I knew I and my family were being scrutinized intently, sitting, if you will, in the model's chair, judged by each word, each gesture, each attitude. In our home, each child we birthed came to know quickly his parents' behaviors, and especially the values we stood for. Especially in our home, those children not born to us tried to size up what they had suddenly "inherited". Could we, their new authority figures, be trusted, were we fair, was kindness always genuine? Could they relate to us? Would we follow the same standard with them as we did with our own birth children? Were our motives for accepting them into our home well-motivated and compassionate?

Role modeling—as a parent, a husband, a citizen of America, a scientist, a person with a faith—came with assignments given to me by virtue of my culture, my age, my choices. Often they were unconscious.

Modeling for our children was especially an unconscious thing, preoccupied as we were with going to our jobs, paying our bills, putting food on the table, making sure each child's needs were met. When traveling in our vehicles, for example, we switched unthinkingly to the stations of our choice . . . only to have our children quickly push the buttons for their music of choice. When going out in public we threw on whatever shirt was handy . . . only to have our children try to hide from being seen with us, regarding us as "so uncool". Those were but some of the myriad ways we modeled life for them. Now in the passage of time and as parents themselves, it's instructive in retrospect to see that their musical choices have also modified. What a complement too that now they might want to select from our wardrobes a shirt that's "retro", even possibly "cool"!

Whenever any of us might think that our modeling days have long since ended, it might be good advice to be reminded that our aging faces, our furrowed brows, our lines of character still are instructive to those interested in shaping portraits. Now that's a sanguine thought and more than just a pretty face. May the canvases of those doing our profiles lift up what is truly there, deeper than what meets the eye. And may those who in the past caught glimpses of our "portrait", remember mostly the positive, all the while erasing the shadows, the dark shades that otherwise might try to conceal our true character.

Sketches of Dr. Brennan are courtesy of Beatrice Ku.



Help! Looking For Stories!

Would you like to share some helpful tips? Got an inspirational story to tell? Know of some useful resources in your community?

These are just some of the many possibilities that you can contribute to this newsletter. Please send them over so we can all benefit from each other's wisdom!

We would also appreciate any feedback, comments and suggestions on ways that we can improve this newsletter so that it is useful to you. What would you like to see in it? Topics of interest?

We look forward to hearing from you!



Wrap Hawai'i Update

Susan Chandler, UH Director of Public Policy

Hawai'i is a state that is filled with many blessings. Not only do we have the most beautiful environment to live in and raise children, we have a large group of nurturing resource caregivers who help out when some extra love and care is needed in our community. Hawai'i has been extremely successful (one of the best in the nation) in reducing the number of children who need to live in resource family homes. Hawai'i has also been successful in returning children to their birth homes quickly and safely. However, we all know that there are, and always will be, children who have multiple needs and require services from across many systems of care.

Wraparound Services is a family-driven process that has been successful in many communities nationwide to assist these multi-system youth and their families with individualized approaches designed to creatively meet their unique needs. Wraparound Services is a planning process that brings all the agencies surrounding each family together to collaboratively plan a unified set of coordinated services. Many families describe this as a major improvement from previously being required to attend several separate meetings at each state agency for their child.

As most of you know, Hawai'i has a history of continually innovating its child welfare practices. In recent years, DHS along with its many community partners and resource caregivers have made great progress in improving its foster care system. Recently, Hawai'i has begun its own version of Wraparound Services called Wrap Hawai'i. This pilot program has already engaged 18 youth and families from foster care, juvenile detention, therapeutic foster homes, and the youth correction facility. In January 2015, Child Welfare Services evolved and expanded this initiative, called Family Wrap Hawai'i, to serve up to 70 more youth in foster care from 50 families on O'ahu under the DHS's Title IV-E waiver project. Starting on October 1, 2015, Family Wrap Hawai'i will be offered on the Island of Hawai'i for 10 youth in foster care from 6 families. The Office of Youth Services will also be using Wrap for incarcerated youth at the correctional facility.

This pilot project is guided by a Wrap Coordinating Committee which serves as the governing group. It has representative members from the Child Welfare Services Branch of DHS, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division of the DOH, Special Education Services of the DOE, the Family Court, the detention home, the Office of Youth Services, and Hawai'i Families as Allies. The Mediation Center of the Pacific facilitates these meetings. Epic 'Ohana provides facilitation and support services to help implement the plans that are created. Hawai'i Families as Allies provides parent partners if the family requests additional support. As the director of the Public Policy Center at the University of Hawai'i, I have had the honor of building the model and convening these meetings through grants and contracts from the Department of Human Services.

Many of the founding principles and values of Wrap Hawai'i are closely aligned with 'Ohana Conferencing which, as many of you know, has been successfully assisting families for well over a decade. Wrap, like 'Ohana Conferencing, builds upon the family's own existing strengths and community networks to provide safe and nurturing support for their children. Wraparound projects all across the country begin with the message that family and youth perspectives are respected, honored and prioritized in all phases of developing any plan involving that family. This is called "Family Voice and Choice" and this is also a major guiding principle in Wrap Hawai'i. This has been the goal of the current models of family conferencing, family finding, youth circles, men's circles and just about all good practice involving families. It's likely these values sound very familiar because they are grounded in Hawai'i's cultural values of respect and love of family.

Wrap Hawai'i is *always* team-based and the family members invite formal and informal supports to join their planning process. In Hawai'i, family is defined very broadly which is a real strength. Adding hanai relatives, friends, and community supporters to the circle of care is always good for children. Collaboration is perhaps the most important and essential pillar of Wrap, and that means much more than having a single "case manager" pulling strings to get a child or family into a "program." It means bringing all the creative minds to the table to really hear what the **needs** of each family are and then find creative ways to meet those needs. The goal is to find support and services that fit the family, not contort the youth or family to fit into a program that has a vacancy.

At the heart of Wrap Hawai'i is the art of listening. The team, which includes resource caregivers, listens to the needs of the youth and family and works to respond with creative and individualized support to address those needs. Throughout, an assessment of what works and what doesn't is being made, and the team adjusts accordingly. The goal is to reduce state agency and service provider involvement so that the youth and family can have as much stability and independence as possible, while accessing the appropriate supports necessary. The goal is to let the families have control over their own lives, and for the youth to have permanent, loving homes.

I am very excited about being a small part of the Wrap Hawai'i pilot and for the upcoming stages of Wrap Hawai'i. We, who are involved with Wrap Hawai'i, believe we can improve the outcomes for youth who have gotten "stuck" in multiple systems of care. Through collaboration, creativity, and strong community support we can make a difference. "Lucky we live Hawai'i!"



Feeding the Positive: How a Strength-based Approach Promotes Growth and Change

By Wilma Friesema, MFT
EPIC 'Ohana Conferencing, Inc.

"Why should I talk about strengths when this teenager is being delinquent?" a Guardian ad Litem (GAL) asks me before a Wrap meeting. (Wrap is a planning process that is family focused and strength-based.) To him it seems like a waste of time and energy to be talking about strengths when a myriad of mistakes, like swirling confetti, obstruct the focus and progress of the team's efforts. From his point of view, the teen just needs to make better choices. If we don't hammer that fact home, he says, we're just sugarcoating the harsh realities of life.

I understand the GAL's frustration, along with the worry and heartache just beneath it. He wants this teen to change, yet the youth has been lectured and scolded many times before and nothing's different. Instead, the teen withdraws and gets stone faced when he hears how he's failing. His walls go up.

Taking a moment to recognize a person's strengths and value – at a time when mistakes are setting off alarms -- *can* seem kind of crazy. Yet when we, as service providers, practice a strength-based approach we communicate something very important to the youth or adult who has failed. We are saying: *I know this truth about you; you are more than your mistakes.*

While most of us may know that about ourselves, for youth or adults who have a history of trauma, instability, or who have come to believe that they are worth very little, it's likely that truth is not one they often hear. They may not even believe it, yet every time we suggest that they are more than their mistakes they are given an opportunity to see themselves differently. Those small openings can create new starting points in conversations or confrontations. They can also help people recognize they have something to draw on within themselves that will help create the change that's needed.

A strength-based approach is based on this simple premise: if we focus on solutions, if we build on the capacities, skills, knowledge, and the connections people already have, they will become more empowered and invested in their own lives. I liken it to giving fertilizer and water to plants in a garden. Even though pulling out weeds -- or addressing problems -- is important, that alone doesn't ensure a healthy garden. We have to feed what we want to grow, just as we have to reflect to people what we want them to see in themselves.

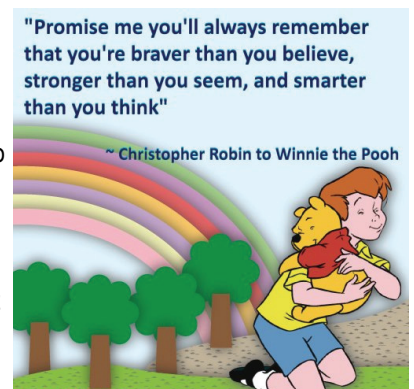
Shifting our focus from deficits to strengths may sound simple, but it's often complex. Just as a gardener envisions the plant the seed will become and provides the right conditions for growth, a strength based practice asks that we recognize people's potential and respond to them from an angle of hope. It asks that we dig in and get to know our youth and families more fully. It asks that we work together to become collaborators of solutions rather than just eradicators of problems.

This doesn't mean that we have to wear rose-colored glasses or sugarcoat hard realities. Actually, it's quite the opposite. Using a strength-based approach gives us freedom to talk about whatever is necessary, but from an orientation that allows issues and problems to be discussed in a way that's safe and productive. It helps keep defenses down and trust up as difficulties are tackled and worked through together.

For our teenager, who was a runner, it meant acknowledging that he ran as a way to cope (strength) and to feel independent (strength) yet it came at a high cost (concern). The cost to himself and his family was clearly spelled out, but the conversation didn't end there. Members of the team worked to help him identify ways to cope that were less self-destructive. They challenged him to exert some control in his life, which implicitly gave the message that he mattered and could be capable of creating the future he wanted.



Using a strength-based approach doesn't create magical changes in people overnight. Self-perceptions born out of pain or deprivation are not easily transformed. Over time, however, respectfully mirroring and eliciting strengths is a way to feed the seeds of possibility, the seeds of change. It's one way to help people flourish; all the while knowing that there are always hidden weeds in even the most beautiful and well-tended gardens.



WRAP Hawai'i and EPIC 'Ohana Conferencing is funded through the Department of Human Services

For more information about WRAP Hawai'i and 'Ohana Connections work
contact Wilma Friesema at EPIC 'Ohana Conferencing, Inc. at 748-7921

DIFFICULT BEHAVIORS IN KEIKI SOMETIMES A RESULT OF FASD

This article was written by Dan Dubovsky, MSW, FASD Specialist, SAMHSA FASD Center for Excellence, Gigi Davidson, Executive Director of 'Ohana Komputer & the parent of 26 year old Russian child affected with FASD and Judith Wilhoite, Family Advocate for Family Programs Hawaii's It Takes An 'Ohana program & mother to 5 bio and 3 foster sons.

For more information, contact Gigi at (808) 523-8191 or gigid@hawaiiantel.net.

Many resource caregivers and adoptive parents may be living with undiagnosed children & youth affected with a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). Their child may appear to be healthy but because children with FASD have permanent brain damage, learning and controlling behavior can present special problems.

What is FASD?

FASD is a spectrum of permanent disabilities with behavioral symptoms that occur in those whose mothers consumed alcohol while pregnant. It occurs more frequently than many other commonly known birth defects, especially since almost 50% of pregnancies are unplanned, most women do not realize when they are first pregnant, and the damage caused by prenatal alcohol exposure begins to occur very early in pregnancy.

FASD is an umbrella term that conveys a range of effects due to prenatal alcohol exposure from mild deficits to severe disabilities. Under this umbrella term, there are a number of diagnostic terms, including: Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), Partial FAS (pFAS), Alcohol Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND), and Alcohol Related Birth Defects (ARBD). In the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM 5), the term Neurodevelopmental Disorder Associated with Prenatal Alcohol Exposure is used.

Continued on pg. 11



Adoptive Families Needed Through Wendy's Wonderful Kids

I first met Noah while he was residing in a temporary DHS shelter in between foster home placements. Noah smiled broadly to me and introduced himself with a flourish. I would come to learn that Noah enjoys meeting new adults and will spend the time to get to know you so that he can find a common interest you might share with him. It is important to Noah that he have relationships with the adults in his environment and he remains open to pleasing those adults who mean the most to him.

Noah was referred to me in my role as a Wendy's Wonderful Kids recruiter. I work with children and youth in the foster care system who lack an identified permanent caregiver to provide them with a Forever Family in which to grow up. Together, the youth and I work building a healthy, permanent placement in a Forever Family. Sometimes it is an adult or family that the youth already knows; other times it is a family that has been recruited and trained specifically to adopt an older child with special needs. When we met, Noah explained to me that he is available for adoption again after having his first adoption dissolved last year. It was a very discouraging time for him, to learn that the family he was planning to grow up in was no longer committed to raising him. In spite of this disappointment, Noah expressed the desire to live in a family "of my own, just like other kids do."

I quickly learned that Noah is developmentally a young child in a teenager's body. His ability to predict consequences and anticipate cause-and-effect is limited which often leads him to get in to trouble for the same actions or behaviors over and over again. Because he is already a teenager, people expect him to have mastered basic skills of everyday life that he still struggles to successfully and consistently do. These are hallmark of his diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

Since meeting Noah one year ago, he has been placed in numerous placements that have lasted a few days to a few weeks at the most. He continues to wait for a family that can provide him with the right environment in which he can blossom. He has many great qualities that he will bring to his Forever Family: he is caring and determined. He is eager to please and he loves to receive adult attention. He is social and loves to talk story with others. He will need a home environment that is calm, structured and predictable. Noah functions best with a low-level of stimulation and most frequently has trouble managing peer relationships. He would do best as an only child in a male, single parent or two-parent family. In order for Noah to be at his best, the family should have routines in place to help him move through the day, use clear, direct and positive communication style and provide close supervision.

Noah is a youth who longs to be connected to a family that will share their lives with him. He has a strong relationship with his therapist, who has been his most consistent, positive support over the last few years. Noah also has a loving relationship with his older brother. He is most successful relating to males and his Forever Home will need to include an invested male caregiver who can model successful family relationships for Noah. I have grown to appreciate the many struggles that Noah faces and watched as his optimism deteriorated this past year following one placement disruption after another. From my work as an Adoption Recruiter, I have seen youth such as Noah – teenagers with complicated histories and complex needs – who have been embraced by a Forever Family and who have flourished in their care. I want a future like that for Noah – a future in which he has a home and a family to call his own.

Teresa Berg, LSW, Program Coordinator, Wendy's Wonderful Kids, Family Programs Hawai'i, 808-540-2552.... **Looking for good homes for great kids in tough situations.**



Difficult Behaviors in Keiki Sometimes the Result of FASD (cont.)

FASDs are brain based disorders. The behaviors that we see are most frequently due to the damage to the developing brain by the prenatal alcohol exposure. Many of these behaviors appear to be willful, purposeful behaviors. However, if they are due to the way the person's brain processes information, the typical approaches to these behaviors will not be effective.

Primary behaviors associated with FASD:

- ◆ Impulsive.
- ◆ Cannot predict the consequences of their actions, resulting in repeating the same negative behavior and always being surprised when they are in trouble.
- ◆ Very naïve and gullible, believing what others tell them or what they see on TV or in the movies.
- ◆ Lack of stranger anxiety
- ◆ Memory problems, especially in immediate or working memory, which is what we rely on when we tell a person to do something.
- ◆ Don't respond to multiple verbal instructions, appearing to be oppositional.
- ◆ Needs re-teaching often; child may seem to learn a new task one day and not remember it the next.
- ◆ Oversensitivity or under sensitivity to light, touch, hearing, smell and/or sight,
- ◆ Slow processing pace, may think and hear slower: may appear to not respond when told to do something.
- ◆ Gaps in understanding,
- ◆ May take longer to mature: A 14 year old may be developmentally more like an 8 year old.

Children with an FASD may do best with:

- ◆ Structure—a predictable environment where they have choices within clear, well-established routines, bedtimes and mealtimes at the same time every day
- ◆ Supervision—enough to keep them out of trouble or danger,
- ◆ Simplicity—basic directions; simple, clear words, not too much out in their room,
- ◆ Small steps—tasks broken into small steps and taught through much repetition and role playing,
- ◆ Context—skills taught in a specific context, recognizing that the information will not typically be able to be applied from one situation to another.

School & the Child with an FASD

School can be an ongoing challenge for those affected by FASD. Many schools are poorly informed about this invisible disorder and punish behavior that a child with FASD cannot control. A teacher may think a child with an FASD is lazy and unmotivated when actually the child has difficulties with one or more of the following: mathematics, reasoning, connecting cause and effect, learning from experience, planning and remembering, decision-making, remembering the rules and what they mean, social skills, completing their work and homework, and/or understanding what the teacher is saying. These difficulties are often heightened when the child enters middle and high school, due to the structure of those programs, the expectation of more responsibility and the increase in auditory learning.

Some parents have changed the need identified in their child's individualized education plan from "behavioral" to "physical." Behavioral programs with incentives, rewards, and punishments *do not* work for children with an FASD.

Overlapping Diagnoses

- ◆ There may be co-occurring diagnoses associated with FASD such as:
- ◆ Failure to thrive
- ◆ Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
- ◆ Speech and Language Disorder
- ◆ Fine and gross motor coordination problems
- ◆ Learning Disability
- ◆ Sensory Integration Disorder
- ◆ Reactive Attachment Disorder
- ◆ Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- ◆ Conduct Disorder
- ◆ Bipolar Disorder
- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

Misdiagnoses

People with an FASD have behaviors that look like a number of psychiatric disorders, such as Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Reactive Attachment Disorder, and Autism. Although the behaviors are similar, what is causing the behaviors is different. Therefore, the response to the behavior needs to be different.

People with obvious physical disabilities are given accommodations to support them in life. It is just as important to provide accommodations for those with an FASD. These accommodations include changes in attitudes and expectations. When the child's strengths are identified and built upon, many frustrations can be avoided and positive outcomes are more likely.

Continued on pg. 12

Difficult Behaviors in Keiki Sometimes the Result of FASD (cont.)

Common Strengths of FASD Affected Children:

- ◆ Friendly, loyal, kind, loving
- ◆ Curious, determined, willing
- ◆ Active, energetic
- ◆ Creative, artistic, musical
- ◆ Concrete, experienced, learn by doing
- ◆ Don't hold a grudge

When raising child with FASD, love is important, but not enough. One needs support and training to understand that a physical brain injury, not choice, dictates some of the child's behaviors.

Websites:

www.childstudy.org
www.ntiupstream.com

Recommended Reading

Cause & Consequence: Behavior Management System by Dr. Ira Chasnoff

Damaged Angels: A Mother Discovers the Terrible Cost of Alcohol in Pregnancy by Bonnie Buxton

Fantastic Antone Grows Up: Adolescents and Adults with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome by Judith Kleinfeld, Barbara Morse & Siobhan Wescott

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: Trying Differently Rather than Harder by Diane Malbin

Moment to Moment by Dr. Ira Chasnoff

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Part-time Co-trainers Needed. Resource Caregivers/Former Foster Youth in Maui, Kaua'i and O'ahu are needed to co-train new Resource Caregivers in the HANA! curriculum. Your experience is invaluable to a new family just learning about providing foster care. Come and share what you've learned/experienced over the years with others!!! Trainings are generally held intermittently on some weekday evenings and some Saturdays. Training and compensation provided.

Part-time Child Care Providers needed in East Hawai'i, West Hawai'i, and O'ahu to provide child care (i.e., during trainings), in the evenings and weekends on an occasional basis. Training and compensation provided.

Part-time Recruitment Assistants needed in West Hawai'i and O'ahu to staff various recruitment booths and share information with potential applicants about the need for additional Resource Caregivers. Training and compensation provided.

HUI HO'OMALU

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HR@pidfoundation.org

or fax to 440-6619

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HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!!!

How long have you been a resource caregiver? We would like to honor you by printing your name and current years of service in our newsletter. We know you are out there but we need your help. Please send your name and years of service to:

RAC@pidfoundation.org ★ (O'ahu) 441-1125 ★ (Toll Free) 1-888-879-8970

Mahalo for your dedication and heart for Hawai'i's keiki and families!

Calendar of Events

O'AHU

- May 14 (Fri)** **Wai'anae Resource Families Support Group.** 5:30pm-8pm. 'Ohana Ola O Kahumana. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531 ext. 245 by 5/7.
- May 23 (Sat)** **2015 Resource Family Appreciation Day at Secret Island.** 9:00am-3:00pm at Kualoa Ranch's Secret Island. Admission is \$10 per person, ages 3 and up. Families will enjoy outrigger canoe paddling, volleyball, kayaking, swimming, stand up paddle boarding, snorkeling and more. For more information, contact Rae Inn at 527-4925 or rae.inn@catholiccharitieshawaii.org
- May 30 (Sat)** **C&S Wholesale Grocers Charity Event.** 2:00pm-7pm at The Mill (95-221 Kipapa Dr. in the Mililani Shopping Center). Entertainment, food and fun! The cost/entrance of the charity concert event is \$20 presale and \$25 at the door. Proceeds raised are to benefit Aloha United Way and Partners in Development Foundation. For more information, contact Alan Castillo at 441-1118.
- June 12 (Fri)** **Windward Resource Families Support Group.** 6pm-8:30pm. QLCC, Ko'olau Poko Unit. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531, ext. 245 by 6/5.
- June 25 (Thurs)** **Central O'ahu Resource Families Support Group.** 5:30-8pm. O'ahu Veterans Center, Honolulu. RSVP to FPH at 521-9531, ext. 245 by 6/18.

MAUI COUNTY

- Apr. 29 (Wed)** **Sign Waving for NFCM.** 3pm-5pm. In Kahului on the corner of Kane St. and Ka'ahumanu Ave. For more information, contact Ethan at 268-5122.
- June 18 (Thur)** **Maui Resource Families Support Group.** 5:30pm-8pm at Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center, RSVP to the toll free Warm Line at 1-866-545-0882 by 6/11.

WEST HAWAI'I

- May 7 (Thurs)** **Healthy from Head 2 Toe Caregiver Training Series: How To Be the Best Advocate You Can Be For Your Child.** 6pm-7:30pm at Kealakehe Elementary School. Presented by Alice Bratton, Parent Partners with Hawai'i Families as Allies. FREE dinner and Childcare! Receive 1 DHS approved training hour! RSVP by calling 808-323-2664 or e-mailing restrada@cfs-Hawai'i.org.
- May 21 (Thurs)** **Healthy from Head 2 Toe Caregiver Training Series: Caring for Self, Caring for Others.** 6pm-7:30pm at Kealakehe Elementary School. Presented by Tari Callaghan, co-founder of the Light ON Foundation. FREE dinner and Childcare! Receive 1 DHS approved training hour! RSVP by calling 808-323-2664 or e-mailing restrada@cfs-Hawai'i.org.
- May 28 (Thurs)** **Healthy from Head 2 Toe Caregiver Training Series: Understanding What Kids Need to Succeed.** 6pm-7:30pm at Kealakehe Elementary School. Presented by Kei-Lin Cert, Director of Strategic Community Development, University of Hawai'i at Hilo/RCUH. FREE dinner and Childcare! Receive 1 DHS approved training hour! RSVP by calling 808-323-2664 or e-mailing restrada@cfs-Hawai'i.org.

EAST HAWAI'I

- May 15 (Fri)** **Resource Caregiver Annual Mahalo Dinner.** Sponsored by East Hawai'i Friends of Foster Families. More info to come.

KAUAI

- May 4 (Mon)** **NFCM Mayor's Proclamation Event.** 10:45am. Mo'ikeha building in Lihu'e. For more information, contact Monica at 346-8184.

****Please check www.FamilyProgramsHawaii.org for an updated calendar of events.**

Funding for FPH support groups, trainings, and annual conferences is provided by the Department of Human Services



PATCH publishes a quarterly newsletter -- Training Tracks, to inform the community of our upcoming trainings around town, and provide the latest child care news and information to professionals and the public. PATCH offers over 100 FREE child care workshops open to all caregivers such as family child care, preschool and infant and toddler staff, before and after school care programs, parents, resource caregivers, medical professionals, babysitters and informal child care. Please visit our website for the latest news and training schedule:



www.PatchHawaii.org or contact your local PATCH office
 O'ahu: 808-839-1988 ★ Maui: 808-242-9232
 Lāna'i & Moloka'i: 1-800-498-4145
 Kauai: 808-246-0622 ★ Hilo: 808-961-3169
 Kona: 808-322-3500



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100% of the proceeds will be used towards supporting Hawai'i's resource families

Display advertisements with borders: business card size = \$30; 1/4 page = \$50; 1/2 page = \$75; full page = \$115.

Send information to: **Hui Ho'omalu—RAC, 680 Iwilei Rd., Ste. 500, Honolulu, HI 96817**

Phone: 441-1125 (O'ahu) ★ 888-879-8970 (Toll Free) ★ Fax: 441-1122 ★ E-mail: RAC@pidfoundation.org

RAC reserves the right to accept, reject or edit advertisements, articles and notices of events based on publication schedule, space limitations, and appropriateness.

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Statewide Resource Advisory Committee

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888-879-8970 (Toll Free)

Fax: 441-1122

E-mail:

RAC@pidfoundation.org

The concept for the Statewide Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) was created by the Department of Human Services (DHS) as a means to support the resource family community. Hui Ho'omalua facilitates this committee comprised of adoptive parents, resource caregivers and various community agencies, all dedicated to providing services and support to Hawai'i's keiki and the resource families who care for them. The purpose of the RAC is to identify ongoing needs, facilitate communication, share resources, provide information through a statewide calendar of events and a quarterly newsletter and report on local projects and other topics of interest to benefit Hawai'i's resource families.

This committee, the newsletter and many of the represented agencies are supported and funded by Department of Human Services contracts.

RAC Committee Members:

Catholic Charities Hawai'i—Hui Ho'omalua

Department of Human Services

EPIC, Inc. 'Ohana Conferencing

Family Court

Family Programs Hawai'i—Hui Ho'omalua & It Takes An 'Ohana

Resource Caregivers

Adoptive Parents

Hawai'i Foster Youth Coalition

Partners in Development Foundation—Hui Ho'omalua