



International Foster Care Organisation

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www.ifco.info

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IFCO invites you to translate this newsletter into your own language and send it further to contacts in your country and elsewhere who may not yet be IFCO members (membership details are on the www.ifco.info web site) - thank you!

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1. IFCO - RELAF Training Regional Seminar 17-19 May, 2007 in Mar del Plata, Argentina: “The Right to Live in a Family: Foster Care and Other Alternatives”

The IFCO RELAF Seminar will bring together individuals and organisations involved in and committed to advocating for the rights of families and communities living in Latin America. The conference will deal with the growing concern for children deprived of parental care, the urgent need to start a de-institutionalisation process, and the provision of alternatives for their care and protection. Themes addressed will be: policies and programmes for families at risk, foster care as an alternative for the fulfilment of “the right to live in a family,” and testimonies from those involved in out-of-home care.

Among the organisations presenting at the conference there will be: UNESCO, SENAF (National Secretary on Childhood, Adolescence and Family), Inter-American Institute of the Chile, National University of Mar del Plata, City Hall of General Pueyrredón.



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Addressed to all child care stakeholders in Latin America, from all cultures and religions: families, youth, state, community, professionals and practitioners from all areas of child care, including Health and Education and mass media.

For more information, the full programme and registration please visit the conference website at: <http://relaf.ifco.info/mardel/index.html>

2. Register now for IFCO Regional Malta Conference, 18-21 November 2007



We are now accepting Calls for Papers through the website until 18 July. The final decision over content for the conference will be made once all entries have been made. July 10 will be the final date for the lowest prices on bookings. We invite you to check back with our home page regarding more information <http://malta2007.ifco.info/>

The full programme starts at 09.00 on Sunday, November 18, so you will need to arrive on Saturday, November 17 (or earlier - the special discounted hotel rates for delegates will also apply for 7 days before and after the conference). The programme will finish at 13.00 on Wednesday, November 21 and will be followed by a courtesy visit to the President of Malta and linking event with the EuroChild conference (both pending to be confirmed).

3. Romania Conference on domestic adoption, 24-27 April 2007

From 24 – 27 of April adoption specialists and directors of the Departments for social assistance and child protection throughout Romania came together in Bucharest Romania to discuss pre- and post adoption support services for children, birth parents and adopters. Experts from IFCO presented together with local experts keynotes and workshops. Experts were impressed with all the expertise shared but also the willingness and enthusiasm in which the Romanian colleagues embraced the ideas from abroad to improve the support services in their country. At the end of May a series of in depth trainings throughout the country will start developed and facilitated by Dutch and UK experts about these issues. A promising development in

a country that put a moratorium on intercountry adoption and at present has a waiting list of Romanians willing to adopt a child!

4. International Foster Families meeting to be held in Arendsee, Germany 18-22 July, 2007

Foster families are invited to take part in a "Internationales Pflegefamiliestreffen" in Arendsee. The meeting will have both discussion meetings and free time activities while free childcare is provided. The meetings are German spoken so it is focused on foster families that master German, although children will understand each other "without words"! A good opportunity for foster families that would like to meet their colleagues and exchange experiences in different countries while their children are looked after! Costs are € 100 for adults and € 80 for children (and only € 25 for child nr 3 and more). Special lower rates (€ 40 adults and € 25 children) for participants from Central and Eastern Europe.

For more information please contact:

Landesverband für Pflege- und Adoptiveltern in Sachsen – Anhalt LV.Pflege-u.Adop.Sachsen-Anhalt@t-online.de
and/or Pflegekinder Aktion Schweiz fachstelle@pflegekinder.ch

5. National Foster Parent Association Conference in Washington DC, USA

The National Foster Parent Association, NFPA, is hosting an annual conference in Washington DC, USA. This will be held on May 23-27. See www.nfpainc.org/training/conference for more information. IFCO will be proudly represented there by our US Board Members, Ray D'Costa and Mr. Howard Green.

6. Maraliza Robbertze comments on an article about the closing down of orphanages in South Africa in favor of children's integration in the communities.

Maraliza Robbertze, one of our members working in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa and the Director of *Give a Child a Family*, an organization that provides help to orphans and vulnerable children placing them back into the community, gives us her comments on the article "*Africa shifts to 'whole village' approach for orphans*", published by the Christian science monitor at the following address: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/0301/p06s02-woaf.html> .

Maraliza writes: In South Africa we have a situation of a growing amount of HIV/AIDS Orphans and the dilemma of not having the safety net of family who could take over the role of foster parents. This is why our approach had to be creative and actually marketing for foster parents who are not necessarily acquainted to the child in need of care.

An approach that has been used is also the "memory work" approach which has been developed by Natal University, based on the memory book technique from NACWOLA in Uganda. Through memory work you actually work with the family whilst the parents are still alive in order to prevent children landing up alone next to an open grave. Our model is creative in the sense that we actually actively recruit, assess and train foster parents who we then put into a "foster care bank" should any field worker need a foster parent in a specific area.

Institutions we have found have a place, but research has found that institutionalized children do have a draw back in life and that shows in the fact that most criminals in state prisons were people growing up in institutions and without the care, love and security within a family.

Our children's homes also desperately try and create homes with a small unit where these children could have some sense of family.



Group of recruited foster parents in the community in training.

7. First International Conference on Child Abuse in Africa

The First International Conference on Child Abuse in Africa will be held in Nairobi, Kenya from 24-27 September 2007. The specific objectives of the conference are to: (a) identify the causes, nature and magnitude of child sexual abuse in Africa; (b) create a forum to identify strategies to deal with sexual violence against children; (c) provide an opportunity to share information and experiences with a view to enhancing partnership and networking.

The conference organisers are calling for paper abstracts (deadline 31 May 2007) that address innovative prevention, intervention, and treatment of sexual abuse; networking or collaborative efforts, and research studies on the topic.

Please send a one page abstract to regional@anppcan.org, with contact information of all presenters. Indicate if you prefer to present at a workshop, panel, or make poster presentation.

For more information on the Conference please contact:

African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect
PO Box 46516, 00100-GPO, Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: + 254 2 2722835; Fax: + 254 2 2723104

Email: admin@anppcankenya.co.ke

Website: <http://www.anppcankenya.co.ke>

8. June launch for Quality 4 Children

The project Quality4Children www.quality4children.info will present its final product: Quality Standards for Out-of-Home Child Care in Europe. This event will take place in Brussels, Belgium on June 13 at 16.00. at the European Parliament. This event will thankworthy be hosted by Ms Lissy Gröner, German member of the European

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Parliament. Highlights of this event will be the inputs by representatives of international organisations such as Eurochild, the Council of Europe, and the European Commission. Youth from the project will develop in a workshop on June 12th a creative presentation so that it becomes very clear that these standards are developed in full cooperation with children and young people!

9. Calling for Contributions!! IFCO is seeking your articles or information for our next Informer

Our next Informer will be published in July and will include the topic of Child Abandonment. We are currently asking for articles about this topic, or related issues such as baby homes, teenage pregnancy, and/or services provided to children not being raised by their parents. We are also open to reviewing articles providing a contrast to this topic, relating situations or stories that are partially or wholly positive.

You may also submit to us, at any time, any articles or information you would like to share via our future E-Newsletters or Informers.

10. Congratulation to our IFCO President's family for the birth of Saoirse!

IFCO shares with the President and his family the celebration for the birth of their new lovely little grandchild!!! We wish them joy at this special time and all the future happiness she will bring to the family.



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