



Enews June 2008

www.ifco.info

INTERNATIONAL FOSTER CARE ORGANISATION MONTHLY Enews FOR MEMBERS

Foster Care news and views from around the world direct to IFCO members

The International Foster Care Organisation is the only international network dedicated to the promotion and support of family foster care all over the world.

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From IFCO members in the USA to India



Former long-standing IFCO Board member and foster parent Cora White from the USA writes about a children's project which her organisation "Partners in Foster Care" (Foster Care Children & Family Fund) has established in India.

We take this opportunity to share information about our licensed family foster care home operating with twenty-eight children in Andhra Pradesh, South India which is for homeless or orphaned boy and girls, ages 8-12.

Partners in Foster Care purchased land, constructed a large family home and moved the children from a rented facility to a home that they can call their own. We have visited the children, recruited the staff and director. (Cora is pictured above above with another former IFCO Board member from the USA Linda Huddleston).

Our other programs include: four sewing centers in different villages, a medical clinic, pharmacy and dental clinic for villagers. Last year, an audiologist accompanied us to India and performed ear examinations for our children and others from several villages.

The children would like to grow fruits and vegetables and rice on the land and purchase two buffaloes in order to have their fresh milk. As the buffaloes breed, the children will sell one buffalo and purchase chickens and turkeys for eggs and fresh meat. We provide food, shelter, clothing, schooling, medical and dental care for the children.

Please visit our web site at www.fostering.us to learn more.

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IFCO & Credo Foundation Training Day in Sweden



IFCO Board member Fredrik Ingvarsson together with his employer the Credo Foundation organised a recent Training Day on "Training, Support and Supervision of Foster Carers" in Sweden. IFCO Training and Development Bureau consultant and trainer Jane Asquith who is well known for her former work with BAAF and for running workshops at IFCO Conferences was invited to be the trainer. The comments on the evaluation forms judged this to be a highly successful day event for Swedish social workers. The Credo Foundation donated the surplus from the conference fees to IFCO - thanks! **PERHAPS IFCO COULD HELP YOU ORGANISE A TRAINING DAY IN YOUR COUNTRY? See below**

Recently Fredrik changed his employment - he writes:

I am writing you to inform that I have decided to end my current employment at the Credo Foundation. I have got an opportunity to change focus of my career and even though it is not going to be in the field of foster care I am excited. I am going to work with people and mostly youth and adults in need of rehabilitation to get back to work or school. It is going to be more managerial and I will be working as 1 of 3 coordinators for a large company of 200 employees.

Since my wife and I are thinking of becoming foster parents in the future we are eager to maintain a contact with the "IFCO-family" and I am planning to attend the IFCO conference in Dublin. After I have started my new employment in August I will not have the same amount of time as before doing IFCO duties but I will do my best to still be active answering e-mails and so on. I am very excited and I feel it is good timing for me since I have spent almost 10 years at Credo and I had the feeling of doing something different to maintain my focus and as an eager person to improve professionally. The last couple of years I have to thank IFCO for giving me the opportunity of growing and maintaining that focus. I was about to lose that just before I became a member

of the IFCO Board. The work within the IFCO Board, the Training and Development committee, HR committee, DEFT-project, the training in Sweden and being able to spread the word of foster care, not only in Sweden but in the whole world has given everything I could not even imagine. To be around and to have the opportunity to work with such professionals from different countries and backgrounds have given me a lot, thank you all! If I also had the "luck" of being able to give you something along the way, that would thrill me!

I most certainly hope that I will see you again somewhere in the IFCO-WORLD!

Kind regards,

Fredrik Ingvarsson

- THANK YOU FREDRIK FOR YOUR VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO IFCO's WORK!

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IFCO's Training and Development Bureau



IFCO training in Korea - certificates for all!

IFCO provides an introduction to international foster care based on its internationally recognized guidelines.

- IFCO trains trainers in different aspects of foster care.
- IFCO connects people to training providers.
- IFCO has a range of expert consultants and trainers - more are invited to apply!
- Click below for more information
- [IFCO provides training on request about any aspect of foster care](#)

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News from Latin America

Inter-American Children's Institute meeting in Mexico

Participation of the Relaf at the Inter-American Meeting on the "Exchange of experience and programs on Child Care" In collaboration with the Government of Mexico, the **IIN Inter-American Children's Institute** (OAS' specialised body) organised the **Inter-American Meeting on the " Exchange of experience and**

Programs on Child Care

” , which

concluded successfully. It was held on April 24th and 25th this year in the city of Queretaro, Mexico. It was attended by IIN authorities, representatives from the child bodies in the 34 Member States, the Inter-American System, UN System and the Ibero-American Secretariat, as well as organisations from the civil society. This Meeting aimed at promoting awareness, exchange and systematization of concrete experiences for the orientation of children and adolescents policies, from whose design, development and impact, innovative and collective apprenticeship could be obtained within the American hemisphere. There were 3 main work fields, divided in 3 workshops or working commissions: a) Experiences of child and youth participation in the promotion, implementation and defense of their rights; b) Experiences of family- and community-based strategies in the attention of children without parental care; c) Experiences of independent follow-up and monitoring of implementation of public policies with a rights' approach. Relaf was invited to participate as an observer at the second theme workshop given the openness of the IIN towards the organisations of the civil society for this meeting. The two documents produced by the IIN on this work field prove a highly valuable tool for those stakeholders devoted to this field, and present the state-of-the-art state of affairs of the situation of children without parental care in the region. During the two working days, experiences were shared by the child care authorities of the following countries: Mexico, Argentina, Trinidad & Tobago, USA, Chile, Uruguay, Brazil and Paraguay. These Governmental authorities first informed the audience about the current alternative family-based programmes in their countries, and later presented the controversial points and pending matters in relation to the implementation of the Convention. These presentations allowed for the obtention of an updated panorama in terms of what countries are doing at present, as well as progress and drawbacks in the matter of children without parental care. Together with SOS Children Villages' representative, Mr. Daniel Miranda, Lic. Matilde Luna (our Relaf Project Leader) supported the promotion of the **Quality4Children Standards (now available in many languages - click below)** http://www.quality4children.info/navigation/cms,id,2,nodeid,2,_language,en,_country,at.html produced in Europe, handing out copies of the Standards in Spanish to the audience. The participation of both observers implied the possibility of attracting governments present in the scheduled development of this project in Latin America. Of great importance is also the commitment taken by the Advisor of the IIN, Dr. Norberto Liwski, who involved the IIN in favour of this initiative for the region.

For more info: please visit the IIN website www.iin.oea.org .

Red Relaf's updated web site is now in Spanish and English <http://www.relaf.org/>

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John Lennon was fostered in kinship care

- see www.fyi3.com/funstuff/fam_fosterKids/johnLennon.cfm

He wrote a moving / painful song about his mother - click below.
Does anybody know other similar songs which we might share?



[watch video](#)

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News from CRIN: COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURE: Committee on

the Rights of the Child endorses campaign

[GENEVA, 11 June 2008] – A side event on the [campaign to establish a communication procedure under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) took place during the eighth session of the Human Rights Council this week.

The event was organised by the Working Group for the communications procedure, under the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The aim of the Working Group (WG) is to persuade states to establish an Ad Hoc Working Group to draft an Optional Protocol ([what is this](#)?).

The event was attended by around 30 participants, including representatives from the governments of Finland, Austria, Switzerland, Uruguay, the United Kingdom, Germany, Mexico, Italy, Slovenia and Canada. The meeting was opened by [Peter Newell](#), of the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children and Co-Chair of the working group, who said that: "Children have waited twenty years for this essential mechanism to reinforce full implementation of their convention. There should be no further delay. Many standard elements to establish such a procedure already exist under other instruments. Drafting should not be a long drawn out process: States should aim to have the Optional Protocol open for signature by the 20th anniversary of the CRC."

Support from Committee

Yanghee Lee, Chair of the UN [Committee on the Rights of the Child](#), said that the Committee had opted to support the proposal.

"The time has come", she said, "we have worked on this diligently, we have weighed the pros and cons, and we are now inviting all stakeholders to come forth and seriously work together on the drafting process". She said that there were of course still issues that needed to be addressed and questions to be answered, but that it should be an open and consultative process.

Eva Tomic, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Mission of Slovenia, which holds the EU presidency, said that her government was extremely supportive of child rights. She added they needed to clarify how children will use the mechanism, but a strong point in support of this mechanism is that it will fully establish children as rights holders.

Kathleen Marshall, Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People was speaking on behalf of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC), a signatory to the petition calling for the establishment of the communications procedure and a member of the Working Group. She said that such a mechanism would raise the status of the CRC and make state authorities take it more seriously. She said that, as a commissioner, having the power to set up formal investigations into breaches of children's rights often resulted in people being more prepared to collaborate. "This leads me to believe that the impact of the Optional Protocol [...] would go far beyond the number of cases in which it was actually invoked", she said.

"At the moment", she continued, "the lack of immediate consequence for flouting the Convention may act to the disadvantage of children. The contrast with the European Convention on Human Rights is stark. The prospect of an application to that Court could always be guaranteed to get authorities moving."

About the Campaign:

A communications mechanism would allow children and their advocates to appeal when domestic or regional remedies fail or simply do not exist. It would provide new pressure on States Parties to fulfil their obligations and also encourage them to provide effective remedies at national level.

By June 2008, more than 400 international and national organisations had signed the petition: "An international call to strengthen the enforcement of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child by the drafting of an Optional Protocol to provide a communications procedure". To sign the petition, go to: www.crin.org/petitions/petition.asp?petID=1007

The petition is available in **English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Russian.**

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Future IFCO Conferences and 2008 AGM

~ No IFCO Conference is scheduled for 2008 but Formal Notice is given to members that the **IFCO Annual General Meeting will be held at 09.00 on 18 October 2008** at the Fostering Network Annual Conference in Cardiff, Wales.

http://www.fostering.net/training_events/events/tfn_conference2008/index.php

More details later - there are no elections to the Board scheduled for this year.

~ **NEXT IFCO WORLD CONFERENCE 12-17 JULY 2009 DUBLIN, IRELAND** <http://www.ifca.ie/ifco2009>

~ **BIDS ARE INVITED FROM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS TO HOST THE 2010 & 2011 IFCO CONFERENCES**

- more information and detailed Conference Guidelines from IFCO's Secretary General, Gaylene Lawrence at nzffcf.eo@xtra.co.nz

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IFCO WEB SITE www.ifco.info

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Do you have a news item, picture or link to contribute for the next IFCO Enews?

Please send this to right2afamily@yahoo.co.uk by July 14 - thank you.

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