

CRP volunteers learn strategies to engage foster/adoptive parents, gain understanding of the Quality Parenting Initiative



On March 31, 2016, FFCR volunteers welcomed guest speaker Trudy Petkovich as a part of the ongoing Fostering Connections training series. Trudy's role as Executive Director of the [Florida State Foster / Adoptive Parent Association](#) and her extensive experience in child welfare benefited everyone present.

FFCR volunteers were given an overview of the [Quality Parenting Initiative](#), which aims to ensure that a family caring for a child provides the loving, committed, skilled care that a child needs, while working effectively with the system to reach the child's long-term goals. The presentation gave our volunteers many valuable insights, including what it means to be a foster parent, the importance of transitions for children in care, examples of co-parenting, success stories, and how Citizen Review Panels can better engage foster parents in the review process.

Trudy also shared the new Partnership Plan for Children in Out-of-Home Care, an agreement that case managers, foster and adoptive parents, and OurKids are required to sign prior to having a child placed with a foster family. The document signifies that all stakeholders are responsible for the well-being of the child, and asks the child's caregivers – along with DCF, OurKids, GALs, and the full case management agencies – to make specific commitments to fulfill the values, principles, and relationships necessary to ensure the child's well-being.

Trudy and her husband spent 18 years as foster parents, taking in almost 300 infants from within the child welfare system. They later adopted three girls into their birth family of a son and daughter. Trudy used her extensive experience and knowledge to start a support group for foster and adoptive parents that lasted 10 years. She has held many posts in the child welfare system and, in addition to serving as Executive Director of the Foster / Adoptive Parent Association, she is currently working around the state to promote awareness of the need for foster homes for all children, but especially for teens.