

Mission: Our mission is to empower, support, and unify foster and adoptive families by strengthening the systems that care for Vermont's children.

Vision: We envision a world where all foster and adoptive families have the resources they need to restore faith, hope and joy to the children they nurture.

Goal: The Vermont Foster/Adoptive Family Board is comprised of productive and engaged representatives that serve with honor.

Responsibility: Executive Board

Action Steps:

- Job descriptions for board members drafted and approved by January 2011
- VFafa by-laws will be updated for full membership vote by April 2011
- Record keeping policies will be clearly defined and implemented by April 2011
- Committee descriptions and definitions of membership and scope of work defined and approved by Jan 2011
- Financial policies and practice guidance will be established and presented to the full board by February 2011.
- The Executive Board will provide a written progress report for the Strategic Plan quarterly.

Goal: The Vermont Foster/Adoptive Family Association be leaders and advocates in ensuring that foster and adoptive families have access to high quality education and training.

Responsibility: Education and Training Committee

Action Steps:

- Gather existing information and research and conduct needs assessment, specific to foster and adoptive family training needs by May 2011
- Establish recommended training phases, specialized fostering parent training and a process for evaluating trainings for foster and adoptive families based on information gathered by July 2011
- Make formal recommendations to the VFafa board and DCF-Family Services leadership by September 2011
- Explore opportunities to increase collaboration with the Child Welfare Training Partnership and have voice in Foundation and Advanced training development and recommendations by September 2011.
- Explore models of mentoring and coaching as a potential foster family function for birth families by April 2011
- Explore partnership with Vermont Kin as Parents and the Vermont Adoption Consortium, specifically to collaborate on training opportunities by April 2011
- Provide guidance and direction to ensure a successful Spring Conference by April 2011.

Goal: The Vermont Foster/Adoptive Family Association will develop and support opportunities for foster and adoptive families to be recognized and appreciated in formal and informal ways.

Responsibility: Appreciation and Recognition Committee

Action Steps:

- Explore options for appreciation and recognition activities for the Spring Conference by February 2011
- Establish a format and procedure for appreciation and recognition in the VFAPA VOICE newsletter by March 2011
- Explore possibility of a VFAPA calendar as a appreciation and recognition mechanism by May 2011
- Research opportunities for local associations to utilize NFPA as a resource and for annual award nominations by January/February 2011

Goal: The Vermont Foster/Adoptive Family Association will expand membership at board and network meetings and establish a diversified representation at various forums throughout the state for the purpose of advocacy and collaboration.

Responsibility: Development Committee

Action Steps:

- Explore options for additional fund raising to further the mission of the Vermont Foster and Adoptive Family Association by March 2011
- Define affiliated membership status and explore opportunities for additional collaborations by January 2011
- Identify opportunities for positive publicity to further VFAPA mission in local newspaper and radio April 2011
- Explore and identify communication recommendations to reach maximum number of foster families effectively and efficiently May 2011
- Develop a VFAPA brochure by February 2011

Goal: The Vermont Foster/Adoptive Family Association will serve as a resource and advisory group for policy and practices specific to foster care related issues.

Responsibility: Best Practices Committee

Action Steps:

- Develop recommendations for Education and Training Committee on promising practices and research by February 2011
- Develop a database of foster/adoptive parents willing to serve on various state committee to represent VFAPA by March 2011
- Ensure that the VFAPA Voice has information in each issue specific to best practices on issues connected to foster/adoptive care by February 2011.

- Review all new DCF-Family Services policy drafts and offer feedback by January 2011.
- Research ethical standards specific to foster/adoptive care and make recommendations to the VFafa board for review by July 2011.
- Establish a message board on the VFafa website to serve as information/education and support for foster and adoptive families by May 2011.
- Research potential partnerships with Department of Education to ensure collaboration on the local level with foster children in the school system by July 2011.
- Explore opportunities for foster and adoptive parents to serve as mentors for birth families in the child welfare system by June 2011.

Goal: The Vermont Foster/Adoptive Family Association will be an advocacy voice for foster parents, child and families and the systems that serve them in the Vermont legislature.

Responsibility: Legislative Committee

Action Steps:

- Gather information and agenda from the VFafa board to order to establish clear legislative priorities by January 2011.
- Educate VFafa board and local associations about who their legislative leaders are and effective advocacy tools by June 2011.
- Establish a phone tree for quick communication on legislative advocacy issues by May 2011.