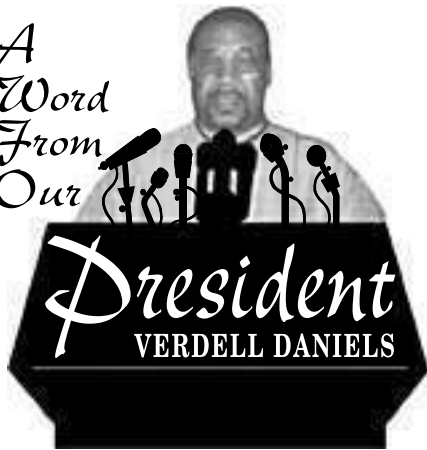


A
Word
From
Our



Dear Members:

Summer is almost gone and most of us have used all the vacation time. Now we must begin the task of getting our children ready for the school year 2000 -2001.

As we go about our shopping for school clothing and supplies, we must REMEMBER who we are and what we do, We must keep our composure and give full attention to our children, this means giving them the very best care that we can. It doesn't make any difference who we are or what we do: You may be an Adoptive Parent, Foster Parent or a Department of Family and Children Services worker, because we are all in this together, and we all should be working for the same reason: That of working for the betterment of all the children in the care of the state of Georgia, and we must be able to do our job right the first time.

We are very special individuals, that have

compassion to care for children who need love and guidance. We, as professional children care providers, have the insight to know that quality child care contributes greatly to the health of our Society. Our job is not easy, but it can and will be the most rewarding challenge we will ever undertake.

As I travel around the state of Georgia, I am often asked what kind of people we are. My reply is very simple: We are people that have love deep in our hearts for all of Georgia's needy, abused and neglected children. We are flexible, we have a great sense of humor, a family support system, a strong self-esteem, and a realistic expectation of the children that we care for.

As summer grows to a close a good foster parent must make a commitment to themselves, the agency, and above all, the children that have been placed in our homes. We must have perseverance. We must not stop when things get rough. We must keep going because the children need adults that are willing to give them a second chance in life.

As we all know the foster care system in Georgia is not flawless. You will have problems. Your phone calls may not be returned in the time you think they should have been, and your local agency may not be perfect. We, as members of this professional team, must understand that we also make mistakes and we are not perfect. As a team we all must remember the bottom line: helping the children.

As we begin the school year let's show our community and our school system that we are professional and that foster parents play a very important role in the life of the children that we care for: (1) Let's be

courteous to the child's teachers. (2) Patience: we must be patient with our children, with the school system, and above all patient with ourselves. (3) Let's show tact. Tact is the ability to delicately deal with others without offending.

Yes, we are professionals and we will be treated as such. We will give respect, but in turn we must demand respect. We must begin to lobby our local and state elected officials. We must let them know what our needs are and what the needs of our children are. We must not just sit by and let time pass. We must not accept leftovers or handouts. This is an election year...that means we must let each candidate know that we need and their support, in order to help make Georgia's foster care system the best in the nation.

We all should be very proud of what we do because we are making a difference in the life of a child.

One last thing: We must all thank our Division Director Mrs. Blount-Clark for the extra clothing money. Even if it was a one time deal, we are thankful and appreciate all she is doing to support the children and Foster Parents of Georgia. As president of AFPAG, I urge all of our members to write or call her, and express thanks.

Remember, as we get our children ready for the new school year, let us make sure that we, as foster parents, are also ready.

I hope all of you have had a wonderful summer.

Sincerely,

VERDELL DANIELS
President, AFPAG



Phil Collins

"You'll Be In My Heart"

Phil Collins' theme song for Walt Disney's *Tarzan* is adopted nationwide as Foster Care Theme

Tarzan,
being the
first story
about true
Foster care
is now
endowed

with a beautiful song that speaks of Foster Care in its truest form. The next time you hear this song on the radio, take heart and listen to these wonderful words...

(Verse 1) Come stop your crying. It will be all right. Just take my hand. Hold it tight. I will protect you from all around you. I will be here. Don't you cry.

For one so small, you seem so strong. My arms will hold

you, keep you safe and warm. This bond between us can't be broken. I will be here. Don't you cry.

(Chorus)

'Cause you'll be in my heart. Yes, you'll be in my heart. From this day on...Now and forever more. You'll be in my heart, no matter what they say. You'll be here in my heart, always.

(Verse 2)

Why can't they understand the way we feel? They just don't trust what they can't explain. I know we're different but, deep inside us we're not that different at all.

(Chorus 2)

And you'll be in my heart.

Yes, you'll be in my heart. From this day on now and forever more.

(Verse 3)

Don't listen to them, 'cause what do they know? We need each other to have and to hold. They'll see in time, I know. When destiny calls you, you must be strong. I may not be with you, but you've got to hold on. They'll see in time, I know...we'll show them together.

(Chorus)

'Cause you'll be in my heart. Yes, you'll be in my heart. From this day on...now and forever more. Oh, you'll be in my heart, no matter what they say. You'll be here in my heart, always....Always.

COME SEE THE NEW AFPAG WEBSITE!

Be sure to go online and stop by our new web site located at www.afpag.org.

The new site is up, running and waiting for you to come for a visit. Included on the site is LOTS of new and exciting stuff that just wouldn't fit in the newsletter, so log on and check it out, and don't forget to sign the Guest Book so we know you were there!