

Dear Caregiver Community,

When the Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence was formed nearly a decade ago, providing training and education to caregivers in support of positive outcomes for families was central to our mission. As we have grown, so has our capacity to support the caregiving community, which is why we are so excited to have been selected to lead Caregiver Retention, Education and Support (CaRES) in partnership with DCYF.

The gap in service since July 2020 has probably left many of you feeling unsupported. We are diligently working to resource this program and launch March 15.

We see this partnership as an opportunity to build on and strengthen the work the Alliance is already doing, and to fulfill your unmet needs. We have a breadth of resources available to support you with individualized and group options. Our trainers already have robust relationships in your local communities, and this program will allow us to formalize and expand the help they have been offering.

Our team will walk alongside you at all points of the caregiver journey, whether you are inquiring about the program, or have your first placed child, or are a seasoned caregiver who needs help with a new situation. This work will be guided by Program Manager Jean Brownell, who started her career supporting caregivers and has been committed to the work for 20 years as well as continuing to learn with you. She will be working with the Administrator of the Alliance's Caregiver Training and Education program, Michael Tyers, to ensure a comprehensive continuum of support.

The vision for this program is grounded in our values of inclusivity and cooperation. Cultural responsiveness is a priority, and we aim to work with you to keep children connected to their culture and place of origin, and provide a community of support. We also will work to evolve through your feedback, listening to where you find challenges either with in-home circumstances or within the system.

Under this partnership, the Alliance will be providing support, mentorship, robust resources, and ways to connect on social media. The FIRST (Foster Intervention and Retention Support Team) Program will be available as soon as the program launches. Another immediate goal will be building out ways for you to connect with other caregivers and the Alliance.

We would love to hear your input as we begin the program development. Please take our brief survey and share your thoughts: <http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07ehl14jydkkyqdpwi/start>.

We will keep reaching out to you as we build up this program and will be sure that you understand where to find resources, answers or support. If you have any questions, you can reach Jean Brownell at alliancecares@uw.edu.

We are looking forward to this work very much, and greatly appreciate your partnership.