

JUNE 2019

# Caregiver Connection

A monthly resource for family caregivers and foster and adoptive families in Washington state

## HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

In the world of child welfare, people who step up to help raise other people's children, even if temporarily, serve an important job as role models, nurturers and guides to adulthood. They provide shoulders to lean on and a sense of emotional security.

In observance and celebration of Father's Day, we say thank you to all the dads – foster dads, granddads, kinship dads, adoptive dads, birth dads and father figures – who give the best of themselves for children.

## Working on a Dream of *Ohana*

When Michael Sanders attended college in Wyoming, he became part of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America and discovered he really enjoyed it.

"I just like working with kids," he said.

His life journey led through several states and finally ended in Washington. Along the way, he came to an important realization: "I wanted to be a foster parent or something with kids."

Ten years ago, he worked at children's camps and eventually met and married his wife Althea. They were a blended family, and, like Michael, Althea had a passion for working with children.

Michael, 54, is employed by the Puyallup School District, maintaining all their

communications equipment. Althea, 48, is a stay-at-home mom.

The couple decided to become a licensed foster family and started taking in babies, who most often stayed for about six months to a year, he said.

They then shifted their emphasis to caring for boys. Their blended family consisted of three boys, so having more in the house gave everyone someone to play with.

Michael said they took kids from Behavioral Rehabilitative Services (BRS), often kids who had the greatest need for a good home.

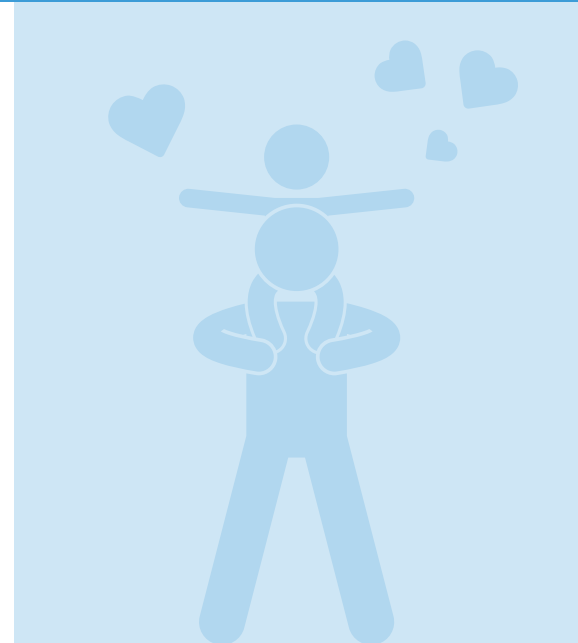
"It became kind of a niche," Michael said. "We just wanted to stabilize them."

They used the philosophy of "love, mercy, grace" to help bring some calm to the troubled waters of these boys' young, traumatized lives.

"They have experienced a lot of trauma. It takes a lot of patience. And you have to teach them life skills, things like table manners."



Michael and Althea Sanders



Caregiver Connection is published by:

**Alliance**  
for Child Welfare Excellence

in partnership with the Washington State  
Department of Children, Youth, and Families



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
Children, Youth, and Families

continues on next page

## ➔ Inside this issue

Honoring Great dads . . . . .	1
Working on a Dream of <i>Ohana</i> . .	1
Kudos to a Deadhead Granddad .	2
Adopting a Legacy of Caring . . .	3
Improving Lives, One Dad at a Time . . . . .	4
Celebrating Pride Month . . . . .	5
Why DOES it get you so Heated? .	5
Coming Soon: Training on Helping LGBTQ+ Youth . . . . .	6
Here are Some of the Pride Month Events around the State. . .	6
LGBTQ+ Information and Resources . . . . .	7
Three LGBTQ+ Icons . . . . .	7
Reunification Month Celebrates Birth Families . . . . .	8
Using Lived Experience to Help Families Reunify . . . . .	8
Reunification Month Events Around the State . . . . .	8
Voices of Children Contest Winners Chosen. . . . .	9
Outstanding Work in Child Welfare Recognized . . . . .	10
Foster Parent Mini-Conference . .	10
Mockingbird Society Youth Leadership Summit . . . . .	11
College Success Foundation's "Way To Go" Events. . . . .	11
Coordinated Care: The Importance of Managing Screen Time for Kids . . . . .	12
Caring for Children with Asthma. . . . .	12
Just For Kids – Recipes for Happy Campers . . . . .	13
Caregiver Training from the Alliance . . . . .	15
Meet Our Recruitment Partners Who Support You . . . . .	19

The Sanders live in Puyallup's South Hill area on 1.2 acres. With that amount of land and a 1,800 square foot deck, an idea took hold – “a vision,” Michael calls it.

Their vision is to create a gathering place where foster families can come over, kids can play and parents can relax or meet together for a while.

They want to call it “*Ohana*” – that’s the Hawaiian word for family. A lot of work remains to be done to turn their dream into reality, but they say it will be so worth it for the community of caregivers and kids who need a place like *Ohana*.

Asked what he likes best about being a dad, Michael said he enjoys showing kids something they may have never seen.

“For me, I like just hanging around with the kids. I love to hike and I love to have them ask questions. I want them to see the beauty around them.”

## Kudos to a Deadhead Granddad

In the small town of Naches near Yakima, the unlikely story of a family coming together to heal and grow after a tragedy is playing out.

Levi Reddicord, 58, a self-described “Deadhead” – or follower of the band the Grateful Dead – has taken over parental duties in helping raise his grandchildren Summer and Payton.

“My papa (Levi) always teaches me about life and I really do appreciate it,” Summer wrote. “I’m very close to her,” Levi said of Summer. “She is such a good kid.”

Summer, 15, is a winner of the Voices of Children Contest, and you can read her winning entry about her grandparents in this edition of the “Caregiver Connection”.

As Summer wrote, her path to Levi and their Grandmother Diana began with violence, when her father shot her mother in front of them.

She and her brother Payton, now 17, were not immediately placed with the Reddicords. They first lived with other relatives, a situation that wasn’t working well, so Levi fought to bring the kids into his family.

It hasn’t always been easy, since he’s sometimes judged by his appearance, Levi said. He laughingly remarks, “I’m a pretty scary sight.”

But they came together, nevertheless, and have remained so.

“We love these children. We love them like we loved our own,” Levi said.

Levi described his work as “mechanic and campfire musician. Music is 100 percent in this house”

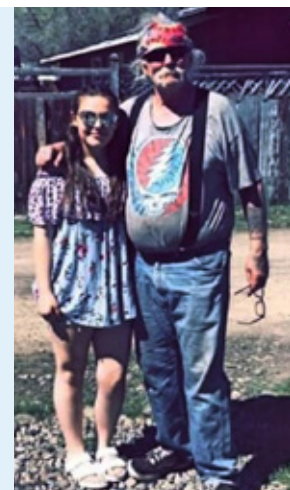
Diana is into sports, so the kids get plenty of both growing up – “sports and a bit of hippie,” Levi laughs.

His parenting philosophy is “having a loving heart and live and let live.”

Like most grandparents raising their grandchildren, he never thought his life at this stage would be filled with children and child-rearing – “not in my wildest dreams,” he said.

But he wouldn’t have it any other way.

“Tragedy happened, and this was thrust upon the family,” he said. “Of course I’d raise my [grandchildren], I’d raise anybody’s children who needed a hand.”



Summer and her “papa” Levi Reddicord

# Adopting a Legacy of Caring

When Todd Ranson was growing up near Port Townsend, his family provided a transition home for refugees, many from Ukraine after the fall of the Soviet Union.

“It was part of the DNA we had in our home that we helped others,” Todd said.

It seemed only natural that as an adult, he would embrace that same caring attitude, but he did it through adoption.

When he and his wife Elaine became a couple, they knew they could not have children of their own, so it seemed they could tap into that long-standing ethos of helping others, instead.

After college and settling down, the seeds planted early in life blossomed.

They began by adopting two children privately. Elaine was in the delivery room when their first child was born and even cut the umbilical cord.

After their second child, they became licensed foster parents. They are now in the process of adopting a third child, who they fostered. Their kids are 5, 3 and 1.

Elaine, 38, is a stay-at-home mom for the family. Todd, 37, is director of customer experience for Expedia.com, and he has taken his private passion into the workplace.

In 2014, he started an email group initially intending to set up a support group for adoptive parents. Someone suggested they include adoptees, which proved to be a huge benefit.

Eventually, the group held a sack lunch event. It turned out to be a standing-room only event.

Among the attendees was the person in charge of employee benefits. Within months of the meeting, new benefits were announced. A \$5,000 support payment from the company to adoptive families was tripled to \$15,000. And the 12-week paternity leave benefit was extended to adoptive families and foster families with a new placement.

Todd also is involved in an annual information event co-sponsored by Expedia in downtown Bellevue to inform people about foster and adoptive care. Many private agencies attend.

And he has now become a guide of sorts through the system as others contemplate adoption or foster care.



“It’s really important for making connections and having conversations,” he said.

Todd is quick to credit others at Expedia, which has cultivated a culture in which these kinds of things can happen.

He has built on the work Expedia has enabled him to do. And he is working himself to build the structure in which kids can find “a sense of normalcy.”

“He is so cool, “and “a great foster dad” wrote Angelina Denver, who works with Fostering Together to recruit and support foster parents.

His passion is obvious when he’s asked what he likes best about being a dad

“Wow – I could say about 400 things,” Todd said. “I just love it. But I think it is the excitement of watching them grow and develop.”



# Improving Lives, One Dad at a Time

Talk about a dynamic dad!

Keoki Kauanoe of Olympia is using what he learned as he tried to become a better dad to help build a program called “Dynamic Dads.”

The program provides education to fathers, many of whom want to be better dads so they can be reunited with their children who have become dependents of the state.

Keoki runs the program through Thurston County-based Family Education and Support Services (FESS). He offers three intensive classes, touching the lives of about 40 dads each year.

Wanting to be a better dad to his two-year-old child when he got divorced, Keoki took every class he could find on parenting several years ago. He eventually became a participant in a class taught by longtime fatherhood educator Howard Winkler. Keoki eventually was asked to teach the class and now is certified as a master trainer.

He puts his teachings to practice at home, where he is the father of two children and two step-children. The two-year-old that spurred his quest to be a better dad is now 20 and attending college.

A second-generation Pacific Islander, Keoki was born in Alabama, the son of a military father. His parents grew up in Hawaii, where he has visited many times.

He said that Island culture has a strong family ethic of generations nurturing each other.

“You have multiple generations taking care of children, all of them living in the same household.”

In his class, participants talk a lot about communication.

They have to learn to respond to their children, not react to them, he said. That means listening to their children so they can understand what is happening in any given situation instead of reacting, a pattern they may have learned from their own parents when they were children. The shift toward actively listening is crucial, he said.

“They have to create a connection to their child, especially before they correct them. They have to make it so their children *want* to talk to them.”

Dads in his class also are sometimes adapting to a new role as fathers.

“There is a different expectation now. It’s not enough to be the breadwinner, the provider, the person who punishes when he comes home from work,” he said. “There’s this idea that dads aren’t nurturers. That really isn’t true.”

To build on that ethic, he uses a curriculum called “Nurturing Fathers” to teach his classes. It is based on a broader curriculum called “Nurturing Parents.”

Keoki has become a leader in a community of those highlighting the role of dads in a system that often focuses on moms.

He sees his role and his classes as a “force multiplier.” For every dad who takes the class, at least one child will benefit, the effects of good paternal parenting rippling throughout the community.

Because of his commitment and skills, many dads are better parents today.



Keoki Kauanoe, holding a child, when he was chosen Employee of the Month at Family Education and Support Services

# Celebrating Pride Month

**The LGBTQ+ community is highlighted in June in celebration of Pride Month.**

**We first present a very personal story by Minnie Biesner of Spokane, who is active in Passion To Action, a group of young people that works with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to improve the foster care system.**

## Why Does it Get You so Heated?

**By Minnie Biesner**

Imagine. Imagine growing up in a home that knows and accepts you, then being placed to a new home that denies you. A home that insists they support your happiness but they just “don’t want to see it.” Imagine having to filter all of your words. “Do you have a boyfriend?,” “What are you plans this weekend?,” “Who got you that gift?,” and “Who is your friend you are moving in with?”

Every question diverted to the point of lies and becoming a professional at it. No, I’m not seeing anyone, I have no plans, my friend got it for me and they’re just a roommate.

It’s easy. Just come out, right?

“Outed” at 11 years old by a person she thought was a confidential adult. A little girl who didn’t even have the wordage for her feelings was now being told that she can’t change in the locker room because she might make others uncomfortable. A little girl being made a pervert with the most innocent intentions.

Now she has one word for how she can identify: Bisexual. Her foster parents are also new to this word. Mistaking it for rebellious sexual behavior, the young girl is now sent to therapy.

She has a new home now, but as each new home comes, so does the painful process of “coming out.”

Will it be okay or will she be given a trash bag the next morning to pack her things?

She’s 17 and has a new word for her sexual orientation: Lesbian. After years of being told, “You have to pick a side, you can’t have both.” She picked, but now she won’t tell or it will feed into the ignorance of others.

New questions arise: “Who is the dominant one?,” “Are you the little spoon?,” and the most painful: “Yeah, but don’t you want to have a baby one day?”

Intersectionality doesn’t fit into her world. Once you’re gay, your whole identity is gay. Forget being an artist, an influencer, a mother or ever being involved with your culture.

Have you ever been asked, “Why does that get you so heated?” when a specific topic is brought up.

It’s because I lived it, it’s because I felt the hurt, it’s because I saw my brothers and sisters in care hurt, it’s because people gave up on me, gave up on them, when we needed support the most. Nobody was willing to step up to support or be educated, but instead catered to toxicity that eroded us within.

Through an awareness of polarity, we can better acknowledge and ground the differences among us for safe and affirming care for our youth involved in systems.



# Training for Caregivers Helping LGBTQ+ Youth

To better help LGBTQ+ children and youth, the Alliance For Child Welfare Excellence and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) are updating and developing new training curricula for caregivers in various formats including online and in the classroom.

Currently, some training is available for staff members. Caregivers who are interested in having a guest speaker attend their local group or are interested in information more readily available can contact Ernest Blackwell, LGBTQ+ lead for the DCYF Licensing Division, [ernest.blackwell@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:ernest.blackwell@dcyf.wa.gov), or Dae Shogren, LGBTQ+ lead for DCYF Child Welfare Programs, [dae.shogren@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dae.shogren@dcyf.wa.gov).

## When we better serve some kids, we better serve all kids.

For additional information, go to the national Human Rights Campaign for an online workshop: [www.hrc.org/explore/topic/adoption](http://www.hrc.org/explore/topic/adoption). *The information provided here is for all caregivers, not just those who are interested in adoption!*

## Here are some of the Pride Month events around the state

### KITSAP COUNTY

**Kitsap Pride 2019: 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. July 20**

Evergreen Park, 1500 Park Ave., Bremerton

### TRI-CITIES

**Pride Family Festival: 1-5 p.m. June 1**

Volunteer Park, 1125 N. 4th Ave., Pasco

### LEWISTON-CLARKSTON VALLEY

**Celebrate Love: 4-9 p.m. July 13**

Pioneer Park, 203 5th St., Lewiston

#### MORE INFORMATION:

[www.facebook.com/events/2394842663881142/](http://www.facebook.com/events/2394842663881142/)

### VANCOUVER

**Saturday in the Park PRIDE: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. July 13**

Esther Short Park, 605 Esther St.

### WENATCHEE

**PRIDE 2019: 11 a.m.-4 p.m. June 15**

Lincoln Park, 1410 Mission St.

#### MORE INFORMATION:

[www.facebook.com/events/2181764321888281/](http://www.facebook.com/events/2181764321888281/)

### MOSCOW-PULLMAN AREA

**Palouse Pride Festival: Noon, Aug. 24**

East City Park, E. 3rd St., Moscow

### SPOKANE

**PRIDE28: Noon-10 p.m. June 8**

Riverfront Park, 507 N. Howard St.

#### MORE INFORMATION:

[www.facebook.com/events/358393941650114/](http://www.facebook.com/events/358393941650114/)

### WHATCOM COUNTY

**Whatcom County Pride Parade, 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. June 9**

Bellingham High School, 2020 Cornwall Ave., Bellingham

### YAKIMA

**Pride Festival and Parade: 10 a.m. June 8**

Performance Park, 100 Pendleton Way

### THURSTON COUNTY

**Capital City Pride Parade & Festival: 11 a.m. June 23**

Heritage Park, 5th Ave. SW, Olympia

#### MORE INFORMATION:

[www.capitalcitypride.net](http://www.capitalcitypride.net)

## Need Help with LGBTQ+ Information and Resources

If you are new to navigating LGBTQ+ terminology and culture, know that it can be challenging – just like learning a new language or meeting a new friend. There are many local, statewide and national resources available, including:

**PFLAG:** [www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)

**Family Acceptance Project:** [familyproject.sfsu.edu](http://familyproject.sfsu.edu)

**Gender Diversity:** [www.genderdiversity.org](http://www.genderdiversity.org)

**Lambda Legal:** [www.lambdalegal.org](http://www.lambdalegal.org)

**The Trevor Project:** [www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

**The Trevor Project Suicide Hotline for LGBTQ +youth:**  
1-866-488-7386.

**For more information on LGBTQ+ issues, here are regional Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) staff leads:**

Region 1: **Cameron Norton, Spokane**  
509-509-828-9014, [cameron.norton@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:cameron.norton@dcyf.wa.gov)

Region 2: **Delton Hauck, Yakima**  
509-818-2026, [delton.hauck@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:delton.hauck@dcyf.wa.gov)

Region 3: **Sorrell Joshua, Bellingham**  
360-899639, [sorrell.joshua@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:sorrell.joshua@dcyf.wa.gov)

Region 4: **Norene Roberts, Seattle**  
425-229-4165, [norene.roberts@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:norene.roberts@dcyf.wa.gov)

Region 5: **Dawn Cooper, Tacoma**  
253-302-1666, [dawn.cooper@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dawn.cooper@dcyf.wa.gov)

Region 6: **Peggy Devoy, Vancouver**  
360-852-5209, [peggy.devoy@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:peggy.devoy@dcyf.wa.gov)

Licensing Division: **Ernest Blackwell**  
253-260-0335, [ernest.blackwell@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:ernest.blackwell@dcyf.wa.gov)

**Statewide Program Manager: Dae Shogren**  
360-688-6237, [dae.shogren@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dae.shogren@dcyf.wa.gov)

DCYF partners with the Center for Children and Youth Justice (CCYJ) to meet the goal of “better systems, better lives.” For more information about CCYJ, click on

[ccyj.org/our-work/supporting-lgbtq-youth/](http://ccyj.org/our-work/supporting-lgbtq-youth/)

## Icons in the LGBTQ+ Community Who have Played Important Roles

**Many individuals deserve recognition for their leadership on LGBTQ+ issues. Here are three of those iconic figures.**

### Janelle Monáe Robinson

Robinson is an award-winning American singer, songwriter, rapper, actress and producer who is signed to Atlantic Records, as well as her own imprint, the Wondaland Arts Society. In her coming out interview with Rolling Stone magazine, Monáe made it crystal clear that she recognizes and embraces the power of her decision. “I want young girls, young boys, non-binary, gay, straight, queer people who are having a hard time dealing with their sexuality, dealing with feeling ostracized or bullied for just being their unique selves, to know that I see you,” she said.

### Thomas Page McBee

McBee’s Lambda Award-winning memoir, “Man Alive – A True Story of Violence, Forgiveness and Becoming a Man,” was named a best book of 2014 by NPR Books, BuzzFeed, Kirkus and Publisher’s Weekly. Thomas was the first transgender man to box in Madison Square Garden, served as a “masculinity expert” for VICE, and is the author of the columns “Self-made Man,” which appears in The Rumpus ([www.therumpus.net](http://www.therumpus.net)), “The American Man,” written for Pacific Standard magazine ([www.psmag.com](http://www.psmag.com)), and “Amateur,” penned for the Condé Nast community platform “Them” ([www.condenast.com/brands/them/](http://www.condenast.com/brands/them/)).

### Harvey Milk

Milk was an American politician and the first openly gay elected official in the history of California, where he was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Milk, a noted human rights leader and coalition-builder, served almost 11 months in office, during which he sponsored a bill banning discrimination in public accommodations, housing and employment on the basis of sexual orientation. He was assassinated by a fellow supervisor in 1978.



# Family Reunification Month Celebrated

*From the Washington State Administrative Office to the Courts*

“For most children in foster care, reunification with their family is the best option for a permanent and loving home. Each year, thousands of children are successfully reunited with their families after parents work hard, gain new understanding and skills and partner

with social workers and courts to meet extensive requirements.

While a number of courts have held family reunification celebrations for many years, we are excited to officially proclaim June 2019 as Family Reunification Month in Washington. The month-long celebration is sponsored by the Washington Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster

Care, with courts and communities hosting individual events.

Safe reunification of children with their parents is the primary goal of the dependency process. The Commission on Children in Foster Care feels it is important for everyone to join in celebrating families that have worked so hard and succeeded in reunifying.”

## Using life experience to help families reunify

Experience gained in life often provide the best foundation to help guide others toward a goal you yourself have reached. Jason Bragg of Seattle is a living example of that. “I’m trying to move parents forward toward reunification,” he said. “My own case is where I get my passion from.”

In 2011, Jason, the single father of a 4-year-old son, knew he wanted to get clean and sober and needed services to help him reach that goal. None were available, so he continued to battle his addictions, going in and out of jail and, at one point, losing custody of his son. “It was really challenging to engage with the department,” he said.

Jason’s mother was taking care of his son while he struggled to get his life in order. Slowly, step by step, that happened. In April 2013, exactly one year after he became clean and sober, he was reunited with his son. His son is doing well and is playing basketball and football; he is going to camp in California on a scholarship this summer.

Jason, 38, has taken all he learned about reunification, which is the department’s first goal when a child enters out-of-home care, and put it to work to help individuals and families involved with the child welfare system.

Besides serving on several committees working on reunification and similar issues, he operates a consulting firm that contracts with public and private agencies. Some help dads and

others help families overcome the barriers to reunification.

Reunification is very doable, Jason said. “I believe 90 percent of our families, with the right support and resources, can reunify.”



## Here is a sampling of Reunification Month celebrations

Many celebrations are planned for Reunification Month around the state. These are the event details available as of press time. For more information about Reunification Month activities, please contact **Heather Ligtenberg** at [Heather.Ligtenberg@courts.wa.gov](mailto:Heather.Ligtenberg@courts.wa.gov) or Lorrie Thompson at [Lorrie.Thompson@courts.wa.gov](mailto:Lorrie.Thompson@courts.wa.gov).

**CHELAN COUNTY** – First annual celebration: noon-1 p.m. June 21, Juvenile Courthouse lobby, Wenatchee. Cake and refreshments, a photo booth, a mascot, a prize drawing and other activities are planned.

**DOUGLAS COUNTY** – First annual celebration: noon-1 p.m. June 21, Juvenile Courthouse lobby, Waterville. Cake and refreshments, a photo booth, a mascot, a prize drawing and other activities are planned.

**KITSAP COUNTY** – 4-7 p.m. June 26, Evergreen Park shelter no. 1, Bremerton. Food, games, prize drawings, art and crafts, face painting, treasure hunt, free family photo and information tables for parents.

**MASON COUNTY** – A celebration is planned for June 27. Details are unavailable at this time.

**PACIFIC COUNTY** – Noon June 4, Courthouse Rotunda, South Bend. Refreshments will be served.

**PIERCE COUNTY** – A celebration is planned for June 20. Details are unavailable at this time.

**SKAGIT COUNTY** – Afternoon Reunification Picnic and Celebration, June 25, Skagit Valley Playfields, 2700 Martin Rd, Mount Vernon. Reunification picnic and celebration.

**YAKIMA COUNTY** – 3-5 p.m. June 20, the county’s Juvenile Justice Center, 1728 Jerome Ave., Yakima, will be the site of a court ceremony. A reception and activities follow on the lawn outside.



# Winning Entries Chosen In Voices Of Children Contest

For 16 years, Thurston County-based Family Education and Support Services (FESS) has given children an opportunity to express their feelings through its contest, the Voices of Children Being Raised By Grandparents and Other Relatives.

The organization invites children and youth statewide to submit writing or artwork describing the positive impact being raised with relatives has had on their lives.

Entries are judged in three age categories. Two winners in each category are given \$100 by Twin Star Credit Union, an event

co-sponsor. The family of each winner receives a free night of lodging and fun at Great Wolf Lodge at Grand Mound.

And each summer, an awards ceremony honors the winners. This year's ceremony will be July 9 at the Washington Governor's Mansion in Olympia.

This month, we present two winners; others will be featured in upcoming newsletters. All entries are presented exactly as written.

## Summer – age 15, Naches

### Summer's winning entry

"My name is Summer. I live with my grandparents due to the death of my mom. My mom passed away on 11-05-06, because my dad shot her. He shot her in front of my brother and I.

My grandparents are the best thing that has happened to my brother and I. They are the reason I am who I am today. I am now in high school, and I get straight A's.

My grandparents are amazing, and so understanding. They are very loving and care about us so much. When we lived with our dad's side of the family they would abuse my brother. I am more than thankful that I now live with my nana and papa. They have taught me and my brother so much, as in respect, responsibility, and they make us so happy.

They are always there when we need them. And my nana and I have an unbreakable bond. She is my best friend and my papa always teaches me about life and I really do appreciate it.

I love them and my brother so much. Everything I went through I went (through) it with my brother, and that is why we are so close. That's all- thank you."

## William – age 5, Lake Tapps



"A day with grandma and grandpa"



## Jamerika Haynes is the current Ms. Evergreen State.

She spoke at May's Caregiver's Conference about her life in foster care and how her foster parent (Willie-May Johnson) and her adoptive parents helped her overcome her life's shaky start. She earned a bachelor's degree in communications and has served as a communications consultant with both private and public agencies. She now operates her own consulting firm, Clever Jam Communications, offering strategic communications guidance, motivational speaking and facilitation to those working in child welfare.



# Great Work In Child Welfare Honored



Every year, the Foster Parents Association of Washington State (FPAWS) honors outstanding work done on behalf of caregivers and youth in care at its Night of Shining Stars ceremony, part of its annual statewide Caregiver's Conference.

Many of those honored are staff members of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families. All honorees are nominated by people who have seen, experienced or been a beneficiary of their great work. Honorees not only have a star officially named for them, but also are recognized at the awards dinner.

## Congratulations to this year's honorees and a thank you for your many contributions to the welfare of children and support of their caregivers.

**Kurt League**, Luminary Award, Spokane case worker.

**Denise Hannon**, Luminary Award, Yakima. Denise is the lead/supervisor in Region 2 for recruitment and retention, caregiver appreciation, kinship care and Shared Planning meetings.

**Iris Montgomery**, Luminary Award, Yakima. Alongside working fulltime for a non-state organization for many years, and even after her retirement, Iris has continued to work for the agency as a dedicated after-hours social services specialist.

**Sieneke Stevenson**, Luminary Award, Bellingham, case worker.

**Angie Andrew**, Luminary Award, Seattle, case worker.

**Stacey Brentin**, Luminary Award, Bremerton, case worker.

**Joanne Horner**, Luminary Award, Vancouver, case worker.

**James (Jimmy) Vallembois**, Luminary Award, Vancouver, case worker.

**Nancy Graham**, Best Practice for an Individual Award. Nancy is a Court-appointed Special Advocate for Kittitas County Superior Court.

**Mark Fullington** and staff of Community and Family Services Foundation, Best Practice for an Organization Award.

**Shelly Willis**, executive director, Family Education and Support Services, Best Practice for Kinship Care Award, Thurston County.

**Rep. Noel Frame D-Seattle and Rep. Tana Senn, D-Mercer Island** The Ruth Kagi Award, given to elected officials who make an outstanding effort to improve the child welfare system for kids and families.

**Kelly Conway**, the Steve and Danielle Baxter Award. Kelly has fostered for 25 years, adopted nine children, and for the past three years, has worn the title of "CPS investigator" in the Kent Office.

**State Rep. John Lovick**, D-Mill Creek, and former state Rep. Jim Kastama, D-Puyallup, the Edith Owen Wallace Award for Kinship Care.

## Foster Parent Mini-Conference (Sept. 7)

A Foster Parents of Washington State (FPAWS) Mini-Conference will be Sept. 7 at Great Wolf Lodge, south of Olympia. Each September, members head back to Great Wolf for another weekend of learning and fun. Families can stay all Friday and Saturday at the FPAWS discounted lodging rate. Trainings and Kids Kamp, a childcare service, will be offered, but only on Saturday. The cost is \$20. So come hang out with other families, learn some new skills and enjoy a toy and clothing give-away!

Seven hours of training are provided – up to 10 training hours when you join Leah Davis for "All About the Colors" Saturday Evening!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

# Mockingbird Plans Youth Summit

Each year, the Mockingbird Youth Leadership Summit brings together youth leaders from each of Mockingbird's seven chapters across Washington to present their proposals for statewide reforms that will improve foster care and end youth homelessness. The date will be announced soon.

During the two-day summit, chapter members present their ideas to groups and individuals who represent state leaders and experts in foster care and youth homelessness.

To learn more about the issues that youth advocates raised at the 2018 Summit, click on this link [www.mockingbirdsociety.org/images/annual-reports/Youth-Leadership-Summit-Proposals-2018-Final.pdf](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org/images/annual-reports/Youth-Leadership-Summit-Proposals-2018-Final.pdf)

For further information about the Youth Leadership Summit, please contact Isaac Sanders, Mockingbird's youth programs manager, at [isaac@mockingbirdsociety.org](mailto:isaac@mockingbirdsociety.org).

## Registration Open for Way To Go Programs

College Success Foundation and Treehouse, in partnership with the Washington Passport Network, announce Way to Go, formerly known as Make It Happen!

Way To Go helps students learn about the Passport to Careers (PTC) Scholarship, plan their post-secondary path and connect with supportive adults who can open doors of possibility and provide ongoing support.

The newly revamped and renamed program has morphed into three one-day events to improve accessibility and increase the number of students who can attend. Those events are:

*Transportation will be provided to all locations.*

*The event is free to attend.*

For more information: [www.washingtonpassportnetwork.org](http://www.washingtonpassportnetwork.org), or contact Donna Quach: [passport@collegesuccessfoundation.org](mailto:passport@collegesuccessfoundation.org)

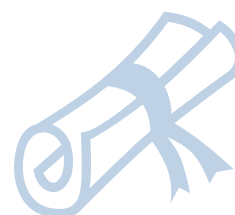
The foundation also oversees the Governors Scholarship for Foster Youth Program.

This year's award recipients will be announced in the July issue.

**June 18 at Eastern Washington University Cheney.**

**June 25 at Saint Martin's University, Lacey.**

**June 27 at Everett Community College, Everett.**





Need help with health care coordination?  
Questions about healthcare, including  
behavioral health? Call Apple Health Core  
Connections, 1-844-354-9876. They are there  
to help.

## The Importance of Managing Screen Time for Kids

When kids are hooked on tablets and smart phones, they can damage their still-developing brains. Too much screen time too soon, can lead to issues with focus, concentration and attention, to name a few. Read more about this at [www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/behind-online-behavior/201604/what-screen-time-can-really-do-kids-brains](http://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/behind-online-behavior/201604/what-screen-time-can-really-do-kids-brains).

Studies have connected delayed cognitive development in kids with too much screen time. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services finds that U.S. children are spending seven hours a day in front of a screen (tablet, smartphone, computer, television or similar devices). Other data shows that kids as young as two regularly play iPad games.

Caregivers should set a good example, create limits and talk with children about screen time. [Kidshealth.org](http://Kidshealth.org) is a great resource and offers these ideas:

Preview games and even play them with your child to see what they are like. The game's rating may not match what you feel is suitable.

Make sure your child has a range of free-time activities. Spending time with friends, playing sports and being active can help them develop a healthy body and mind.

Turn off all screens during family meals and at bedtime. Also keep devices with screens out of bedrooms.

Let kids know that screen time needs to be earned and is not a right. Let them know screen time is allowed only after chores and homework are done.

Use screening tools on the TV, computers and tablets to block access to material they should not see.

Teach your child about internet and social media safety, and make sure they know the dangers of sexting or sharing private information online.

Keep the computer in a common area where you can watch what is going on.

See more at [kidshealth.org/en/parents/screentime-teens.html](http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/screentime-teens.html)

---

**Apple Health's 24/7 Nurse Advice Line is available for health-related questions and concerns for Apple Health Core Connections members: 1-844-354-9876; TTY/TDD: 711**

## Caring for Children with Asthma

Asthma can be very serious. The key treatment is long-term control medication. Regular use of these medications helps with symptoms and prevents asthma attacks.

If you are caring for a child with asthma, routine care is vital. Make sure the child takes the long-term control medication regularly. If you need more information about caring for children with asthma, Apple Health Core Connections staff can help. Call 1-844-354-9876 and ask for Health Care Coordination.



# Recipes For Happy Campers

**Nothing says summer quite like camping – and that means outdoor adventures, the smoky aroma of clothes and hair, stories around the campfire, dirt and pine needles in everything – and if you're a kid, being hungry all the time!**



As tasty as hotdogs and s'mores are the first day of camping, and as easy as they are for kids to cook over a campfire or barbeque grill, it's fun to have options. Why not let them try some new campfire recipes. Even preschoolers can help with some of these recipes, and depending on their skill level, older kids can probably handle most of the recipes with just a little

supervision. Be sure to teach your children campfire safety, including how to move foods on and off a grill with tongs, pancake turners and potholders to avoid getting burned. And if you're using a grill over a campfire, teach them to tuck in loose hems and roll up sleeves to keep themselves fire-safe.

---

## Campfire Quesadillas\*

**Equipment:** Aluminum foil, knife, can opener.

**Ingredients:** Tortillas, shredded cheddar, Jack, cheddar or Mexican-blend cheese – or cheese slices.

**Optional:** Black beans, chopped onion and/or tomato, chopped avocado, olive slices

### DIRECTIONS:

Place the tortilla on a sheet of foil about 12 inches long. Cover half of the tortilla with a generous layer of cheese, then sprinkle on any optional ingredients.

Fold the bare half over the cheesy half, then fold the foil around the quesadilla, being careful to seal all the edges tightly so the cheese won't ooze out as it melts. Carefully place the packet on a hot grill for about 5 minutes, or until the cheese is melted. Use tongs and potholders to slide the packet off the grill and onto a paper plate. Carefully open a fold and let the steam vent before fully opening the packet. Cut the quesadilla into sections and serve with salsa, guacamole and sour cream if you brought them.

*\*A variation on this recipe is Campfire Pizza. Use a tortilla shell or flatbread and traditional pizza toppings. Cook on an open foil sheet.*

## Snappy Chicken Rice

**Equipment:** 2-quart saucepan with lid, large spoon, can opener.

**Ingredients:**

1 19-ounce can chicken and sausage gumbo soup, undiluted

1 12-ounce can white meat chicken, plus juice

½ cup white rice

About 1/2-3/4 cup water or chicken broth.\*

**Optional:** chili powder, red pepper flakes, canned green chilies, catsup.

### DIRECTIONS:

Open the canned chicken and the soup and pour both into the pan. Stir in the water and rice. Add extra chili powder or red pepper flakes for a spicier version or tone down the spice with two-three tablespoons of catsup.

Place a lid or foil on the pan and set it on the grill. Give the ingredients a stir about every 10 minutes. Check after about 20 minutes to see if the rice is soft and tender. Add more cooking time as needed.

*\*Depending on the grill temperature, a little extra water may need to be added to keep the rice from burning on the bottom. The dish also may turn out a little soupier than expected – just serve it in bowls, if so. You're camping, right?*

continues on next page

## Polenta "Lasagna"

**Equipment:** 9-inch foil pan, knife, spoon or spatula, aluminum foil

**Ingredients:** 18-ounce rolls prepared polenta

About 1/4 cup pesto sauce

1 jar spaghetti sauce (leftovers can be used for tortilla pizzas)

About 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese

Optional: Cooked Italian sausage or ground hamburger, sautéed mushrooms

**DIRECTIONS:** Spray the pan with vegetable oil spray.

Cut polenta into quarter-inch rounds.

Dump a little spaghetti sauce in bottom of pan and spread to form a thin layer, then arrange a layer of the polenta rounds over the sauce. Spread the pesto sauce on the polenta. If using optional ingredients, layer them over the pesto. Cover with part of the mozzarella and a thin layer of spaghetti sauce. Next, arrange another layer of polenta, then cover it with spaghetti sauce and finally, the rest of the cheese. (Only about half or a little more of the spaghetti sauce will probably be used).

Cover the pan tightly with foil and carefully place on a grill over medium heat. If the fire seems too hot, crinkle up four golf-ball sized balls of aluminum foil and place them on the grill, then place the casserole on them so the pan isn't directly touching the grill. Elevating the pan will cut down the direct heat so the casserole doesn't burn on the bottom.

Cook until heated through, about 35-45 minutes, depending on the temperature of the grill.



## Toasty Marshmallow Fruit

**Equipment:** Campfire roasting forks or long sticks, knife, spoon

**Ingredients:** Fruits such as strawberries, quartered apples, banana chunks – any fruit that will stay on a fork.

One jar of marshmallow fluff, stirred

**DIRECTIONS:** Place fruit on the fork, then dip it into the marshmallow fluff or spoon the fluff over the fruit to lightly coat it. Roast over the campfire or grill just until the marshmallow is lightly toasted.

## Campfire Banana Boats

**Equipment:** aluminum foil, knife

**Ingredients:** One large, ripe banana per person

A variety of toppings: Chocolate or butterscotch chips, mini-marshmallows, chopped nuts, crumbled cookies, granola, nuts, cut-up candy pieces

### DIRECTIONS:

Peel the banana and split it in half lengthwise, leaving the bottom uncut – like a hotdog bun. Place the banana on a piece of foil large enough to envelope it when ready to cook. Sprinkle the desired toppings in the valley between the two halves. Bring the ends of the foil up over the banana to cover it, then tightly fold and crimp the edges so that the toppings won't ooze out as they melt.

Place the packet over the campfire grill and cook until the toppings are melted, about 5-10 minutes. Carefully open one of the seams enough to let any steam escape, then open the packet and enjoy!



## Caregiver Training from the Alliance

Explore our wide variety of caregiver training options designed to increase understanding and strengthen skills. These upcoming in-person classroom sessions provide in-depth information on relevant topics for the caregiver community at convenient locations across the state.

### JUNE TRAININGS IN REGION 1: EASTERN WASHINGTON, NORTH OF KITTITAS AND BENTON/FRANKLIN COUNTIES AND EAST OF COLUMBIA COUNTY

- ILABS Module 3: Language Development: The Importance of Early Interactions
- ILABS Module 4: Language Development: The Power of Learning Through Imitation
- ILABS Module 13: Race Today: What Kids Know as They Grow
- ILABS Module 14: "Racing" Toward Equality: Why Talking About Race is Good For Everyone
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Invitation to Aggression Replacement Training
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Webinar)
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Partners Make Better Decisions: Caregivers and Social Workers Working Together
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

### JUNE TRAININGS IN REGION 2: SOUTH/CENTRAL EASTERN WASHINGTON

- African American Hair and Skin Care
- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- ILABS Module 10: Language Development: From Listening to Speaking
- ILABS Module 11: Bilingual Language Development
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Verbal De-escalation

## Caregiver Training from the Alliance continued

### JUNE TRAININGS IN REGION 3: I-5 CORRIDOR SNOHOMISH COUNTY TO WHATCOM COUNTY + ISLAND

- ILABS Module 2: Why the First 2,000 Days Matter: A Look Inside the Brain
- ILABS Module 9: Sharing Attention During Early Childhood
- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Knowledge and Skills to Help Children Heal
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Youth Missing From Care for Caregivers

### JUNE TRAININGS IN REGION 4: KING COUNTY

- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- DLR/CPS Allegations: An Overview of the Investigative Process for Caregivers
- Healthy Engagement With Children of Trauma
- ILABS Module 6: Language Development: Learning the Sounds of Language
- ILABS Module 10: Language Development: From Listening to Speaking
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Partners Make Better Decisions: Caregivers and Social Workers Working Together
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Why Children Lie



## Caregiver Training from the Alliance continued

### JUNE TRAININGS IN REGION 5: PIERCE AND KITSAP COUNTIES

- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Chaos to Calm: Promoting Attachment in Out-of-Home Care
- Fostering Children and Youth Through Transition, Grief, and Loss: Helping Children With Their Feelings
- ILABS Module 5: Understanding Emotions
- ILABS Module 7: Development of Attachment
- ILABS Module 8: Attachment in Practice
- ILABS Module 12: Temperament in Early Childhood
- ILABS Module 15: Early Music Experience
- ILABS Module 17: Development of Literacy
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

### JUNE TRAININGS IN REGION 6: I-5 CORRIDOR SOUTH OF PIERCE COUNTY TO CLARK COUNTY + OLYMPIA PENINSULA

- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma: A Workshop for Resource Parents From the National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- Kinship 101
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Talking With Children About Race
- Understanding and Managing Caregivers Own Emotions and Self Care

## Caregiver Education and Training Administrator

Michael Tyers . . . . . 425-268-9375 [tyersm@uw.edu](mailto:tyersm@uw.edu)

## Your Child Welfare Training Team for Regions 1 and 2

### Eastern Washington

Kebbie Green . . . . . 509-362-1336 [kgreen10@uw.edu](mailto:kgreen10@uw.edu)

Patty Orona . . . . . 509-834-8535 [po5@uw.edu](mailto:po5@uw.edu)

Ryan Krueger . . . . . 509-660-0350 [krry300@uw.edu](mailto:krry300@uw.edu)

Sherry Colomb . . . . . 509-322-2552 [scolomb1@uw.edu](mailto:scolomb1@uw.edu)

## Your Child Welfare Training Team Regions 3 and 4

### King County and North to Whatcom County and Island County

Joan Sager . . . . . 360-594-6744 [sagerj2@uw.edu](mailto:sagerj2@uw.edu)

El-Freda Stephenson . . . . 206-923-4922 [elfreda@uw.edu](mailto:elfreda@uw.edu)

Gracia Hahn . . . . . 253-983-6362 [hahng@uw.edu](mailto:hahng@uw.edu)

## Your Child Welfare Training Team for Regions 5 and 6

### Pierce County & South to Clark County plus the Olympic Peninsula & Coast

Penny Michel . . . . . 360-725-6788 [mpen300@uw.edu](mailto:mpen300@uw.edu)

Stephanie Rodrigues . . . . 206-321-1721 [steph75@uw.edu](mailto:steph75@uw.edu)

Shelby Russell-Hays . . . . 253-222-2371 [shha@uw.edu](mailto:shha@uw.edu)

Linda Soltero . . . . . 425-830-1172 [lfrago@uw.edu](mailto:lfrago@uw.edu)

## Your Registration Help Desk

Registration Help . . . . . 866-577-1915 [help@acwe.on.spiceworks.com](mailto:help@acwe.on.spiceworks.com)

**Join us on Social Media for inspiration, tips, trainings,  
the latest events and to be part of a caregiver community**



# Meet Our Recruitment Partners Who Support You



**Fostering Together supports the west side of the state (Regions 3, 4, 5, and 6) through foster care Liaisons.**

Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) works in partnership with two separate agencies to provide foster parent recruitment and retention / support services to prospective foster parents, current foster parents and relative caregivers in all areas of Washington. Our goals are to:

- Increase the numbers of safe, quality foster families to meet the diverse needs of children and youth placed in out-of-home care in Washington State, and
- Offer support to foster parents and relative caregivers

Prospective foster parents are welcome to license through either DCYF's, Children, Youth and Families – Licensing Division (DCYF-LD), or any private child placing agency licensed in Washington. Our recruitment partners serve all families, regardless of where they choose to become licensed. Prospective foster parents are welcome to license through either DCYF's, DCYF-LD, or any private child placing agency licensed in Washington. Our recruitment partners serve all families, regardless of where they choose to become licensed.

The Liaisons or Resource Peer Mentors (RPMs) provide information, help and guidance for you from your first inquiry, through training, and throughout the licensing process to become foster parents. Liaisons and RPMs both answer questions and share helpful information during your foster care journey. They offer:

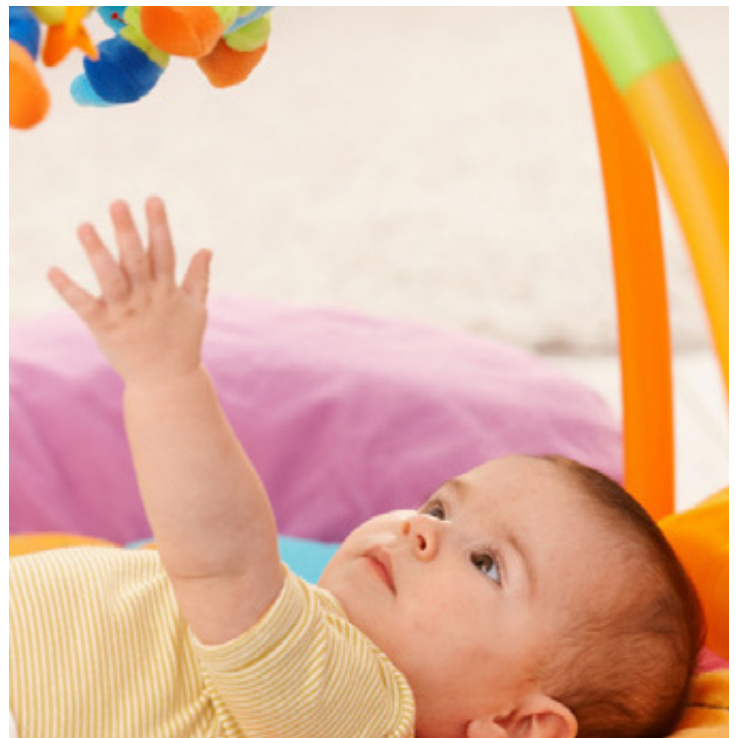
- Support at your first placement,
- Support groups , (some with training hours available and some provide a meal and / or child care)
- Mentoring,
- Training, and
- On-line Facebook groups



**Fostering Washington supports (Region 1 and 2) the east side of the state through Resource Peer Mentors (RPMs).**

All supports are designed with our caregivers in mind.

We want to help you connect with other caregivers, obtain additional training, and find answers to questions. Both Fostering Together and Fostering WA offer information and referral services to foster parents and relative caregivers. The regional liaisons or peer mentors also help resolve issues foster parents may experience in their local area. Contact the liaison or RPM listed for your area with any questions you might have.



# Fostering Washington



Position/ Area Covered	Name	E-mail	Phone
Director All Counties	Kim Fordham	kfordham@ewu.edu	(208)-659-7401
Recruitment Coordinator Asotin, Ferry, Garfield, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Whitman Counties	Amber Sherman	asherman4@ewu.edu	(509) 359-0874
Recruitment Coordinator Benton, Columbia, Franklin, Kittitas, Klickitat, Yakima, Walla Walla, Counties	Tyann Whitworth	twhitworth@ewu.edu	(509) 731-2060
Recruitment Coordinator Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Okanogan Counties	Hayley Stoebner	hstoebner@ewu.edu	(509) 322-1191
FIRST Program Manager All Counties	Dru Powers	Dpowers8@ewu.edu	(509) 928-6697

Fostering Washington's website [www.fosteringwa.org](http://www.fosteringwa.org) can help you locate your local foster parent

Resource Peer Mentor (RPM) from the county map on their website.

Click on: → *Find your mentor*

**Fostering Together:**  
**1-866-958-KIDS (5437)**



Name	Region	E-mail	Phone
Shala Crow	3 and 4	<a href="mailto:shala-crow@olivecrest.org">shala-crow@olivecrest.org</a>	(360) 220-3785
Leeann Marshal	5 and 6	<a href="mailto:leeann-marshel@olivecrest.org">leeann-marshel@olivecrest.org</a>	(360) 909-0421

Fostering Together's website [fosteringtogether.org](http://fosteringtogether.org) can help you locate your local foster parent liaison.

Click on: → *About Us* → *Find Your Liaison*