

OCTOBER 2018

Caregiver Connection

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

Social Media—A Way for Caregivers to Receive and Share Support

As the world becomes more connected electronically, parents in the caregiving community have linked through social media sites such as Facebook and Instagram.

“It’s part of our culture now,” said Mike Canfield, executive director of the Foster Parents Association of Washington State (FPAWS). “It’s a way to educate.”

FPAWS uses Facebook pages, as do the two agencies contracted by the state to provide recruitment and support activities: Fostering Together serves Western Washington and Fostering Washington supports those in Eastern Washington. The Alliance, which provides caregiver training for the state, uses Facebook,

Instagram, LinkedIn and Pinterest to share information with caregivers.

According to Jean Brownell, caregiver curriculum developer and social media lead for the Alliance, the increased social media presence “has led to a lot of response. Caregivers are looking for support and community. Sometimes it can feel like no one understands the work they’re doing. Since we built our social media presence we hear from caregivers all the time and can help them identify trainings that might help with specific issues they are seeing in their home. Plus, we share parenting hacks, little tips from other caregivers or from experts in parenting children who have experienced trauma. We get to be the

cheerleaders for our caregivers and show them that we see the work they’re doing and how much it matters.”

“I think they are more valuable than the (in-person) support groups,” said Shala Crow, program director for Fostering Together, which manages more than 20 individual Facebook pages. The organization has pages for each geographic area it serves and other pages targeted to specific groups, such as caregivers for LGBTQ youth and medically fragile youth. It just started a Facebook page for kinship caregivers who are taking care of children in state custody.

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Support for Caregivers is Expanding

The support network for foster parents and kinship caregivers caring for children in state custody has grown in recent years.

October’s Caregiver Connection highlights ways it has developed including the growth of social media sites that support caregivers. We also would like to introduce you to the new Department of Children, Youth, and Families’ Caregiver Recruitment, Retention, and Support Program Manager Holly Luna.

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for Child Welfare Excellence

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Children’s Administration



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Children, Youth, and Families

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“We know how complicated and complex (child welfare) is because it involves human beings,” he said. “All who use those pages need to remember that.”

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“They are way more beneficial for activities like setting up play dates and getting more mentorship,” Crow said of the social media pages.

Kim Fordham, director of Fostering Washington, says the group also manages multiple pages including one aimed at recruitment and three others that branch off from it. She said they can be very valuable in targeting specific groups or geographic areas for recruitment efforts.

Describing them as “a forum to talk over things,” she added, “We’re using (social media) more and more all the time.” But, she emphasized that actual support groups and the person-to-person contact they provide are highly important.

“Technology is not going to be that person,” she said of face-to-face interaction.

Both Shala and Mike said their organizations’ Facebook pages are valuable for exchanging information. A foster parent may have a question about an issue and post it on Facebook. That will bring forth advice from other foster parents who have faced a similar issue, Shala said.

“Another caregiver will step up and answer a question before we even have a chance to do it, so we just move on,” Shala said.

“I see people looking for advice,” Mike agreed.

He cautioned, however, that information has to be dispensed carefully.

“It’s a double-edged sword,” he said of information. “It has to be carefully monitored to assure it is correct.”

Shala and Kim said they also monitor advice and information dispensed. They have people with eyes on the pages all day, every day to make sure anything inappropriate is removed.

Something else they watch for are people venting on the pages, especially about specific cases. “It can be harmful,” Mike said. While specific situations faced by caregivers can be frustrating, ranting is not constructive.

“We know how complicated and complex (child welfare) is because it involves human beings,” he said. “All who use those pages need to remember that.”

In addition to exchanging information and advice, Facebook pages are proving useful in reaching out for respite care or finding a home for a child. The Department of Children, Youth, and Families uses Facebook pages to find homes when respite or a placement is being sought. Foster parents also post respite requests on the pages.

Membership on some of the pages is limited and confidentiality is stressed. For instance, members are asked not to use the names of children in their care. Use of pictures of youth in care are acceptable as long as the child is not identified by name.

Used wisely and monitored closely, these pages are helping to create a community of people helping each other.

“They are a great resource,” Shala said.

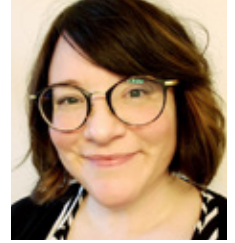
Fostering Together
www.fosteringtogether.org

Fostering Washington
sites.ewu.edu/fosteringwa/

Foster Parents Association of Washington State
www.fpaws.org

The Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence
allianceforchildwelfare.org/

Meet Holly Luna, New Program Manager for Caregiver Recruitment, Retention, and Support



"I feel deeply about people being heard in this work."

Recruiting and supporting foster parents is meaningful work that is constant by nature. The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) contracts with two agencies that have staff stationed across the state to accomplish it – to say nothing of the child placing agencies and DCYF staff who work in the field.

But inside the agency, Holly Luna has just begun her duties of working with the caregiver and child welfare community. She says her job is two-fold; first, Luna states that she needs to partner with the recruitment and retention contractors to keep current recruitment efforts running and to consider additional ways we can encourage people to become foster parents. On the other hand, Luna also feels it is her responsibility to build relationships and teamwork so the networks of support already developed will grow and respond to the emerging needs of caregivers. In mid-September, Holly took over for Meri Waterhouse, who retired, as the DCYF program manager for foster parent recruitment and retention.

Along with her background in child welfare, Holly brings a passion to the work that speaks to inclusion and partnership.

"I feel deeply about people being heard in this work," said Luna.

"I know this may sound idealistic, but I believe our relationships with each other can change the world."

She says she sees foster parents as invaluable and as strong allies in the work of child welfare.

"I think the work of foster parenting is just incredible," she said.

Her job, with its many facets, will give her many opportunities to create those partnerships and relationships.

She oversees contracts with the two recruitment and retention agencies and the agency that handles questionnaires from potential foster parents. She will take over the We Are Family Day partnership with the Mariners, launched by Waterhouse. She is liaison to Camp to Belong Washington, works with those producing the Caregiver Connection,

and helps oversee the consultation team between foster parents and DCYF leaders, among her other duties.

Holly, a 2001 graduate of the University of Washington, has had a variety of jobs that have put her in direct contact with caregivers, youth in care and birth families. "I learned what kids need from caregivers and what caregivers need from us. I was able to see how our relationships with each other strengthen our work and help transform lives," she said.

Holly joined DCYF in 2013 and most recently served as the Permanency Planning Program Manager. She lives in Pierce County with her spouse and seven-year-old twins.

"Our job is to provide a platform for our clients' voice. They have to have a voice and authentic opportunities to be a part of the child welfare team, or we've lost our way in this work. We are better together."

Holly can be reached at 360-902-8035 or holly.luna@dcyf.wa.org

New Online Caregiver Core Training Offers Greater Flexibility

Training for potential caregivers has come into the electronic age.

Beginning late last month, the Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence, which is responsible for caregiver training in the state, created a version of the Caregiver Core Training (CCT) for potential caregivers that can be completed online.

The work to create the online training was done by the Alliance in partnership with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF).

"DCYF heard your request for more flexible trainings, and we responded with the new online CCT," said Krissy Wright, program manager for the DCYF's Licensing Division. "This training allows foster parent applicants a flexible training that will move at their own pace."

"The Legislature said CCT should be online as much as practical," said Erik Applebee, interim associate director of learning and development for the Alliance.



Erik Applebee, Interim Associate Director, Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence

Alliance
for Child Welfare Excellence

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Caregiver Core Training continued

He said the new online training offers a real benefit to many potential caregivers who might find it hard to get to in-person trainings because of travel, child care and other issues.

“It can be hard to travel, especially in more rural areas,” he said. “This is designed to help overcome those barriers.”

Caregivers learn in eight three-hour training sessions, plus do a field experience, such as attending a court hearing or attending a support group.

The trainings have become “more caregiver-driven,” he said.

And the online training uses the “genuine voices” of people who have been affected by the system – former foster youth, current foster and adoptive parents and veteran parents who have been through the system and reunified or had their parental rights terminated - who are highlighted throughout each of the sessions. As they tell vignettes of real-life experiences they have had, “the amazing and beautiful struggles they have gone through” – they humanize the experience for potential caregivers.

“It’s not just a Power Point with a voiceover,” Applebee said. “It’s not just theoretical. It’s something different when you listen to people who have been there.”

He added, “Hearing the experiences of a young person, it’s powerful. Everyone’s that kid.”

While real advantages exist to being part of a group that is going through in-person training together, through online training you do have a group of “online classmates,” Applebee said.

Even after going through the online training, participants talk to an Alliance trainer during a coaching session to make sure they have learned the skills taught, such as those about discipline, Applebee said. The trainer will also provide them with information about other resources, such as support groups for Fostering Together and Fostering Washington, contracted with the state to support foster parents and kinship caregivers with children in state custody.

It is those two groups of caregivers the training is designed to teach. But currently licensed foster parents and relative

caregivers can also go online and take any of the CCT training sessions, Applebee said.

“They can come back at any time,” he said. “They can use it as a resource going forward.”

He anticipates about 25 percent of potential caregivers initially will take CCT online, but the number may grow as caregivers see the benefits of being able to fit the training into their own life schedules.

But, he stressed, “classroom trainings are not going away,” because they have proven benefits also. And a greater use of webinars is also planned.

The Alliance wants to provide the trainings in ways that will work for the diverse group of people who need them.

Applicants for the online CCT training must complete the whole training within 12 months of starting it.

To check out the online CCT, go to allianceforchildwelfare.org/project/sign-now-caregiver-core-training-online

Here is a description of the training sessions:

The 24-hour Caregiver Core Training is composed of eight sessions, each three hours long, plus a field experience.

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

SESSION 2: WORKING AS A MEMBER OF A TEAM

SESSION 3: WORKING WITH BIRTH FAMILIES

SESSION 4: CULTURAL CONNECTIONS AND ADVOCACY

SESSION 5: GROWING UP WITH TRAUMA, GRIEF, AND LOSS

SESSION 6: UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING BEHAVIOR

SESSION 7: COMMUNICATION AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

SESSION 8: GETTING READY, AND THE EFFECTS ON THE CAREGIVING FAMILY

Field experience: Participants learn outside the classroom by choosing an activity that will give them more awareness of the experience of children within the system or of the role of a caregiver for children in the system.

Coaching Session: After completing the eight sessions and the field experience, participants meet with a trainer by phone or video chat for a review of the material and support around any remaining questions. The session will include a focus on the material covering discipline, cultural awareness, and supports and resources.

Need Answers? Try the Department of Children, Youth, and Families' Foster Parenting and Kinship Care Webpage

A great one-stop location for information for foster parents or kinship caregivers with a child in state custody is the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) dcyf.wa.gov/services/foster-parenting

Among the many user-friendly features on this page is an employee directory for all DCYF staff members. The directory contains contact information for caseworkers and supervisors. Links to forms, training requirements, crisis line contact information, information about the contracted recruitment and retention staff, frequently asked questions, parenting resources, the latest DCYF news, links to past issues of the Caregiver Connection and much more.

As an example, another resource that caregivers can access is the "Caregivers Communication Guide" to find information about who to call when they need help of a specific nature. Here's a sample:

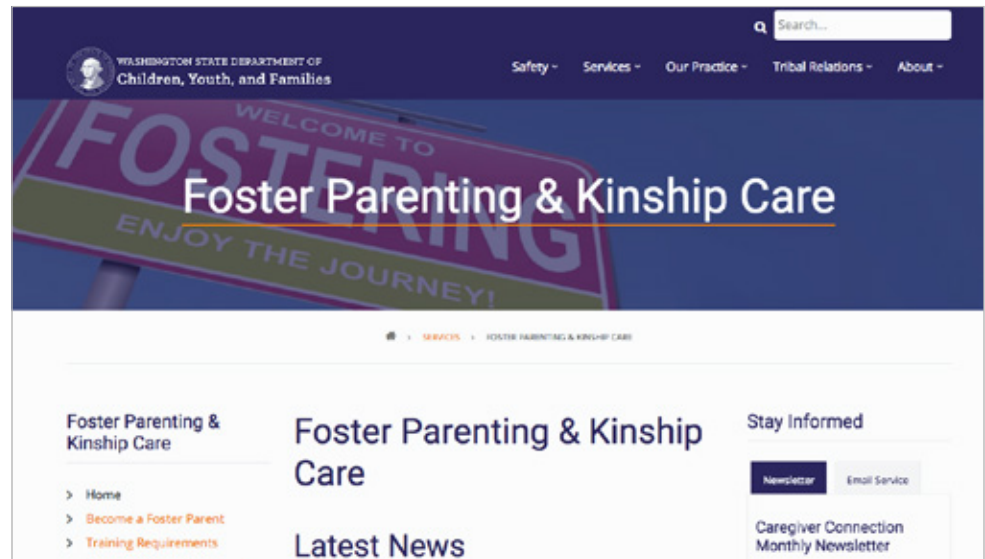
When I need help, I should...

Call the child's worker if you have a question or concern about the child in your care.

Call your foster care licenser if your concern is related to your foster care license. If he/she is unavailable, leave a message. Here is the link for the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) staff directories: fortress.wa.gov/dshs/ca/employeedirectory.

Urgent calls

If you are unable to reach the worker and the call is urgent, and you must speak with someone immediately, press "0" to have your call redirected. Ask to



speak with the worker's supervisor. If he/she is not available, ask to speak to the supervisor of the day. Tell the staff member that this is an urgent call about a child in care.

If you don't hear back from the worker or if you disagree with the response, you may call the supervisor. If he/she is unavailable, leave a message.

If you don't hear back from the supervisor or if you disagree with the response, you may contact the area administrator. If he/she is unavailable, leave a message.

If you don't hear back from the area administrator or if you disagree with the response, you may contact the DCYF Deputy Regional Administrator (or the deputy administrator for the Licensing Division (LD) of the department. If he/she is unavailable, leave a message.

If you don't hear back from the DCYF Deputy Regional Administrator

or LD Deputy Administrator or if you don't understand, or disagree with the response, then contact the DCYF Regional Administrator / LD Administrator. If he/she is unavailable, leave a message.

Every effort is made to return your call in a timely manner. Please give us 48 business hours to respond.

If I still disagree...

Contact the DCYF Office of Constituent Relations by phone, email or letter: 1-800-723-4831 or 360-902-8060; ConstRelations@dcyf.wa.gov; Constituent Relations, PO Box 45710 Olympia, WA 98504-5710.

You also can contact the Office of the Family & Children's Ombuds to express your concern. The Ombuds' contact information is 1-800-571-7321 or fortress.wa.gov/es/ofcoform/.



Kinship Korner – Becoming a Licensed Foster Parent

The Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF, formerly Children's Administration) is on a mission to license more kinship caregivers. The mission begins with helping our kinship caregivers understand the licensing process and its benefits.

Kinship caregivers caring for children with child welfare cases are highly encouraged to become licensed foster parents.

The monthly foster care reimbursement is the largest source of ongoing financial support available for kinship caregivers. This reimbursement is a minimum of \$573 per month per child. This is far larger than the Child-Only TANF grant available to unlicensed caregivers. The classes required for licensing, Caregiver Core Training, are offered online and in-person. They use the voices of foster youth and experienced caregivers to provide important information about the system. Training is also a way to connect

with others who are caring for a child in state care. These classes clarify the role of caregivers, caseworkers, the court and others in the complicated child welfare system. They also explain how the system works and connect caregivers to resources that can assist them throughout the life of a case.

Both licensed and unlicensed caregivers have monthly visits from caseworkers and must follow case and visitation plans. Cases with court involvement can last for months and longer, so remaining unlicensed does not shorten or lessen state involvement. Becoming licensed can actually provide additional financial resources.

Help is available with the process of becoming licensed! Call 1-888-543-7414 to get started. You will receive a response within 48 hours. You can also contact one of our recruitment and retention partners who serve kinship and foster parents and can assist with the licensing process.

Here are those contacts:

Fostering Washington in Eastern Washington:

- Recruitment Coordinator
Amber Sherman
(509) 359-0874, asherman4@ewu.edu
- Recruitment Coordinator
Hayley Stoebner
(509) 322-1191, hstoebner@ewu.edu

Fostering Together in Western Washington:

- Program Director and Regions 3 and 4 Program Supervisor
Shala Crow
(360) 220-3785,
shala-crow@olivecrest.org
- Regions 5 and 6 Program Supervisor
Leeann Marshal
(360) 909-0421,
leeann-marshel@olivecrest.org

Parent-Child Visits: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Parent-child visits keep children and parents connected when children have to be placed out of their home. For caregivers, visitation has numerous impacts. Here's what you need to know about visits and how you can help support families served by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF).

Let's start with the basics. What is visitation?

When children must be removed from their home to keep them safe, visits provide an opportunity for families to safely spend time and maintain their bonds to each other. Visits can occur in different settings, with or without supervision, and schedules and times may vary. Some visits are facilitated by a visit service provider, while others may be supported by a foster parent, kinship caregiver or another approved adult.

Did you know?

Visits are a statutory right of families including children and parents in Washington.

Based on data from the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), as many as 8,500 visits occur each week.

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When do visits happen?

Department policy requires efforts to be made so that visits occur within 72 hours and no later than five days after a child is placed in out-of-home care.

Policy requires that a visit plan is to be developed at the first Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) meeting or at the time a Voluntary Placement Agreement is signed. Sometimes, the initial visit plan may be ordered by the court. Subsequent visit plans are reviewed at shared planning meetings and shared with the court. A judicial officer will determine whether or not to stick with the department's recommendation or the judge or commissioner may order visits that differ from the department's recommendation. However, all visit plans will specify how often visits will occur and how long each visit will be.

Where do visits happen?

Visits can happen almost anywhere.

The department's visitation policy requires that visits are "in the least restrictive setting" necessary to ensure the child's safety and with consideration given to the family's culture. Visits should also be in the child's community whenever possible. When it is safe, visits are the most beneficial and supportive when they are in a location that is familiar to the child and parents. This helps normalize the family's time and supports parents in using parenting strategies that they would use upon reunification.

What are supervised, monitored and unsupervised visits?

These terms refer to the level of supervision which is based on safety, risk, and parent's protective qualities. In an unsupervised visit, the child's parent(s) are fully responsible for the child's care and safety. In a monitored visit, another adult is available and checks in on the family at intervals determined by the caseworker. Supervised visits are used when another person must be present to ensure the child is safe. In a supervised visit, the adult supervising the visit must be able to see and hear all interactions between the child and parent.

Why are visits important? Why are they a "right"?

Visits are important for many reasons.

Some of the most significant reasons are that visits help:

- ➔ Ease children's fears and worries for their parent during separation.
- ➔ Maintain family relationships and a sense of belonging.
- ➔ Support permanency planning and have a strong tie to shorter timeframes in out-of-home care.

Visits can be an emotionally complex experience for caregivers, children and parents. Before and after visits, children may behave in unusual ways.

In these scenarios, children are frequently responding to the experience or feeling of being reunified with their parent and then separated again at the end of the visit. However, this does not mean that a lack of visits is a good thing either. The feelings are frequently normal reactions to experiences that may feel abnormal.

Caregivers and Visits

As a caregiver, you play an important role with visits.

The visitation policy directs us to develop visit plans in consultation with caregivers and to review any recommended changes to the plan with caregivers. It is also likely that you may be asked what role you would like to play in visits.

Caseworkers may ask if you can help with transportation or supervision. In some instances, you may be asked if you would be willing to have visits at your home.

There are two primary reasons that we ask caregivers to be involved in visits.

First, it supports children. It is incredibly beneficial for a child to see their caregiver and their parent(s) getting along. It also provides continuity of relationships and a familiar, comforting presence.

The other reason is that the department is obligated to explore other community resources, relatives, foster parents and other appropriate people.

If you have concerns about the visit plan, a child's behavior before and after visits, or what occurs during the visits, contact the child's caseworker.

Here are some ways that you can support your foster child:

- ➔ Share a notebook with the parent. Write down notes about how the child is doing, including accomplishments and new activities. Ask the birth or legal parent questions about the child's favorite activities or bedtime routine. Share artwork or photos.
- ➔ Reassure the child that their parent loves and cares about them. Even if you have a strained relationship with the birth or legal parent, avoid negative comments about them at all costs.
- ➔ Consider whether or not you could help with transportation or extra contacts outside of regular visits. Could the parent attend an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting at the child's school, a doctor appointment or an extracurricular or cultural activity? Discuss your feelings and interest with the child's caseworker.
- ➔ Provide a visit pack. Load a backpack or bag with a favorite stuffed animal, book, snack or game that the child and parent can use at the visit. This works best when the caseworker and birth or legal parent are aware that you will be doing so.
- ➔ Develop a visit routine. You can help prepare your foster child for visits by singing a song, reading a book or playing a game before and after visits. If your foster child struggles with visits, it may be helpful to create some "protected time" after the visits – time to process what went on at the visits.

New Federal Foster Home Licensing Rules Proposed

National standards for the licensing of foster families are being proposed by the federal government under the new Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), signed into law in 2018.

While feedback from individual states is still being processed on the draft policy proposals, the federal policies are scheduled to go into effect on April 1, 2019.

Krissy Wright, Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), licensing division program manager, said many of the proposed changes line up with already existing state rules for foster home licensing.

But, she said during a webinar explaining the possible changes, “some will greatly impact foster parents.” She has made a chart showing how the various proposed federal policies will affect foster parents in Washington. See it at bit.ly/2xS2Wqd.

Among the major changes:

Immunizations

Current state standards are not as restrictive as the proposed federal standard.

“DLR currently allows for religious, philosophical, personal and medical exemptions, as do the schools. This new requirement would no longer allow for those exemptions. The only exemption allowed is if the vaccine is “contrary to a child’s health.” The immunization rule applies to all children in the household.

“If this change is approved by the federal government, this will be a major change for Washington,” said Krissy.

Caring for more children than an individual foster care license allows (called “overcapacity”)

“We allow (overcapacities) for families that have demonstrated exceptional abilities to meet the needs of children, and this would no longer be allowed. The only exceptions are for siblings, to allow a child to remain with a family that they have an established relationship with, or for foster parents that are skilled and trained to meet the specific need of a child with a severe disability.”

Pools

“Moderate...revision requiring barrier (fencing) on all sides of a pool; no longer allowing a 4-foot pool wall to count as a barrier. “We believe this would mean fences around every pool or fences around pool areas, but we are asking for clarification from our federal partners on this,” Krissy said.

Gun storage

Previously, state code required guns and ammunition to be stored separately. Those rules were changed in 2016 to allow guns and ammunition to be stored together in a gun safe. The new federal requirements would again require guns and ammunition to be stored separately. “We are unclear at this time how this will be handled if this were to pass, but there may be waivers done for law enforcement,” Krissy said.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

The proposed federal standard requires a carbon monoxide detector on each level of occupancy, and one near all sleeping areas. This would be a new requirement for all licensed homes in the state, although most new homes already meet this requirement, as it is state code, she said.

Smoking

Smoking would not be allowed in any vehicle used to transport children or in the presence of a foster child. This is more stringent than current state standards, Krissy said.

Transporting children

The federal standard “requires a driver to have registration, and only adults in the home having a driving record in ‘good standing’ transport the child. This would be a major change, as many families rely on natural supports such as friends and relatives to get their foster children to and from activities. We really don’t think this was the intent of the federal proposed standards and we have asked for clarification on this issue. Also, the definition of “good standing” also has to be clarified by the federal government, Krissy said.

Communication

Revisions will be needed to meet the standard that “applicants must be able to communicate with a child in the child’s own language and must be able to communicate with the (child welfare) agency, health care providers and other service providers.”

Krissy stressed that no changes have been made yet and state foster parents likely won’t see an overwhelming change in the day-to-day care of children.

“Washington hit the mark on a lot of the rules being proposed and I think we’re ahead of the game.”

Parent-Child Visits continued

→ Be cautious about asking the child for too many details about the visit. Children may struggle with feelings of allegiance toward their parents after a visit.

If you would like more information,

- Review RCW 13.34.136
- Check out “Caregiver Tip Sheet: Successful Parent Child Visits” (DSHS 22-1714)

→ Familiarize yourself with DCYF’s Parent, Child, Sibling and Relative Visits policy here: bit.ly/2QmTX7s

It May Seem Early, but It's Time for Some Holiday Magic

The Holiday Magic program, which provides gifts to children and youth in care during the holiday season, will continue this year! Holiday Magic, a decades old program, is a collaboration between the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) and Treehouse, a non-profit based in Seattle.

"I think we will have another successful year," said DCYF program manager Meri Waterhouse who, until her recent retirement, oversaw the contract with Treehouse to operate the program.

Last year, more than 5,000 young people across the state received a new, significant gift through Holiday Magic. Those eligible include children in foster care (both those in-state and those placed out-of-state) and children in the custody of the state who are living with relatives.

"That [5,000 number] has been the trend" for many years now, said Christopher Nix, Holiday Magic program assistant for Treehouse.

"We're going to try to go more digital this year," Nix said of the logistics.

The process begins early this month with an email notification to caregivers of children and youth eligible for a gift.

The e-mail will indicate how to register for the program. Emails will be sent starting when registration opens in October all the way through until it closes on Nov. 23.

"Our goal is to capture as many online registrations as possible," said Nix. These kinds of emails sometimes get caught in the recipient's junk folder, so if you do not see a Holiday Magic email in your inbox, you should look in your spam folder," he said.



Photo by Adam Tarwacki on Unsplash

"The process of filling out the registration and selecting a gift can be done in about 15 minutes," Meri said. Letters via regular mail will also be coming to caregivers near the end of October for those who have not yet responded electronically.

Each caregiver can select their top choice from the gift list for each foster child in their care, as well as a second choice, in case any items run out of stock. Gifts will be mailed between mid-November and mid-December to the mailing address provided when gifts are chosen.

Meri said the information will be pulled from DCYF's FamLink database several times during the Holiday Magic season. This helps to ensure the most accurate and updated information about kids

entering care or who may have moved is available. She had a piece of advice for caregivers signing up for a gift.

"Caregivers need to select a gift as soon as possible. Shipping can be an issue," especially toward the end of the holiday season."

Caregivers with questions about the program should contact the child's caseworker, Meri said.

For further information, visit: treehouseforkids.org/our-services/holiday-magic/

October is National Bullying Prevention Month

Bullying happens more often than adults think and much of it happens quietly online. Kids might not talk about it, and when they do, they may only tell part of the story (Source: pacer.org/bullying). Victims of bullying are likely to suffer from depression, feel lonely and have low self-esteem and other behavioral health struggles.

Photo by Andrik Langfield on Unsplash

What can you do to help?

Be aware of signs that a child is being bullied. Are they reluctant to interact with certain children?

Are they unwilling to go to school or out to play?

Connect your children with peers in the neighborhood so they have friends at school. They will feel more comfortable and less likely to become a victim of bullies.

- Ask the schools to provide good anti-bullying programs.
- If a child in foster care is the bully, make sure he or she gets counseling or another intervention.
- If a child is being bullied, ask for help in school or provide assertiveness training.
- Consider what could make children the target for bullying: poor hygiene, unstylish clothing, trouble interpreting social cues or special education needs, for instance.

When it comes specifically to cyberbullying, here are some suggestions.

- Make sure you are discussing social media facts with children/youth.
- Be as aware as you can of all the websites your children visit. Monitor their activity as much as possible.
- Establish and review cell phone rules with children regularly.
- Discuss values and general principles with children regarding all electronic communications (Source: embracetfc.com/bullying-blog).

Check out Coordinated Care's free book for children and caregivers about bullying: bit.ly/2It6KCs.

Tips for minimizing exposure to the flu



November Honors Adoptive Families

November 16th in Washington State has been identified as National Adoption Day. This day is set aside to celebrate and honor both individual adoption stories and the teams who support children, youth and families through the child welfare system leading to an adoption.

The following information is provided by Washington's Administrative Office of the Courts.

"National Adoption Day was founded in 2000 by a coalition of child welfare organizations and businesses working to improve the lives of foster children. The coalition wanted to celebrate adoptive families and also highlight the thousands of foster children across the United States waiting for new families. The goal is to spread the word that these children need homes."

Historically, this celebration has occurred for a number of years. National Adoption Day is sponsored by Department of Children, Youth, and Families, Administrative Office of the Court, Court Appointed Special Advocate, Foster Parent Association as well as many local and regional groups and businesses. Every year the Governor provides a proclamation for this day.

While November 16th is when we observe National Adoption Day in Washington State, you can celebrate all month long! The Children's Bureau within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services sponsors National Adoption Month.

How you can help

Everyone can be part of National Adoption Day and National Adoption Month.

Members of the public can attend some ceremonies, write letters to the newspapers and spread the word to family, friends and co-workers that foster children are in need of placement to call home.

You will hear more about National Adoption Day celebrations and adoption stories in the November edition of the Caregiver Connection.



"POUCH TIPS" TO KEEP YOU FROM THE FLU!



DARBY BOINGEE



THE FLU IS:
A VERY CONTAGIOUS SICKNESS THAT ATTACKS THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM.

BLINK-EYE



A VACCINE IS:
A SPECIAL TYPE OF SUBSTANCE THAT GOES INTO THE BODY TO HELP IT LEARN TO FIGHT INFECTIONS.

VILL-EYE



A FLU VACCINE FACT:
THE FLU VACCINE WILL NOT GIVE YOU THE FLU.

**SET YOUR FLU VACCINE!
ASK YOUR PARENTS TO CALL YOUR DOCTOR!**



Join the Healthy Kids Club at
coordinatedcarehealth.com/healthykidsclub

THIS IS A FRIENDLY DEMONDO FROM

coordinated care

What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and what do they mean for children and youth in foster care?

Traumatic events and experiences in childhood can have lifelong physical and emotional affects. A study called Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) looks at the relationship between some of these experiences and longer-term outcomes. ACEs fall into three groups: abuse, neglect and family/household challenges. The study found that ACEs are linked to risky health behaviors, chronic health conditions and early death (Source: cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/index.html).

Each adverse experience is counted as part of a score on the ACEs scale. ACE scores go up when children are removed from their family, so children in foster care are more likely to have higher scores. They also rise when children have to adjust to new surroundings. Safe, stable, caring relationships and environments may prevent poor outcomes for children and youth in foster care, helping them reach their full potential.

Celebrating the Circle of Life, Dia de los Muertos-style

by Deanna Partlow



Halloween, celebrated on October 31st, is a wildly popular holiday for kids across the country. Halloween has roots that include Christian, Celtic, and Roman traditions. From Mexico to Brazil, many communities in Latin America, Mexican Americans, Latinos, and others celebrate Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead).

Dia de los Muertos is a celebration and time to remember family members and friends. It is not intended to frighten children; rather, the holiday encourages people to view death as a natural part of life and creates a time to reconnect with loved ones who have passed away. Depending on the community, Dia de los Muertos celebrations may begin as early as October 28th, but many observe and wrap-up their celebrations on November 2nd. Families frequently make a small altar or ofrenda. The beautifully decorated ofrendas usually include candles, marigolds (known as “the flowers of the dead”), mementos, photos, and favorite foods and drinks. These remembrances are intended to lure the departed souls to return home and enjoy the altar’s offerings. Families may also gather at churches and cemeteries to clean and decorate the graves of their loved ones, once again encouraging their spirits to return to earth for the day. During these celebrations, stories and anecdotes are told about the lives of those who have died. Far from being morbid or scary, the festival is meant to be an uplifting and joyous way to honor the circle of life.

Parts of the celebration such as calaveras (skulls or sometimes used to refer to clothed or costumed skeletons) and Day of the Dead parades and celebrations are being increasingly popular and common place. While many elements of the festivities are symbolic, the one increasingly visible throughout the country is the decorated sugar “calavera” or skull. Calaveras are believed to have been ancient art forms or items of religious significance and have been found in Mexico and Central America. You may have seen sugar skulls mixed in with Halloween decorations or molds at a craft store or “supermercado” (grocery store). Far from being viewed as morbid, they are considered reminders of the circle of life.

Try making your own calavera!

Here’s what you’ll need: Plastic skulls, one for each “artist.” (I found mine at a dollar store – they’re about 5 inches tall; hobby stores also have skulls in various sizes.) Paintbrushes with a fine tip; acrylic paints and permanent markers in bright colors; glue and/or hot glue; adornments such as glitter, charms, gems, flowers – any small decorative items that will stick to the surface.

How-to:

1. I began by giving my skulls a double-coat of acrylic multi-purpose paint with a matte finish to give the skull a uniform color. You can use any color – they don’t have to be white. (An adult or older child can do this step a day ahead so the paint is dry and the skulls are ready to decorate.)
2. Decorate first with paints and/or markers. If paint is used, you may want to have a blow-dryer handy to speed the drying process.
3. Embellish with a choice of materials.

An entertaining way to help children get more of a feel for the celebration is by watching Disney’s “Coco,” a movie that is a fairly accurate representation of Dia de los Muertos festivities. Another movie option is the “Book of Life”

that features animation by Mexican artist Jorge R.

Gutierrez. You can also go online, where a wealth of material on the festival is available. A particularly good website is the Smithsonian Latino Virtual Museum, latino.si.edu/LVM/DayOfTheDead



Sugar skull decorating in progress.

Bring Your Issues to Consultation Team Members

Since 2007, statewide meetings have brought together caregivers and administrators and managers of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). Within DCYF and the caregiving community, these meetings are frequently referred to as “1624 meetings,” (this number reflects the legislative bill number that created the committee). The meetings include foster parent representatives who are elected for a

two-year term by other caregivers in their region, elected representatives from the Foster Parent Association of Washington State (FPAWS), and DCYF staff who are appointed by agency leadership. If you, as a caregiver, have questions or concerns you would like to have discussed at the meeting, contact a team member from the list included in this issue.

The committee discusses issues of statewide concern to foster parents. The regional members also help set dates for regional consultation meetings so local issues can be discussed.

You can also contact Caregiver Recruitment, Retention, and Support Program Manager Holly Luna at Holly.Luna@dcyf.wa.gov or 360-902-8035.

CA Foster Parent Consultation Team (1624) Foster Parent Regional Representatives 2018

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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.

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

- As They Grow: The Drug Impacted Infant and Toddler
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Caregiving for Children with Physically Aggressive Behavior Concerns
- Chaos to Calm: Promoting Attachment In Out-of-Home Care
- Emotion Coaching
- ILABS Module 3: The Importance of Early Interactions
- ILABS Module 5: Understanding Emotions
- ILABS Module 7: Development of Attachment
- ILABS Module 8: Attachment in Practice
- ILABS Module 9: Sharing Attention During Early Childhood
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Knowledge and Skills to Help Children Heal
- Minimizing the Risk of Allegations
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What?
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Verbal De-escalation

OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER TRAININGS IN REGION 2: SOUTH/CENTRAL EASTERN WASHINGTON

- ABC's of Autism, Behavior, and Coping Strategies
- Bullying: Prevention, and Intervention
- Caregiving for Children with Physically Aggressive Behavior Concerns
- ILAB Module 13: Race Today: What Kids Know As They Grow
- ILAB Module 14: "Racing" Toward Equality: Why Talking To Your Kids About Race Is Good For Everyone
- ILAB Module 15: Early Music Experience
- ILAB Module 16: Foundation of Literacy
- ILAB Module 19: Early STEM Learning
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Minimizing the Risk of Allegations
- Paper Trail
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Verbal De-escalation

Caregiver Training from the Alliance continued

OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER TRAININGS IN REGION 3: I-5 CORRIDOR SNOHOMISH COUNTY TO WHATCOM COUNTY + ISLANDS

- Behavior Management Tools for Foster Parents and Caregivers
- Emotion Coaching
- ILAB Module 2: Why The First 2,000 Days Matter: A Look Inside the Brain
- ILAB Module 5: Understanding Emotions
- Infant Safety and Care
- Introduction to Adoption From Foster Care
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Minimizing the Risk of Allegations
- Parenting the Positive Discipline Way
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER TRAININGS IN REGION 4: KING COUNTY

- African American Hair and Skin Care
- Caregiving for Children with Sexual Behavior Concerns
- Caregiving for Children with Physically Aggressive Behavior Concerns
- Caregiving for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma: A Workshop for Resource Parents from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- Healthy Engagement with Children of Trauma
- Identifying and Supporting Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) for Caregivers
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Kinship 101
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Minimizing the Risk of Allegations
- Paper Trail
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Talking With Children About Race
- Understanding and Managing Caregiver's Own Emotions and Self Care

Caregiver Training from the Alliance continued

OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER TRAININGS IN REGION 5: PIERCE AND KITSAP COUNTIES

- African American Hair and Skin Care
- DLR/CPS Allegations: An Overview of the Investigation Process for Caregivers
- Healthy Engagement With Children of Trauma
- ILAB Module 12: Temperament in Early Childhood
- Introduction to Adoption From Foster Care
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Parenting the Positive Discipline Way
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Verbal De-escalation

OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER TRAININGS IN REGION 6: I-5 CORRIDOR SOUTH OF PIERCE COUNTY TO CLARK COUNTY + OLYMPIA PENINSULA

- African American Hair and Skin Care
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Caregiving for Children with Physically Aggressive Behavior Concerns
- Caregiving for Children with Sexual Behavior Concerns
- Chaos to Calm: Promoting Attachment in Out-of-Home Care
- DLR/CPS Allegations: An Overview of the Investigation Process for Caregivers
- Healthy Engagement with Children of Trauma
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Introduction to Positive Discipline
- Kinship 101
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Verbal De-escalation

Your Child Welfare Training Team for Regions 1 and 2

Eastern Washington

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Ryan Krueger 509-660-0350 krry300@uw.edu

Sherry Colomb 509-322-2552 scolomb1@uw.edu

Your Child Welfare Training Team Regions 3 and 4

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Your Child Welfare Training Team for Regions 5 and 6

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

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Robert Judd 360-344-3003 juddre@uw.edu

Gracia Hahn 253-983-6362 hahng@uw.edu

Your Registration Help Desk

Registration Help 866-577-1915 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



Olive Crest's Fostering Together program 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 CA'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 CA'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.

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:

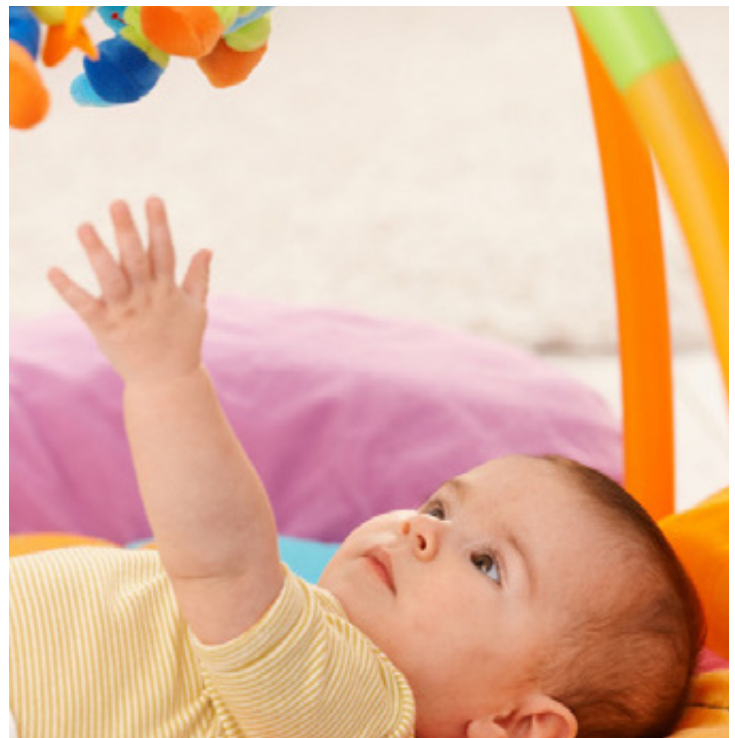
- Support at your first placement,
- Support groups , (some with training hours available and some provide a meal and / or child care)
- Mentoring,
- Training, and
- On-line Facebook groups



Eastern Washington University's Fostering Washington program 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 Olive Crest and Eastern Washington University 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.



Eastern Washington University Fostering Washington

FosteringWA
FOSTER | SERVE | SUPPORT

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 Mngr. All Counties	Dru Powers	Dpowers8@ewu.edu	(509) 928-6697

Fostering Washington's website 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*

Olive Crest's Fostering Together: 1-866-958-KIDS (5437)

**fostering
together**
Our Community...Our Children

Position	Name	E-mail	Phone
Shala Crow	Director	shala-crow@olivecrest.org	(425) 462-1612
Leeann Marshel	Supervisor	leeann-marshel@olivecrest.org	(360) 909 0421
Patrice Vansligtenhorst	Program Coordinator	Patrice-Vansligtenhorst@olivecrest.org	(425) 462-1612 x 1308
Danielle Martin	FIRST Program		(866) 393-6186

Fostering Together's website fosteringtogether.org can help you locate your local foster parent liaison.

Click on: → *Region where you live* → *Find Your Liaison*