

Caregiver Connection

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

February is Black History Month

Black History Month provides a focused opportunity to talk about African American children in the child welfare system. Disproportionality in the child welfare system means that African American children are over-represented (as are Hispanic and Native American children). This means the percentage of the children in foster care who are African American is significantly higher than the general population of African American children in the state. DCYF is focused on addressing this disproportionality as well as recruiting caregivers from the same communities as the children who are in care, to lessen children’s losses of culture and connection.

For Black History Month, we will speak to two experts in caregiving from different parts of the state who bring different perspectives on parenting and caring for African American children, and maintaining their cultural connections.

Trey Rebut, 35, a foster parent and family outreach specialist for AMARA, a King-County-based child welfare agency, said he noticed the contours of the system as he did his work in child welfare.

He saw many African-American kids in the system, so when Trey—who happens to be African-American—became a foster parent, he decided his family would foster African-American children so that they could provide

them a living experience that includes an African American caregiver.

“Culture is the big piece. It’s creating a home and having a family that looks like you and knows your day-to-day struggles,” he said.

But, he added, “You don’t have to be a black parent to raise a black child.”

On the other side of the state, Kebbie Green, a 45-year-old Spokane mom, knows that well.

She is a white woman married to a black man. They are raising 10 black or biracial kids ranging in age from 7 to 27. Kebbie trains others on issues of culture, race and ethnicity for the University of Washington-based Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence.

“It’s a huge learning curve,” she said. “It’s not just about looking different, but also about understanding the cultural differences of someone who did not have the same upbringing.”

Kebbie says you have to step into somebody else’s culture.

“You have to see life – as much as possible – through their eyes. Their perspective of life is very different from yours,” she added.

In her training, Kebbie tries to dispel misunderstandings about the differences between culture, ethnicity and race.



Trey Rebut, AMARA family outreach specialist



Kebbie Green, trainer, Alliance For Child Welfare Excellence

“You have to see life —as much as possible—through their eyes. Their perspective of life is very different from yours.”

—Kebbie Green

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Photo by Dazzle Jam from Pexels

HEROES TO CELEBRATE FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

U.S. gymnast Simone Biles, 21, has won a combined total of 25 Olympic and World Championship medals during her career, making her the most decorated American gymnast and the third most decorated female gymnast in history. Many observers consider her to be the greatest gymnast of all time. Biles and her three siblings are former foster youth.

“People are intensely curious about their ethnicity,” she said. “But in [the United States], many understand race as ethnicity.”

However, “skin color does not define who you are,” says Kebbie.

Still, race is an all-too-common factor in how some people view and judge others. Her husband, a black postal carrier, has had many ugly incidents that she has never experienced because she is white, she said.

She calls racial prejudice “systemic.”

“My family has experienced it. I never have.”

Trey said the concept of white privilege in our society is real: “The foundation of privilege is economics and race. People who are white are going to have a higher level of privilege.”

So how do you raise black children in a society of white privilege – a society that uses race, ethnicity and culture interchangeably?

Trey said caregivers who know that a black child will be raised with respect and is safe in their own home should look around their network of friends to see how their life outside the home might better reflect the children they are raising

“Look at the top 10 people in your life and see if there are ways you can make a network of friends,” he said. “Advocate (for your children) in the schools,” which he said may have an unwelcome atmosphere for children of color.

Kebbie said it’s important for mixed race families to choose their surroundings carefully. Her family moved to a neighborhood next to someone who was constantly making racial remarks. “We moved very quickly.”

A key component for white parents raising children of color is putting yourself in someone else’s shoes, Kebbie said. “It comes down to listening – being able to look at things from someone else’s perspective.”

She also advocates what she calls “courageous conversations” with other people about what it is like to live the life her family lives and confront the biases people have.

While she says, “I can never walk around life in brown skin,” she feels she can do all in her power to make life easier for those who do, especially kids in care.

“They have already been traumatized – they don’t need anything else.”

Celebrating Black History Month with Children

By Deanna Partlow

Black History Month gives us all an opportunity to honor the unique contributions, achievements and roles of the many heroes of history who have not traditionally been celebrated or received recognition.

Here are a few ideas for celebrating Black History Month – but don't limit these activities to February. Keep them going year-round!

Talk with your kids about why you're celebrating the month. Recognize and celebrate achievements, contributions and unique stories while also discussing what injustice, stereotyping and prejudice are and how they affect people's lives.

Attend a Black History Month celebration in your area. Watch for news of special activities and speakers. Many local libraries host speakers and activities.

Visit a museum or other facility featuring an exhibit of art by African American artists. Look for multi-media presentations that weave together history, spoken word and/or photography. If you're in the Seattle area, visit the Northwest African-American Museum (www.naamnw.org/). Until May, there's an exhibition on influential rock musician Jimi Hendrix.

Read kids' books about current and historical figures and events. "Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King" by Doreen Rappaport; illustrated by Bryan Collier.

"Misty Copeland" ("You Should Meet" series) by Laurie Calkhoven; illustrated by Monique Dong.

"The Youngest Marcher: The Story of Audrey Faye Hendricks, a Young Civil Rights Activist" by Cynthia Levinson; illustrated by Vanessa Brantley Newton.

"Henry's Freedom Box" by Ellen Levine; illustrated by Kadir Nelson.

"The Book Itch: Freedom, Truth, and Harlem's Greatest Bookstore" by Vaunda Micheux Nelson; illustrated by R. Gregory Christie.

"When the Beat Was Born: D.J. Kool Herc and the Creation of Hip Hop" by Laban Carrick Hill; illustrated by Theodore Taylor.

"Stealing Home: The Story of Jackie Robinson" by Barry Denenberg.

"Mae Jemison" ("You Should Meet" series), by Laurie Calkhoven; illustrated by Monique Dong.

"Katherine Johnson" ("You Should Meet" series) by Thea Feldman; illustrated by Alyssa Petersen.

"Whoosh! Lonnie Johnson's Super-Soaking Stream of Inventions" by Chris Barton; illustrated by Don Tate.

Watch television documentaries about black history and famous black Americans. Don't forget the importance of watching movies featuring blacks in starring roles, even if they aren't about historical figures or events. All children need role models and to see people who look like them. Remember to check with Common Sense Media or another source to find out what is age-appropriate for the children in your home.:

"Sonder."

"Remember the Titans."

"A Ballerina's Tale" – about famed dancer Misty Copeland.

"Selma," a drama about Martin Luther King and the struggle for equal rights.

"Hoop Dreams."

"The Civil War" – Ken Burns' series about the Civil War.

"The Princess and the Frog" – Disney's first animated film featuring a black princess.

"The Journey of Henry Box Brown," an animated film about the slave who shipped himself to freedom in a box.

"Ali," a bio about champion prize-fighter Mohammed Ali.

"Ruby Bridges," a Disney movie about one of the first Black children to attend an integrated Southern school.

"The Express," a bio about Ernie Davis, the first black football player to win the Heisman Trophy.

"Hidden Figures," based on the true story of three gifted black women whose work at NASA was instrumental in the space program.

"The Great Debaters," based on a true story about a team of debaters from a black college who win national recognition in the '30s.

"Malcolm X," Spike Lee's bio about the great minister and human rights activist.

"Glory," a drama about the first black volunteer company to fight in the Civil War.

"Roots," the classic mini-series about slavery, based on the Alex Haley novel.

"Akeelah and the Bee," about an 11-year-old black girl who participates in the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

"Black Panther," featuring the black Marvel Comics superhero.

Sanctuary Stories: How Hair Care Products Can Help a Child Feel at Home

By Sarah Wheeler, Amara Emergency sanctuary program manager, Pierce County

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When kids are removed from their home for their own safety, everything familiar and comfortable is suddenly gone.

When they come to stay with us at the Emergency Sanctuary everything there is new and unfamiliar. So we strive to learn as quickly as possible what would make children more comfortable and do our best to provide that.

Sometimes it's special foods that they know from home, or certain music, books or movies. Sometimes it can even be hair care products.

As part of our ongoing training, sanctuary staff attended a seminar about caring for all types and textures of hair. It felt good to expand our ability to care for kids – including their hair. But it wasn't until later that I realized how impactful something as seemingly simple as hair care could be for kids.

Recently, we had a sibling group come stay with us at the sanctuary. When young kids stay with us, we are often trying to answer their questions or comfort them amidst tears. For the older kids in this sibling group, however, the challenge was getting them to smile or open up to us.

One sister in particular was protective of her younger siblings, ushering them in to take their turns in the shower and casting a distrustful eye at staff and volunteers. I realized that for this young woman, it would take some time to adjust and feel comfortable in a new place full of strangers, but I would do my best to provide a safe, welcoming place for as long as she and her siblings were with us.

While everyone was showering, I found all our hair care products and placed them out on the table for them to use.

When the older sister emerged from the shower, she stopped in her tracks, staring

at the products on the kitchen table. She grabbed one and looked at me inquisitively, eyeing my very straight hair. "How do you have *this!*!" she exclaimed, holding up one bottle. "This is what my Grandma has at home!"

I explained how the sanctuary staff had taken a hair care class to learn about caring for all types of hair. She nodded and seemed pleased at the offering.

She went on to do her siblings' hair using the products and brushes we provided. As braids and ponytails appeared, so did a few smiles and giggles—tentative at first, then stronger and louder. Pretty soon, everything felt a little bit lighter, a little more hopeful.

I marveled at how something that might not seem like a big deal can be an important way to show care and offer comfort to kids in a time of crisis. It was wonderful to see how a little bit of familiarity helped this young woman relax and rest during such a difficult time.

When it was time for them to leave, we suggested they each choose a product to take with them. They were so excited to do so! And I was happy to know we helped set these siblings up for success in their next place in one small but important way.



Alliance Training Offered on African-American Hair and Skin Care

Meeting specific hair care needs is more than just a matter of making the hair look good, said Theresa Johnson, a cosmetologist with 29 years of experience. She and Shelly Gaines own SAKS Hair Salon in Renton. They offer a popular hair care training through the University of Washington's Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence. **The four-hour training will be April 7.**

The right kind of haircare is important because appearance matters to kids, she said. "Their hair care has a direct effect on their self-esteem. To *not* look good can make you not feel good about yourself. If kids look good, they feel so much better. Kids can get teased if their hair does not look right."

This four-hour training for caregivers (and social workers and supervisors) teaches participants to understand the complexity of caring for African-American and biracial hair and skin. Participants will gain skills and knowledge to be culturally responsive to the needs of the children/youth in their care. Participants observe a demonstration of how to properly wash, dry and style (including braiding) for African-American children and youth in their care. Participants receive guidance on how to get the appropriate hair and skin products for children/youth. Participants will learn how to seek necessary resources and support to promote a healthy self-concept for the children/youth in their care.

For more information:

www.alliancecatalog.org/node/7370/course-signup



News from the Department of Children, Youth, and Families

Watch your email box for GovDelivery messages; it's the new platform for communicating with caregivers

As of Feb. 1, DCYF will begin using a new email platform to send general caregiver information and updates. Rather than receiving emails through Mail Chimp, DCYF will be sending news and information through **GovDelivery**. If you notice that you are no longer receiving emails, please complete the following steps:

- Check your trash or spam folder.
- Add the following email address to your contacts or trusted recipients: DCYFcommunications@public.govdelivery.com
- Sign up again by following this link www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/foster-parenting/email-service

Family stories sought

We want to help our communities learn more about the amazing care, love and support that caregivers provide throughout Washington. Would you like to share your family's story? Perhaps you have maintained contact with a former foster child who is now an adult. Maybe you partnered with a child's birth parent and helped a child return home. You may have adopted. Or perhaps you are parenting a kinship child.

Whatever your story, we're interested in learning more about the people making a difference in these children's lives.

Please share your stories with us!

Contact Communications Consultant [Nancy Gutierrez](mailto:Nancy.Gutierrez) to share your story or learn more.

New Mandatory Reporting Number Rolls Out this Month

To insure we work efficiently and connect the public with the appropriate staff throughout the state, the intake function for all reports of child abuse and neglect or calls for service will now be localized to each region.

Each region will be assigned a 1-800 (toll-free) number and a local number as the region-specific intake line.

The statewide END HARM line to report suspected abuse and calls for service (1-866-ENDHARM) will remain active.

DCYF is planning to roll out the new phone numbers in three phases.

Regions 1 and 2, roll-out of new intake lines is Feb. 4. Once specific numbers and transition dates have been confirmed, we will share more details.

Beginning Feb. 4, the residents in Region 1 and 2 are asked to report child abuse or neglect directly to their local region.

New intake numbers are:

Region 1: 1-(800) 557-9671

Region 2: 1-(855) 420-5888

Regions 3 and 4: roll-out of new intake lines will be in early March.

Regions 5 and 6: roll-out of new intake lines will be in early April.

Counties included in each region are:

Region 1: Adams, Asotin, Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Whitman.

Region 2: Benton, Columbia, Franklin, Kittitas, Klickitat, Walla Walla, Yakima.

Region 3: Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom.

Region 4: King.

Region 5: Kitsap, Pierce.

Region 6: Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum.

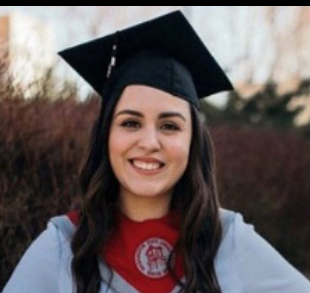
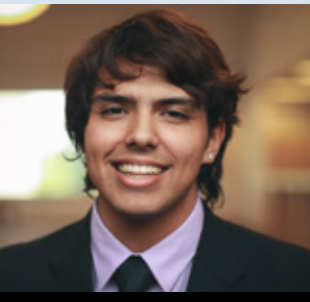
Caregiver survey

DCYF has contracted the Washington State Survey Office to gather feedback from foster parents and kinship caregivers. The survey, which has been in existence since 2012, asks caregivers a series of questions about support and training they have received since becoming a foster parent or kinship caregiver.

Someone on the survey team will call randomly chosen caregivers to participate in the study. Your honest feedback will help us make improvements.

If you would like to learn more or read past reports, go to the [Department of Social and Health Services, Research and Data Analysis](#) webpage.

Passion to Action: Foster Youth Work to Make Changes in the System



William Mendoza,
Passion To Action

Alexis Arumbul,
Passion to Action

Among young people who have been part of the child welfare system, a recurring theme in recent years has been “nothing about us without us.” Many young people believe their experiences should be shared with policy makers and others who are making important decisions about the lives of youth in care.

The Washington Legislature agreed, and in 2005, it required the State to establish a youth advisory board so youth could have

a say as state policy was being developed, said Rick Butt, who served as the first program coordinator for what was then Children’s Administration. He worked with Casey Family Programs and College Success Foundation to help pull the program together.

Butt said it was clear from the first that this program was to be developed and informed by youth between 14 and 23 who had experience in the child welfare system.

“Everything that was decided was decided by young people.” That included the name. “We needed their buy-in,” he said.

Passion to Action is a statewide group and meets regularly. Members receive a stipend. Membership goes well beyond that, Butt said. “It provides a sense of family. It has created lifelong friendships.”

William Mendoza, a Passion to Action member from Pullman who was in foster

care for seven years, said, “When I walked into that first meeting, I was welcomed with open arms. We may not all be related, but it is a family we have made.”

Not only is William involved with Passion to Action, but he also serves as a counselor for Camp to Belong Washington, a camp for siblings separated due to out-of-home care.

“We want to change the system for the better. We can’t do it alone,” he said. “If there weren’t other people there, I wouldn’t be there.”

The group works within the system, advocating for improvements with the people making policy. The group does not do external advocacy like groups such as the Mockingbird Society, Butt said.

While William says his special interest is on placement and stability for kids in care, education issues have been important to the group. It also has pushed for changes that led to the prudent parenting law, which allows youth in care to have more normal life experiences, similar to their peers who are not in care.

Alexis Arumbul, 23, had four foster care placements, including relative care, as she grew up in Eastern Washington. She linked to parts of the system to get financial help for her education, graduating from Washington State University last year and joining Passion to Action last May.

Her degree was in political science, and Alexis said she hopes for a career in which she can help influence public policy to improve the system. She has already had some experience, including completing an internship with U.S. Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.). She was able to help make recommendations for the federal Family First Prevention Services Act and other policies.

“I really shared my experiences and background to advocate,” she said.

She sees Passion to Action as a way to continue advocating for improvements.

“What’s so great about Passion to Action is that foster youth alumni come together and create a plan to inform people about the system, she said.

She also sees the group as a family. “We can all relate to each other, no matter our backgrounds. It does create change. It’s state law, and it still works. It does help the system.”

While the group’s members have to compete for time to talk to decision-makers, she said she feels like they are being heard: “We’re not just token foster kids. We are valued.”

One of Alexis’ key issues is keeping youth stable in the homes of caregivers.

“I’m so tired of seeing kids move,” she said. “Why aren’t we setting that right? I just want permanency.”

She also wants to see more focus on preventing youth from entering care by working with biological parents. That is a key focus of the Family First Prevention Services Act.

Her passion runs deep on the issues of child welfare, and she may well run for office one day, she said

“It’s just not going to go away ever,” she said of her passion.

Azia Ruff, Passion to Action

Azia Ruff, 21, of King County, entered foster care at 16 and joined Passion to Action in 2015. She said she was having trouble with all the rules of foster care and wanted to do something about it.

“I wanted to be part of the conversation,” she said.

She also found a “family” in Passion to Action, referring to other members as “my brothers and sisters in care.”

Passion to Action embodies that sentiment.



Kinship caregivers encouraged to become licensed foster parents

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. The amount is far greater than the child-only TANF grant available to unlicensed caregivers. Help is available with the process! Call 1-888-543-7414 to get started. You will receive a response within 48 hours.

You also can contact one of our recruitment and retention partners who serve kinship and foster parents for help with the licensing process.

In Eastern Washington, contact Eastern Washington University's Fostering Washington:

Amber Sherman, recruitment coordinator:
509-359-0874; asherman4@ewu.edu

Hayley Stoebner, recruitment coordinator:
509-322-1191; hstoebner@ewu.edu

In Western Washington, contact Olive Crest's Fostering Together:

Shala Crow, program director and regions 3 and 4 supervisor:
360-220-3785; shala-crow@olivecrest.org

Leeann Marshel, regions 5 and 6 supervisor:
360-909-0421; leeann-marshel@olivecrest.org

HEROES TO CELEBRATE FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Katherine Johnson (August 26, 1918-), now 100 years old, is a mathematician whose calculations of orbital mechanics as a NASA employee were critical to the success of the first and subsequent U.S. manned spaceflights. She graduated from college at 18 but was rejected by NASA the first time she applied. She taught school for many years while she raised a family. Among her writings, Johnson went on to co-author one of the first textbooks on space – virtually writing the textbook on rocket science. In 2015, she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, one of many esteemed awards garnered over her lifetime. Her story became widespread in the movie, “Hidden Figures” (2016).

Ella Baker (1903-1986) was an African-American civil rights and human rights activist. She played a key role in some of the most influential organizations of the time, including the NAACP, Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Baker criticized professionalized, charismatic leadership; she promoted grassroots organizing, radical democracy and the ability of the oppressed to understand their worlds and advocate for themselves.

Alicia Garza (1981-) is an American activist and writer. She has organized around issues related to health, student services and rights for domestic workers, as well as violence against trans and gender nonconforming people of color. But she is best known as one of three founders of the Black Lives Matter movement in 2013. The other founders are **Patrisse Khan-Cullors** (1984-), an American artist, author, and organizer who is a noted advocate for prison abolition, and **Opal Tometi** (1984-), a Nigerian-American human rights activist, writer, strategist and community organizer.

Marsha P. Johnson (1945 –1992) was a transgender women who was an LGBTQ rights activist and an outspoken advocate for trans people of color. Johnson spearheaded the landmark Stonewall uprising in 1969 in New York, and along with Sylvia Rivera, later established the Street Transvestite (now Transgender) Action Revolutionaries (STAR), a group committed to helping homeless transgender youth in New York City. She advocated on behalf of AIDS patients.

It's Not Too Late For Flu Shots

From the Department of Children, Youth, and Families' Licensing Division

We are in the midst of another bad flu season, and are continuing to encourage caregivers to get their annual flu vaccine if they haven't already.

Foster parents licensed to care for children ages 0-2 are required by Washington Administrative Code (WAC) to have flu shots, as are all of their other household members over the age of six months.

Foster parents, please be sure to provide the verification of your flu vaccination to your licensors. We also encourage unlicensed caregivers to get their flu vaccine, along with their household members. The flu vaccines better protect you and our children.

All children and youth placed in caregiver homes by the department are required to be immunized, according to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control (ACIP/CDC). These requirements were established in the Recommended Immunization Schedule for Persons Aged 0-18 years and are necessary unless you have been directed differently by your child's assigned caseworker. If you have any questions about this, please contact your child's caseworker.

Foster Parents and household members of children in foster care who are older than 2 are not required by WAC to have flu shots, but are strongly encouraged to get them for their own health and safety, those in their household and the community.

CDC Immunization Schedule for birth to 6 years old:

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/downloads/parent-ver-sch-0-6yrs.pdf

CDC Immunization Schedule for 7 to 18 year-olds:

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/teen/parent-version-schedule-7-18yrs.pdf

Important Oral Poliovirus Vaccine (OPV) Update For Children Who Have Lived Outside The United States

Research has shown the OPV (oral polio vaccine) is not effective if administered on or after April 1, 2016. If administered prior to April 1, 2016, it will still be counted as a valid dose.

The United States only provides the Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV), which is given as a shot. Therefore, any child who has received only vaccinations in the United States is protected and does not need to do anything further.

If you are caring for a child that may have lived outside the country, please review their vaccination records to see if the oral form of the vaccine was given, and if it was, check with the healthcare provider to update their vaccine.

Helpful resources about immunizations can be found here:

www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Schools/Immunization

Passion to Action continued from p6

She said she likes the way the group gets into the policy sphere by advocating within the system rather than advocating on change from the outside.

As a representative for Passion to Action, Azia also talks to potential foster parents during Caregiver Core Training.

As those in the Passion to Action become older, many are turning into informal mentors to the younger member. It is one way to make sure the core mission continues, they said.

Alexis said, "This is a way to pay it forward."

William put the involvement of youth in the group this way: "If not for me, it's for the next foster youth coming up. And maybe one day, there won't be any foster youth."

HEROES TO CELEBRATE FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Actress and LGBT advocate **Laverne Cox** (May 29, 1972-) rose to prominence with her role as Sophia Burset on the Netflix series *Orange Is the New Black*, becoming the first trans woman of color to have a leading role on a mainstream scripted television show and the first openly transgender person to be nominated for a Primetime Emmy Award in the acting category. An advocate with an empowering message of moving beyond gender expectations to live more authentically, she was named one of The Grio's 100 Most Influential African Americans and one of the Top 50 Trans Icons by the Huffington Post. She has been honored with the Courage Award from the Anti-Violence Project, and with the Reader's Choice Award from "Out" Magazine, among other accolades.



Follow-up care for children prescribed ADHD medication

Children and youth taking ADHD medication need to be monitored. Those taking it for the first time should see their doctor within 30 days of starting the medication. Two follow-up appointments should happen within nine months from the time medication was started. If you have any questions about this or any other health-related issues, please contact us at 1-844-354-9876.

Getting Caregiver Tax Help

As tax season approaches, foster parents often have questions about the tax implications of their reimbursement for caring for children. Foster parents and kinship caregivers may claim a tax deduction on certain foster care payments for children who have been placed in their care for more than half of the tax year.

Exceptions apply for a foster child who was born within the tax year. Caregivers will need to check with their tax advisor in these situations. If no Social Security Number (SSN) has been issued for a newborn or infant who enters care, DCYF staff members try to process the application for the number as quickly as possible. They are asked to provide a child's SSN when requested by the caregiver for tax purposes. A written request from the caregiver is not necessary.

Remember, DCYF staff members cannot provide tax advice to caregivers. However, caregivers can use the following resources to obtain some assistance:

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS): 1-800-829-1040; www.irs.gov

IRS publication 501, "Exemptions Related to Dependents and Qualifying Children."

**The DCYF Finance Office,
Task Desk: 833-725-3502 or [dcyf.
taxreporting@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dcyf.taxreporting@dcyf.wa.gov)**

Other reminders and updates

The annual **Pacific Northwest Caregivers Conference** will be May 3–5 at Great Wolf Lodge near Centralia.

More information about the conference can be found at www.fpaws.org. Part of the event is a May 4 dinner to honor social workers and others who do outstanding work in child welfare. [Nominate](#) an individual or organization for an award.

Camp to Belong Washington is now accepting applications for its annual camp for siblings ages 8-18 who are separated from their brothers and sisters due to foster, kinship or adoptive care. The 2019 camp is June 24-29 in Port Orchard. It is free. To fill out an application for a child, or to apply to become a counselor or for more information, visit www.campbelongwa.org.

We Are Family Day will be May 19 at the Mariners' stadium. Discounted tickets are available, and a pre-game ceremony will be part of the event. To learn more visit: www.Mariners.com/WeAreFamily

College scholarship applications are available for youth in care through the National Foster Parents Association. Learn more: bit.ly/2MDs8qE.

The Mockingbird Society's Advocacy Day will be Thursday, Feb. 7, at the state Capitol in Olympia. Learn more at www.mockingbirdsociety.org.

Alternative treatments: What's covered?

Some caregivers prefer organic food and natural treatments or are interested in new products they've read about. Whatever the situation, you should know what is covered by Coordinated Care and what is not.

Food can contribute to a person's mood. There are many providers and parents who believe that diet can impact ADD/ADHD. The best approach for overall health is a diet that limits sugary and processed food and is rich in fruits, vegetables, grains and healthy fats. Talk with your child's doctor if you are thinking about trying a different diet to help with behavior changes.

From time to time, we get calls about weighted blankets or compression vests for children. There are state codes related to the care of children in foster care. One of them, WAC SHS-4631.2, bans the use of these items on children under age 3 and children of any age with mobility limitations. It also outlines strict rules for their use for older children.

Many people find that naturopathy works for them. They use it to treat lots of conditions: ear and respiratory infections, sensory integration disorder, skin conditions, food allergies, ADD/ADHD and learning disabilities. Naturopathy is covered by Coordinated Care. Use the "find a provider" tool on Coordinated Care's website to find a naturopath in your area, or call 1-844-354-9876 for help finding any provider.

HELP PROVIDED Need help with health care coordination? Questions about health care, including behavioral health? Call Apple Health Core Connections, 1-844-354-9876. We are here to help!

Our **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).

If you have questions or concerns about **WHOLE-PERSON HEALTH**, you can send your questions to fostercaregmt@coordinatedcarehealth.com

Teach Kids to Cook and They Can Eat Well All Their Lives – Part 2

by Deanna Partlow

I learned how to cook informally by working with my mother and more formally through membership in a 4-H cooking club. The latent mad scientist in me was thrilled by the magic of stirring ingredients together to create something entirely new. I later taught boys and girls in 4-H groups how to cook, and I discovered most kids love cooking.

In the March 2018 Caregiver Connection, I wrote about the importance of basic cooking skills, tools children can use now and, more importantly, as blossoming young adults. Why? Because eating is a daily activity, and being armed with cooking skills can help young adults stretch money and make healthier food choices.

Since then, I've read several blogs on the subject, trying to break down skills kids need to learn. Most list mastery of different cooking skills by age. But since our kids in care arrive at our homes with unknown skill levels, I've come up with a version based on their abilities. I'm sure the list isn't complete, but it contains the skills most helpful to master. Figure out what your child knows and then go from there.

Kids don't need much encouragement in this area, but giving them a cookbook and maybe an apron of their own add to the fun! Don't forget to compile a notebook or box of recipes they're learning so they can take it with them on their journeys. And enjoy the bonding time together – you're giving them gifts that will help them through their lives.



Simple cooking skills:

- Washing hands before preparing food and eating.
- Washing fruits and vegetables.
- Dumping ingredients into a bowl.
- Stirring or mixing with a spoon or spatula.
- Mashing foods with a fork.
- Peeling simple fruits, such as bananas.
- Sprinkling foods such as cheese or candy sprinkles.
- Wiping counters.

Elementary skills

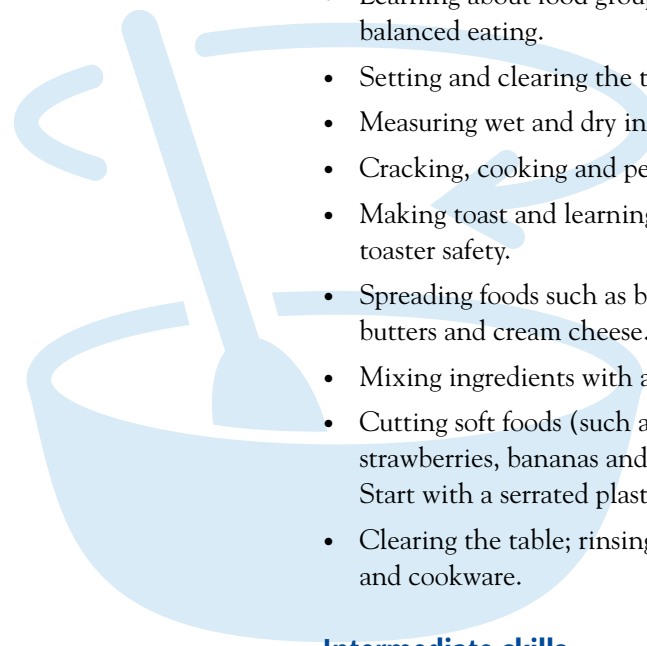
- Learning about food groups and balanced eating.
- Setting and clearing the table.
- Measuring wet and dry ingredients.
- Cracking, cooking and peeling an egg.
- Making toast and learning toaster safety.
- Spreading foods such as butter, nut butters and cream cheese.
- Mixing ingredients with a whisk.
- Cutting soft foods (such as strawberries, bananas and butter. Start with a serrated plastic knife.)
- Clearing the table; rinsing off dishes and cookware.

Intermediate skills

- Simple meal-planning with basic food groups.



Practice makes perfect! This 3-year-old is an old hand at peeling bananas and could peel eggs when he was 2. Each child learns at his own pace, based on experience and the opportunity to learn.



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.

DCYF Foster Parent Consultation Team (1624)

Foster Parent Regional Representatives 2019

Name	E-mail	Phone
Alla Mishin	allamishin@gmail.com	509-847-4210
Victoria O'Banion	vnhobanion@gmail.com	308-991-5663
Silvia Zarate	Mendozawapato@aol.com	509-830-5027
Aimee Harris	Aimee@loverecklessly.org	425-246-8862
Jenny Piper	jennypiper206@gmail.com	206-790-0194
Katie Biron	ka0ebiron@outlook.com	206-650-3422
Liz Wisham	lizw@occ.org	425-246-9552
Krista Piger	KristaPiger@gmail.com	253-548-6353
Sheryl Herd	Herd.Family@yahoo.com	360-771-9105
Stephanie Vombaur	stephvombaur@yahoo.com	360-241-3534
Beth Canfield, FPAWS	bethcanfield@comcast.net	360-990-1011
Mike Canfield, FPAWS	mkbeth@comcast.net	360-990-1255

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.

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

- As They Grow: The Drug Impacted Child
- As They Grow: The Drug Impacted Infant and Toddler
- Emotion Coaching
- ILABS Module 13: Race Today: What Kids Know As They Grow
- ILABS Module 14: “Racing” Toward Equality: Why Talking to Your Kids About Race is Good For Everyone
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Knowledge and Skills To Help Children Heal
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

FEBRUARY TRAININGS IN REGION 2: SOUTH/CENTRAL EASTERN WASHINGTON

- 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
- Identifying and Supporting Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) for Caregivers
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

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

- Caregiving for Children With Sexual Behavior Concerns
- Caregiving for Children with Physically Aggressive Behavior Concerns
- Emotion Coaching
- How You Can Become an Effective Educational Advocate for Your Child
- ILABS Module 6: Language Development: Learning the Sounds of Language
- ILABS Module 17: Development of Literacy
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Talking With Children About Race

Caregiver Training from the Alliance continued

FEBRUARY TRAININGS IN REGION 4: KING COUNTY

- DLR/CPS Allegations: An Overview of the Investigation Process for Caregivers
- Emotion Coaching
- Fostering Children and Youth Through Transition, Grief, and Loss: Helping Children With Their Feelings
- Infant Safety and Care
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Paper Trail: Documentation Training for Caregivers
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Talking with Children About Race
- Understanding and Managing Caregiver's Own Emotions and Self Care

FEBRUARY TRAININGS IN REGION 5: PIERCE AND KITSAP COUNTIES

- ABC's of Autism, Behaviors, and Coping Strategies
- Emotion Coaching
- ILABS Module 14: "Racing" Toward Equality
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What?
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

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

- DLR/CPS Allegations: An Overview of the Investigation Process for Caregivers
- Early Childhood Development in Child Welfare: Supporting Lifelong Healthy Outcomes
- Fostering Children and Youth Through Transition, Grief, and Loss: Helping Children With Their Feelings
- How You Can Become an Effective Educational Advocate for Your Child
- Identifying and Supporting Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) for Caregivers
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Kinship 101
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Minimizing the Risks of Allegations
- Paper Trail: Documentation Training for Caregivers
- Partners Make Better Decisions: Caregivers and Social Workers Working Together
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

Caregiver Education and Training Administrator

Michael Tyers 425-268-9375 tyersm@uw.edu

Your Child Welfare Training Team for Regions 1 and 2

Eastern Washington

Kebbie Green 509-362-1336 kgreen10@uw.edu

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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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El-Freda Stephenson 206-923-4922 elfreda@uw.edu

Gracia Hahn 253-983-6362 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

Stephanie Rodrigues 206-321-1721 steph75@uw.edu

Robert Judd 360-344-3003 juddre@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



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

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

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

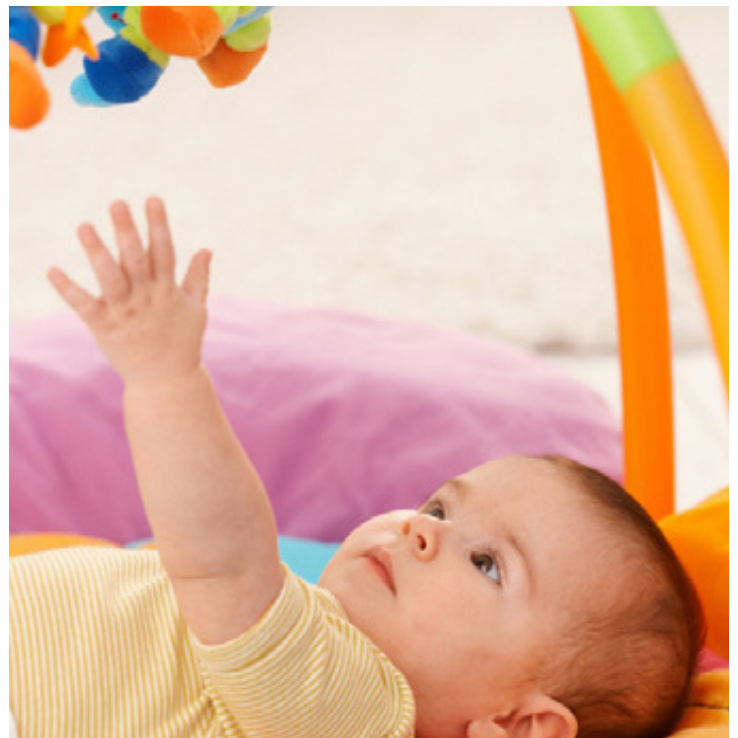
Prospective foster parents are welcome to license through either CA's, Children, Youth and Families – Licensing Division (DCYF-LD), or any private child placing agency licensed in Washington. Our recruitment partners serve all families, regardless of where they choose to become licensed. Prospective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

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.



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 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	shala-crow@olivecrest.org	(360) 220-3785
Leeann Marshel	5 and 6	leeann-marshel@olivecrest.org	(360) 909-0421

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

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