



fostering  
together

Our Community...Our Children

## FIRST Program

*Foster Intervention and Retention  
Support Team*

### **The FIRST Program provides neutral advice and support to foster parents statewide.**

Licensed foster parents may experience an investigation when someone makes an allegation against them. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) has a responsibility to look into these concerns. The Division of Licensed Resources DLR/CPS (Child Protective Services) staff investigates allegations about child abuse and neglect. Either DLR/CPS staff or a licenser investigates allegations about licensing violations.

Most investigations do not result in a "finding" of abuse or neglect against a foster parent. However, these investigations can be a stressful time for you or your family. The FIRST Program is here to support you.

The FIRST staff is trained to help foster parents, but they are not employed by the Department of Social and Health Services.



## HOW CAN THEY HELP?

**The FIRST staff is accessible by telephone and they can:**

- Respond to your request for assistance within 12 hours.
- Explain the investigation process, including timeframes.
- Explain the difference between a CPS investigation and a licensing complaint.
- Assist you in communicating your thoughts and concerns to agency staff.
- Talk to you about how you are feeling and lend a supportive ear.
- Meet with you in person or by telephone at your request and provide you with ongoing support throughout the investigation.

Would you like to speak to a  
FIRST representative?

call  
**253-219-6782** for FIRST support

**OLIVE CREST**  
Strong Families, Safe Kids



*Fostering Together was developed in partnership between the state of Washington and Olive Crest – a national leader in transforming the lives of at-risk children since 1973.*

[fosteringtogether.org](http://fosteringtogether.org)



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