

MAY 2019

Caregiver Connection

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

May: Celebrating Foster Parents and Kinship Caregivers

By proclamation, Governor Jay Inslee is recognizing the contributions of foster parents and relatives in improving the lives of children.

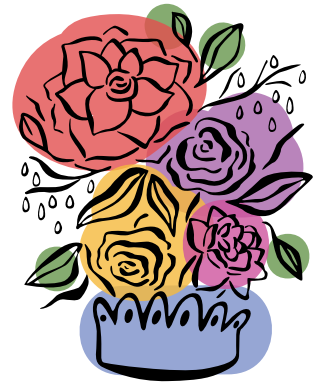
Gov. Inslee proclaimed May as Foster Care Month and May 15 as Kinship Caregiver Day in Washington.

In his proclamation, Gov. Inslee's highlighted the contributions of caregivers, declaring:

Whereas there are 9,200 children of all ages in Washington's foster care system who rely on foster and kinship families to open both their hearts and homes to them in a time of crisis ... and whereas there is no greater task than to ensure all children and youth in foster care find a safe harbor in the homes of nurturing families who provide a meaningful and supporting presence in their lives ... I urge all people in our state to join me in an effort to raise public awareness of the need for additional qualified foster families and to offer support for our existing caregivers.

For Kinship Caregiver Day, he declared, in part:

Whereas relative-headed families face enormous personal day-to-day living challenges as they focus on ensuring that the children in their care experience structure, accountability, encouragement, affection and age-appropriate expectations ... and whereas as a result of this commitment the homes provided for many of those children becomes their "forever" home and ... the significant care and nurturing of these children by their relatives deserves to be recognized.



May 15th
is Kinship Caregiver Day

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Children, Youth, and Families

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The Enduring Legacy of Caregiver Dave Keating

A caregiver whose commitment and love will echo through the hundreds of children he and his wife fostered for 30 years

By Nancy Gutierrez, Department of Children, Youth, and Families

For more than 30 years, Dave and Denise Keating welcomed hundreds of foster children into their home in Enumclaw. Dave died in December, but his caring and compassion for children will live on in their lives.

The Keatings treated each child as if the child was their own, and adopted, became legal guardians and created lifetime bonds with many of the children that came through their doors.

Jason Pollock, a caseworker who has worked with the family for more than four years, says he witnessed time and time again the Keatings going above and beyond for many of Washington's high-needs foster children.

In 2008, the Keatings were asked if they would care for a medically-fragile youth over the weekend. Not only did the child – who was diagnosed with Duchene Muscular Dystrophy and was 10 years old at the time – stay with the Keatings that weekend, he was part of their household until right before his 21st birthday.

"All of the children in the home have some level of special needs," explained Pollock. "The Keatings have gone well beyond anything that could have been expected of them as caregivers."

This was not out of the ordinary for the Keatings. The couple advocated for their kids at schools and with providers, participated in the Special Olympics, kept their children engaged with their peers and birth families, and worked closely with Seattle Children's Hospital to do whatever was necessary to improve the quality of life for their kids.

Connie Lambert-Eckel, former assistant secretary of Child Welfare Field Operations at the Department of Children, Youth, and Families,

recognized the couple for their caring and compassionate work in a letter she sent to them on Dec. 10, 2018.

"To quietly and lovingly care for many special needs children, who need us the very most, is what Dave and Denise Keating so beautifully demonstrated in their over 30 years of devotion for all of the children who came into their lives," Lambert-Eckel wrote.

"We respect and honor their commitment to children."

The recognition was bittersweet. Dave, 59, died Dec. 11 in his home, surrounded by his loved ones.

"While we lost Dave Keating all too soon, this year, his legacy of profound caring and commitment to children, especially those children with special needs, will live on through his loving wife Denise and all the children they loved, protected and nurtured in the past 30-plus years," said Lambert-Eckel.

Often, the assumption is that there are not enough foster parents in the state of Washington. While more foster parents could increase placements, the need for homes is greater for children with special needs, behavioral issues and children of color, she said.

Before leaving DCYF, Lambert-Eckel urged people across the state to become foster parents, especially if they can look beyond the challenges and put extra effort into the heart of a child in need by love, care and support.

"Denise and Dave Keating personified this way of serving as loving and devoted foster parents for over 30 years," she said. "We at the DCYF are eternally grateful to Dave and Denise."



A Heartfelt Thank-You to Mothers

By Deanna Partlow

As Mother's Day approaches, we pay tribute to those foster, kinship and adoptive mothers among us.

These mothers advocate for children in peril, children whose lives are marked by trauma and loss. They warmly embrace the young beings who come through their door, providing love and structure, guidance and safety – even when some of those children resent it. They affirm birth mothers and other guardians, knowing that by doing so, they affirm the children in their care. They give of themselves whole-heartedly, understanding all too well that their homes often are only temporary.

Like other mothers, they slay the monsters lurking under the bed, cheer from the sidelines school events and other activities, help with homework and know the answers to the “why?” questions.

But these special moms also help heal spiritual wounds and normalize the lives of the children they care for. They attend therapy and court appearances, rock drug-exposed newborns in the middle of the night, go to classes on learning disabilities and other needs and report to case workers, licensors and judges. And they spend their precious free time reading books on brain development and trauma-informed parenting.

These mothers know it is worth every ounce of pain and grief and sadness to love unconditionally, and if and when they have to, let go.

They do so, often repeatedly, sometimes never hearing again how that child is faring. They let go, hoping that the seeds of trust and resilience they've planted have taken root; that they have helped a child gain the skills and confidence to grow and flourish.

Over and over, they hear the refrain, “I don't know how you do it.” And these mothers answer: “If I don't make a home for this child, who will? If I don't care for this child, who will? Yes, it hurts terribly to let them go – but it hurts more to think of a child in desperate need who has no loving home to go to.”

Often, these mothers and their families make these children a permanent part of their lives through adoption. But the many mothers who have had to love and let go don't forget that child – ever.

For foster, kinship and adoptive mothers, no less than for other moms and guardians, the words of poet e. e. cummings forever ring true: “I carry your heart (I carry it in my heart)”

The mothers of other people's children forever hold in their hearts the joy of that those first toddling steps, the giggles from that first slumber party, the excitement of a kid on the way to that first school concert and so much more. And they are heartened by those memories.

The rest of us know they have made an incalculable difference in the life of that child, and we thank them. They are heroes in every sense of the word.

Happy Mother's Day to these amazing mothers.

Profiles of Three Amazing Moms

Room for One More

Nine years ago, Steph Vom Baur of Ridgefield was mom to three girls.

She thought having some boys in her life would add balance, so “God put it in our hearts” to become licensed foster parents, she says.

She and her husband Jason had seven placements in nine years, including a sibling group that stayed for more than five years.

The family now includes three biological children, two adopted children, one foster child and, as she put it, “a whole lot of love.”

Steph has had the usual foster parent experience – one child who was to come for a short time who stayed a long time.

The Vom Baur family had decided not to take any more kids, but in another experience common to foster parents, they couldn’t resist a caseworker’s call for a home for a child.

“It’s the kids,” she said of why she became a foster parent and continues to pour out her passion for them.

Part of Steph’s journey has included learning the value of reaching out to biological parents.

“They are just people who made mistakes,” she said. “Helping them can be very fulfilling.”

Not only that, but it helps kids heal when they see their birth parents and foster parents working together. The child understands “If I can accept them (birth parents), I can accept him,” she said.

Steph is one of those extra-mile people. She took on the task of home-schooling one child to help him overcome attachment issues. “You’ve got to do what you’ve got to do to help heal these kids,” she said.

She also has become a representative on the statewide foster parent consultation team where she meets with Department of Children, Youth, and Families leadership working to improve the system.

And she and Jason find the time to operate an appropriately named American Family Insurance Agency.

She uses this metric to describe how her busy life has unfolded.

“I must be doing something right because all my children want to adopt, and I hope someday they do.”



Steph Vom Baur left, with what she describes as “some of the crew,” (l-r) Sara, Britt, Allison, Isabella and Sammie.



“I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

In January 2016, Christina Brown of Puyallup was looking ahead to her two biological children leaving the nest.

“I was sure I would be child-free at age 38, and now here I am with five other children,” Christina said. “I honestly did not see my life in this place. But I wouldn’t have it any other way.” Christina has a fulltime job in information technology with CHI Franciscan. Allen is a welder in a machine shop.

Her life began to take a new direction when she and her significant other Allen took into care a child from her half-sister. As more kids were removed from her half-sister’s

home, she and her parents shared child-raising duties.

Eventually, Christina and Allen had five unanticipated children. As the kids arrived, they were placed in her home as a kinship placement. Eventually, the couple became licensed because the financial support for foster parents is much greater than for kids living with unlicensed relatives, Christina said. Now, all the children in their care have a date for adoption this July.

While she is the mother of more children than she ever expected, she says, “I have an amazing support system and I am alive and well today and the kids are alive and well today.”

A Neighborhood of Siblings

When Rachele Raj decided to become a licensed foster parent in 2007, she and her first husband had no intention of adopting, she said.

But then two boys, Danny and David, came into their lives.

Looking back on the start of that journey, she laughs, saying, “We were young and really didn’t have any idea what we were doing. I think it was good that we didn’t have any biological kids because we just rolled with it.”

Rachele’s background includes animal trainer and working at an animal shelter. But she reached a crossroads in her life as she tried to decide whether to continue on that path or take a different route into the world of child welfare.

She chose the latter, and after Danny and David came, a third sibling, Patrick, arrived. All were adopted into their family.

But her life became more than those three boys. More and more siblings of her three kids started being placed in homes in the Bothell area where Rachele lives.

“How unusual is it that all those kids would have been placed so close together?” she asks.

She began meeting the caregivers of the other kids and they supported each other.

“All of us became close friends,” she said. “Moms need other moms in life – but foster moms *really* need other foster moms.”

She said she also had great support, from caseworkers. “I’m definitely a big supporter of caseworkers. I always felt like I was part of the team.”

Rachele’s home became an informal hub – what she calls a “cocoon” – where the siblings often gathered. She also organized monthly gatherings to help keep the sibling connected.

Some of the siblings in the neighborhood would stay with her for long periods of time. Another of the siblings came to her as an emergency placement and stayed two years.

Over the years, the number of kids grew to the point where they could field a football team.

As they arrived in the area, they also began attending Camp To Belong Washington to strengthen their bonds as brother and sisters. One of the older boys is now a camp counselor; Rachele serves on the organization’s board of directors.

Along the way, she had a biological daughter; a second child is due in June.

She urged those who want to become foster parents to have a clear focus on what they want in taking in kids and to remember that “foster care is a marathon, not a sprint.”

Looking back on the last decade of her life and all the children who have entered it, she realizes how it has affected her:

“I became passionate about all these siblings and them trying to find that one caring adult,” she said.



Rachele Raj with her kids, l-r, Danny, David, Patrick and Emery



Coaching Offered to Help Make Parent/Child Visits Successful

Patty Orona, trainer

Visits between children in foster care and their parents can be emotionally challenging for everyone involved.

That is why the Alliance For Child Welfare Excellence offers personal coaching sessions to help foster parents navigate those emotions.

“There are different ways children handle the challenges with visits,” said Patty Orona, who trains and offers coaching to foster parents.

A child returning from a visit may act out or seem to be very unhappy, she said.

That doesn't mean that visits are bad for the child. There are a lot of possible reasons for the emotions, including missing parents, or feeling conflicted loyalty. One of the best ways foster parents can help children with visits is to support visitation.

She suggested foster parents try to be as positive as possible about the visits before they occur.

“You could say, ‘today you get to go visit your mom or your family’ as compared to ‘today is Wednesday and you have to go visit your mom or family,’” Orona said.

You can show signs of respect for the biological parents by such small gestures as sending pictures of recent events in which the child took part, examples of good school work or some games they like to play – like Chutes and Ladders.

It's also important to remember that the biological parents are going through their own trauma and challenges.

“One bad decision can get you involved in the system,” she said. Often that decision revolves around substance abuse, a huge issue for many people.

“There isn't a person in this country that doesn't have a family member with an addiction issue,” she said.

It's also important to see things through the child's eyes, she said.

“They want to see that someone is being respectful to their parents.”

They see it as “if you don't respect my parents, you don't respect me,” And a child in trauma is much more likely to feel better and do better if he or she believes his or her foster parents and birth parents are working together for his or her interests.

“When we are supporting the child, we are supporting the family,” she said.

You can contact any Alliance trainer to get coaching on visitation at www.allianceforexcellence.org

To take the web-based training, click on allianceforchildwelfare.org/course-catalog and scroll down to Parent/Child Visitation to sign up.

In Celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

By Maia Anderson • Foster Parent Liaison, King County West/Everett

“How searching out my own Polynesian heritage helped me understand the importance of my foster children’s connections to their cultural identities”

Unfortunately, I didn’t grow up living with my dad. Like many of our kids in foster care, he wasn’t a safe parent for me or a safe partner for my mom.

Not knowing the language, foods, music, dances or ways of my dad’s Samoan family always felt like a hole in my heart. I had the pigment in my skin that made me darker than my blonde-haired blue-eyed mom, dark curly hair and the Samoan eye shape, but at times it felt like false advertising because inside, I didn’t have anything to connect me to those people.

As an adult, I reconnected with my dad. He wasn’t who I had hoped, but I found the best thing he passed to me was my rich cultural heritage. While I felt disconnected from him, I became

very connected to being a Pacific Islander. These people, my people, I came to learn, had an incredible spirit.

They had used the ocean to travel to their home in Samoa, which is located hundreds of miles from its closest archipelago neighbor, during pre-GPS times and almost 500 years before Columbus was exploring the ocean! They used the ancient Polynesian art of ‘wayfinding,’ using the stars, wind and wave patterns to navigate. Their technology, engineering and ingenuity helped them accomplish incredible distances of ocean travel and they are still considered the best navigators in history, with the most successful types of ships in which to do ocean exploration.

My daughters now take hula, and we as a family are exploring what Polynesian culture means for us living in the Pacific Northwest.

It is important in shaping a piece of who we are. I was able to take this “good” from my dad, even though he wasn’t a good parent. That has helped me see how important culture can be and is for our foster children who may have had parents that can’t be present in their lives but have passed down a cultural legacy. These connections to their people can help provide a source of strength and identity. Helping them to connect is one way to get to know them better and build their confidence!

In my work as a liaison with Fostering Together, and in partnership with Thaidra Alfred of the United Indians for All Tribes Foundation, I have been able to work on helping Native American kids in foster care have opportunities to connect to Pacific Northwest Native American culture through monthly support groups.

Regardless of which tribe, experiences in music, storytelling and other traditional activities have been a place where their culture is explored and celebrated.



Creating Better Access to Mental Behavioral Health Services

As the nation focuses on mental health during Mental Health Awareness Month, strides are being made in Washington to help foster caregivers access mental and behavioral services for children in their care.

For five years, Taku Mineshita has been a mental health systems integration program manager for the Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

He has been part of the effort to integrate physical and behavioral health services into one system, making it easier for everyone to gain proper care.

Previously, physical health care and behavioral health care were accessed through isolated systems.

The integration has been underway statewide for the general Medicaid population since April 2016 and will be fully integrated in 2020. It truly has been a team effort working with children, youth, caregivers and system partners, Mineshita said.

For the child welfare population specifically, Integrated Foster Care was rolled out in January, introducing two major changes.

Under the previous system, behavioral health providers used Access to Care Standards to determine whether children and youth could access upper-level behavioral health services. That standard disappeared as of Jan. 1 for the child welfare population. Now, foster children and youth will be assessed and provided the behavioral health services they need where and when they need them. The new system also has eliminated geographic boundaries in accessing behavioral health services, assuring continuity of service when children and youth move. If a child or youth moves from region to region, their behavioral health services are no longer interrupted. They can continue seeing a provider in one region even if they move to another or they can schedule an appointment with a new provider in their new location without a delay, Mineshita said.

Working with the Coordinated Care Apple Health Core Connections (AHCC) program, caregivers and caseworkers don't have to search around for providers alone these days. AHCC care coordinators can help. Integrating physical and behavioral health services and removing geographic boundaries means that even if caregivers, children or youth move from one part of the state to another, they don't have to start all over again in their treatment.

As with much of the mental health system, providers are building on the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) brain science to develop programs that work and are supported by research.

"We are building a trauma-informed care system, and Washington state as a trauma-informed state is serving our children and youth and supporting those who care for them," he said.

For more information about behavioral health integration, please contact Apple Health Core Connections (AHCC) at 1-844-354-9876 or DCYF Mental Health Systems Integration Program Manager Taku Mineshita at Taku.Mineshita@dcyf.wa.gov or 360.902.7928.

Your Thoughts as a Caregiver are Important

The Department of Children Youth, and Families (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 the support and training they have received since becoming a foster parent or kinship caregiver. Someone on the survey team will call caregivers that were randomly chosen to participate in the study. Honest feedback will help DCYF make improvements.

If you would like to learn more or read past reports, you can find them on the Department of Social and Health Services' Research and Data Analysis webpage: www.dshs.wa.gov/ffa/rda/research-reports/2017-foster-parent-survey-dshs-foster-parents-speak.

Update on OurKids Mobile App for Caregivers

Based on feedback from users, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families has recognized that the OurKids mobile application is difficult to install and access, which has limited its use. People from the licensing division and the Child Welfare Program have partnered with technology services to develop a user-friendly web application for caregivers that will have simplified access through Secure Access Washington.

The application, called OurKids, will enable caregivers to view their placements and other important case information. All caregivers, licensed and unlicensed, will have this access.

Caregivers will now be able to access OurKids from their desktop, tablets and mobile devices. Licensed foster parents will be able to see information related to their license, such as expiration dates and authorized and completed reimbursements.

Other material that will be available includes the child's personal information, social and legal information, medical and education information, as well as contact details for assigned caseworkers and licensors.

The platform will be ready for release in the coming months. We will keep you updated as new information becomes available.



WE ARE FAMILY DAY

SUNDAY, MAY 19 • 1:10 PM



VS.



EVENT DETAILS AND PRICING

- We Are Family Day celebrates foster, kinship and adoptive families and the folks that support them with a pregame event.
- Arrive early to join us in the Outside Corner near section 330 for our pregame event.
- Receive a We Are Family giveaway when you purchase through this special offer (while supplies last).

- \$14 View Level Tickets
- \$31 Main Level Tickets

Deadline to purchase tickets:
Friday, May 17 – 5:00 p.m.



MITCH HANIGER



To buy tickets or for more info call or visit:
206-346-4519 * Mariners.com/WeAreFamily



WASHINGTON STATE
Department of
Children, Youth, and Families

Summer's Coming: Free Activities For Caregivers

The Department for Children, Youth, and Families has created partnerships with other organizations to provide free or reduced fees for activities that foster families and relative caregivers with children placed by the state can enjoy. Among them are:

The Pacific Science Center offers two pass programs aimed at providing hands-on science education and fun to families.

The **Family Access Membership** is a \$19 family-level membership available to anyone who receives any form of public assistance. The membership comes with eight free guest passes to the Center's permanent exhibits, 15 passes to see documentary IMAX® movies, unlimited access to the Planetarium and much more.

The **Youth Access Membership** is a free program for:

- Any youth, age 14 to 21, currently in a dependency action in a Washington State or Tribal Court, in the care and custody of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families or Tribal Child Welfare agency, and in foster care.
- Any foster parent or relative caregiver providing care for a child under the age of 14, through a dependency action in a Washington State or Tribal Court, in the care and custody of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families or Tribal Child Welfare agency,
- Any youth 14 to 21 being raised by a relative or kinship caregiver who lives in Washington State.
- Any Relative/Kinship caregiver living in Washington State raising children under the age of 14, and is served through a Washington Kinship Navigator Support Program, or is a member of a Washington state federally recognized tribe.

To sign up for either of these programs, visit the Pacific Science Center and ask about the Family and Youth Access Membership programs. You also can contact the membership office at 206-443-2924 or click on this link to learn more about the benefits of membership.

www.pacificsciencecenter.org/access/

Washington State Parks and the Seattle Aquarium Connections Program

You can use your foster care license or identification card for access to state parks. You need to have the wallet-sized foster care identification card to access the aquarium.

Kinship caregivers who are not licensed can obtain a card from the Licensing Division worker who is completing their home study. Once a home study has been completed, kinship caregivers can request a new card from their kinship child's caseworker.

If you have questions about obtaining a card, please contact Holly Luna at holly.luna@dcyf.wa.gov or 360-902-8035.

You can learn more about the Washington State Parks program at parks.state.wa.us/205/Passes

For more information about the Seattle Aquarium Connections Program, visit www.seattleaquarium.org/connections-program





Registration Now Open for “Way To Go,” formerly “Make It Happen”

The College Success Foundation and Treehouse, in partnership with the Washington Passport Network, announce that “Make It Happen!” is now “Way To Go.”

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

New name and brand: The Way To Go name was developed by the foundation and Treehouse, which has dramatically increased high school graduation rates for youth in foster care. The name was chosen to evoke optimism and highlights the importance of students setting their own course for post-secondary success. Students’ paths are not always linear and come with highs and lows. This is seen as normal, healthy progression. With the right support and information, these scholars are considered to have the potential to break stereotypes and oppressive cycles.

One-day format in three different locations: To improve accessibility and increase the number of students who can attend, three one-day events are being presented around the state:

June 18 – Eastern Washington University in Cheney.

June 25 – Saint Martin’s University in Lacey.

June 27 – Everett Community College in Everett.

Transportation will be provided to all locations. The event is free to attend.

Focus on high school juniors and seniors: Rising high school juniors and seniors who meet the following criteria are eligible to attend:

- Those who have experienced state, tribal or federal foster care after the age of 13; or
- Those who have experienced unaccompanied youth homelessness at some point during high school.

If you have questions about whether a student is eligible to attend, you’re encouraged to contact the foundation.

Tribal foster youth, unaccompanied refugee minors and unaccompanied homeless youth: These students are newly eligible for Passport To College. Please help spread the word to them about Way To Go so they can be empowered to take full advantage of financial aid and support programs available through PTC.

Event agenda details, a frequently-asked-questions document, information about transportation support and attendee registration are available on the Washington Passport Network website www.washingtonpassportnetwork.org.

Questions?

Feel free to reach out to event lead Donna Quach: passport@collegesuccessfoundation.org

RECALL AND WARNING ISSUED

Please click on this link below if you have a Fisher-Price Rock-N-Play infant sleeper. They have been recalled because of danger to infants:

www.cpsc.gov/Newsroom/News-Releases/2019/CPSC-ALERT-CPSC-and-Fisher-Price-Warn-Consumers-About-Fisher-Price-Rock-N-Play-Due-to-Reports-of-Death-When-Infants-Roll-Over-in-the-Product#



Memorial Day closure—Coordinated Care will be closed Monday, May 27, in observance of Memorial Day.

Celebrating caregivers during Foster Care Month

May is an important month for foster care. It's National Foster Care Month, a time when we come together as a community to celebrate caregivers, family members and others who are helping children and youth in foster care find permanency and lifelong connections.

From the entire staff at Coordinated Care to all of the foster, adoptive and kinship caregivers across the state, we say thank you! It is truly an honor to serve you. Our call center received more than 10,000 calls from caregivers in 2018. Our team is inspired by the care you provide to the children and youth in your home.

To help celebrate National Foster Care Month, Coordinated Care and CC the Panda will attend the Pacific Northwest Caregivers Conference and We Are Family Day at the Mariners' stadium.

More information and resources for National Foster Care Month:

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan issued the proclamation first establishing May as National Foster Care Month. Visit the Children's Bureau website for more history.

This year's theme for National Foster Care Month is "Foster Care as a support to families, not a substitute for parents."

Are you interested in spreading the word on your social media pages? Find some sample tweets, posts and emails to get the word out about National Foster Care Month here:

www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/spread/socialmedia/

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 when medication was started. If you have any questions about this or any other health-related issue, contact Apple Health at 1-844-354-9876.

Need help with health care coordination? Have questions about healthcare, including behavioral health? Call Apple Health Core Connections at 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).

Direct Deposit for Caregivers

Caregivers, please consider signing up for Electronic Fund Transfer (direct deposit) for reimbursements. EFT is an option for all caregivers and signing up is easy. Receive your reimbursement timely and save yourself a trip to the bank. To sign up, please fill out the form located at:

www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/SESA/ssps/documents/SSPSEFTRegistration-W9.pdf

To submit the form, print, sign and mail to SSPS Provider File Unit at P.O. Box 45346, Olympia, WA 98504, or FAX to 360-902-8268.

Honey, I Shrunk the Art



“Honey, I Shrunk the Kids” is one of my favorite kids’ movies. I love imagining how the world would appear if you were three inches tall!

I happened upon some shrink-film projects online last month, which reminded me of the movie, and I thought shrink art would be perfect to adapt to gift-giving. Mother’s Day and Father’s Day ARE fast approaching, after all. So last week, I bought a package of shrink film at a hobby store and got busy. I had lots of fun creating some simple gifts. What was even *more* fun was watching my artwork undulating and wriggling as it shrunk in the oven, only to flatten back out into a miniaturized version of itself. Whether you’re 7 or 17 or 70, it’s magic.

Since shrink film also is fairly economical, your kids can have a great time making a one-of-a-kind shrink-art keepsake for their moms and dads and you’ll have plenty of shrink film left over for slumber parties, birthday bashes and boredom busters this summer.

Here’s the supply list for making shrink art necklaces and keychains:

1. **Shrink film.** Packages of these sheets come in a variety of types: clear, roughed on one side or photographic – which enables you to reproduce photos on it via a printer. (Yes, you *can* shrink the kids!) Permanent markers are a must when using the clear shrink film; the finished artwork remains clear. I decided to try the type that’s rough on one side. The beauty of it is that you can use permanent markers on the smooth side or turn it over and use colored pencils or acrylic paint on the rough side. After baking, the art is opaque.
2. **Fine-line permanent markers or colored pencils.** (Water-based markers and crayons won’t work.)
3. **For a necklace: A jewelry chain, thin ribbon or cord.** I’d planned on buying cord, but noticed a leather cord on clearance. It already had the necklace fastening attached, cost just \$2 and looked classy.
4. **For keychain: a package of key rings.**
5. **Jump rings to finish your jewelry.** These are small wire circles, and unless you’re using very fine cord to thread the pendant on, you will need jump rings to attach the pendant onto the cord. The same goes with the key fob. That’s because the hole, as well as the art, shrinks in size.
6. **Cookie sheet or pan lined with aluminum foil.**
7. **Pencil, paper, scissors, pliers, quarter-inch hole-punch.**



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Have children too young to create a masterpiece? Press their thumb onto an ink pad, then onto the film to make a print. Two thumb prints can be overlapped at the bottom to form a heart. Write a little sentiment, their name and/or the date on it. Any youth 14 to 21 being raised by a relative or kinship caregiver who lives in Washington State.

Making shrink art jewelry

1. Decide how large to make the finished art. I totally underestimated the amount of shrinkage. For my pendant, I began by drawing a 3-inch circle on the film, and when finished, my design had shrunk to 1¼ inches – too small, I thought. So I made a 5-inch circle. When I made the key fob, about 4 inches long, it looked huge on paper. But it became much too small when baked. Don't be afraid to make it larger.
2. Decide on the desired shape of the finished product. (It doesn't have to be a circle or a rectangle.) Using a pencil, lightly mark the shape onto the shrink film. (I traced around a bowl for my pendant and around a tag for the key fob.)
3. On scratch paper, make duplicate shapes and let your kids practice their design ideas on paper before doing it on the film.
4. Once they're happy with their design, they can recreate it on the film freehand or slip the scratch paper under the film, trace their design, then color it.* There's a tendency for permanent markers to smear on the slick film, so caution them to hold their hands away from the just-colored areas as they work until the ink dries – just a few seconds.
5. Cut out the shapes.
6. **IMPORTANT** ~ Use a hole-punch to make a hole at the top of the shape so it can be fastened onto the jewelry. It must be done *before* baking because the film thickens considerably as it bakes, making it impossible to create the hole later without a drill.
7. Set the oven at 325 degrees. It's important that the oven is preheated to the correct temperature before baking.
8. Place the cut-out shapes on a cookie sheet or oven pan lined with aluminum foil.
9. Bake for 1 to 3 minutes, until the shape curls up and then becomes flat again. After it flattens, leave it in another 20 seconds.
10. Remove from the oven. If the shapes aren't quite flat, press them down lightly using something flat, like the bottom of a glass. Let cool for a few minutes.
11. Attach the artwork to the necklace or key chain. To use the jump rings, spread the wire ring ends slightly apart with pliers, then slip it over the necklace cord or chain. Next, slip the artwork onto the same ring and pinch the ring back closed with the pliers.

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.

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

- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma: A Workshop for Resource Families from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- ILABS Module 5: Understanding Emotions
- ILABS Module 6: Language Development: Learning the Sounds of Language
- ILABS Module 10: Language Development: From Listening to Speaking
- ILABS Module 12: Temperament in Early Childhood
- Infant Safety and Care
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Webinar)
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Parenting the Positive Discipline Way
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Understanding and Managing Caregiver's Own Emotions and Self Care
- Verbal De-escalation

MAY TRAININGS IN REGION 2: SOUTH/CENTRAL EASTERN WASHINGTON

- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Caregiving for Children with Sexually Aggressive Behavior Concerns
- Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma: A Workshop for Resource Parents from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- ILABS Module 4: The Power of Learning Through Imitation
- ILABS Module 5: Understanding Emotions
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Parenting the Positive Discipline Way
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

Caregiver Training from the Alliance continued

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

- Bullying: Prevention and Intervention
- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Caregiving for Children with Physically Aggressive Behavior Concerns
- Caring for Children Who Have Experienced for Trauma: A Workshop for Resource Parents from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- ILABS Module 5: Understanding Emotions
- ILABS Module 10: Language Development: From Listening to Speaking
- ILABS Module 11: Bilingual Language Development
- ILABS Module 12: Temperament in Early Childhood
- ILABS Module 17: Development of Literacy
- ILABS Module 18: Learning to Make Things Happen: How Children Learn Cause and Effect
- Introduction to Adoption
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Verbal De-escalation

MAY TRAININGS IN REGION 4: KING COUNTY

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Behavior Management Tools for Foster Parents and Caregivers
- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Caregiving for Children with Sexual Behavior Concerns
- Chaos to Calm: Promoting Attachment in Out-of-Home Care
- ILABS Module 5: Understanding Emotions
- ILABS Module 6: Language Development: Learning the Sounds of Language
- ILABS Module 9: Sharing Attention During Early Childhood
- ILABS Module 12: Temperament in Early Childhood
- ILABS Module 15: Early Music Experience
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Parenting the Positive Discipline Way
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Verbal De-escalation

Caregiver Training from the Alliance continued

MAY TRAININGS IN REGION 5: PIERCE AND KITSAP COUNTIES

- As They Grow: The Drug Impacted Infant and Toddler
- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Caregiving for Children With Sexual Behavior Concerns
- How You Can Become an Effective Educational Advocate for Your Child (the Family Guide to Working with Schools)
- ILABS Module 18: Learning to Make Things Happen: How Children Learn Cause-and-Effect
- ILABS Module 19: Early STEM Learning
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Parenting the Positive Discipline Way
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

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

- As They Grow: The Drug Impacted Infant and Toddler
- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- ILABS Module 2: Why The First 2,000 Days Matter: A Look Inside the Brain
- ILABS Module 3: The Importance of Early Interactions
- ILABS Module 4: The Power of Learning Through Imitation
- ILABS Module 15: Early Music Experience
- ILABS Module 16: Foundations of Literacy
- ILABS Module 17: Development of Literacy
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What?
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

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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

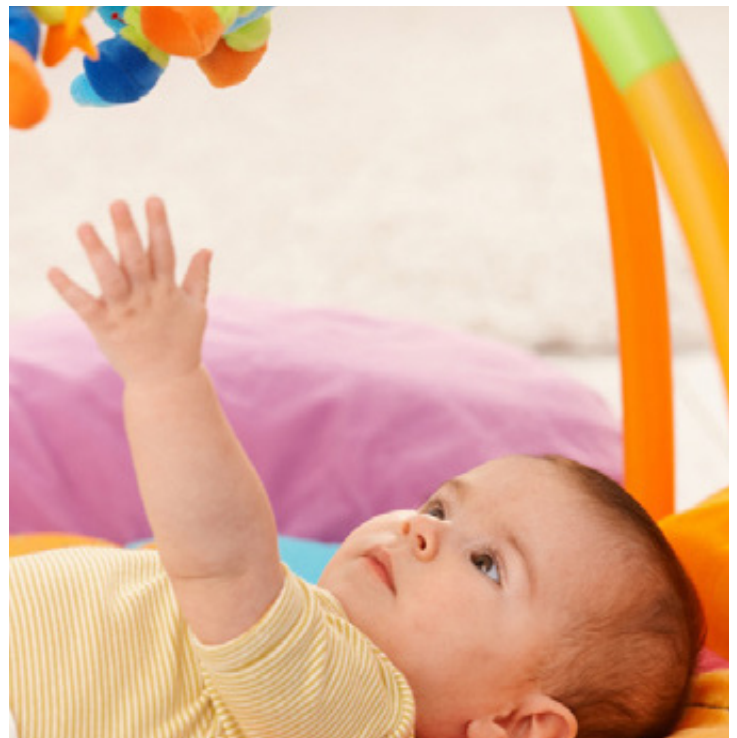
Prospective foster parents are welcome to license through either DCYF's, Children, Youth and Families – Licensing Division (DCYF-LD), or any private child placing agency licensed in Washington. Our recruitment partners serve all families, regardless of where they choose to become licensed. Prospective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

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

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

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](#)