

JULY 2019

Caregiver Connection

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

Thanking Bob and Deanna Partlow for their 13 Years of Service



For the last 13 years, Bob and Deanna Partlow crafted the words behind the stories for the “Caregiver Connection.” Each penned articles that highlighted our caregivers across the state, the resources available for families and the children and youth we serve.

Prior to writing for the “Caregiver Connection,” Bob served as the recruitment and retention program manager at the former Children’s Administration.

During his time with the agency, he was assigned to help coordinate Camp to Belong, a nationally recognized, 5-day camp dedicated to reuniting siblings who were separated in foster care. Deanna Bedell, a curriculum developer at the University of Washington who previously supervised Bob, says he was instrumental in getting the Washington State Camp to Belong up and running.

Bob and his wife Deanna continue to volunteer at Camp to Belong to this day.

A Fresh Start for the Caregiver Connection

Beginning August 1, news from the “Caregiver Connection” will be available on the DCYF “Foster Parenting and Kinship Care” webpage—www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/foster-parenting. Every week, we will post two to three articles in the “Latest News” section and on the DCYF homepage, dcyf.wa.gov, under “What’s New.” At the end of each month, we will send a roll-up with links to all of the articles using the foster parent and caregiver email service. If you haven’t signed up to receive emails and news, you can do so here—www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/foster-parenting/email-service. While we will no longer distribute the large, multi-page newsletter, we are hopeful that you will find the new format easy to access. DCYF maintains its commitment to bring you information that is timely, useful and an affirming reflection of all of the amazing caregivers, children, youth and families that are the foster care community.

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
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“While these were job assignments for Bob, they were more than that to him. He brought a passion to the work that was based on his love of children and his experience as a foster parent,” said Bedell. “This passion continues today, even after retirement.”

Deb Kennedy, director of Camp to Belong, explained the camp wouldn’t be here today if it wasn’t for Bob’s championing to bring it to Washington.

“He’s seen more than 1,000 brothers and sisters reunited here and has helped to process camper applications and select sibling groups to attend camp,” said Kennedy.

But you can’t really talk about Bob without mentioning his wife Deanna, she added.

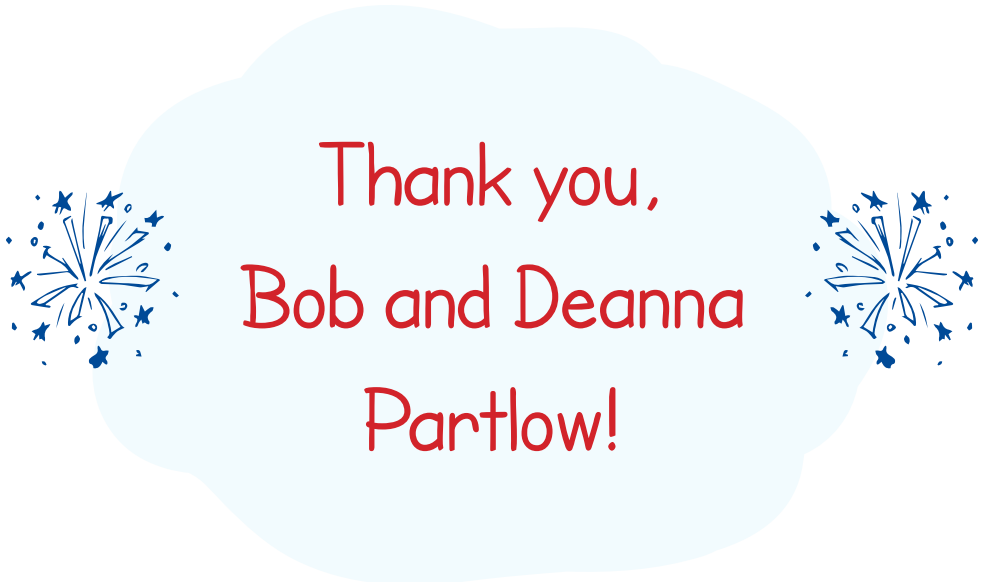
“They are a united force and have an equal passion for the children,” explained Kennedy. “I have witnessed firsthand the depth of care and concern they show for improving the lives of foster children.”

Shala Crow, director of Fostering Together, also knows the couple for their work during the holiday season when they dress up as Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus. Crow says his role as Santa Bob at the annual Caregiver Conference has brought happy hearts and smiles with young and old alike.

“He is a champion for caregivers and children in foster care,” said Crow. “He has a heart for change and this passion has been evident through his work over the years and as a long time foster parent.”

Jean Brownell, statewide caregiver curriculum developer lead at the University of Washington, worked with the Partlows on the “Caregiver Connection” publication in recent years.

“It has been such a pleasure to learn from their years of experience and their passion for supporting caregivers and the children in their home. They always bring such an empathetic and genuine care to their work.”



A Mission Statement Tattooed on the Heart

From Bob and Deanna Partlow, former foster parents

July marks the last month of the Caregiver Connection [in its current format], first produced as a one-page printed document in March 2005 by then-Children's Administration.

I have been deeply involved with the newsletter from day one, but am now leaving this work, thankful beyond words for being able to indulge two of my passions, reporting/writing and supporting those who work on behalf of children.

those on the front lines of helping our most vulnerable children, it also inspires others.

All of you put service above self, knowing that, as Muhammad Ali said, "service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth."

The mission of the Caregiver Connection has always been education, information and inspiration.

I would be less than honest if I said we don't feel sad and disappointed that the Caregiver Connection is changing format. For me, it's somewhat like raising a child from infancy through the teen years, then not having that child in your life any more – sort of like being a foster parent.

So I leave this labor of love with a heavy heart, but knowing also that while the Caregiver Connection is ending, the stories that have been included in it live

They say if you do what you love, you never work a day in your life.

That has certainly been true with the Caregiver Connection. It has been a labor of love, both for me and my wife Deanna, who edits the newsletter and creates the Just For Kids column.

I'm a people person and it's so important to both me and Deanna that the people in this system have their stories told. We have had the honor of telling hundreds of your stories over the years.

I've written before that the word "hero" is so overused it has become almost meaningless.

But I've seen real heroes. For me, they're the ones serving on the front lines of helping others, be they first responders, nurses, members of the armed services, teachers, social workers or those men and women who help nurture and guide to the future children in need of homes and love. They are all heroes.

Telling the stories of the people who serve in a cause like this is so important. It not only recognizes and honors the work of

We feel proud of the work we have done in partnering with so many others to help fulfill that mission.

I'm old-school about writing and storytelling. I believe that as important as it is to give caregivers what they need to know, it is absolutely necessary that they are also told stories of others who share similar experiences, their passion and their challenges. In this difficult and sometimes thankless task, they then can be buoyed up by the many others who, like themselves, have their mission statements tattooed on their hearts.

That has always been job one for connecting caregivers through the newsletter.

One of the first rules of journalism is that people want to read about people.

The endeavor of raising other people's children is an enterprise about people, connections and relationships. The stories caregivers share help all of us humanize what can be a complex and confusing system.

on. We look forward to finding other ways to tell these compelling human stories from those who populate our work.

Again, I say thank you for supporting me and Deanna in our work, and again, we thank you for all you do each day in sustaining those young, traumatized lives and those who seek to make them better. As those who have donned the personas of Santa and Mrs. Claus, we are happy to say your passion and persistence will always keep you on Santa's good list.

And finally, to all those who work on behalf of children, I will close with my favorite quote, from the author James Baldwin: "For these are all our children and we will profit by or pay for whatever they become."

Please never forget that thousands of young lives have profited mightily for all you have done and continue to do every day of your lives.

Rachel Scott: Now Oceans Away from Foster Care

When Rachel Scott received her diploma from the University of Washington on June 13, the 23-year old budding oceanographer took the next big step in a journey that began 19 years earlier while watching a television show.

The show was a NOVA documentary on oceans and ocean life. Rachel was instantly enthralled.

"I just fell in love," she said. "From then on, it was oceans, oceans, oceans. I've been smitten with the oceans since day one." This passion came from a young person, who, living in Eastern Washington, never even saw the ocean in person until she was 13.

It was her focus on the future that led her to earning a degree in oceanography with a minor in marine biology. It was that same focus that helped her overcome a rocky childhood and being removed from her parents when she was 12. She lived in foster care in a kinship placement until she turned 18.

In Spokane, Rachel graduated summa cum laude from Gonzaga Prep School, wrote a winning entry for the Voices of Children contest, became a Washington Governor's Scholar and enrolled at the University of Washington.

She knows that, with her college success, she has beaten the odds as a former youth in care since so few like her attend or graduate from college. Even rarer are youth in care who graduate in a field of science.

"I've never met another oceanographer who was in foster care," she said. "I've never met another scientist who was in foster care."

"It is important for other kids in foster care to see – to see that you can be a scientist," she said of the example she has set.

Many people helped her along her journey, she says. Melissa Rapp, from the Champions Program at UW, connected with her and other former youth in care to help them navigate the higher education system. Through Annie Blackledge, now executive director of the Mockingbird Society, she was able to attend three White House conferences on foster care and youth homelessness. There, she met President Barack Obama and made a strong connection with First Lady Michelle Obama.

In an interesting twist of fate, one of her professors, to whom she also gives credit, is Deborah Kelley. Rachel realized at some point during her time at UW that Deborah was one of the oceanographers featured in that long-ago TV documentary. The documentary also featured John Delaney, described by Rachel, as a world-renowned oceanographer. She has been fortunate enough to work with him, she said.

Rachel is now working for the UW's Oceanography Program, where she will be part of a team measuring the health of the oceans. Her job will be processing data, she said.



Rachel Scott with First Lady Michelle Obama at the White House

Her long-term goal is to earn an advanced degree and teach, she said.

While many young adults who come out of the foster care system go to work to improve it, Rachel's life path was different. But she still speaks about her childhood experiences, she said, most recently at the national Children's Justice Conference.

"The system failed me," she said. "Ten years ago, I had the idea that I would be dead by 20."

What kept her going was the people who surrounded her with support. "It was the community, the whole foster care community, that supported me to have the life I have today," she said.

One of her key inspirations remains her older sister Marye, who went to college believing her other four siblings would follow her lead. "My sister and all of my siblings are my biggest role models in life," she says. Like Rachel, they are well on the road to bright futures.

Marye just graduated from Gonzaga Law School. Another sister, Marie, is a project manager for a company that works with The Boeing Co. William, her brother, works for a shoe manufacturing company, and Rachele, another sister, is studying pre-med at Washington State University and plans to attend the nursing school.

Now it's Rachel's turn to inspire the next generation, instilling in them the same belief she learned to have in herself.

"My life is going to be amazing and I made it amazing," she said.

Governor's Scholars Honored

The Governor's Scholarship for Foster Youth, a program launched in 2001 by then-Gov. Gary Locke and operated by the College Success Foundation, recently announced the students chosen as 2019 Governor's Scholars.

Foster youth are selected partially on the basis of a written scholarship essay, which is part of a judging event.

Listed below are the 2019 Governor's Scholars, along with their hometowns, high schools and the colleges they plan to attend.

Congratulations to all, and may your college experience be happy and helpful in preparing you for your life ahead!

2019 GOVERNOR'S SCHOLARS

Fasika Alemu—Olympia, North Thurston High School, Seattle Central College.

Hunter Allen—Spokane, Ferris High School, Spokane Falls Community College.

Basema Bataminy—Spokane, Lewis & Clark High School-Spokane, Eastern Washington University.

Taykeisha Brown—Spokane, North Central High School, South Seattle College.

Jolie Bwiza—Tacoma, Stadium High School, Saint Martin's University.

Anthony Comacho—Bellingham, Meridian High School, Whatcom Community College.

Adrian Combelic—Vancouver, Vancouver School of Arts and Academics, Clark College.

Lexi Cree—Lynden, Lynden High School, Western Washington University.

Madison Derrer—Tacoma, Tacoma Community College Fresh Start Program, Tacoma Community College.

Shadow Duggan—Deer Park, Deer Park High School, Eastern Washington University.

Makaila Ervin—Puyallup, Challenger Secondary School, Pierce College at Fort Steilacoom.

Tiffany Estes—Spokane, Ferris High School, Seattle Pacific University.

Yesenia Fernandez—Auburn, Thomas Jefferson High School, Central Washington University.

Monica Forgey—Yakima, Eisenhower High School, Eastern Washington University.

Misty Garcia—Blaine, Sehome High School, Western Washington University.

Sibhat Gebrekidan—Seattle, Foster High School, South Seattle College.

Aerolynn Geddes—Manson, Manson High School, Spokane Falls Community College.

Alex Gerkensmeyer—Cheney, Cheney High School, Eastern Washington University.

Dania Gutierrez Bonilla—Renton, Lindbergh High School, Green River Community College.

Junie Guzman—Tacoma, Lincoln High School-Tacoma, undecided.

Rachel Harwood—Spokane, North Central High School, University of Washington – Seattle.

Salena Joiner—Manson, Manson High School, Big Bend Community College.

Timothy Karn—Vancouver, Vancouver iTech Preparatory, Washington State University.

Samantha Maertens—Olympia, Tumwater High School, University of Washington – Seattle.

Christian Martinez—Bellevue, Sammamish High School, Seattle University.

Michael Matson—Spokane, Mead High School, Eastern Washington University.

Alexius McKinney—Mount Vernon, Arlington High School, Skagit Valley College.

Krystall Moreno—Woodinville, Woodinville High School, Cascadia Community College.

Jade Morgan—Graham, Challenger Secondary School, Olympic College.

Dupree Pickett—Seattle, Interagency Programs, Seattle Central College.

Savannah Rae—Burlington, Burlington-Edison High School, Whatcom Community College.

Jacqueline Sikes—Eatonville, Eatonville High School, undecided.

Sequoyah Skay—Marysville, Arlington High School, Everett Community College.

Noah Tillequots—Darrington, Darrington Senior High School, Central Washington University.

Destin Toquinto—Auburn, Auburn High School, Green River Community College.

Cawh Twe—Seattle, Franklin High School, Seattle Central College.

Trinity Utnage—Auburn, Auburn Riverside High School, University of Washington – Tacoma.

Holland White—Auburn, Kentridge High School, Pacific Lutheran University.

Voices of Children Winners Honored

This month, we present the final four winners in the “Voices of Children Being Raised By Grandparents and Other Relatives” contest. Two were featured in the June edition of Caregiver Connection.

For 16 years, Family Education and Support Services, based in Thurston County, has operated the statewide contest. Children and youth in kinship care are invited to submit writing or artwork describing the positive impact being raised by relatives has had on their lives.

Two winners in each of the three age categories are given \$100 by co-sponsor Twin Star Credit Union, and each winner's family receives a free night's lodging at Great Wolf Lodge. Winners and their families also are honored at an awards ceremony. This year's ceremony will be July 9 at the Washington Governor's Mansion.

The winning entries below are displayed exactly as submitted.



Magdalena, 11, Grandview

My name is Nattalee and I am 11 years old. I am excited to live with my Great Grandma Bonnie and my grandma YawYaw (wendy).

My brother is two and went to live with GG Bonnie and YawYaw when my mom couldn't keep us because she needed help and decided to let us live with GG and YawYaw.

It is so good to live with my grandmas. Our home is safe, warm, and comfortable. We have popcorn movie nights where we make beds on the floor and we turn [off] the lights and laugh and tickle each other. My family also includes Honey and Little Bit our small dogs. GG said I run fast and needed a best friend to run with, so she got Little Bit for me. She is my best friend she even sleeps with me. She likes to cuddle. She runs so fast. She is black with the cuties whiskers on her chin. I love her so much plus Honey is so sweet to.

My GG Bonnie went to my school to talk with my teacher. I was having problems and couldn't read. I meet with Dr. Winters and he checked my eyes, they didn't work together. So he setup therapy times and I went to therapy for 8 months and I just graduated. I now read better, write better, the words don't jump around or disappear. I am happy because I feel better and have more confidence.

I thank my GG Bonnie and YawYaw for getting me therapy. I really feel good about school now. They had to push me and I got mad. But we did it together. My Grandmas are great.

I have made new friends living with my Grandmas. We play and have sleep overs. They like my grandmas to. I have a bike to ride and one to share whe my cousins come to visit because GG thinks we need the fresh air and fun together.

GG lets me play on her phone. I love that she trusts me. We go get ice cream cones, and go to family reunions. It's great fun. At bed time we pray for our families and friends. This makes me happy

Nattalee, 11, Yakima

Voices of Children Winners Honored continued



Kaden, 5, Forks

Going the Extra Mile

It's not a Grandparents job to raise their Grandchildren.

They're supposed to take out their life savings to go on adventures, make new memories, and they're definitely supposed to take a well-deserved break.

But my Grandparents decided to take on the job of becoming parents again.

When I was around the age of 6, I remember the trailer my sisters and I lived in with our mom and dad. It reeked of cigarettes and alcohol as soon as you opened the door. There was no room to play, no clean water, not enough food for a full meal and definitely no new clothes.

And because of that we would get dropped off at our grandparents' house every week.

We would get new clothes, get properly bathed and eat a delicious meal.

One day my mom said pack up your things your living with your grandparents.

I had three things, my school backpack, my Chucky doll I got from the smoke shack, and the clothes on my back.

It felt no different from any other day because we were always over there, but after a while my mom stopped visiting us at our new home and we never saw our dad.

But we went to school every day, ate our three meals of the day plus dessert, went shopping regularly, made new friends, learned new things about ourselves, and learned to be more appreciative of our grandparents every day.

There isn't anything in this world I wouldn't do for them, because they raised my sisters and I since we were kids and certainly because I love them.

I owe my whole life to my grandparents.

And they deserve everything in this life.

Lola, age 17 – Yakima

Legislature Works On Child Welfare Issues

The 2019 session of the State Legislature that ended in April passed several bills related to child welfare.

One of the most visible was a bill that will phase out the use of juvenile detention for “status offenses,” those committed by young people such as running away or truancy. This was a major effort on behalf of youth working through the Mockingbird Society.

Liz Trautman, Mockingbird’s director of public policy and advocacy, said services will have to be developed to replace those that historically have sent youth automatically to detention.

The current system of locking kids up in “juvie” sends the wrong message, Trautman said. “You teach them not to engage with the system.”

Rep. Michelle Caldier, R-Port Orchard, co-chair of the legislative Kids Caucus, an informal group of legislators who champion children’s issues, said the bill drew criticism from some people in law enforcement, who were concerned they would not have anywhere to place youth if juvenile detention was no longer an option. The three-year phase-in will enable alternate preventative services to be developed.

In another legislative effort, more money was put into the State Need Grant Program to allow more low-income youth to access financial support for college, said Frank Ordway, director of government affairs and community engagement for the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF).

“This is a significant win,” Ordway said of the program, which had already been created but never funded.

“This will help bring stability (to educational programs) to help kids,” he said. “This is a major, major step.”

An increase in money also is going to support the Behavior Rehabilitation Services (BRS) program.

Mike Canfield, executive director of the Foster Parents Association of Washington State (FPAWS), said Rep. Noel Frame, D-Seattle, was instrumental in putting more money into the program. If youth receiving BRS supports cannot stay in placements better equipped to meet their needs, they can end up in foster homes that may not be prepared or equipped to meet their needs, he said.

Language also was changed so the State can maximize access to federal money for prevention services under a new federal law.

“The biggest problem we’ve had is the lack of preventative services,” Caldier said.

The department has put an emphasis on providing prevention services to children and youth so they do not have to be removed.

The Legislature and DCYF are also trying to give youth in care a voice. It created two spots specifically for youth with foster care or juvenile court system experience for the DCYF Oversight Board and for a state advisory committee that works on issues related to homelessness. These youth will apply the expertise that comes with “lived experience” to shaping and recommending policies affecting them.

“On the whole, we’re pretty excited,” Trautman said of the 2019 Legislative session’s outcome.

Among other pieces of passed legislation:

- ➔ A bill that requires any child entering foster care to be screened for traumatic brain injury.

“That’s huge,” said Caldier, a former foster youth and former foster parent who is getting relicensed to care for teens, probably in a respite situation because of her legislative duties.

“I’m a great believer in walking the talk,” she said. “I can directly play a role.”

Greater access to mental health records can be shared more broadly under certain circumstances. And a youth 13 years or older can be given mental health services under certain circumstances, even if they say they do not want them, Caldier said.

- ➔ A bill requiring DCYF to create a child welfare housing assistance pilot program to include housing vouchers and supportive services for birth parents so they can have their children returned home more quickly.

“If the only reason a parent can’t get their child back is housing, this is intended to help that,” Caldier said of the bill. “A lot of parents don’t have a lot of money.”

Caldier said she is a big supporter of the idea that persistent work to change the system can make life better for everyone who is part of it.

“I was so frustrated with the State” as a youth in care and as a foster parent. “We can totally change the outcomes.”



Above upper:
Rep. Michelle
Caldier, R-Port
Orchard
Above lower:
Frank Ordway,
Director of
Government Affairs
and Community
Engagement,
Department of
Children, Youth, and
Families



Resources Offered for Youth in Care

A great deal of attention is being focused on the needs of youth who are considering how to prepare for their life after being in care. A number of organizations provide information, resources and advocacy for these young people. Among them are:

The College Success Foundation, which provides scholarships and a college preparedness experience called “Way To Go,” among other resources. See what it offers at www.collegesuccessfoundation.org

The Mockingbird Society, which provides many services, including an opportunity for young people in care to have their voices heard on matters affecting them, such as the phasing-out juvenile detention for youth status offenses. To learn more or to get involved in Mockingbird’s work, click on www.mockingbirdsociety.org

Passion To Action, which is a youth-driven group of about 24 current and former youth in care. It advises both DCYF and other groups and individuals about issues impacting their lives. It was created by the Legislature in 2005. Peggy Lewis is the DCYF program manager for Passion To Action. For more information, contact her at peggy.lewis@dcyf.wa.gov

Another great resource for youth in care is www.independence.wa.gov, which has information about financial and other resources that can help youth as they prepare to transition out of care. Check it out, too, to learn about scholarships and other financial aid opportunities for further training or education.



CPS Investigator Receives Rosie Oreskovich Award

Unbeknownst to her, Janet Watkins, a CPS investigator working out of the Benton County Sheriff’s Office, walked into a room full of people ready to recognize her commitment to safety, permanency and well-being of children and families.

Janet received the Rosie Oreskovich award during this year’s Children’s Justice Conference in Seattle on May 13.

Jody Becker, Deputy Secretary of Programs for Children and Families, presented the award to Janet, who received three separate nominations.

Janet has worked for DCYF (formerly Children’s Administration) for the past 11 years in various positions, including after-hours, intake and relative search.

She has been instrumental in increasing a working relationship between law enforcement and the agency and played a crucial role in implementing visitation protocols to facilitate visits between incarcerated individuals and caseworkers.

Janet also teaches part time at Heritage University, where she mentors future social workers, some of which have joined DCYF.

Cecilia Larios-Cardenas, a colleague who nominated Janet described her leadership and impact on the community.

“With respect to exemplifying social work values and ethics, Ms. Watkins shines. The best part about her is that she does not realize her shine qualities,” Cecilia wrote in her nomination. “She simply does what needs to be done in an efficient manner. Ms. Watkins works and pushes to do what is in the best interests regarding child safety. She does this through information sharing, guidance, education, and effective leadership.”

Congratulations Janet!



Foster Youth Throws Honorary First Pitch at We Are Family Day

Johny Perry, an 18-year-old foster youth from Spokane, threw an honorary pitch on the field in front of fans at T-Mobile Park.

Johny joined hundreds of families to celebrate We Are Family Day at the Mariners game on May 19.

He was nominated to be the first pitch youth by three separate people, who knew he lives and breathes Mariners baseball.

When he is not attending high school, Johny participates in the Special Olympics and is known to carry his baseball mitt ready to cheer on his favorite team.

The pre-game activities kicked off with a welcome from Heather Moss, Deputy Secretary of Operations and Infrastructure. Families received information and goodies from partners like Treehouse and Coordinated Care. As part of the special ticket, families also received Mariners socks.

Thanks to everyone who attended this year’s event!

What Parents and Caregivers Need to Know About Vaping

The Surgeon General has declared vaping use among teenagers an epidemic in the United States.

A recent study shows teens in the United States are using vaping devices at higher rates than ever. One report suggests that 37.3 percent of 12th graders report using “any vaping” device in the past year.

What is vaping? Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling aerosol that is made by an e-cigarette or vape pen. The liquid usually has flavoring in it. The nicotine in e-cigarettes is addictive. Besides nicotine, e-cigarettes can contain harmful and potentially harmful ingredients like:

- Ultrafine particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs.
- Diacetyl, a chemical linked to serious lung disease.
- Heavy metals, such as nickel, tin and lead.

What do parents and caregivers need to know about vaping?

Parents, caregivers and teens need to know the effects of vaping on health. They need to know the development of the teen brain and the potential for

addiction. Nicotine is very addictive and can harm the brains of children and teens. Using it can cause problems with learning and attention and can lead to addiction.

Speak with your children.

Be ready to listen rather than lecture. Try using an open-ended question, such as “What do you think about vaping,” to get the conversation started.

Discuss your expectations.

Express what you know about the risks, along with why you do not want the child vaping. If you choose to set consequences, be sure to follow through. Reinforce healthier choices.

Be a good role model.

Set a positive example by being vape- and tobacco-free. If you do vape, keep your equipment and supplies secured.

Read more about vaping and recent study findings at e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/

Coordinated Care Trainings and Events

Apple Health Core Connections has [free trainings](#) focused on parenting children who have endured trauma. These include the Hope for Healing series, Trauma Informed Care and Resiliency.

If you are interested in hosting or setting up a training, send an email to communityeducation@coordinatedcarehealth.com

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. Call 1-844-354-9876 (TTY/TDD: 711).

Is it time for an annual visit to your child's Primary Care Physician?

One of the most important things caregivers can do is to make sure the children in their care see a Primary Care Physician (PCP) at least once a year. Regular contact with the PCP helps prevent problems. Serious

health conditions can be found earlier. Treatments can begin. For teens, these exams are vital. The teen can have private conversations about physical, mental and sexual health and safety. If you need a PCP, Apple Health Core

Connections staff members can help you find a provider. They also can help track down a teen's PCP. Call Coordinated Care for help.

A Road Trip Survival Guide for Parents

By Deanna Partlow



A long-ago road trip with our newly blended family of five children was such an epic calamity that the mention of it sent shudders down my spine for years. As the car rolled along, each child nursed his or her grievances and irritations, which grew like snowballs, until on the way home, tempers exploded in such spectacular fashion that a roadside attitude readjustment was required. When the car reached the motel that night, everyone – adults included – fled the car in different directions to escape each other's company.

We now hoot with laughter over that trip. It certainly prodded me to look for better methods to help everyone keep their sanity and sense of humor on our future travels. Since a summer road trip may well be in your plans, here are some tips I've gathered for happier traveling.

Make a realistic driving plan.

Since you're taking children, you will need to allow extra time to reach your destination. Traveling for 10 hours jammed in a car just doesn't work well for kids.

Share information and plan together.

Discuss your travel destination with your kids beforehand. Include how long the drive will take, how long you'll be staying and why you are traveling to a particular area. Learn about area attractions in books and online and invite them to help you decide some of the things to do. If historical or natural attractions are on the list, find kids' books on the subject.

For those kids in care who may not have had a chance to travel before, this step is important. Putting some structure around the trip and seeking their input can help give them a sense of control and alleviate anxiety.

Decide on car seating arrangements beforehand to avoid arguments and jostling.

If car seats allow for it, rotate the kids each day – or at each stop – so no one gets crammed in the middle seat or in the back row of the van for the entire trip. It also helps if certain kids are getting on each other's nerves.

Give each child some travel money.

Even if it's only a few dollars, they'll have fun deciding how to spend it and how to make it last through the trip. It can be a great learning experience and provide lots of happy anticipation.

Place a necessities bag in the car within easy reach.

In it, put things like sunscreen, mosquito repellant, a first-aid kit, baby wipes, zip-seal plastic bags and other immediate needs. Throw in a road atlas or paper map as a back-up to GPS, but also so kids can track your progress.

Pack lots of healthy, non-messy car snacks and, if you have room, a cooler or at least an insulated bag and ice packs for foods like string cheese, yogurt and juice.

This is an important step if your kids in care have suffered food deprivation in the past and have anxiety about being caught somewhere without food. If you're staying in motels, choose ones that have at least some minimal kitchen equipment – a microwave and/or mini-fridge – for foods like popcorn and cold drinks. Motels that offer a free breakfast get extra points, too.



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Make sure everyone gets a good night's sleep before you go so they're well-rested.

Packing as much as you can earlier in the week helps avoid a last-minute scramble. One thing that worked well with our particular kids was leaving early in the morning. We'd load the car the night before, then pop our pajama-clad kids into the car at 4 or 5 a.m. They'd fall asleep again and, by the time they awoke, we were a good way down the road.

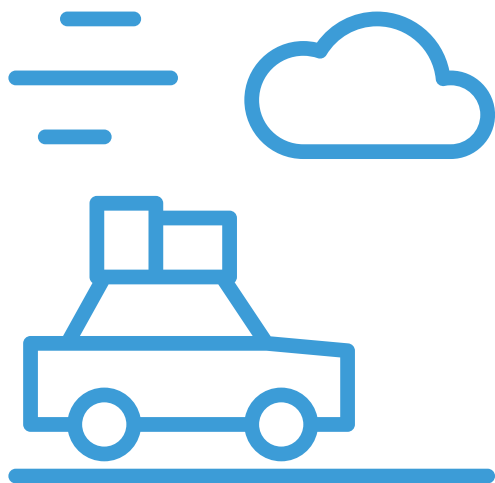
Plan ahead for most meals on the road and let everyone know about the day's plan.

If you're stopping for fast food, decide which place it'll be beforehand to avoid the bickering when one child wants tacos and another wants burgers. You can rotate the places so that each child's favorites are taken into account.

If your child is too young for a cell phone, arm him or her with a disposable camera to document the journey. Few things give kids more pleasure than photographing themselves, each other and memorable locations than being able to take pictures of it and enjoy them again after the trip.

Avoid car jail.

One of the best tips I ever got was to plan frequent kid stops. Google the location of rest areas and parks along your travel route and pull over every couple of hours for a break – not just a bathroom break, but for some physical activity. Pack things like your kids' skates, ball mitts and a ball, blow-up beach balls or flying discs to help them blow off excess energy. Have races or play tag. Hike a short trail. If a baby is in your midst, bring an activity mat or big blanket so your baby can stretch out, kick, crawl and enjoy a break from the car seat.



Stop at points of interest – historic, scenic, the world's biggest ball of string.

While you're probably in a hurry to get where you're going, the journey can be a happy part of the adventure. For help finding great places to visit on your route, download an app to help you. There are several good ones, including Roadtrippers, <https://roadtrippers.com/about/app?lat=40.80972&lng=-96.67528&z=5>

Have fun in the car. For older kids, you could relax screen-time rules.

Listen to audio books, sing songs or read books together. Games like "I spy," slug-bug or a license plate game – finding a license plate from each state – can make car time a fun time. Wrap up a few small novelty toys, sticker books and the like to distribute in the late afternoon when kids are likely getting tired and cranky.

Souvenir along the way.

Shopping for special souvenirs is not only fun but also provides an object to remember a trip by. It doesn't need to be expensive. A few years ago, my grandkids started buying pins at various sites they visited. Each has a baseball cap they attach pins to, and their caps are covered with pins from the places they've visited. Each evokes memories for them. Other collections could be made from stickers, badges, magnets, pencils or postcards. Even brochures from memorable stops can become a souvenir.

Spend a few minutes each day and especially after the trip, conversing about the highlights of the day and what they most enjoyed to help cement this special time together. And if you build memory books for your kids, add a new page or two of trip photos and comments.

Happy adventures!

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.

JULY 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)
- DLR/CPS Allegations: An Overview of the Investigative Process for Caregivers
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Webinar)
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Minimizing the Risks of Allegations
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

JULY TRAININGS IN REGION 2: SOUTH/CENTRAL EASTERN WASHINGTON

- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Identifying and Supporting Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) for Caregivers
- ILABS Module 9: Sharing Attention During Early Childhood
- ILABS Module 12: Temperament in Early Childhood
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Webinar)
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Minimizing the Risks of Allegations
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

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

- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Caregiving for Children with Physically Aggressive Behavior Concerns
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Webinar)
- Minimizing the Risks of Allegations
- Parenting the Positive Discipline Way
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

Caregiver Training from the Alliance continued

JULY TRAININGS IN REGION 4: KING COUNTY

- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Webinar)
- Minimizing the Risks of Allegations
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

JULY TRAININGS IN REGION 5: PIERCE AND KITSAP COUNTIES

- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Emotion Coaching
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

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

- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregivers Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Emotion Coaching
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others (Coaching Session)
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Healthy Engagement with Children of Trauma
- Paper Trail: Documentation Training for Caregivers
- 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.

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

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

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

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

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



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

All supports are designed with our caregivers in mind.

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



Fostering Washington



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

Fostering Washington's website www.fosteringwa.org 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 Marshal	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](#)