

JANUARY 2019

Caregiver Connection

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



Mentoring: A Great Way to Make a Difference in the Lives of Young People

No one gets through life without help from others.

As we celebrate National Mentoring Month in January, it's a great time to reflect on programs and individuals who have mentored youth along their way to adulthood. Mentoring, and the programs that offer mentoring services, can be especially helpful for young people who have come into care because of abuse or neglect. Here are some of those programs in our state.

Seattle-based **Amara**, a private agency that specializes in adoptions, offers a specific program, the STAR Adoptee Mentor Program, geared toward youth who have been adopted.

Adopted youth 10-17 years of age, are mentored by adopted youth 21 years old and older. The adoptees meet as a group, often going to events like sporting matches. They sometimes help with a restoration project in a neighborhood or do other service projects.

"Just being together makes a huge difference," Amara's Post-Adoption Program Coordinator Claudia Marchen said. "Being with others of shared experience is extremely powerful."

The program, now in its third year, came from the mind of a 12-year-old adoptee who noted there was help for adoptive parents, but not so much for adoptees.

Passion To Action

Another group with members who help mentor each other is Passion to Action, which creates opportunities for youth who have experienced foster care to advocate within the system for change. While the program has no formal mentoring program, older youth provide guidance to younger members. Learn more about Passion to Action in the February Caregiver Connection.

Mentor Washington

Mentor Washington is a public-private partnership that provides information about mentoring and how to get involved in mentoring programs.

"Mentoring helps because a child is not alone in dealing with day-to-day challenges... Simple things that seem easy or straightforward to you now may appear to be a complete mystery to a young person. Mentors provide their mentees with an experienced friend who is there to help in any number of situations," the organization's website explains.

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Photo by NESAs by Makers on Unsplash

"Every kid is one caring adult away from being a success."

– Josh Shipp, motivational speaker

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Children, Youth, and Families

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Research by childtrends.org shows resilient teens may be better at avoiding risky behaviors like violence, substance use and pregnancy.

See the research at www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/ChildTrends-2013_11_01_AHH_Resilience.pdf

Tom Pennella, mentoring administrator for the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) echoed that idea.

“Many young people in foster care have not been taught life skills that we take for granted,” he said. “That includes things like what to do and say when applying for a job or filling out the federal form for higher education financial aid.”

He said a 2013 study revealed that on any given day, 65 percent of young people involved with Mentor Washington were involved in the foster care system.

Information provided by Mentor Washington shows young people with mentors are:

- ➔ 52 percent less likely to skip a day at school
- ➔ 46 percent less likely to start using illegal drugs
- ➔ 37 percent less likely to skip a class
- ➔ Exhibit fewer depressive symptoms

Tom has his own special story about mentoring.

An EMT/firefighter who spent his childhood in foster care and was later adopted attended a foster care camp as an adult to help out. There, he connected with a young camper, even though it was for a short time. The man ended up staying in touch with the youth and later adopted him. He now has convinced a local YMCA to start a mentoring program for foster youth.

“You just think about the power one person has to make a difference,” Pennella said.

Mentor Washington provides a wealth of information about mentoring, including training for adults who want to help mentor foster youth. You can find information at www.mentorwashington.org

Informal mentoring

While programs are helpful, mentors do not have to be attached to an organization to have an enormous impact on a young life.

Annie Blackledge, executive director of Mockingbird Society, an organization that focuses on improving foster care and helping homeless youth, has often told the story about how one single person made a difference in her life. Annie was experiencing challenges as a foster youth when a nun named Sister Peter grabbed hold of her life and would not let go – no matter what was occurring.

The journey from Annie’s life as a troubled foster youth to leader of an international organization working to improve foster care might not have happened without that one caring adult, she says.

Mentoring can be as simple as a teacher who connects with a child and provides guidance and support, even when the child is no longer in her class.

[The Harvard Center on the Developing Child](http://www.harvard.edu) notes that the one shared factor for resilient kids is ‘at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver or other adult.’ These bonds can build skills – like the ability to plan, monitor and control actions – which can help teens adapt.



Tom Pennella, mentoring administrator Department of Children, Youth, and Families

Get Out Your Calendar ... 2019 has lots of Events for Caregivers and Youth

The beginning of a new year means planning is underway for many events focused on meeting the needs of caregivers and children in care. Here is a summary of some of those events and activities.

We Are Family Day 2019

The Seattle Mariners and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) have announced details for the 11th annual We Are Family Day, which will be Sunday, May 19, at Seattle's Safeco Field. We Are Family Day celebrates foster, kinship and adoptive families, and the people who support them.

"We hope to rock the stadium this year when the Mariners take on the Minnesota Twins at 1:10 p.m.," said event organizers.

Stadium gates will open at 11:10 a.m. Plan to arrive early to participate in pregame events for caregiving families. They'll begin at 11:30 a.m. in the Outside Corner on the stadium's 300-level.

The Mariners make deep discounts on tickets for this event – and they sell quickly! The discounted tickets, which can be purchased now, are available to foster parents, relative and kinship caregivers, tribal caregivers, DCYF staff, Child Placing Agency staff, group care staff and community partners and stakeholders, along with friends and families.

To purchase tickets, go to www.Mariners.com/WeAreFamily. Click on the green "buy now" button on the webpage. You must enter the promo code, WEAREFAMILY, to purchase the discounted tickets. A special We Are Family giveaway will be given to ticket purchasers through this special offer, while supplies last.

Pacific Northwest Caregivers Conference

The 10th annual Pacific Northwest Caregivers Conference will be held May 3-5 at Great Wolf Lodge, just south of Olympia at Grand Mound. The conference, headed by the Foster Parents Association of Washington State (FPAWS), provides training for caregivers and fun for kids.

Child care is available for the event, but must be booked ahead. Rooms at a discounted rate can be reserved now. To reserve rooms or save a spot for the conference, go to fpaws.ejoinme.org/saveourspot2019.

Keep checking back. Further conference information will be available soon.

The Refresh Conference

The Refresh Conference will be March 14-16 at Overlake Christian Church in Redmond. Although it is faith-based, everyone is welcome to participate in caregiver trainings and general session events.

Conference organizers describe it as "time for you to escape from the distractions and chaos of life and be refreshed, equipped and inspired."

More information, including registration details and frequently asked questions, can be found at therefreshconference.org/

Camp To Belong Washington

Camp To Belong Washington will celebrate its 11th year of welcoming siblings separated by foster, relative or adoptive care in 2019. The camp is built around strengthening sibling bonds and includes a range of activities that help separated siblings build happy memories together, encourage feelings of belonging and enable older youth to explore possible options for future careers and education.

This year the camp will run from Monday, June 24, through Saturday morning, June 29. It is free for separated siblings ages 8-18 and will be held at Miracle Ranch, Port Orchard.

Online registration begins Feb. 1 at www.camptobelongwa.org and is limited to 100 camper spots.

More information about the registration process, as well as some video clips from previous camps, are also available on the website.

Camp To Belong always needs counselors and volunteers to fill a variety of roles. Applications and information are available on the website.



Voices of Children Being Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives Contest

The 16th annual Voice of Children Being Raised by Grandparents and other Relatives Contest will begin soon. Further information will be provided in the February edition of the Caregiver Connection.

During the statewide event, children and youth in three age groups have an opportunity to submit words and/or artwork about their experiences of being raised by relatives. Prizes are awarded in each age group, and prize-winning entries are displayed in a book.

The contest is sponsored by Family Education and Support Services, which is based in Olympia.

Saying It Out Loud Conference

The 18th annual Saying It Out Loud Conference, which addresses issues relevant to LGBTQ+ individuals, will be April 29 at the Greater Tacoma Convention and Trade Center. More information will be available later this month. Scholarships will be available.

Washington State Governor's Scholarship and Make It Happen!

The Washington State Governor's Scholarship and Make It Happen! experience will be offered again this year by the College Success Foundation. Make It Happen! for college-bound students in care will be in June, but logistics are still being determined. Details will be coming later this winter.

Washington State Governor's Scholarships have been awarded since former Gov. Gary Locke began the program in 2001. To be eligible for a Governor's Scholarship, students must:

- Be a high school senior on track to graduate from a Washington high school or obtain a GED from a Washington institution by June 2019.
- Have a minimum cumulative high school grade point average of 2.0.
- Plan to enroll fulltime by fall 2019 at an eligible college or university. (Click to see a list of eligible [colleges and universities](#) in Washington.)
- Have resided in Washington for at least three academic years prior to graduating from high school or obtaining a GED.
- Have applied for the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) or the free [Washington Application for State Financial Aid \(WASFA\)](#).
- Meet one of the following criteria (either currently or until age 18).
 - Placed by a Washington State court order in any of the following living situations:
 - Foster care, guardianship or dependency guardianship (non-relatives, relatives, residential/group care).

- Placed in federally recognized care (private nonprofit agency in Washington), classified as an unaccompanied minor and rendered legal permanent residency in the United States.
- Placed under a dependency tribal court order outside of your home.

Applicants are *not* eligible if they:

- Have been adopted.
- Returned to live with their parents before turning 18 (regardless of whether the court continued to remain involved).
- Have had their dependency court order dismissed.
- Were not dependent to a federal, state or tribal court prior age 18.

Application deadline

The 2019-20 Governor's Scholarship application is available now. The online application *must* be submitted by Feb. 28, 2019. *No exceptions.*

More information about the scholarship program is available at www.collegesuccessfoundation.org



Work To Stop Human Trafficking

January is Human Trafficking Prevention Month

By Dae Shogren, Program manager, Department of Children, Youth, and Families

What exactly does “Trafficking” mean?

By definition, trafficking is the trade of humans for the purpose of forced labor, sexual slavery or commercial sexual exploitation for the trafficker or others. It can include transactional sex with a minor, exotic dancing/stripping, pornography/web cam, gang-based prostitution and more. This article focuses on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC).

Who is at risk of being trafficked?

Ask yourself: *What does a prostitute look like?*

Typically, the image of a sex worker is a female, scantily clad, walking down a street or hanging out on a street corner. Maybe she is leaning into a fancy car, talking to a man. She is smiling, flirty and provocative.

And then ask: *What does a victim of sexual exploitation look like?*

The image of a victim of sexual exploitation is usually a white girl who is scared and sad. Maybe she is tied to a bed in a ripped nightgown. Maybe she has been kidnapped.

Both images hold some truth, but ultimately, they do not represent the majority of victims.

The majority of victims are children to young adults, people of color, nearly equal across genders (male, female and non-binary). They wear clothes like jeans and tee-shirts and are feeling equal levels of shame and guilt. And more often than not, children in this situation have had some level of engagement with the child welfare system.

Why are people who have had contact with the child welfare system more vulnerable to trafficking?

When children are removed from their family of origin, it is because they have suffered from abuse and/or neglect. That trauma of abuse and neglect is impacted by the removal, which can further compound the child’s pre-existing feelings of isolation and worthlessness. This combination creates higher levels of vulnerability and susceptibility to predators, traffickers, and buyers.

How can you combat this cycle?

Relationship, relationship, relationship! Community advocates who work with CSEC victim-survivors will tell you that **relationship is the intervention**. This means meeting the victim-survivors “where they are at,” right here, in the immediate moment.

How can I support a CSEC victim-survivor?

Ask yourself, “*What do they need?*” Maybe to sleep, maybe to shower, maybe to eat, maybe to talk, maybe to be alone.

This means being ready for “the long game,” even if it seems fruitless. It means frustration will happen and patience is necessary. It means maybe they won’t show up on time, but when they do show up, be welcoming. It means recognizing the impact trauma has had on their life and believing in their inherent goodness. It means asking: *How can I best support you?* It also means asking what support you need as a caregiver.

A person who is trafficked, may not directly ask for help but is in need of a person who will be consistent and stable for them. The relationship can be messy and uncertain but is critical for a young person to get out of what is known as “the life.” Resources are available to assist caregivers navigate ways to support a CSEC victim-survivor.

CSEC classes and other help for caregivers

The Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence (ACWE) provides CSEC training for caregivers. To learn more about the courses, caregivers can go to www.alliancecatalog.org/course-catalog and click on course 2176 to take the class online, or on course 2188 to take it in person.

Other statewide resources can be found at: ccyj.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Revised-Model-Protocol-Feb-2016.pdf

www.wattraffickinghelp.org

Survivors will tell their stories Jan. 9 at an event put on by the King County CESC Task Force. It will be in Federal Way. For more information, go to www.kingcountycsec.org/events/2019/1/9/listening-to-the-voices-of-survivors-of-sex-trafficking

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Training on Commercially Sexually Exploited Children offered Online and in Class

Lisa Ball, Trainer, Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence



The University of Washington’s Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence offers trainings to caregivers on commercially sexually exploited children.

The training will help caregivers identify and support children and youth who are at risk for or are being commercially sexually exploited. The training will provide a framework for understanding this issue that greatly impacts adolescents in the child welfare system, as well as for

understanding the basic practices that support helping these youth reach positive outcomes.

Lisa Ball, Curriculum Developer at the Alliance, said foster youth are the highest risk group for being exploited. Moving from home to home and living with caregivers who do not know them well makes them especially vulnerable, she said.

Among the signs caregivers should watch for are kids who run away a lot, kids who are accumulating a lot of items, those who are very attached to their phones and/or those in an intense relationship, especially with an older adult.

She said she finds it hopeful that so much more attention is being paid to this issue now. Resources are available that didn’t exist before.

“As a caregiver, you don’t have to feel alone in helping young people in your care avoid being exploited.”

And social workers are required to take training on the subject, which makes them good partners with caregivers around this subject, she added.

In February, two in-person classes will be offered. The first is from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Feb. 19 in Vancouver; the second is from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Feb. 26 in Sunnyside. See more details and register at www.alliancecatalog.org/node/14066/course-signup

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Each DCYF region has a CSEC lead who can be a resource for you:

Region 1: Chris Thompson

christopher.thompson@dcyf.wa.gov . . . 509-828-0651

Region 2: Chris McLaughlin

christopher.mclaughlin@dcyf.wa.gov . . 509-731-9946

Region 3 and 4: Norene Roberts

norene.roberts@dcyf.wa.gov 425-229-4165

Region 5: Mike Stamp

michael.stamp@dcyf.wa.gov 360-509-2671

Region 6: Eric Anderson

eric.anderson@dcyf.wa.gov 360-869-9869

Division of Licensing: Becky Taylor

rebecca.taylor@dcyf.wa.gov 360-902-0215

Headquarters CSEC Program

Manager: Dae Shogren

dae.shogren@dcyf.wa.gov 360-688-6237

Identifying Children And Youth Who May Be Victims Of Commercial Sexual Exploitation

Certain red flags may mean that a youth is the victim of Commercial Sexual Exploitation. A young person could have all these red flags and not be trafficked, or not have any of these flags and be trafficked. These red flags are intended to be used as a guideline.

- Being a chronic truant/runaway/ homeless/gang-involved youth.
- Possessing excess amounts of cash.
- Having hotel room keys.
- Having goods or services he/ she could not have paid for.
- Lying about age/having false identification.
- Displaying dramatic personality changes or evasive behavior, especially around a “new boyfriend/ girlfriend,” or having an older group of friends.
- Having an older intimate partner.
- Carrying multiple cell phones.

- 1 Rep. Michelle Caldier, R-Port Orchard, Co-chair, Kids Caucus;
- 2 Frank Ordway, director of government affairs and community engagement, Department of Children, Youth, and Families; 3 Mike Canfield, executive director, Foster Parents Association of Washington



Legislative Agendas for Kids in Care Set

State legislators will consider a number of issues centered around foster care as they begin meeting later this month

The informal “Kids Caucus,” a group of legislators – several with personal experience as foster children or foster parents, are still developing a full agenda.

But caucus Co-chair Rep. Michelle Caldier, R-Port Orchard, said two items will take up much of her time. As with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) preventing children and youth from entering foster care will be a high priority.

Passage of the 2018 Family First Prevention Service Act (FFPSA), which focuses on prevention programs that will keep young people from ever entering the child welfare system, will affect the 2019 agenda.

“We will need to see how that will impact the state” Caldier said. “There will be much more of a focus on family preservation and treatment.”

Caldier explained that may mean turning group homes, which are more expensive than individual foster homes, into treatment facilities and group homes could still exist, but must be accountable for providing treatment.

Frank Ordway, DCYF’s director of government affairs and community engagement, said without group homes, the most challenging of young people could move to foster homes, many of which may not be adequately prepared to care for them.

“There’s a lot of hope to get ahead of a lot of things through prevention. Every intervention (with families and youth) is an opportunity for prevention if we do it right,” he said.

Caldier said the transition would take time. The state may ask for a time extension to get the work done. But Caldier, both a former youth in care and a former foster parent, is optimistic changes will be positive.

“Given time, it will be a great thing for our state,” she said.

Ordway said DCYF wants to keep and support existing programs designed to prevent young people from coming into the system. And DCYF wants to increase pay for staff members who work in settings with high-risk youth. Those staff members, Ordway said, are underpaid.

“We cannot expect people who are making \$12 an hour to provide high quality therapeutic care,” he said.

He said the department is meeting regularly with those who provide services for children with the greatest needs to make sure they understand what the department is doing.

Caldier also wants the state to improve on involving biological parents when their children come into state care. It’s also important to find relatives who might be able to care for the children. Legally, relatives are the first option for a new home when children enter care.

Currently, considerable information exists about potential family members, but the information is scattered across multiple databases that don’t connect to each other.

This sometimes leads to situations where children bond with a foster family – sometimes over a period of a couple of years or more – only to find a relative at the last minute, leading to potentially greater trauma for the child and the foster family.

“We need to get (the search for relatives) done earlier,” she said. “It’s huge.”

Ordway said another key item for DCYF is increasing resources for those in child welfare.

The department wants to add more social workers to reduce their caseloads. DCYF has requested millions of dollars to increase the number of social workers.

He also said the department must work to improve the relationship between foster parents and the social worker/licensing staff.

The department wants to reach out to the many advisory committees such as the consultation team of foster parents and high-level department staff (known informally as the “1624 team”) to move on items of concern to foster parents.

“In the last year, many of the same items kept coming up meeting after meeting,” Ordway said. “They weren’t being resolved. We need to be more resolution-based.”

He said the department also wants to make it easier for foster parents to become licensed by implementing changes such as moving toward more online forms as other states have done.

And the department wants to work more closely with the growing “advocacy community” to seek improvements for child welfare from the Legislature.

One item the Foster Parents Association of Washington State (FPAWS) will be seeking is \$100,000 to help the organization give mini-conference training sessions across the state, said Mike Canfield, FPAWS executive director.

FPAWS is working with the Governor’s Office on the financial request, he said.

Another addition his group would like is to have a foster parent liaison in each region to complement the work done by contracted liaisons through Fostering Together in Western Washington and Fostering Washington in Eastern Washington.

In 2018, FPAWS asked for a liaison in each office to help with the relationships between foster parents and social workers. It also is working with the Parent Allies organization to increase the number of biological parents hired to work within the system. This would enable their voices to be heard, another way to improve help for kids in care, he said.



The Importance of Kinship Caregivers Becoming Licensed

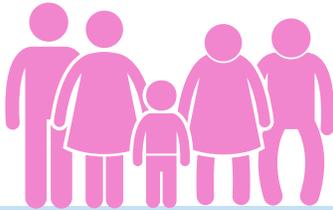
From the Department of Children, Youth, and Families

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

The monthly foster care reimbursement is the largest source of ongoing financial support available for kinship caregivers. This reimbursement is a minimum of \$573 per month per child. The amount is far greater than the Child-Only TANF grant available to unlicensed caregivers.

Help is available with the process! Call 1-888-543-7414 to get started. You will receive a response within 48 hours.

For assistance with this process, you can also contact one of our recruitment and retention partners who serve kinship and foster parents and can assist with the licensing process.



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

Amber Sherman, Recruitment Coordinator, 509-359-0874, asherman4@ewu.edu.

Hayley Stoebner, Recruitment Coordinator, 509-322-1191, hstoebner@ewu.edu.

In Western Washington contact: Olive Crest's Fostering Together

Shala Crow, Program Director and Regions 3 and 4 Supervisor, 360-220-3785, shala-crow@olivecrest.org.

Leeann Marshel, Regions 5 and 6 Supervisor, 360-909-0421, leeann-marshel@olivecrest.org.

Have Car Seat, Will Travel... Information about Appropriate Car Seats and Visits

Ongoing issues have been reported between foster parents and those who transport children to visits.

Foster parents report that sometimes the person transporting a child to a visit shows up with the wrong-size car seat. Disagreements have occurred about whether the child should be transported in a car seat that is not appropriate for his or her age and size.

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families advises that if a visitation provider arrives at a caregiver's home to transport a child to a visit and the caregiver does not believe the car seat is appropriate, thus creating a safety issue for the child, the caregiver has the option of declining

to allow the child to be transported in that car seat. The caregiver also has the option at that point to transport the child themselves OR provide their own car seat to the transportation provider. However, the caregiver is not required to do so.

If this occurs, the caseworker should be notified right away so the issue can be resolved.

DCYF hopes providers, caregivers and caseworkers can be proactive about this issue so there is not a disagreement about the problem in front of the child.

More information will be provided as it becomes available.

Tax Season is Coming

As tax season approaches, foster parents often have questions about the tax implications of their reimbursement for caring for children.

Foster parents and kinship caregivers may claim a tax deduction on certain foster care payments for children who have been placed in their care for more than half of the tax year.

Exceptions apply for a foster child who was born within the tax year; caregivers will need to check with their tax advisor in these situations.

If no Social Security Number (SSN) has been issued for a newborn or infant who enters care, DCYF staff members try to process the application for the number as quickly as possible. They are asked to provide a child's SSN when requested by the caregiver for tax purposes. A written request from the caregiver is not necessary.

DCYF staff members cannot provide tax advice to caregivers.

Caregivers can use the following resources to obtain some assistance:

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS), 1-800-829-1040; or www.irs.gov. IRS publication 501, "Exemptions Related to Dependents and Qualifying Children," also provides some guidance.



Emergency Fund for College Students Being Established

By Maria Rebecchi, College Success Foundation

Scholarships are one form of support for college students. Other forms of aid help meet other needs. However, financial emergencies of many sorts come up for students. The article below explains a new fund being created to help students with emergency situations.

The school year just started and I'm busy working to ensure students begin the year strong. Unfortunately, even when low-income students receive some form of assistance, they often find themselves unable to make ends meet. Below are just a few examples of the challenges these students face:

- Kelly was awarded funding from a federal grant, the State Need Grant, the College Bound Scholarship and also received a WSU waiver. However, this still is not enough. She has now taken out a subsidized loan and **needs an additional \$715 in tuition for this term** – *money she does not have*. Without this money she will be unable to continue her studies.
- Luis received the supports above and a CSF scholarship and yet, due to his family's financial situation, *he often uses his college's food pantry so that he can eat*. Luis reached out to me to ask for assistance with groceries to supplement what he can get at the food pantry. Food insecurity is *one of the leading reasons* low-income students do not complete college.
- Janae is in her junior year, taking a full course load and working a part-time job off-campus to supplement her tuition and pay her living expenses. Her car broke down and *she did not have the money needed to fix it*, leaving her without transportation necessary to both work and go to school. She contacted CSF to see if we would be able to help with emergency money for repairs, as *she had nowhere else to turn*.

Unfortunately, these stories and requests are common in my line of work.

Together, we can keep more of these students enrolled in college.

Please help us in setting up an Emergency Fund for CSF scholars currently in college. Students in need will be able to apply for the \$715 they are short in tuition, the \$250 they need for groceries, the \$500 they need to fix their car or cover another unexpected expense.

Many of these students do not have a safety net, and with the Emergency Fund, we hope to create one for those who need it most.

Join us in launching this Emergency Fund by [giving a fully tax-deductible gift](#) today!



Dental Care is Part of Whole-Person Wellness

Early childhood dental care is important for long-term health.

According to the [American Dental Association](#), baby teeth “hold space in the jaws for permanent teeth that are growing under the gums. When a baby tooth is lost too early, the permanent teeth can drift into the empty space and make it difficult for other adult teeth to find room when they come in. This can make teeth crooked or crowded.”

Tooth decay and cavities also can cause children pain, making it difficult for them to focus on learning and to eat without pain. Healthy baby teeth help babies and toddlers speak, chew and smile. They set the stage for healthy adult teeth.

The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) reports about 40 percent of children entering foster care have serious oral health issues. Here in Washington, the Department of Health’s [Smile Survey 2015-2016](#) found that 53 percent of third- graders had experienced tooth decay.

So what can a caregiver do?

- Encourage children to brush twice a day.
- Limit sugary foods.
- Take children for regular dental exams.

Want more tips? Check out the American Academy of Pediatrics suggestions [here](#).

Children entering foster care who have been neglected may need extra help learning how to care for their teeth. You can help them by:

- Remaining calm and patient.
- Brush together; model good oral hygiene.
- Don’t be afraid to have fun while teaching children about the importance of brushing!

Make brushing teeth a game or part of a fun routine. [Here are seven songs](#) you can sing to make brushing more exciting!



Dental care is a covered Medicaid benefit.

Children and youth in foster care are required to see a dentist within 30 days of entering foster care. Babies need to see a dentist when the first tooth erupts, or by their first birthday. Following the first dental exam, children in foster care are required to have an exam every six months.

If you need help finding a dentist, call Coordinated Care at 1-844-354-9876 (TTY/TDD 711). We’re happy to help!

Creating Photo Montages on a Cold Winter's Night

By Deanna Partlow

On these rainy and snowy evenings in January when your family is felled by colds or everyone has been cooped up in the house far too long, it's fun to try a new activity. Puzzle nights or game nights are excellent alternatives to television – and so is a craft night.

Creating a photo montage is a simple project that can be adapted for all children except the very youngest. All you need is a stack of photos, a scanner/printer, a blank canvas and a pot of Mod Podge or watered-down white school glue. The finished works of art can help decorate the house or become a treasured gift to bio parents or grandparents, perhaps for Valentine's Day.

Here's how to make an easy photo montage.

You can do the first step or two ahead so kids can get right down to making the montage.

1. Purchase some blank stretched canvases, one or two for each child, from the art section of a hobby or art supply shop. Several sizes are available, and they can either be flat or the type pulled over an inner plywood frame. Either type is fine. I purchased some about the size of a sheet of notebook paper.
2. Sort out photos of your children or have them sort out a few they especially like. This is a fun activity in itself, bringing up good memories and stories! If your child wants to make a montage for his bedroom wall, maybe he'll choose photos of friends or favorite activities. If it's for your child's mom or dad, she might want to choose several photos of themselves and/or their siblings.
3. Scan each photo, cropping to center the person or item of interest if you can, then print it out. I used plain copy paper but on a do-over, I'd use a heavier paper stock to avoid wrinkling when the Mod Podge is applied.
4. Cut off the excess white paper around the printed images. You can either leave a small border or remove borders.
5. Gather supplies:
Mod Podge (make a substitute by mixing 1 cup white glue with ¼ cup water), scissors, paper towels, a flat, soft paintbrush and a jar of warm water for soaking the brush.
Optional: permanent pens and markers; paints.
6. Give each canvas a thin coat of Mod Podge and allow it to dry thoroughly.
7. Play with the photos to decide where to place them on the canvas. They can be placed in orderly arrangements with space in between or crazy-quilt style on the canvas. An area of the canvas can be left blank, then filled with writing or small drawings.
8. Once the arrangement is decided on, carefully lay aside the pictures and brush a thin coat of Mod Podge over the canvas.
9. Place photos one at a time, face up, on the wet surface, smoothing them out to avoid wrinkles and bubbles.* Teach kids to touch the photo's center to the surface first, then slowly work out to the edges from there. This avoids wrinkles. If a wrinkle or bubble occurs, it's best to use a wooden spoon or similar flat-surfaced object to work it out from the photo's center to the edge.
10. If a large canvas is being created, brush the Mod Podge only on one part of the canvas at a time, then move on to the next portion.
11. After all the photos are stuck down, add any writing or drawings to the canvas. That might include names, a message, a line or two of poetry ... whatever your child wants to include.
12. Finally, brush another thin layer of Mod Podge over the completed canvas, being careful not to miss any spots.
13. Flat canvases can be placed in a standard frame. For the canvases stretched over wood, kids can make a "frame," by using strips of decorated paper or duct tape on the edges.

After the montage dries, the canvas is ready to hang or gift-wrap.



I found a feature on my photo program that allowed me to make a collage layout with my photos and print out a single page. While it saved time, I had difficulty avoiding bubbles and wrinkles using a large piece of paper. I'd recommend that children work with photo prints of about 7 inches or less in size to avoid frustration and achieve the best results.



I made these photo montages for our disabled, grown-up son. He is hard on actual photos, but he enjoys them so much! The montage will enable him to enjoy some of his favorites for a long time.



Make Your Own Valentines This Year

Valentine's Day is a fine time to spread love and kindness. Kids can create their own valentines with construction paper and art supplies. If they're stuck for ideas or short on time, print out some of the many valentine freebies available online. Here are just a handful of the websites that offer free holiday printables. For more, search "free Valentine's Day printables" or "free valentine coloring pages" online.

Thesprucecrafts.com has 500-plus coloring page designs including Hallmark designs. Just download them as pdf's and print them out: www.thesprucecrafts.com/free-valentine-coloring-pages-1358218

Playfisherprice.com has fun designs, especially for younger kids: play.fisher-price.com/en_us/gamesandactivities/coloringpages/index.html#the=16%20Valentines_Day

Shutterfly.com also has free printables – everything from print-your-own valentines to photo props to make at home. Go to www.shutterfly.com/ideas/valentines-day-printables/

Thanks to these websites, and also to livelaughrowe.com for this Valentine's Day "I Spy" game: liveloughrowe.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Valentines-Day-I-Spy-Printable-Game-from-Live-Laugh-Rowe.pdf

Bring Your Issues to Consultation Team Members

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

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

The committee discusses issues of statewide concern to foster parents.

The regional members also help set dates for regional consultation meetings so local issues can be discussed.

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

DCYF Foster Parent Consultation Team (1624)

Foster Parent Regional Representatives 2018

Name	E-mail	Phone
Victoria O'Banion, Reg. 1	vnhobanion@gmail.com	308-991-5663
Alla Mishin, Reg. 1	allamishin@gmail.com	509-847-4210
Silvia Zarate, Reg. 2	Mendezawapato@aol.com	509 830-5027
Shannon Love, Reg. 2	shannon.fcwa@gmail.com	509-834-8002
Lisa Page, Reg. 3	lisa.page@gmail.com	206-351-2699
Ray Deck III, Reg. 3	Raydeck3@gmail.com	518-290-0729
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Mike Canfield, FPAWS	mkbeth@comcast.net	360-990-1255 (c) 360-377-1011 (h)

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.

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

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Caregiving for Children with Physically Aggressive Behavior Concerns
- Caregiving for Children with Sexual Behavior Concerns
- How You Can Become an Effective Educational Advocate For Your Child
- ILABS Module 7: Development of Attachment
- ILABS Module 8: Attachment in Practice
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

JANUARY TRAININGS IN REGION 2: SOUTH/CENTRAL EASTERN WASHINGTON

- Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma: A Workshop for Resource Parents from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- Emotion Coaching
- How You Can Become an Effective Educational Advocate For Your Child
- ILABS Module 13: Race Today, What Kids Know as They Grow
- ILABS Module 14: "Racing" Toward Equality: Why Talking To Your Kids About Race is Good For Everyone
- Infant Safety and Care
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

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

- Fostering Children Through Transition, Grief, and Loss: Helping Children with Their Feelings
- ILABS Module 9: Sharing Attention During Early Childhood
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Kinship 101
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

Caregiver Training from the Alliance continued

JANUARY TRAININGS IN REGION 4: KING COUNTY

- Caregiving for Children with Physically Aggressive Behavior Concerns
- Compassionate Parenting
- How You Can Become an Effective Educational Advocate For Your Child
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)

JANUARY TRAININGS IN REGION 5: PIERCE AND KITSAP COUNTIES

- As They Grow: The Drug Impacted Child
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Talking With Children About Race

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

- Behavior Management Tools for Foster Parents and Caregivers
- Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma: A Workshop for Resource Parents from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- Kinship 101 (Webinar)
- Parenting the Positive Discipline Way
- So You Have a New Placement...Now What? (Webinar)
- Why Children Lie

Caregiver Education and Training Administrator

Michael Tyers 425-268-9375 [tyersm@uw.edu/](mailto:tyersm@uw.edu)

Your Child Welfare Training Team for Regions 1 and 2

Eastern Washington

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

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

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

Your Child Welfare Training Team Regions 3 and 4

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

Your Child Welfare Training Team for Regions 5 and 6

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

Penny Michel 360-725-6788 mpen300@uw.edu

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

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

Your Registration Help Desk

Registration Help 866-577-1915 help@acwe.on.spiceworks.com

**Join us on Social Media for inspiration, tips, trainings,
the latest events and to be part of a caregiver community**



Meet Our Recruitment Partners Who Support You



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

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

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

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

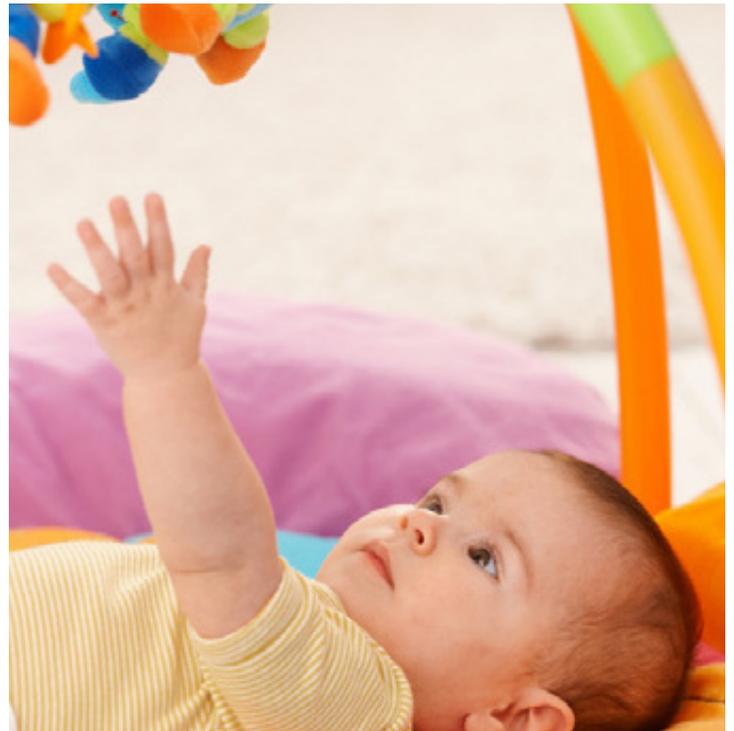
Prospective foster parents are welcome to license through either CA's, Children, Youth and Families – Licensing Division (DCYF-LD), or any private child placing agency licensed in Washington. Our recruitment partners serve all families, regardless of where they choose to become licensed. Prospective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

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

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

All supports are designed with our caregivers in mind.

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



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

Fostering Washington’s website www.fosteringwa.org can help you locate your local foster parent

Resource Peer Mentor (RPM) from the county map on their website.

Click on: → [Find your mentor](#)

**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](#)