

Fostering Communications

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

November 2017

National Adoption Month

November was National Adoption Month, which is a wonderful time to bring attention to the children and youth in ND that are waiting for their permanent home as well as recognize and thank all of the amazing families who have chosen to open their hearts and families to adoption. The dedication and unwavering support for children by adoptive families is more than appreciated by CFSTC. Within North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum's proclamation, it is noted that 356 adoptions were finalized last year, including 149 children whom were adopted from foster care. The following link shares the remainder of Governor Burgum's proclamation for Adoption Awareness Month:

[ND Adoption Awareness Month Proclamation](#)

President Donald Trump released the following statement within his proclamation:

“This year's National Adoption Month, we focus on our commitment to helping older youth experience the transformative value of permanency and love. A child is never too old for adoption. A supportive family can provide the critical direction that older children need as they enter adulthood, helping them attain educational and employment goals, and, in certain cases, avoid homelessness or incarceration. We never outgrow the need for family, and older youth who are adopted are more likely to finish high school and feel emotionally secure than those who age out of foster care without a permanent family”.

PRIDE Link

One of the PRIDE Model Competencies we follow as caregivers through foster care is **“supporting relationships between children and their birth families”**. Visitation between children and their families is an essential component for potential reunification. It has been shown through multiple research studies that children who have frequent, meaningful visits with their parents are more likely to return home. Visits are one of the many places where the child's case manager can assess the parent's strengths and their needs, but can also observe the parent-child relationship. The process of visitation is stressful and hard at times for all involved, especially the child(ren). Many emotions may come to the surface before, during, and after a visit. Each child may express their feelings different, so it is important to give each child in your care individual attention. Separation from a parent after a visit is often quite traumatizing and can trigger the grieving process to start all over again. As caregivers, you are asked to do what you can to make visitations as stable as possible for the ones in your care. The following link offers tips on what you can do before and after a visit.

[Visitation Tips](#)



ADOPT
IF YOU CAN'T ADOPT:
FOSTER ↻
IF YOU CAN'T FOSTER:
SPONSOR ↻
IF YOU CAN'T SPONSOR:
VOLUNTEER ↻
IF YOU CAN'T VOLUNTEER:
DONATE ↻
IF YOU CAN'T DONATE:
EDUCATE ↻

Upcoming State Conferences...

ND Family Based Services
Association Conference
Fargo, ND
April 3-6, 2018
www.ndfbsa.org



C • F • S • T • C
Children and Family
Services Training Center
Department of Social Work
University of North Dakota

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Comments should be directed to the Training Center.

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ONE....



One tree can start a forest;
One smile can begin a
friendship;
One hand can lift a soul;
One word can frame a
goal;
One candle can wipe out
darkness;
One laugh can conquer
gloom;
One hope can raise your
spirits;
One touch can show you
care;
One life can make the
difference;
Be that ONE today!!

~Author unknown



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Holiday Joys and Tears

By the time December rolls around, many children have lists upon lists of what they are hoping to receive for Christmas with plans of friend sleepovers or other fun adventures for the holiday break from school. This of course is not the case for every child. Children in foster care are not only dealing with the loss of their parents and other extended loved ones, but may also be grieving the loss of their family holiday traditions. Holidays can bring a level of uncertainty that is simply too much for some children to handle. Many families have changes from their everyday routines by traveling to a relatives home or having guests over to celebrate. Many of the stressful parts tied to the holidays can be resolved with simple conversations and planning ahead. The following link offers many ideas on how you can do what is best for the child in your care over the next month. [Coping with the Holidays](#)

Here is another helpful link that offers ideas on how to prepare with various ideas of how to best schedule your holiday time, shopping tips, as well as shares some additional techniques on how to help a child cope with the holiday stress. [Managing Holiday Stress](#)

Little Ones and Trauma

Children who are placed into foster care have likely experienced many traumatic events, ranging from the maltreatment they may have endured to the removal from their parents care. This can be hard to process with younger children due their level of brain development and lack of communications skills on such an abstract concept. At times we need to seek outside resources to help us communicate these impactful events. Sesame Street has created a wonderful toolbox of activities, videos, and printouts to help a child walk through these harder concepts. [Traumatic Experiences](#)

Independence

Even though we have just begun our winter season, if you have a teenager that will be graduating this spring they likely feel like they are ready for adulthood. As an adult you know that they will need some assistance as they make their transition to independence successful. Thankfully the North Dakota Chaffee Foster Care Independent Living Program offers strength-based, youth driven, and individualized programming and plans; direct financial assistance with living expenses; financial assistance for post-secondary education (Education and Training Voucher Program); child and family team involvement; youth stakeholder groups; Regional and State Youth Advocacy Boards; one-on-one assistance with finding and maintaining employment and housing, accessing necessary resources including physical/mental health services, and pursuing academic and vocational goals. The following “website was designed by a large group of youth from North Dakota’s Youth Leadership Independent Living Board.” The website offers a Regional Map of North Dakota, tips for youth about what they should know when they turn 18, and contact information about various services available in North Dakota. This would be a great site to any teenage youth in foster care. [ND Youth Rise](#)

The “FosterClub’s Transition Toolkit” is another free tool for developing a youth-driven transition plan, with a team approach. This resource does a nice job of helping explain how without having a “road map” in place the youth’s “transition journey could be in trouble”. This toolkit covers money management, employment, life skills, identity, permanency, education, self-care/health, housing, and community/culture/social life. These topics are shared with an explanation along with a workbook page. [Transition Toolkit](#)