

# Fostering Communications

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

March 2020

## Upcoming State Conferences...

ND Family Based Services Conference, March 31-April 3, 2020  
HAS BEEN CANCELLED  
[www.ndfbsa.org](http://www.ndfbsa.org)

ND Children & Family Services Conference, Bismarck, ND July 27-30, 2020

Registration available soon on [CFSTC website](http://CFSTC website)

ND Conference of Social Welfare September 23-25, 2020 Bismarck, ND  
[www.ndcsww.org](http://www.ndcsww.org)



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## PRIDE Link

The PRIDE Model we follow highlights the competency of “**Supporting relationships with birth families.**” As foster parents, you understand that supporting relationships with birth families can be challenging. It can be challenging due to birth family’s feelings of powerlessness as a result of a removal of the child or children that they love, and that these feelings of powerlessness can manifest into behaviors of anger, judgment, and suspicion towards foster parents. It also can be challenging to support a relationship with birth families when you struggle with the decisions and actions they may have made that resulted in the removal of their child or children. If foster parents are able to set aside feelings that they may have towards the biological family and nurture the relationship between the child and the biological family a connection may form between foster parents and biological family, and that connection can help play a vital role in establishing permanency for the child. *As always, every family is unique with their own dynamics and challenges and thus we would encourage you to discuss with your child’s case manager on what contact with biological family should look like.* Check out the following resource for tips on how you can establish a relationship with birth parents.

### [Supporting relationships with Birth Parents](#)

In addition, foster mom, Tara Swinger, offers an insightful testimonial in the following video on how being a voice of encouragement for the biological family can make a difference for the foster child and their biological family.

### [How to have a Great Relationship](#)

*\*CFSTC does not support or encourage the sales of any products in this video \**

## Coping with Coronavirus Pandemic

During this an unprecedented time of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak we have been introduced to unfamiliar concepts such as social distancing, extended school closures, and for some, working from home. During this stressful time, we need to remember as caregivers to take care of ourselves first before we care for others. The following [COVID-19 Resources](#) from the ND Department of Human Services offers some insightful resources on how we can cope.

As adults, we are learning to adjust to all these changes and we need to acknowledge that this adjustment can be difficult for our children as they accommodate to changes to their routine, missing special people and events, and not to mention dealing with fears about contracting this virus. The article [“How to Talk About Coronavirus with Kids”](#) provides guidance on how we best facilitate these discussions with our children.

Lastly, the resources below provide fun ideas on how you can safely engage, educate, and entertain your children during this unique period of time.

[Indoor Activities](#)

[Educational Websites](#)

[Doodling with Mo Willems](#)

*Fostering Communications is published by the UND Children and Family Services Training Center under the sponsorship of the Division of Children and Family Services, North Dakota Department of Human Services. It is intended for all foster parents, foster care providers, and child welfare agencies.  
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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## Online Training Resources

Recently some in person training has been cancelled/postponed as we need to take the necessary precautions regarding the COVID-19 virus. A reminder that CFSTC does have online resources available to you as training opportunities. Please check out our [Archived Webinars](#) as well as [Foster Parent College](#) for some training opportunities. We also encourage you to watch the CFSTC [Calendar](#) for pending webinars, which we hope to have posted soon. If you have concerns with unmet training needs, please reach out to your licensing worker for further discussion.

## Playful Parenting

During busy and stressful times engaging in meaningful play with children of all ages can be challenging, however, it can provide rewarding interactions and positive, healthy connections in children's brain development. Author, Jessica Sinarski, LPCMH, provides a brief explanation of the science of playful parenting and helpful hints for playful parenting with younger and older children in the following article.

[Playful Parenting Builds Better Brains: 10 Tools for Success](#)

## National Poison Prevention Week

The week of March 15-21, 2020 is National Poison Prevention Week. Poisoning is the third leading cause of unintentional injury death among children ages 1 to 19 years, and medication is the leading cause for poisoning incidents for children. It is important that medication is stored away and out of sight from children, and per North Dakota foster care licensing policy, Proper Storage of Medication and Other Hazardous Material 622-05-25-30-03, "The family foster home for children shall properly store medications, alcohol, poisonous materials, cleaning supplies, and other hazardous materials to prevent access to children, as appropriate for age and development of the children in placement." Check out the following resource from Safe Kids Worldwide for more information about poisoning prevention. [What to Know About Storing Medication](#)

## Appreciation Central

The staff at CFSTC would like to take a moment to extend our appreciation to all of the social workers across the state for their hard work and dedication that they provide each and every day. Governor Doug Burgum stated within the 2020 proclamation declaring March Social Work Appreciation Month, "Social workers have been and continue to stand ready to help our nation in times of crisis, contributing to the success of our state and nation so they protect the most vulnerable among us". This can not be more true today!! We celebrate North Dakota's social workers and all they do to serve our communities. Read the full proclamation [HERE](#).

*To know even one life has breathed easier  
because you have lived—that is to have succeeded.*

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

