

# Fostering Communications

*Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System*

February 2022

Upcoming State  
Conferences...

ICWA Conference  
VIRTUAL CONFERENCE  
February 16-17, 2022  
Click [HERE](#) to register  
or go to  
[www.nativeinstitute.org](http://www.nativeinstitute.org)

North Dakota Family Based  
Services Association  
(NDFBSA) Conference  
Bright Futures Together  
March 29-April 1, 2022  
Click [HERE](#) to register  
or go to [www.ndfbsa.org](http://www.ndfbsa.org)



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Children and Family  
Services Training Center  
Department of Social Work  
University of North Dakota

## PRIDE LINK

In this issue of PRIDE LINK we are taking a closer look at the PRIDE competency “Meeting Developmental Needs: Attachment”. Many individuals feel called to foster children as they want to help a child who may be experiencing abuse and neglect by providing a supportive nurturing relationship and providing HOPE. And that relationship is important, because a child is likely to be more successful if they are able not only maintain past connections with loved ones, but also continue to grow other relationships such as with their foster parents and foster family. Josh Shipp, author, motivational speaker and former youth in foster care says, “Every kid is one caring adult away from being a success story.” As a foster parent, you are in a position to be that caring adult and nurture this relationship. A relationship between a foster child and a foster parent may take time and effort to develop, and depending on different factors, such a child’s past trauma experience, relationship building can be more challenging for both you and the child. Capstone Foster Care provides 10 tips that you may find helpful to remind yourself as you are providing that meaningful connection to a child in your home. Please click on the link below for the complete list.

### [10 Tips on Connection with Your Foster Child](#)

The relationships and attachments we make as children are the building block for adult relationships. When a child experiences trauma the development of healthy relationships can be impacted. But there is Hope! You, as a foster parent, can help support and grow more healthy attachments for the children in your home. Kristin Berry, Honestly Adoption Company, wrote an article “How To Empower Your Child To Build Healthy Attachment” that provides ideas you may find beneficial as you are supporting growth in your foster child’s attachment and relationships. Click on the link below for the complete article.

### [How To Empower Your Child To Build Healthy Attachments](#)

Foster Care provides children a temporary safe home where they can receive love and nurturing while the parents/caregivers work on conditions that where resulting in the child being unsafe. When the child can return home after parents/caregivers can provide safety, it doesn’t necessarily need to mean an end of your relationship with the child; ideally, when appropriate, that child and their family will continue a relationship with the foster family. *Fostering Perspectives* provides an article, “Making a Difference by Maintaining Connections” that highlights how building upon the relationship with birth parents/caregivers and their family that may start at time of removal and could then continue when a child returns home. Please click to the link below for the article that outlines different approaches that may help you in building and maintaining connections with children and their families that last past their time in your home.

### [Making a Difference by Maintaining Connections](#)

*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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## Internet Safety & Foster Care

The reality is that we rely on the internet for work, school, and our personal lives. This is also true for youth in foster care, and often times these youth rely on internet to maintain their closet ties to family and friends. Parents/Caregivers should monitor all children's internet access and activity, but may be left with questions such as can my child have a smart phone, how and should I monitor their usage, how much is too much screen time? We encourage you to work closely with your child's custodian to answer many of these questions, but below are a few additional resources that might be helpful as you navigate online safety.

First, the Child Welfare Information Gateway published a PDF that you may download that offers tips for foster parents and caregivers and how to manage social media. This includes how you can support your youth using social media safely as well as tips regarding your use of social media as a foster parent. Please click on the link below to access that full PDF document.

**[Social Media: Tips for Foster Parents and Caregivers](#)**

A second article from AdoptUSKids blog, "Keeping children you foster and adopt safe online", provides additional information to include benefits and risks that online activity presents for children, signs that you, as a foster parent, can use to identify if social media use is becoming an issue with your child, and what you can do to ensure that your child's online and social media usage remains reasonable and appropriate. To read the complete article click on the link below.

**[Keeping Children You Foster and Adopt Safe Online](#)**

Lastly, our friends at Safe Kids Worldwide have a 25 minute podcast from their Parent Pep Talk series that explores how parents can set limits with their children regarding Smartphone usage. The podcast includes Marc Groman, an expert in privacy, technology, and cyber security, as well as Dr. David Reitman, child pediatrician. They provide helpful strategies on how you should monitor your child's device and online usage as well as how you can set healthy boundaries regarding this usage. This episode include parents and children sharing their experiences regarding this issue. To listen to the entire Parent Pep Talk episode (episode 8), click on the link below.

**[Smartphones: How to Set Limits and Bring Peace to Your Home](#)**

## Activities to Beat the Winter Blues

Winter is in full swing and you may, if not already, have heard the dreaded statement, "I am bored!" Below are a few links that include fun, easy, and inexpensive activities you can engage with your children to help enjoy your time at home while you are staying warm.

**[50 Essential Winter Activities for Families](#)** **[31+ Days of Winter Activities for Kids](#)**



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**NORTH DAKOTA**

**FOSTER OR ADOPT**

Are you interested or know someone who may be interested in becoming a foster parent?

Please call the ND Toll Free Inquiry Line

1-833-FST-HOME  
(1-833-378-4663)

And speak with Carissa Cox, Foster Parent Recruitment & Retention Specialist



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## Recruitment & Retention

### Say Yes to a Teen!

The reality in North Dakota, and the entire country for that matter, is that there are not enough homes to serve the number of older youth in our foster care system. Occasionally, families shy away from teens out of respect for their own children's birth order or because they do not have experience caring for teenagers. However, what seems to be the most common concern is the "stigma" attached to teens in foster care, and the anticipated difficulties. Will it be easy? Absolutely not. But, neither is caring for an infant, toddler, preschooler, or grade school child. Naturally, each developmental stage will bring a different set of challenges. Now add childhood trauma to the mix, and yes, some days will definitely be hard. The advantage that comes with fostering is the training that is offered and the built in supports that can be accessed as needed. Without a solid support system in place, teens who age out of foster care, often have poor outcomes, such as homelessness and substance abuse. Teens in foster care need to be given a chance to avoid becoming a statistic when they transition to adulthood. It only takes one caring and committed adult to change a young person's trajectory. Consider looking beyond the stigma. Consider saying yes to a teen in foster care. It may not always be easy, but all beautiful, life changing experiences take hard work.

Brittany Burcham, licensed foster parent in Alabama, has a passion for foster care and is a strong advocate for teenagers in the foster care system. Check out the link below to hear more from Brittany on being a foster mom for teens:

[Healing The Next Generation: Why Fostering Teens Helps Everyone](#)

From time to time, engaging with teenagers can be a challenge. It may require effort and patience, but the joys felt as a teen begins to open up will be priceless. If you are looking for tips on communicating with older youth in your home, check out the link below from the Adopt US Kids blog:

[7 tips For Getting to Know a Teen You Are Fostering or Adopting](#)

### Virtual Foster Care Panels

With 2022 in full swing, the CFSTC has brought back our Virtual Foster Care Panels! These panels provide a fantastic opportunity for community members throughout the state to learn more about fostering. Panelists will include a former foster youth, foster parents, and foster care licensors from across North Dakota. Keep an eye on the CFSTC Facebook page for upcoming dates, and consider sharing these events out as a way for us to grow supports and homes for our children and families in need of foster care.

### Upcoming Foster Parent Support Sessions

There are two scheduled "open chat" foster parent support sessions in February. The first session is February 9th from 6:30-7:30pm CST, to join click [HERE](#). The second session will be held on February 28th 12:00-1:00pm CST, to join click [HERE](#). We highly encourage to you attend one or both of these opportunities to connect with other foster parents across North Dakota.

**\*\*NOTE: Foster Parent Support Session training opportunities will resume in March 2022\*\***