

# Fostering Communications

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

May 2022

## May is Children's Foster Care Month

### Message from Children & Family Services

National Foster Care Month 2022 focuses on the theme of "Relative and Kin Connections: Keeping Families Strong," which greatly compliments the Children of Family Services Division's mission of "Safe Children ~ Strong Families."

This month we recognize the strength of families and their willingness to work with professional staff to meet case goals and if unable to meet case goals, support the permanency plan for their child to be placed with a relative caregiver. Each role in child welfare is necessary, and May allows us to recognize the importance of foster care in supporting children and families and the individuals involved across the state and our nation.

The Director of Children and Family Services, Cory Pedersen, reflects: "National Foster Care Month is a time to show appreciation for the hard work and dedication of custodial case managers, licensing specialists, parents, relative caregivers, licensed foster parents, treatment facilities, training staff, and various community partners. Professional relationships have a positive impact on meeting our mission of safe children and strong families."

The North Dakota foster care program has embraced a great deal of change in the last 18 months, starting with the implementation of Safety Framework Practice Model (SFPM), which streamlined how professional staff assess child safety. More families have been able to maintain their children in their homes with the support of services, implementation of prevention programming and case managers working directly with parents to enhance parental capacities without judgement. On April 1, 2022, Children and Family Services implemented a new licensing unit to offer efficiencies and consistency to licensing foster care providers and child welfare service agencies statewide.

Pedersen states, "Change can be difficult, but offers an opportunity to be innovative. Thank you all for your efforts. Your positive attitudes and willingness to engage in change is recognized and appreciated as we support new initiatives, maintain family connections, and plan alongside North Dakota children with families."

This month and throughout the year we remain grateful to those individuals who are a part of child welfare system services who diligently work to place children, engage parents, and support providers.

North Dakota recruitment and retention coalitions have created great opportunities to recognize foster parents and their role in offering emergency placements, temporary placements, respite, and treatment foster care for children in need. Coalitions offer virtual panels, support groups, and are developing a foster parent mentoring program. Individuals interested in learning more about becoming a licensed foster parent, are encouraged to contact **1-833-FST-HOME (1-833-378-4663)**. Licensed North Dakota foster parents who want to learn more about providing respite care or a shelter/safe bed in an emergency, can contact the newly created CFS Licensing Unit at **701-328-2322** or [cfslicensing@nd.gov](mailto:cfslicensing@nd.gov).

**I ALONE  
CANNOT  
CHANGE THE  
WORLD,  
BUT I CAN  
CAST A STONE  
ACROSS THE  
WATERS TO  
CREATE MANY  
RIPPLES.**

**-Mother Teresa**



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

# Fostering Communications

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

May 2022

## ATTENTION!

Seeking Foster Homes for  
**TEENS**



ND is experiencing a higher number of requests for teenagers in need of a foster home. Custodial agencies are seeking help from the CFS Licensing Unit to find a temporary safe place for this population and after many calls to families, we struggle as a state to secure foster homes. **Please help!**

If you are willing to help provide temporary care to a teenager anywhere in ND, please let your licensing specialist know or email [cfslicensing@nd.gov](mailto:cfslicensing@nd.gov) so they can update the ND Provider List.



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

## Foster Care Month Proclamations!

It is official May is Children's Foster Care month! Please click on the links below to view both North Dakota's proclamation as well as President Biden's proclamation for National Foster Care Month.



*Thank You!*

### Appreciation Central

A heartfelt **THANK YOU** to resources parents, for all you do for children and families in North Dakota. You are the difference in lives of the children and families that you touch. Your love and dedication does not go unnoticed!

*~Your Friends at CFSTC*

### North Dakota Children's Foster Care Month Proclamation

### President Biden's Proclamation on National Foster Care

## Foster Parent Training Needs Survey

It is that time when we, at CFSTC, are looking ahead to plan for future Foster Parent Trainings, which are hopeful to include both in person and live virtual training opportunities. As we move forward with planning we need YOUR feedback regarding foster parents training needs. Please complete the survey by clicking on the link below to provide your feedback.

[2022-2023 Foster Parent Needs Survey](#)



# Fostering Communications

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

May 2022



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

Please call the  
Toll Free Inquiry Line at  
**1-833-FST-HOME**  
(1-833-378-4663)

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

## UPCOMING Foster Parent Education & Support Sessions:

06.02.22  
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. CST  
\*Open Support Session\*

06.07.22  
8:00-9:00 p.m. CST  
\*Education Opportunity\*  
Topic-Independent Living  
Programming & Services

06.21.22  
7:00-8:00 p.m. CST  
\*Open Support Session\*



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

## Recruitment & Retention

### National Foster Care Month-Strengthening Families

Designated as National Foster Care Month, May is a time to spread additional awareness about foster care. Throughout the month, efforts are put forth to recognize children in foster care, their families, foster parents, and all the professionals and volunteers who play a role in strengthening families. This year's National Foster Care Month theme is **“Relative and Kin Connections: Keeping Families Strong.”** When a child cannot safely remain at home with their parents, it is important for other relative options to be considered. A child's placement with a grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin, or even fictive kin is valuable for a variety of reasons. It will assist in maintaining the bonds that children have with loved ones, it will keep children connected to their culture, and it will provide a source of comfort, familiarity, and stability. It can also minimize trauma for children who are impacted by the removal from their family home. If additional supports are needed, family members can look into foster care licensing. When remaining at home or with kin is not an option for a child, placement in a licensed foster home outside of family may be necessary. It cannot be stressed enough that foster parents are a support to families, not a replacement. While living in a foster home, every child deserves to maintain the meaningful connections they have with their own family. Foster parents play a crucial role in this by building their own relationships early on with a child's parents and extended family. When foster parents focus on forming healthy partnerships, there is more likelihood relationships with a child and their family will continue long after reunification occurs. Keeping families connected and having an active role in the reunification process is one of the many beauties of fostering!! During National Foster Care Month and always, we send great thanks to all foster parents and kinship providers who strive to keep families connected and to keep families strong!

Family connections are essential in the well-being of a child. There are over 400,000 children in foster care in the United States. Of those, roughly 34% are placed with relatives and kin. In North Dakota, approximately 40% of licensed foster parents provide care to a relative. As part of National Foster Care Month, Childwelfare.gov shared touching stories from individuals who have made it a priority to keep their own families strong. You can find two of these stories below:

[Raising My Siblings With Love and Support](#)  
and [Kristen's Story](#)

With June right around the corner, National Reunification Month will be celebrated. To learn more about the importance of foster parents partnering with birth parents to promote reunification, check out the following piece from Childwelfare.gov

[Partnering with Birth Parents to Promote Reunification](#)

## Virtual Foster Care Panels

Do you know somebody who is interested in fostering? Attending a Virtual Foster Care Panel is a great place to start! Keep an eye on the [UND-CFSTC Facebook page](#) for upcoming dates, and consider sharing with family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, or simply help spread the word by posting on social media!



# Fostering Communications

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

May 2022

## Upcoming State Conferences...

### West River Conference of Social Welfare

June 9-10, 2022

Medora, ND

(Virtual & In Person)

Click [wrcsw.org](http://wrcsw.org) for details

### The Behavioral Health & Children and Family Services Conference

October 11-13 2022

Fargo, ND

Virtual & In-person options  
Registration Coming Soon

### The North Dakota Family Based Services Association Conference

March 27-31, 2023

Fargo, ND

Click [ndfbsa.org](http://ndfbsa.org) for details



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

## PRIDE LINK

With May being National Foster Care Month “Relative and Kin Connections: Keeping Families Strong” in this issue of PRIDE LINK we are taking a closer look at the PRIDE competency “**Connecting children to safe, nurturing relationships intended to last a life time**”, specifically the role foster parents can play in keeping children connected to their families while they are in foster care.

The following *Fostering Perspectives* article “Making a Difference by Maintaining Connections” provides one foster parent’s perspective to include different “tips” in ways foster parents can make and maintain family connections for children in foster care. Click on the following link to check out the specific tips.

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

Connecting with a foster child’s biological family may feel intimidating and scary. These are common feelings that foster parents may experience; the challenge is to address those feelings and, if approved by the child’s custodian, work with biological family to maintain those family connections for that child in your care. Mike Berry of Honestly Adoption Company addresses some of these natural feelings and explores where these feelings may be coming from in the below linked blog. His blog entries are written from a perspective of an adopted parent, but is relevant for foster parents as well.

### [What Should I Do If I Feel Afraid of My Child’s Biological Family](#)

Lastly, the link below is a podcast “Partnering with Birth Parents in Foster Care” from Creating a Family: Talk about Adoption and Foster Care. This podcast is a conversation about building a relationship with biological parent when working towards a partnership in parenting.

### [Partnering with Birth Parents in Foster Care](#)

## NEW SFPM Foster Parent Training

**Safety Framework Practice Model (SFPM) training for foster parents is available online NOW!** This online self paced training is eligible for one hour of credit for continuing education. To document your education credit you will be prompted at the end of the training to type your name (or names if a two parent household where both parents viewed the live training) and a certificate will be created for you to take a photo of or screenshot. **We highly encourage this training as this is the new model of practice that is directing all of our safety decisions regarding placement and level of agency involvement.** Please reach out to your licensor regarding any questions you may have regarding this training.

### [Safety Framework Practice Model Foster Parent Training](#)

*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.*