

FOSTERING COMMUNICATIONS

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

December 2023

Upcoming State Conferences

North Dakota Family Based Services Conference

April 9-12, 2024

Holiday Inn

Fargo, ND

In-Person

More Details to Come...



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

PRIDE Link

The holiday season often is a time of the year when we spend time with those that mean the most to us, our friends and family. These close relationships are important in our lives as they provide connection and support during times of struggle as well as during times of joy and celebration. We know that these relationships children in foster care have with their family and friends are equally important and need to be maintained. This can be challenging at times due to a variety of reasons and in this PRIDE link we will take a closer look at the importance of maintaining and growing the connection and relationships children in foster care have with family and friends as it relates to the PRIDE competency, "Supporting relationships between children and their families". Please note that each child and family have individual needs and thus seeking guidance from the custodial agency in how to make and maintain connections is recommended.

First, let's take a closer look at how foster care providers can involve a child's biological parents in a "co-parent" role. In the article, "Co-Parenting Gets Children Home from Foster Care Safer and Faster" Dr. Stan Waddell explores different ways that this can be done successfully including communication, how to build a relationship with parents, and ways to mentor parents. To read the complete article please click on the link below.

[Co-Parenting Gets Children Home from Foster Care Safer and Faster](#)

Face to face visitation is the most common way that children maintain that connection with their families, and as noted in the above article, visitation with children and parents is needed for successful reunification. To help make the visitation experience successful for the child and their family the below article outlines different tips a foster care provider can utilize to help support the process. To read these tips click on the link below.

[5 Tips to Help Children in Foster Care Before and After a Visit](#)

Next, Laura from Foster Parent Partner created a video where she discusses different parent visitation scenarios in foster care including parents not visiting, children refusing visits, and supporting children after the visits. In the video she discusses and demonstrates different dos and don'ts in supporting a child in these different scenarios. To view this short video please click on the below link.

[Supporting a Child With Parents Visits in Foster Care](#)

Lastly, the holiday season can provide additional opportunities and challenges to maintain connections children in foster care have. Creating A Family's article, "Working with Your Child's Birth Family During the Holiday Season", outlines specific tips foster care providers can use to support connections during the holiday season. To read the entire article click on the link below.

[Working with Your Child's Birth Family During the Holiday Season](#)



Surviving & Thriving the Holidays

The holidays can spark thoughts of scenes from a Hallmark movie, sweet conversations with playful banter at the dinner table, frolicking in the snow, and children holding hands as they wait patiently in line to see Santa. But those scenes are not always reality even on the best of days, and when parenting children who have experienced trauma and loss there can be additional challenges. Creating a Family podcast, "Navigating Sticky Situations That Arise During the Holidays" covers a variety of "sticky situations", foster care providers may encounter during the holiday season, such as incorporating different holiday traditions, incorporating birth family, and managing gift expectations etc. The podcast panel of child welfare professionals and those with lived experience give different insights on these situations. Please click on the link below to listen to the podcast.

[Navigating Sticky Situations That Arise During the Holidays](#)

Another great resource from Creating a Family is their article, "10 Tips to Enjoy the Holidays with Kids Who Have Experienced Trauma". The article discusses why children who have experienced trauma may struggle during the holidays to include changes in typical routines and increase sensory overload that comes with this time of year. The article includes 10 tips that you may utilize, to include how to communicate with your child regarding changes, holiday traditions, setting boundaries, as well as expectations for yourself and your children. To read the entire article from Creating A Family please click the link below.

[10 Tips to Enjoy the Holidays with Kids Who Have Experienced Trauma](#)

Lastly, The Honestly Adoption Company's Resilient Caregiver has a FREE "How to Survive The Holiday Season" Guide. This guide includes four different podcasts with Mike and Kristen Berry and different therapists that cover the following topics: How to Process Disappointment; How to Help Your Child Cope with Unmet Expectations; How to Handle Overstimulation; How to Create Structure During The Holidays. To obtain this guide with links to the podcasts, click on the link below and provide your email address to have the guide emailed directly to you.

[How To Survive The Holiday Season](#)

Sensory Processing

This time of year can be sensory overload with the additional sights, sounds, and taste of the holidays, which means it can be great time to talk about what a Sensory Processing Disorder is and how this can impact children. Child Mind Institute explains what Sensory Processing issues are and some behaviors of children who are impacted by sensory processing. To read the entire article click on the link below.

[Sensory Processing Issues Explained](#)



The article "Sensory Processing and Trauma" is a short article with numerous resources including a YouTube video explaining how sensory overload may feel from a child's perspective as well as additional links to YouTube videos and other helpful resources that provide additional information on understanding what sensory processing disorder is and how to help your child. To view please click on the link below:

[Sensory Processing and Trauma](#)

During the holidays there are some things that you may want to try to ease sensory overload, such as communicating events and activities and planning ahead for different needs for children in your home. The Balance Brain covers this and more in their article, "Avoid Holiday Meltdowns with These Strategies". To read the entire article click the below link.

[Avoid Holiday Meltdowns With These Strategies](#)

If you want to learn more about the sensory related topic, please check out December's virtual training:

"Sensory Input and At Home Tips"

Training Information located on Page 3 of this newsletter!!



**From your friends at the
Children & Family Service Center**



Recruitment & Retention

The Red Shoe Campaign

November is recognized as National Adoption Month. During this time of year, additional effort is placed on increasing awareness about adoption related issues. In North Dakota, there are children in foster care who are waiting for permanency. One way in which Adults Adopting Special Kids (AASK) promotes awareness of this need is through their Red Shoe Campaign. You might be asking, what is the Red Shoe Campaign? This campaign was launched in November 2020, when the pandemic was not allowing the typical National Adoption Day celebrations to take place. Understanding the need, AASK felt the importance of continuing to spread the word. It was then that the Red Shoe Campaign was initiated! Inspired by the classic Wizard of Oz, we all remember Dorothy clicking together her red shoes and stating, "There's no place like home." In that moment, Dorothy desires nothing more than to be home with her family. Tesia Miller, Lead AASK Adoption Specialist, shared, "At AASK, we desire for all our kids to have a forever home with their adoptive family." Therefore, the purpose of the Red Shoe Campaign is to raise awareness about the children in foster care who are still waiting for permanency. The goal is to inform the community about the AASK program, in hopes to find families to potentially match with waiting children. At any time in North Dakota, there can be up to 30 kids waiting for their forever family. That is 30 kids too many! Throughout communities across the state, you may catch sight of red signs and red shoes displayed at businesses, along boulevards, or maybe even in your neighbor's yard, all representing youth in North Dakota who are waiting for their adoptive home. The signature slogan "There's no Place Like Home", reminds our state that every child is adoptable and that every child deserves permanency.



Kevan and Jennifer grew their family by adopting through foster care. In this testimonial, they share more about their adoption journey and working with the AASK program.

[North Dakota AASK Adoptive Parent Testimonial](#)

To learn more about AASK, feel free to visit their website:

[Adults Adopting Special Kids - Fargo, ND \(aasknd.org\)](#)

Virtual Training Opportunities!

CFSTC offers monthly virtual training as part of the Recruitment & Retention contract with the North Dakota Department of Health & Human Services. One hour of education credit is offered to licensed foster care providers who attend. Kinship homes are also welcome to participate! Watch for monthly fliers sent through email that will include details on upcoming training opportunities! If you have questions, or need access to the monthly flyer, please reach out to your Licensing Specialist, Case Manager, or CFSTC!

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 friends, family, and through social media!

**Upcoming Panel scheduled for Thursday, February 1, 2024
from 7:00-8:00 pm CST**

Anyone interested can simply register through the Zoom link [HERE](#) and join on the scheduled date!



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. Any comments or questions should be directed to the CFS Training Center.

NORTH DAKOTA

FOSTER OR ADOPT



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

Please call the Toll Free Inquiry Line @

1.833.FST.HOME
(1.833.378.4663)

And speak with Recruitment & Retention Specialist, Carissa Cox.



UPCOMING Virtual Training:
December Training "Sensory Input and At-Home Tips"

12.20.23
7:30-8:30 p.m. CST
Click [HERE](#) to Join

UPCOMING Virtual Open Chat Sessions:

12.07.23
7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. CST

12.19.23
11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. CST

Session details come by email from CFSTC. Please reach out if you would like to attend and have not received an email invite.

NORTH Dakota Be Legendary.

Health & Human Services