

# FOSTERING COMMUNICATIONS

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

December 2024

## Upcoming State Conferences

### North Dakota Family Based Services Conference

April 1-4, 2025

Holiday Inn

Fargo, ND

Details to come...

### North Dakota Indian Child Welfare & Wellness Conference

April 22-24, 2025

Spirit Lake Casino & Resort

Details to come...



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

## PRIDE Link

In this edition of the PRIDE link we will be focusing on the PRIDE competency “meeting children’s developmental needs”, specifically focusing on children who have been impacted by prenatal exposure to alcohol and drugs. Prenatal exposure is when a pregnant woman uses alcohol or drugs. According to data obtained by US government research, approximately 11% of all children born in the US have prenatal exposure to alcohol, drugs, or, frequently, both. This data indicates that there is a strong likelihood that a child you may be caring for could be impacted by prenatal substance use. The impact can result in numerous effects to include developmental delays such as cognitive deficiencies; behavior challenges; physical abnormalities; as well as other effects. In addition, some babies, when born prenatal exposed experience withdrawal symptoms known as Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS). NAS is when a baby withdraws from drugs they were exposed to in utero, to include symptoms such as shaking, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, and more.

A child who has long term effects of being prenatally exposed impacts how, as caregivers, we need to parent, advocate and care for a child, and there are various resources available regarding prenatal exposure to alcohol and drugs and it is effects. Creating A Family, a nonprofit with a focus on strengthening foster, adoptive, and kinship families, has numerous resources regarding this subject. First, is “What Resource Parents Should Know About Prenatal Exposure” that is an article that highlights the impact of prenatal exposure, effects of prenatal substance exposure, as well as ways to provide care for children who have been impacted by prenatal substance exposure. Within the article there are links to additional great resources for caregivers. Please click below in the link below to read the complete article as well as access the resource links.

### [What Resource Parents Should Know About Prenatal Exposure](#)

Next, in the Creating a Family podcast, “Prenatal Exposure: Diagnosing and Treatment” Dr. Larry Byrd Director of North Dakota’s Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Center covers a variety of topics as it relates to the diagnosis for substance exposure, the impacts, how it impacts placement of children who are in foster care, and more. Click on the link below to listen to Dr. Byrd share his expertise regarding Prenatal Substance Exposure.

### [Prenatal Exposure: Diagnosing and Treatment](#)

The last resources is from the Honestly Adoption Company Podcast (currently known as the Resilient Caregiver) “How to Advocate for Your Child with an FASD” with Laura Hernandez who has lived experience as a caregiver shares her wisdom on how to be an advocate in systems or environments where those working with children are unfamiliar with this diagnosis. To listen to the podcast please click on the link below.

### [How To Advocate For Your Child With An FASD](#)



# Surviving The Holiday Season

The holiday season can be a season full of joy, over stimulation, laughter, exhaustion, surprises, anger outbursts, and so much more. It is very intentional that we acknowledge that this time of year can bring both high and lows for everyone. Feelings of highs and lows may be magnified both for those children who are separated from their parents, family, and other connections as well as those who are their caregivers. To help you through this holiday season we are sharing Alternative Family Service's article "Celebrating the Holidays with Foster Youth: Dos and Don'ts" is a resource that outlines different things that you, as a foster care provider can do

support your family, such as communicating expectations of the holiday season, being purposeful about incorporating the child's holiday traditions and customs into the holiday season, and more. To read the complete article with all the do's and don'ts please click on the link below.

## [Celebrating the Holidays with Foster Youth: Do's and Don'ts](#)

Laura from Foster Parent Partner is a foster care provider who creates trauma informed videos and other resources aimed to support other foster care providers. First of these resources is a short video (approximately 1 minute) that demonstrates ways that you can support youth in care during the holidays. Laura role plays examples of ways you may consider incorporating the youth's holiday traditions as well as talking about your family traditions, and ways to support their connection with a child's family during the holidays. Click on the link below to watch the video.

## [Supporting Foster Youth During the Holiday Season](#)

A second video from Laura, Foster Parent Partner, role plays ways that a foster care provider can support different negative behaviors that a child may demonstrate. She demonstrates how to redirect, how to make connections, to provide choice, as well as positive reinforcement. To watch this second video please click in the link below.

## [Foster Parent Supporting Elevated Behaviors During the Holidays](#)

Lastly, Creating a Family's article, "Set Your Family Up for Success This Holiday Season" provides 10 tips that you can implement with your family during the holidays. The different tips include being aware of the child's perspective on the holiday on how to handle routines during this busy season. In addition, within the article are links to numerous other holiday themed resources from Creating a Family. To read the entire list of tips and access additional resources please click the link below.

## [Set your Family Up for Success This Holiday Season](#)

## FOOD INSECURITY

Children in the child welfare system may have experienced food insecurity with some research stating the numbers are between 20-30%. In addition to food insecurity, some children may have trauma that is associated with food, and what this could mean is that mealtimes or even food in general can be a sensitive subject. In the Families Rising article, "Healing from Food Insecurity: Beyond the Stash" author Dr. Katja Rowell highlights how foster parents may see food insecurities present itself within children and tips to reduce food anxiety, that provide children with the ability to have choice, limit conflict, and focus on healing. To read the article from Dr. Rowell click on the link below.



## [Healing From Food Insecurity: Beyond the Stash](#)

Dr. Katja Rowell, the author of the article mentioned above, has an interest in working with foster care providers as well as adoptive parents in helping their children heal from their food insecurities and food traumas and on The Feed Doctor website, she has links to numerous resources including previous blog posts, YouTube videos, etc. Click on the link below to check out addition information for Dr. Rowell's The Feeding Doctor website.

## [The Feeding Doctor](#)

## 2024 Fall Festival recorded sessions are available on the CFSTC website

### Sessions:

Supporting Children of Incarcerated Parents (2 Sessions)

From Awareness to Action: Equipping Foster Care Providers to Safeguard Against Internet Risk

Child Sexual Abuse: Prevention is Possible

**CLICK [HERE](#) to view the recordings**





# Recruitment & Retention

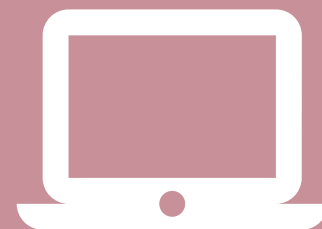
NORTH DAKOTA

FOSTER OR ADOPT



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

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:**

**Grief & Loss in Foster Care: Working through the "Goodbyes"**

**12.19.24 7:00-8:00 p.m. CST**

Click [HERE](#) to Register

**\*\*Watch your emails for further details\*\***



## The Reel Hope Project: A Forever Family for Every Child

There are more than 108,000 children in the United States waiting in foster care for their forever family. On Saturday, November 23rd, the Nation celebrated National Adoption Day as an effort to bring awareness to the need for permanency for children. Right here in North Dakota, communities across the state celebrated 30+ adoption finalizations on National Adoption Day! However, there are still children in North Dakota that continue to patiently wait in foster care for permanency.

In direct response to the foster care crisis, The Reel Hope Project was established in Minnesota roughly eight years ago. What started as a nonprofit now serves eight states across America. North Dakota is lucky to be one of those states! The team at The Reel Hope Project creates two-minute profile recruitment videos, also known as reels, for youth in foster care who are waiting for an adoptive placement. Each video serves as a much-needed supplement to the otherwise limited information available to those looking to adopt.

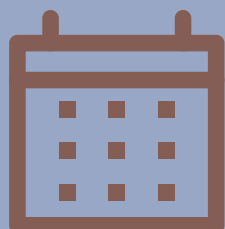
The focus of The Reel Hope Project is to get the number of waiting children in foster care to zero. With a strong mission: A forever family for every child, their team works towards this goal through the creation of adoption profile recruitment reels highlighting prevention efforts, and equipping individuals to step into respite and foster care, kinship placement, and adoption so that every child in their focus states has a family. One year ago, North Dakota's Adults Adopting Special Kids (AASK) began collaborating with The Reel Hope Project, in which reels for 23 kids have been created, 6 of whom are already matched with an adoptive family! According to Abby Marino with The Reel Hope Project, each reel is specific to the child's age, developmental stage, interests, hobbies, and passions. The child's team plans a special day that celebrates who that child is and showcases their strengths! Misconceptions linger around youth in foster care. According to a recent survey conducted by The Harris Poll on behalf of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, 51% of Americans believe youth are placed in foster care because of something they did. This belief is not only false, but also harmful, which leads to misperceptions about foster care and adoption. While The Reel Hope Project's video reels are intended to find forever families for children in foster care, the reels also help break myths about children in foster care. For more information about AASK, The Reel Hope Project, & ND Waiting Kids please click on the links below:

[North Dakota Adults Adopting Special Kids \(AASK\)](#)  
[The Reel Hope Project](#)  
[North Dakota's Waiting Kids](#)

## 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!

**The next panel is 02.13.25 7:00-8:00 p.m. CST**

Click [HERE](#) to register attend!!

*Fostering Communications is published by the UND Children and Family Services Training Center under the sponsorship of the Children and Family Services Section within the North Dakota Department of Health & Human Services. It is intended for all foster care providers, kinship providers, adoptive parents, and child welfare agencies. Any comments or questions should be directed to the CFS Training Center.*

NORTH Dakota Be Legendary.

Health & Human Services