

FOSTERING COMMUNICATIONS

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

March 2024

Upcoming State Conferences

North Dakota Family Based Services Conference

April 9-12, 2024

Holiday Inn

Fargo, ND

In-Person

Click [HERE](#) to register

Behavioral Health & Children and Family Services Conference

September 16-19, 2024

Bismarck Event Center

Bismarck, ND

In-Person & Virtual

More Details to Come...



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

PRIDE Link

In this edition of *Fostering Communications* newsletter we will focus on the PRIDE competency, "meeting children's developmental needs". Specifically, looking at what is normal sexual development for children and youth and how caregivers can support healthy sexual development, especially for children who have experienced trauma.

Sexual development starts at birth and it is more than just changes with our bodies, but includes sexual knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network's (NCTSN) "Sexual Development and Behavior in Children" highlights great information about what is common sexual behavior for different age groups, how to respond to sexual behaviors when you encounter them, what to teach children about sexual issues based on ages, as well as different resources that you may find helpful as a caregiver. To download this resource please click on the link below.

[Sexual Development and Behavior in Children](#)

Please note: If you have any concerns regarding your child's sexual behavior you are encouraged to talk to the child's case manager and/or therapist.

It is normal sexual development for youth to explore their sexuality and relationships. Children who are in foster care have negative outcomes with disproportionate rates of pregnancy, and according to one study youth involved with child welfare are at a higher of having their first consensual sexual experience before the age of 13. Because of this *Families Rising* shares three things that parents and professionals can do help youth when exploring relationships. This includes giving them a safe and structured platform to practice dating relationships; be knowledgeable and empathetic to some of the ways youth express their trauma; and become an example of what it means to be in a healthy relationship with others. Click on the link below to read the complete article that goes into depth of each of these three pieces.

[Relationships and Sexuality: How to Support Youth in Foster Care & Adoption](#)

Many youth in foster care identify as LGBTQ+ and to meet a child's needs who identifies as LGBTQ+ it is important that the youth feels support by their caregiver. Child Welfare Information Gateway "Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth: A Guide for Foster Parents" highlights what you, as a caregiver, can do. This guide provides information regarding different terms and misconceptions that are helpful for a caregiver to be aware of, ways a caregiver can create a welcoming and affirming home, ways you can support a youth who identifies as LGBTQ+ in the community, and other resources. To read this guide please click on the link below.

[Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth: A Guide for Foster Parents](#)

Saying Goodbye

The start of spring is just around the corner which ignites thoughts of new beginnings. New beginnings can also mean change, and one change could be saying goodbye to a child who is placed in your home. This may not be easy, no matter the reason, and during this transition you, as a foster care provider, have every right to experience feelings of loss. Whitney from *Be the Village* shares a video "Losing a Foster Care Placement is Never Easy" regarding why a foster care placement may end, sharing her feelings of saying goodbye, and how to handle the transition. To view the video click on the link below.

[Losing a Foster Care Placement is Never Easy](#)

An additional resource that may be helpful when a foster care placement ends is an article from *Foster Care Associates* "5 tips for when your foster placement ends". This article provides different scenarios of why a placement may end, as well as tips that can make this process easier, and insights on how to tell a child they are leaving. To reach the entire article click on the link below.

[5 Tips for When Your Foster Placement Ends](#)

In addition, we at Children and Family Training Center, encourage you to communicate with the placement agency regarding any loss you may be experiencing and for you to be aware that there is resources available to support you and your family. To learn more about this resource please refer to the information located under "Grief and Loss Counseling" on the next page of this newsletter.

Building Resilience

What does it mean when we say someone is resilient? Is resiliency something we are born with or is it something we can build upon? The short answer to these questions is resiliency can mean a variety of things, and the meaning may be different when we are referring to children and youth who have experienced trauma or are a part of the child welfare system, and resiliency is something that you can help foster within a child or youth. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, NCTSN, has a short recorded podcast that talks about resiliency in foster youth, and how to promote resilience with foster youth. This includes perspective from Amnoni Myers, expert and an individual with lived experience, providing valuable perspective on this topic, to include meeting the child where they are at. To listen to this Resource Parent Curriculum (RPC) Podcast please click on the link below.



[Building Resilience in Foster Youth](#)

Creating A Family's article, "Tips for Building Resilience in Our Children" tackles the three R's of Building Resilience with children who have experienced trauma. The three R's include Reassuring, Returning to Routine, and Regulating. To learn about the three R's as well as other helpful tips click on the link below:

[Tips for Building Resilience in Our Children](#)

Another great resource from Creating a Family is a podcast with Dr. Ken Ginsburg where he explores what resilience is as; the seven crucial Cs- Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, Contribution, Coping, and Control; how trauma impacts resiliency; and much more. To listen to the entire podcast with this valuable insights from Dr. Ginsburg click on the link below.

[Raising Resilient Kids](#)

To Honor March being Social Work Month, we at CFSTC, send our gratitude to all Social Workers and the work they do to make difference for those lives they touch.

**thank you**

Recruitment & Retention

Supports Available to Foster Care Providers

As a foster care provider, you are stepping up to provide temporary care to a child during a very difficult time not only for them, but for their family as well. Fostering requires providers to open their heart, their mind, and their home to a young person who has experienced childhood trauma. With this, comes many highs and lows. Navigating the foster care system can be challenging at times, but did you know there are supports available? Through the Recruitment & Retention contract, foster care providers have access to:

Foster Care Provider Mentor Program:

The foster care provider mentor program is available to licensed providers who would benefit from additional support. Mentors have a minimum of one contact each month (more as needed) with providers they are matched with. The goal is to build relationships and support fellow providers to help them learn, grow, or get through challenging times.

Grief and Loss Counseling:

Counseling services are available to North Dakota providers who are experiencing grief and loss, and are in need of additional support. Three 1-hour sessions, per foster family, are fully funded through the Recruitment & Retention contract. Any additional sessions would be the financial responsibility of the foster care provider.

ICWA Cultural Liaison Program:

The ICWA Cultural Liaison Program is a supportive service offered through the Native American Training Institute (NATI). This service is available to Native children placed with non-Native foster care providers, and Native children who have been adopted into a non-Native family as a means to prevent cultural disconnect. A liaison can provide education to the family on powwows, regalia, food, herbs, sundances, and any other cultural information important to the child. In this video, Andrew Makena, shares more information about the Cultural Liaison program:

[ICWA Cultural Liaison Program](#)

If you have questions about any of these supports, or would like more information, please contact your Licensing Specialist, or CFSTC at 833.378.4663

Virtual Training Opportunities!

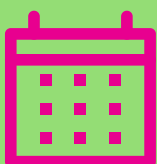
CFSTC offers monthly virtual training as part of the Recruitment & Retention contract with the North Dakota Department of Health & Human Services. One hour of education credit is offered to licensed foster care providers who attend. Kinship homes are also welcome to participate! Watch for monthly fliers 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 Tuesday, May 14th
from 7:00-8:00 pm CST

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



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:**

**March Training
"An Evening with AASK"**

**3.13.24
8:00-9:00 p.m. CST**

Click [HERE](#) to Join

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

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