

Caregiver Connection

MARCH 2016

A monthly publication for Washington State foster and adoptive families and relative caregivers produced by the Washington Department of Social and Health Services, Children's Administration and the Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence.



March is National Social Work Month

SOCIAL WORKERS CHANGE FUTURES

Few people know the truth of those words more personally than those who work with children in foster, kinship or adoptive care.

March is recognized as National Social Work Month to honor the commitment of those who stand with caregivers on the frontline of trying to stabilize young lives whose early months or years have been so dreadful.



Alissa Copeland,
Curriculum Developer

"It's a difficult job," says Alissa Copeland, Curriculum Developer with the Alliance for Child Welfare at the University of Washington. The Alliance trains social workers.

Alissa began her career as a social worker with the state Children's Administration in 2007, became a supervisor and now oversees social worker training for the Alliance.

"It's a high-stress job with a lot of competing demands for your time."

Alissa chose her profession, she says, because "I always wanted to work with children."

A similar motivation propelled Kayla Pinza, into her job as a Child Protective Services social worker in Spokane, where she began her duties in January.

"I really like helping people," Kayla said.

At Eastern Washington University, she began studies as a math major, then found it wasn't what she wanted to do after she took an introductory social work class. She steered her career in an entirely new direction.



Kayla Pinza, CPS SW

"I fell in love with it," she said. An internship with Volunteers of America put her close to the work of helping foster youth. Through the internship, she discovered, "I have a heart for foster care youth – helping them with life skills, anything they wanted." She also worked with the Mockingbird Society, where she learned advocacy skills. She worked on and helped pass the state's new Prudent Parenting Bill, designed to help make the lives of foster youth as normal as possible. "I think what got me was that I can potentially advocate for people," she said of her experiences before becoming a social worker.

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Nancy Taft, SW

That goal was not on the mind of Nancy Taft Morrow when she graduated with a degree in philosophy from the University of Puget Sound at age 22 in the late 1960s.

“It never occurred to me I was going to have to support myself, and I had no discernible skills whatsoever,” she said.

Nancy, now 69, said she stumbled into the field that consumed her life’s work. She heard about jobs in the public assistance field – there was no Children’s Administration then – and began as a financial services specialist for those receiving old-age assistance.

She eventually became a social worker on the frontlines for 20 years, then served as a program and policy worker in Children’s Administration management.

She returned to the field as a regional deputy administrator before finishing her career with Children’s Home Society in Seattle. Her training experience could not have been more different than that of new social workers.

Social Worker training encompasses 320 hours over eight weeks and used the Regional Training Curriculum. The training spans 40 days and consists of classroom training, as well as a heavy emphasis on job shadowing and field experience. Social workers can also get some training online.

Washington’s social workers are trained in five major subject areas, called modules, that cover 33 specific subjects. The subjects are as diverse as teaming with caregivers and using the FamLink computer system to documenting all your activities and appearing in court.

That’s a far cry from the experience of Nancy and that of her co-workers in the

late 1960s and early 1970s.

“There’s such single-mindedness to it now,” as young people start out with the goal of becoming a social worker, study for it and then get training, Nancy said.

When she was starting her career, she says, “Nobody knew anything. We were going by the seat of our pants. There was no training, no training academy, no training center.”

She described her co-workers back then as “a bunch of misfits” with a variety of backgrounds. Like her, many of them just sort of stumbled into the work.

“It was a much better time, although maybe we missed some stuff,” she said. She talked about times when things were different. “You were allowed to fail and not be held accountable in the newspaper. Now there is so much pressure. It’s impossible to do the job now.

There were a lot of idealistic people then, too, but they came from a lot of different backgrounds.”

Kayla said she and her co-workers still possess that idealism.

“I definitely see that,” Kayla said. “A lot of people are definitely wanting to serve. For me, I have made a difference before and I want to continue to do so.”

But to become a social worker, all three of them said you actually have to have the work experience with children and families.

“This is a job you can’t learn at school,” Nancy said. “You have to live it. You have to hear it from your elders.”

Alissa said, “I learned so much more from my peers and supervisors than I did in training. Training can build the foundation, but the day-to-day work is the best teacher. You can’t teach someone how to be a social worker in eight weeks.”

Kayla’s work with young people as she started her career motivated her to continue.

“I know what gets me is that I can potentially advocate for people,” she said.

Turnover continues to be an issue – driven by the stress, the high stakes of children’s lives, the ever-increasing number of policies, the legal need to document every single action and the consequences of a wrong decision.

“It’s definitely an issue,” Kayla said of turnover. “But many people do want to stay in CA and become supervisors.”

And even for those like Nancy, who showed up for work in this field in July 1969 and stayed for 40 years, the lure of service, the ability to help people help themselves, or just “the craziness of it” kept her going.

“I was just marking time,” she said of her first few years. “I kept thinking, ‘This can’t be my real life.’

But after 20 years I finally figured out, ‘This is what I do.’ But I never did think this would be my career.”

**“Our fingerprints
don’t fade from
the lives we’ve touched.”
Author Will Fetters**

Contents

SW Month	1
SW Month continues	2
Becoming a DSHS Social Worker	3
Partner the Parrot	3
New Data Base, Stroller Recall	4
Federal Program	4
Letter from a Foster Child	5
Camp to Belong and Foster Parent Conference	6
Voices of Children and Family Day	7
News for Kinship Caregivers and Make It Happen	8
Seattle Aquarium	8
Executive Order	8
Consultation Team	9
Additional Resourcer	10-11
Meet Our Recruitment	12
Fostering WA Staff List	13
Fostering Together List	14
Cargiver Training	15
Trainers in your Region	16

BECOMING A DSHS SOCIAL WORKER – THE RIGHT STUFF



What's required to be a child social worker?

Applicants for social work positions must have either a bachelor's degree and two years of paid social service experience or a master's degree in social services, human services, behavioral science or a closely related field and one year of paid social service experience.

A practicum can be substituted for the year of paid social service experience. Selected candidates may be required to complete an in-training plan to meet the experience requirements for this job class.

Candidates selected must then complete an eight-week formal training sponsored by DSHS at the time of hire. Additional mandatory trainings must be

What does the state desire in a social worker?*

The job focuses on establishing meaningful relationships with families and the communities around them, while assessing the safety of children. It empowers families to contribute to their own solutions and success. It is essentially the core of preventive social services.

*From the job site www.careers.wa.gov choose the "Look for Jobs" link and search for "Social Service Specialist".



What do social workers learn during training?

The Alliance For Child Welfare Excellence, University of Washington, says the modules listed below, which include 33 detailed training sessions, are at the heart of social worker training:

- Module 1 – Orientation
- Module 2 – Engaging families through consensus-building
- Module 3 – Getting organized through assessment
- Module 4 – Planning for permanency and well-being
- Module 5 – Case management

Some sessions can be taken online (e-learning).

PARTNER THE PARROT SAYS: "TELL THE COURT HOW KIDS ARE DOING"

Partner the Parrot reminds you to watch for the next court date for kids in your care – or ask for the date from your child's social worker – so you can provide current information to the judge about how the child is doing. As a child's day-to-day caregiver, you have the best current information about him or her. Sharing it with the court helps the judge make the best decisions about the child.

The court hearing is your best chance to tell the judge – who has final say over a child's case – what you see in the life of that child, how she/he has improved and what would help you help the child.

Don't know when your foster child's next court hearing will be? Make a point to ask the child's case worker at your next health and safety visit – or email the worker and ask for the date. The court date is on the first page of the child's court report, which is prepared two weeks prior to the hearing.

You can submit comments in writing for the hearing by using the caregiver report to the court form. We also encourage you to come to court whenever possible. However, the judge determines who will speak at the hearings. Thank you!





NEW DATABASE HELPS PEOPLE CONNECT WITH CHILDREN'S ADMINISTRATION STAFF MEMBERS

Children's Administration has created a new searchable employee directory that makes it easy to find social workers and their supervisors.

The directory will enable you to search using a number of features, including first or last name, region, office, city and title. The "detail" link displayed with the results also provides the supervisor's name and contact information. The directory will be updated continuously, to provide greater accuracy of information.

Go to the [Children's Administration employee directory](#).



A new play took the stage this month at the Seattle Repertory Theater. "Luna Gale" written by Rebecca Gilman and directed by Braden Abraham looks at the child welfare system through the eyes of a veteran social worker.

A synopsis of the play is included on the Seattle Rep. website: "Who decides who is capable of raising a child? Veteran social worker Caroline will do whatever it takes to protect baby Luna Gale, but her well-intentioned mission is swayed by hidden motives, buried secrets and moral ambiguity.

Powerful and arresting, Luna grapples with the age-old question of whether the end justifies the means." Run time is approximately 2 hours with one intermission. This performance contains adult content and profanity.

See more at: <https://www.seattlerep.org/Plays/1516/LG/Synopsis#sthash.MsgstceM.dpuf>

If you are interested in purchasing tickets use the Seattle Rep. Theatre's website: <https://www.seattlerep.org/Buy/>

FEDERAL PROGRAM HELPS FOSTER CARE YOUTH WITH SCHOOL COSTS

Application deadline is April 30

The Education and Training Voucher Program, informally known as ETV, is a federally funded program to help current and former foster care youth pay for the cost of attending an accredited college, university, vocational or technical college.

Applications are being accepted through April 30.

Who is eligible?

Current and former Washington foster care youth may be eligible for assistance if they meet any one of the following criteria:

- They are between the ages of 16 and 20, currently in a dependency action in a Washington state or tribal court, in the care and custody of the Department of Social and Health Services or Tribal Child Welfare Agency, and in foster care.

- They are between the ages of 18 and 20 and they exited state or tribal foster care because they reached the age of majority.

- They were adopted or entered a relative guardianship on or after the age of 16 to 20. How do I apply or help someone apply?

Go to the ETV page on the independence.wa.gov website.

Youth can apply online for:

- The Education and Training Voucher Program.

- The Passport to College Foster Promise Scholarship Program.

Applicants also must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and should do so as soon as possible after Jan. 1 for the upcoming academic year. To complete the FAFSA, go to www.fafsa.ed.gov/

For questions, contact Kathy Ramsay, ETV Program Manager, at 360-902-7990;

kathy.ramsay@dshs.wa.gov

LETTER FROM A FOSTER CHILD



“I think of you all the time. You are my real family.”

The January Caregiver Connection included an article Carole Sebens posted on her blog, “A Letter to a Foster Child” that was written around Christmastime. Carole wrote this about the response she received from her post: “Today someone posted this response in the comments. I cried as I read it – I cried for her, what she went through. I also cried happy tears. What a beautiful Christmas gift she is giving us, past foster parents and teachers! Her life was changed because a foster parent, teachers, and her Heavenly Father cared for her and loved her. I hope her foster family sees this one day and recognizes her in it. I know you will not be able to read this and not be impacted. Thanks! Carole.”
(Click here to see [Carole’s blog.](#))

By Catherine Pearson

Dear Foster Parent,

How are you doing? Do you ever think of us, your temporary foster kids? We think of you. You probably had more impact on us than you know. Odds are, we will never meet again, but there are so many things I want to tell you.

If you were ever a foster parent and felt loved, or didn’t, because your foster child didn’t know how to show you love the way you wanted it, or you weren’t in a place to receive it... this message is for you.

I stayed with several foster families – some for just a few days and others for months... (16 in all). I remember the day I came to live with you, carrying all my belongings in a black trash bag. I still remember the sick feeling in my stomach when I was called to the office at school and a case worker walked me out to her car. I felt so embarrassed when I showed her my house and how few clothes I had to bring with me.

She told me how wonderful your family was on the drive over. She bought me a happy meal from McDonalds, which I tried to force myself to take a few bites of while driving to your house... I may have seemed shy and scared the first few days. I didn’t know what the rules were, I didn’t know if I would get in trouble if I accidentally wet the bed. I really wished that I could have brought my poodle Princess with me.

Thanks for making me breakfast and helping me put my clothes away. I never knew that parents made kids hot meals every day! Holy Cow! Thanks for letting me watch and help you cook, clean, work in the office, and even drive with you to the store (just you and me). At first, I thought everyone was just on their best behavior and that after I was there a while things would go back to the way things were like at my real mom’s house ... But they didn’t. I learned that parents take care of the kids every day and not just once in a while. When parents fight it doesn’t have to involve the police.

Even though you thought nobody noticed that you cleaned the house while we were at school ... I did. I was so proud of you for doing such a good job as a mom. When I could hear you putting dishes away in the morning, I remember smiling ... because it just made me feel loved. All the time you spent making our Easter baskets and then hiding little messages around the house for us to find them ... (Mine was hidden in the dryer). Thank you for taking the time to teach me about buckling up in the car. You helped me to realize the hard truth about why I was not at my “real” house.

You are right, when I got comfortable ... I started to rebel. I remember getting into trouble for jumping on my bed when it was bedtime, and digging up the tree roots in the front yard. I told all my friends you were Aunt Jemima, and they believed me. You taught me no matter what to do my best, even if nobody else noticed.

I want you to know that when I went back to my mom’s house I would still do the things you taught me to do. I would always buckle up in the car, even though my mom would get mad at me and say that I thought she was a bad driver and that was why I chose to buckle up. I would tell my teachers if my mom had drugs, even though that meant my mom would hate me. Everyone at my mom’s house referred to me as the “tattle-tale.”

I even started to throw away garbage from our car into the trash can,

instead of throwing it out the window while we were driving. I would make sure to collect the trash so that my siblings wouldn’t throw it out the window either. It was awkward at first walking all the way to the trash can for even something small, when it would have been much easier to toss it on the ground.

I remember my siblings making fun of me and saying that I was a “goody two-shoes.” Since I was the youngest of my siblings it was harder for me to stand up for what was right ... but I want you to know that I did! I would make sure and keep my clothes washed, and even though I didn’t have a bed at my mom’s house, I made a nice clean spot on the couch and kept the same bedtime routine you taught me. Yes, I brushed my teeth every night even though I told you I wouldn’t have to at my “real” mom’s house.

When my mom bought lots of drugs and alcohol for my sister’s 16th birthday, I want you to know that I used all my paper route money to buy candy and fancy soda for that party. I made a rule that in order for people to get into “my party” they first had to sign an agreement with me that they would not participate in the drugs/ alcohol. I only had one person join my party that night but it was someone pretty important. It was my sister’s boyfriend John! Ha! My mom and sister were MAD at me.

I want you to know that when I went to school I started to do my best. I still had fun and made jokes during class, but I slowly started getting good grades. I even helped my older brother and sister with their math facts!

I want you to know that I finished high school, and even earned some college credits while still a high school student. I decided to become a teacher because school was the only place where I felt safe while I lived at my mom’s house.

I still got mocked by my siblings because I was doing better than them. Sometimes, their teasing and laughing made me really, really sad. I wished that I had someone to stand up for me since I was the youngest. When I would fall asleep at night, I would often hug my pillow and imagine that I was hugging you!

At school my teachers would announce PTA (Parent/Teacher Association) meetings. I went to these meetings even though they lasted until dark, and I would have to walk home on my own. I think parents attending must have thought I was with one of the other parents ... I went to these meetings because I

thought it was unfair that my friends’ parents knew what was going on and I didn’t. I even started reading parenting books for my age to make sure that I was not missing anything else.

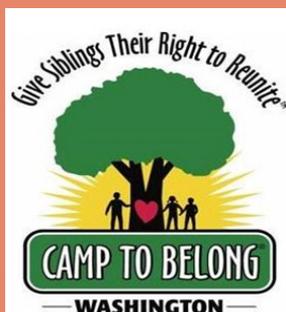
What I mainly want you to know is that when I left your house, I did not fall back into the old ways. I brought back all the things you taught me, even though most of it you did naturally because you were such a great foster parent! In fact, I remember you got many calls to take even more foster kids! Once, when I was 5 or 6, I had to sleep in a baby crib out in the hallway because they brought you more foster kids. Even though I was not the only kid at your house, you made me feel like I was. You talked to me about everything, and spent time to get to know my fears, wants, and even listen to my endless jokes!

I wish I knew how to get in touch with you! I want to tell you that I even graduated from college, and became a teacher. I am often chosen to put together websites, or technical presentations for my colleagues. In one of my psychology classes in college, I remember the professor saying that kids raised in a neglect or drug environment would repeat the cycle. He said that they would not be able to hold down a job, maintain relationships, or go to college. I was mad. He had no idea that I was breaking the cycle and I was in his class. So, I decided I would also get a master’s degree, and I did.

As you can see, I still like to prove people wrong. I graduated with honors! I know you would have been proud. I wished you were there. I didn’t know what to do with the family tickets that I was given for the graduation. I think I may even still have them.

I want you to know that I have been employed since I was 14. I legally divorced my mom when I was just 14. Not only did I finish high school, but I graduated from George Fox University with honors! I have been married for 14 years. I became a Christian, and know that my father is the King! I have three kids and I have done everything possible to be the best mom to them! I took in foster kids too, and told them all about you! I paid careful attention and I remember what you taught me. Though I don’t have but a handful of pictures from my childhood, I do have clear memories of you. I think of you all the time. You are my real family. Merry Christmas from your foster child.

CAMP TO BELONG WASHINGTON:



TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE

One former camper, now a camp counselor, says of Camp To Belong Washington: "Miracles happen here." Many others describe their time at Camp To Belong as "life-changing." What's so special about this camp? It reunites brothers and sisters separated by foster, kinship or adoptive care, giving them a week together each summer to build their relationships and create happy memories.

Camp To Belong Washington will be Aug. 22-27 this year, reuniting 100 brothers and sisters. The camp, for siblings 8-18 years old, is free and is again at Miracle Ranch in Port Orchard.

Applications will soon be posted at www.fosterfamilyconnections.org. Applications for counselors also will be available on the website.

If you are a caregiver with separated siblings in your care; if you are a social worker with separated siblings; or if you would like to become a counselor, please watch for the applications. Along with the usual summer camp activities of boating, swimming, horseback riding, archery and a ropes course, the camp has several signature events that define it and the 10 other Camp To Belong camps in the United States. These events are designed to grow and strengthen the bonds between siblings who are attending. They include gift shopping by siblings for a Birthday Party Night; creation of sibling pillows and quilts; the Life Seminar for older campers; and campfires, during which

campers can share their stories and hear from others with similar experiences. Washington's camp also has Formal Night, a popular event started two years ago, at which campers dress up in donated formal gowns, dress shirts and ties to attend a chic dinner-dance. Not every moment is scripted. Campers have time to hang out together and just talk and reconnect.

Many camps have themes carried throughout the week. Washington will join them this year, honoring the Olympics, which will just be ending in Rio as camp begins. A torch will be used to light the Monday night campfire, and the theme of "Training for the Future" will be carried in events and messages throughout the week.

Camp is organized and operated by Foster Family Connections, with financial and logistic support from Children's Administration and many individuals and private organizations.

ANNUAL CAREGIVERS CONFERENCE AND NIGHT OF SHINING STARS

Make reservations now for the seventh annual Pacific Northwest Caregivers Conference, **May 13-15 at Great Wolf Lodge south of Olympia.**

Training, networking, basket giveaways and a toy giveaway hosted by Santa will highlight the conference, which is sponsored by the Foster Parents Association of Washington State.

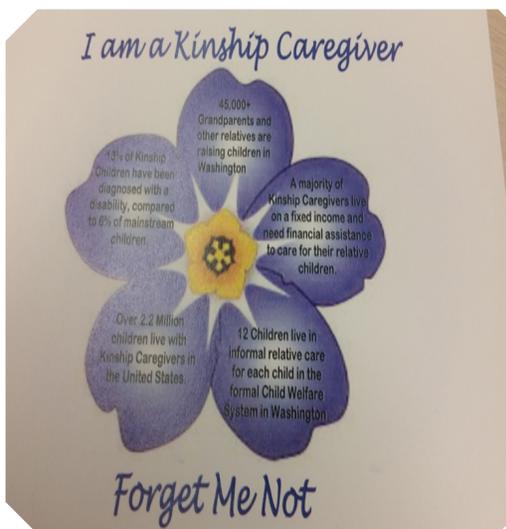
To highlight the great work being done by many people in child welfare throughout the state, the seventh annual Night of Shining Stars Banquet and Award Ceremony will take place during the conference – at 6 p.m. Saturday, May 14. You are encouraged to nominate social workers from around the state who you believe have done an outstanding job.

Full information about the conference as well as nomination forms for the Night of Shining Stars can be found at the association website, www.fpaws.org. If you are planning to bring children, be sure to sign up for Kids Kamp or Toddler Kamp as soon as possible. Forms are available on the website and must be approved beforehand.

Child care will be available at no charge. More details are available at the FPAWS website, www.fpaws.org.



DEADLINE LOOMING IN VOICES OF CHILDREN CONTEST



April 1 deadline is fast approaching for art or writing submissions to Washington's 13th annual contest, Voices of Children Being Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives.

As you can see from the graphic above, produced by Kinship Navigator Lynn Urvina for Family Education and Support Services (FESS), contest sponsors, Washington has a huge number of children who can no longer live with their biological parents and who now live with other relatives. The contest provides one way for these children to express their feelings in a positive way. Here are some details about the contest:

How do you enter?

Write a poem or short essay, or draw a picture that describes how living with a relative (such as a grandparent, aunt or uncle) has made a positive difference in your life. Entries will be judged in three age categories: 5- to 7-year-olds, 8- to 12-year-olds, and 13- to 19-year-olds.

What are the rules?

- All participating children must live in Washington and be:
 - 5 -19 years old.
 - Poems should be 21 lines or less.
 - Essays should be 200 words or less.
 - Artwork must be submitted on the entry form, which can be found at: <http://familyess.org/>
 - Artwork should be as big and bold as possible and also contain a statement that explains the art or drawing.
 - The artwork should not include any names within it.
 - Artwork must be flat and within the box on the entry form.

- Entries must be original, in English and unpublished.

- Winners will be notified in early May. All decisions of the judges are final. The date and place of an awards ceremony for winners will be announced soon. FESS reserves the right of first publication and use of writings and drawings. All entries may be published in a 2016 book called "Voices of Children—Raised by Grandparents and Other Relatives."

What are the prizes?

The top two entries in each age division will receive:

- \$100 from Twin Star Credit Union
- A free night at Great Wolf Lodge, Grand Mound, Wash., for a family of four

An awards ceremony will be at a time and place yet to be determined.

Questions?

If you have questions, please call Family Education and Support Services at 360-754-7629 or toll-free 877-813-2828 or e-mail Lynn@Familyess.org. Remember, all entries must be submitted or post-marked by April 1.

Mail your entries to:
Voices of Children Contest
1202 Black Lake Blvd. #B
Olympia WA 98502

IF IT'S SPRING, IT'S TIME FOR WE ARE FAMILY DAY 2016

On Sunday, May 1, the Seattle Mariners invite foster and adoptive families, relative caregivers, DSHS staff, tribes, private child-placing agency staff, our community partners and their friends and family to Safeco Field in Seattle for the eighth annual We Are Family Day.

The event recognizes May as National Foster Care Month as well as Kinship Caregiver Day May 18. It honors caregivers who make a difference in the lives of children as well as those who work each day to support them.

We Are Family Day is a three-part event.

The doors of Safeco Field's Ellis Pavilion will open at 9:30 a.m. for a short caregiver recognition program from 10 to 11 a.m. Among the speakers will be **First Lady Mrs. Inslee**, along with alumni of foster care, who will share how caregivers made a difference in their lives. Drawings for amazing door prizes and caregiver giveaways are part of the fun, as is free popcorn.

Come meet the Mariner Moose! And 10 lucky individuals will be randomly chosen to have their picture taken on the field with a Mariners player.

Then, at 11:10 a.m., children are invited to walk the warning track on the field.

At 1:10 p.m., the game gets underway, with the Mariners taking on the Kansas City Royals, 2015 World Series Champions.

The Mariners once again are offering exceptionally low ticket prices for this game. Seats are \$12 for the 300-level and \$29 for the 100-level. Everyone who attends the game also receives a free Mariner t-shirt.

All DSHS staff, tribes, child-placing agency staff, our community partners, along with their family and friends, may purchase tickets at the same price as caregivers at the team's We Are Family website, www.Mariners.com/WeAreFamily. Tickets for the event must be purchased online no later than noon on Friday, April 29. The price is not available at the door of the ballpark. For more information, view the flyer at www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/CA/fos/documents/WeAreFamily2016.pdf.

Tickets are selling quickly – don't wait to get yours!

For further information, please contact Meri Waterhouse, (360) 902-8035 or meri.waterhouse@dshs.wa.gov



MORE GOOD NEWS FOR KINSHIP CAREGIVERS!

In honor of Kinship Caregiver Day, kinship caregivers will be able to stay at Great Wolf Lodge near Olympia from May 17-20 at a discounted rate.



Contact your Kinship Navigator (list is on the More Resources page) for further information about the rates.

**COLLEGE
SUCCESS
FOUNDATION**

**MAKE
IT HAPPEN!
2016**

The dates and location have been set for Make It Happen!, the three-day, two-night summer experience for foster youth transitioning into college.

The event, sponsored by the College Success Foundation, will be June 28-30 at Pacific Lutheran University in Parkland.

For more information:

www.collegesuccessfoundation.org

or 425-213-5888.

Don't forget to "like" the College Success Foundation on Facebook.

State Park Passes and Seattle Aquarium Passes

Free state park passes are available for foster parents and relatives caring for children in state custody. The same is true for use of the Seattle Aquarium.

You can use your foster care license or card for access to the parks. You must have the foster care wallet card to access the aquarium. Relative caregivers can obtain a card through the worker who is your home study writer in the Division of Licensed Resources.

Relative caregivers whose relative children are not placed with them through Children's Administration can obtain a pass card from their local Kinship Navigator or Kinship Support Programs.

If you have questions about obtaining a card, please contact:

Christie Boyd at: boydcha@dshs.wa.gov

NEW STATE AGENCY FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROPOSED



Washington Gov. Jay Inslee last month signed an Executive Order creating a Blue Ribbon Commission to create a separate stand-alone department to provide services to children and families in Washington state. Currently, services are provided through Children's Administration, which is part of the state's Department of Social and Health Services.

Creating such a department would have to be approved by the state legislature. Lawmakers would work from a set of commission recommendations due to the governor by Nov. 1, 2016.

For more information about the governor's proposal, including a question-and-answer section, click on

www.governor.wa.gov/news-media/inslee-announces-transformative-changes-children%E2%80%99s-services

To hear what Jennifer Strus, assistant secretary for Children's Administration has said about the proposal, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=A77X5F2_7II&feature=youtu



WHEN YOU NEED HELP WITH AN ISSUE, REACH OUT TO YOUR 1624 CONSULTATION TEAM MEMBER

Wondering who to turn to when you have an unresolved concern or problem related to foster care?

A consultation team that enables foster parent representatives to bring issues before high-level Children's Administration leaders was established through a provision in a 2007 state law.

That team, known as the Children's Administration Foster Parent Consultation Team (1624 Team), includes four representatives from each of the state's three regions (two from the north area and two from the south area). Team members were elected in late 2015.

In Region 1 North, centered in the Spokane area, all the spots are vacant. (Contact information is listed below if you're interested in serving as the representative.)

The statewide team meets quarterly.

Regional team meetings also take place quarterly. Here is contact information for the team:

Foster Parent Association of Washington State Representatives

Beth Canfield
bethcanfield@comcast.net
(360) 990-1011, cell;
(360) 377-1011, home

Mike Canfield
mkbeth@comcast.net
(360) 990-1255, cell;
(360) 377-1011, home

Team Representatives

Region 1 North
Lynsey Bilbruck:
bilbruck@hotmail.com
509-560-3423;

Aimee Budrow:
abudrow@ewu.edu
509-846-5603;

Region 1 South
Windy Hancock
timandwindy@ymail.com
(509) 528-6392, cell; (509) 554-2377

Audra Krussel
Audra11@mindspring.com
(208) 340-9956

Region 2 North

Jamie Potter
Jalice24@yahoo.com
(425) 223-8168

Shanna Weatherby-Clark
Shawea2@msn.com
(425) 232-6283

Region 2 South
Shannon Mead
Shannon.mead@gmail.com
(206) 856-1508

Yosef Banai
Yobanai@hotmail.com
(425) 378-1625

Region 3 North
Michael Thomas
mlthomas253@hotmail.com
(253) 298-1860

Ashleigh Barraza
ashleigh.barraza@yahoo.com
(619) 847-8370

Region 3 South
Vacant

Amy Gardner
michaelamy52@msn.com
(360) 200-2102

Region 3 South Alternative
Cara Leyshon
caraleyshon@hotmail.com
(360) 440-5629 (c)



Do you have a story idea or topic you'd like to see addressed in the Caregiver Connection.

Have you seen a helpful article on caregiving you'd like to share more widely?

Please pass your ideas or articles to Bob Partlow:

bpartlow1970@hotmail.com;

Tel: 360-539-7863.

Additional *Resources*



Washington State's Kinship Navigators

Helping grandparents and relatives raising children

Locate information, resources, and a link to your local Kinship Navigator for support at:

<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/kinship-care-support-services>

Foster Intervention Retention and Support Team

FIRST

Offers neutral third party advice and support for foster parents when dealing with allegations or a licensing violation.

ALL FOSTER PARENTS STATE-WIDE PLEASE CALL:
253-219-6782

Email:
FIRST@olivecrest.org

Fostering Well-Being Care Coordination Unit (FWB CCU)

FWB CCU can help answer health-related questions or help you with health related issues for children/youth in your care.

Contact information:

1-800-422-3263 ext. 52626 or
360-725-2626

(8:00 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.) or

e-mail: fwbccu@dshs.wa.gov.

FPAWS

Foster Parent Association of Washington State FPAWS is an all volunteer, non-profit association, led by experienced caregivers who provide support and helpful services to all caregivers (foster, adoptive, and kinship) in Washington State.

Contact FPAWS at

www.fpaws.org

1- 800-391-CARE (2273).

FOSTER PARENT AND CAREGIVER CRISIS AND SUPPORT LINE:

1-800-301-1868

Foster Care Critical Support and Retention Program

This program was developed to help retain foster parents who care for sexually reactive children, physically assaultive children, or children with other high-risk behaviors. Short term therapeutic and educational interventions are available to help support the stability of the placement.

This service is free of charge and is provided through Olive Crest. Contact the child's worker if a referral would help you in handling the behaviors of the child in your home.

If you would like to learn more about the available services contact Jasmine Hodges Olive Crest's Critical Support Clinician

425-1612 ext. 1356 or

Jasmine-Hodges@olivecrest.org

Additional *Resources*



The Mockingbird Society's mission is to empower foster and homeless youth with the tools of advocacy to make positive changes within the foster care system.



They produce a newspaper, set up constellations of homes for foster parents to connect, and use the power of the voices of youth to advocate for positive changes in the child welfare system.

Visit them at

www.mockingbirdsociety.org.



This nationwide organization is based in Issaquah and lists its mission is "to provide students with the inspiration, mentoring, counseling and financial support they need to help navigate their individual path to college completion. We do everything in our power to help our students persist and succeed."

The foundation offers a number of scholarships, including the Governor's Scholarship for Foster Youth, and runs the annual summer Make It Happen! experience to better prepare young people for college.

Read more at

www.collegesuccessfoundation.org.



Based in King County, Treehouse serves more than 8,000 foster youth each year. Services are tailored to help them graduate from high school with a plan for their future.

Through educational and financial support, the organization also serves caregivers, helping them navigate the challenges and opportunities of fostering and provide the best possible experience for the youth in their care.

See their website at

www.treehouseforkids.org.

Meet Our Recruitment Partners

Who Support You

Children's Administration (CA) works in partnership with two separate agencies to provide foster parent recruitment and retention / support services to prospective foster parents, current foster parents and relative caregivers in all areas of Washington. Our goals are to:

- Increase the numbers of safe, quality foster families to meet the diverse needs of children and youth placed in out-of-home care in Washington State, and
- Offer support to foster parents and relative caregivers

Prospective foster parents are welcome to license through either CA's Division of Licensed Resources (DLR), or any private child placing agency licensed in Washington. Our recruitment partners serve all families, regardless of where they choose to become licensed.



Olive Crest's Fostering Together program supports the west side of the state (Regions 2 and 3) through foster care Liaisons.

Eastern Washington University's Fostering Washington program supports (Region 1) the east side of the state through Resource Peer Mentors (RPMs),



The Liaisons or RPMs provide information, help and guidance for you from your first inquiry, through training, and throughout the licensing process to become foster parents. Liaisons and RPMs both answer questions and share helpful information during your foster care journey. They offer:

- Support at your first placement,
- Support groups , (some with training hours available and some provide a meal and / or child care)
- Mentoring,
- Training, and
- On-line Facebook groups

All supports are designed with our caregivers in mind. We want to help you connect with other caregivers, obtain additional training, and find answers to questions. Both Olive Crest and Eastern Washington University offer information and referral services to foster parents and relative caregivers. The regional liaisons or peer mentors also help resolve issues foster parents may experience in their local area. Contact the liaison or RPM listed for your area with any questions you might have.



EWU's Staff List

Region 1:



Last Name	First Name	Email	Counties	Phone
Boorman	Lisa	lboorman@ewu.edu	Grant, Adams	(208) 484-5725
Christensen	Jennifer	jchristensen6@ewu.edu	Walla Walla, Columbia	(509) 629-1262
Flowers	Meaghan	mflowers1@ewu.edu	Spokane, Lincoln	(509) 991-9692
Harris	Ruth	rharri28@ewu.edu	Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille	(509) 675-8888
Muse	Mon Ra'	mmuse@ewu.edu Assistant Director	Spokane, Whitman, Garfield, Asotin	(509) 359-0791
Morehead	LeDeana	lmorehead@ewu.edu	Chelan, Douglas	(509) 670-7270
Powers	Druska (Dru)	dpowers@ewu.edu First Program Manager	R1 North and South	(509) 230-9608
Sherman	Amber	asherman4@ewu.edu Regional Coordinator	Spokane, Pend Orielle, Stevens, Ferry	(425) 422-6557
White	Wendy	wwhite@ewu.edu	Chelan, Douglas	(509) 731-2060
Hancock	Windy	whancok2@ewu.edu	Richland, Benton	(509) 528-6392 (h) (509) 322-1191 (c)
Curbow	Staci	surbow@ewu.edu	Kennewick, Benton	(509) 308-2950 (h) (509) 308-2950 (c)
Crossley	Cheryl	ccrossley1@ewu.edu	Zillah - Yakima	(509) 985-7038
Acosta	Mirna	amirna@ewu.edu	Yakima – Yakima (Spanish speaking)	(509) 307-3628
Lesley	Molly	mohallor@ewu.edu	Spokane – Spokane	(509) 326-6250
Moon	Lori	lmoon4@ewu.edu	Sunnyside – Yakima	(509) 882-4996
Rogers	Linda	lrogers13@ewu.edu	Spokane - Spokane	(509) 389-7192
Cammack	Heather	hcammack24@ewu.edu	Colfax – Whitman	(509) 288-0207
Thompson	Karen	kthomps9@ewu.edu	Spokane – Spokane Valley	(509) 230-4668
Bludau	Melike	mbludau@ewu.edu	Spokane - Spokane	(509) 714-7728
Farnsworth	Chrystal	cfarnsworth1@ewu.edu	Cle Elum - Kittitas	(509) 304-7000
Tajeda	Brittney	btejeda@ewu.edu	Richland - Benton	(509) 438-9608
Stoebner	Hayley	hstoebner@ewu.edu Regional Coordinator	Leavenworth - Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Okanogan	(509) 322-1191 (c)
Whitworth	Tyann	twhitworth@ewu.edu Regional Coordinator	Yakima, Kittitas, Klickitat, Columbia, Walla Walla, Franklin, Benton	(509) 731-2060

Olive Crest's Fostering Together Liaisons: Region 2:

Last Name	First Name	Email	Counties	Phone
Crow	Shala	Shala-Crow@olivecrest.org Program Director	Region 2	360- 220-3785
Parra	Deena	Deena-Parra@olivecrest.org Staff Support	Region 2	360-572-4271
McClure	Leilani	Leilani-McClure@olivecrest.org	NE King County	425-681-2094
Smith	CeCe	cece-smith@olivecrest.org	South King County	509-201-7069
Anderson	Maia	Maia-anderson@olivecrest.org	King West County, MLK, White Center	425-346-8336
Harp	Megan	Megan-Harp@olivecrest.org	Smokey Point	425-350-3839
Buckles	Summer	Summer-Buckles@olivecrest.org	Everett, Sky Valley and Lynnwood	425-830-9400
Pitts-Long	Angela	Angela-Pitts-Long@olivecrest.org	Central District	425-614-6176
Uratsun	Christina	Christina-Urtasun@olivecrest.org	Island, San Juan, Skagit and Whatcom	360-720-0969

Olive Crest's Fostering Together Liaisons: Region 3:

Last Name	First Name	Email	Counties	Phone
Marshel	Leeann	Leeann-marshel@olivecrest.org Regional Director	Region 3 Coordinator	360-909-0421
Fowler	Michelle	Michelle-Fowler@olivecrest.org	Support Assistant for Region 3	360-772-1955
Thompson	Erika	Erika-Thompson@olivecrest.org	Pierce	206-406-2398
Johns	Jeanie	Jeanie-Johns@olivecrest.org	Kitsap	360-265-3398
Hatzenbuehler	Niki	Niki-Hatzenbuehler@olivecrest.org	Mason and Thurston	253-219-3355
Cortani	Linda	Linda-Cortani@olivecrest.org	Jefferson and Clallam	360-640-0869
Mitchell	Tristan	Tristan-mitchell@olivecrest.org	Grays Harbor & Pacific	360-581-3590
Vacant			Lewis, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum	
Glover	Kim	Kim-Gover@olivecrest.org	Clark and Skamania	360-433-7150



Caregiver Training

The Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence provides training for foster parents, relatives, and prospective adoptive parents who are providing care to children placed in their homes by the Children's Administration.

The Course Schedule provides easy access to scheduled trainings in your community.

To register for a course you can visit our website at:

www.allianceforchildwelfare.org and click on the Course Schedule.

For any questions, please email registration@allianceforchildwelfare.org

For caregivers that do not have a computer or need assistance registering for classes, the Alliance has registrars available to help you, including a Spanish speaking registrar. For assistance, please call 1-866-577-1915 and leave a message for a registrar in your Region. A registrar will contact you and help you with your registration.



**Currently Seeking
Contractor
Trainers for Caregivers:**
UW Request for Quotes (RFQ)
Reference # 699237304

Application deadline: Friday, March 18, 2016

View a summary of the RFQQ on the Washington Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) website:
<http://des.wa.gov/services/ContractingPurchasing/Business/Pages/default.aspx>

Application Process for Contractor Trainers

Step 1 - Register on Washington Electronic Business Solution (WEBS)

<https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs/>

- Skip this step if you already have an existing WEBS account
- Enter your name when asked for company name
- Enter "1" for number of employees
- Only answer required fields

WEBS registration and search tips:

<http://www.des.wa.gov/services/ContractingPurchasing/Business/Pages/WEBSRegistration.aspx>

Step 2 – Go to the Contractor Trainer Request for Quote

- Once logged into WEBS, go to "Search Opportunities" on the left menu bar of the WEBS homepage
- In "Filter by Government Organization" select University of Washington
- Select "Search"
- Select "Alliance Contractor Trainers"
- Select the RFQ attachment at the bottom, "RFQ 2016 Alliance Contractors" for the application timeline, description of the services being requested, and the contact information for the UW Procurement Coordinator

REGION	NAME	EMAIL	TELEPHONE
R1 <i>Spokane & surrounding areas</i>	Jan Hinkle-Rodriguez, Supervisor	janh5@uw.edu	509-836-5499
	Leon Covington, Trainer	leonc44@uw.edu	509-846-8641
	Renee Siers, Trainer	siersr@uw.edu	509-363-3399
	Kebbie Green, Registrar		1-866-577-1915
R1 Yakima, Tri-Cities, Ellensburg & surrounding areas	Jan Hinkle-Rodriguez, Supervisor	janh5@uw.edu	509-836-5499
	Ryan Krueger, Trainer	krry300@uw.edu	509-358-3096
	Patty Orona	po5@uw.edu	509-225-7927
	Eileen Angier, Registrar		1-866-577-1915
	Maria Amaya, Registrar – Spanish (Español)		1-866-577-1915
R2 Seattle Metro Area	Yolonda Marzest, Supervisor	ymarzest@uw.edu	206-923-4955
	El-Freda Stephenson, Trainer	elfreda@uw.edu	206-923-4922
	Cara Mbaye, Trainer	mbayec@uw.edu	206-923-4914
	Janice Jackson, Registrar		1-866-577-1915
R2 Bellingham, Everett, Mount Vernon & surrounding areas	Yolonda Marzest, Supervisor	ymarzest@uw.edu	206-923-4955
	Julie Gelo, Trainer	jkg@uw.edu	425-339-1811
	Joan Sager, Trainer	sagerj2@uw.edu	360-594-6744
	Julie Kerr, Registrar		1-866-577-1915
R3 Tacoma, Bremerton, Puyallup & surrounding areas.	Arthur Fernandez-Scarberry, Supervisor	sart300@uw.edu	206-276-4549
	Gracia Hahn, Trainer	hahng@uw.edu	253-983-6362
	Luanne Hawley, Registrar		1-866-577-1915
R3 Tumwater, Olympia, Centralia, Long Beach, South Bend, & surrounding areas.	Penny Michel, Trainer	mpen300@uw.edu	360-725-6788
R3 Clallam County and Jefferson County	Robert Judd, Trainer	juddre@uw.edu	
R3 Aberdeen, South Bend and Long Beach.	Stephanie Rodriguez, Trainer	steph75@uw.edu	206-321-1721
R3 Vancouver, Camas, Stevenson & Kelso.	Colleen Cornman-Wilcox, Trainer	cm39@uw.edu	360-993-7991
	Kim Glover, Registrar		1-866-577-1915