

# Caregiver Connection

A monthly resource for family caregivers, and foster and adoptive families in Washington state

## How Working Together Works for Kids



“His, hers and other peoples” L-R: Erika holding Danny, Baily, Aidan, Essy, Brent

Like many new foster parents, Erika Thompson of Puyallup brought along an old attitude when she and her husband became licensed eight years ago.

“I thought if your kid was in care, you were horrible,” Erika said.

But as she and her husband Brent began working with the families of the 106 children who have come through their doors since, her attitude changed.

“I became open to working with (biological parents),” she said. “I realized that everyone could be one drink, one usage, one slip-up away from being in that situation.”

She tells the story of one little boy who came into their care. Erika attended the Family Team Decision Meeting, and it was clear the biological mom was unhappy Erika was there.

Erika slowly started trying to open the door with the mom, telling her that her son was missing his biological family, and that they had no intention of adopting him. Erika reassured her, saying, “We will take care of him so you can focus on the services you need.” She added, “I’m in your corner. But your child is my priority right now.”

By the end of the meeting, the mom seemed more relaxed and open toward Erika.

Shortly after that, Erika had a birthday. When the child’s visit with mom occurred, he told his mother about Erika’s birthday and returned from the visit with this message: “Mom wants me to tell you happy birthday.”

### Editor’s Note

The holiday season is the time of year when people focus on families more than ever.

### All families are different, of course.

The story and essay below describe one family that has opened their home and hearts to more than 100 children in eight years – and has reached out to support, as best they can, the biological parents of those children.

“I hope our story inspires others,” says Erika Thompson, who, with her husband Brent, is raising a family of what she calls “his, hers and other peoples” children.

Their family life inspired their daughter, Essy, who captures what it is like to live as a biological sibling in a home with so many kids in foster care.

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Transforming lives

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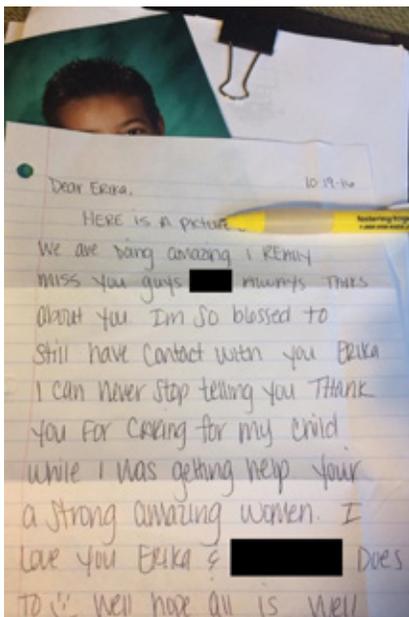
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### Editor's Note *from page 1*

The musical group Alternate Routes sings in the song "Nothing More" the following:

**"We are love, We are one,  
We are how we treat each other  
When the day is done."**

As you celebrate this season of hope, peace and love, we join with Erika in hoping you are inspired by the story of this family who, by the example of their lives, show us "how to treat each other when the day is done."



## Working Together continued

The door had opened all the way. And it stayed open until mom got the services she needed to accomplish reunification with her son. Erika and her family did great work to stay connected and supportive in every way they could; and the mom did what she needed to do, as well.

"She just did amazing work," Erika said. "She is such a success story. It was a really, really awesome experience."

A hand-written letter from the birth mom pictured by this story says it all about the human connection that was made.

## Mentoring: A great way to be supportive

When children are placed in out-of-home care, the primary goal is reunification with their parents. One of the best ways to aid in reunification is when the foster and biological parents are cordial with each other and seen by the child as working together.

For several years, Children's Administration had a foster parent mentoring program, pairing experienced foster parents with biological parents. Kim Glover of Vancouver, like Erika a foster parent liaison with Fostering Together, was one of those mentors. The program was dropped due to budget cuts a few years ago, but Kim and others are working with the department to reinstate it.

"It had a great success rate," in successfully reunifying families, Kim said. "A lot of kids are at home today because of the program."

She said mentors provided parenting guidance, advocated for the biological parents and taught them everything from budgeting to cooking to advocating for their needs. In many cases, she said, "They just didn't know how to parent." Each mentor would work with an assigned biological family four to six months and try to stay in contact even after kids went home, to make sure their help was no longer needed.

Both Kim and Erika promote the importance of foster parents working with biological parents when possible because it can be so important for a child.

"We tell the kids, 'I want you to be with your mom'," Erika said. Creating the idea that both parents are working together for a child minimizes the child's dilemma of divided loyalties.

"If they can see their families getting along, they can transition more easily," Kim said. And it's easier on the foster parent. "None of us want to be in an adversarial relationship."

Erika tells of another child who came into their care. Erika bonded with the biological mom, and eventually the child returned home. However the biological mom realized she could not care for that child and the other children she already had living her.

*~continues*

She asked Erika and Brent to adopt him, and they did.

Mentoring, or even reaching out to a child's biological parents, is not always easy. Some foster parents find it difficult; not all biological parents become strong enough to have their children returned home; and some can't or won't accept the help offered by a foster parent.

"You can't parent everyone," Erika said.

But she and Brent are dedicated to helping; they took in a niece whose mom has been struggling. She also will be adopted by the couple.

As a foster parent, you can offer help, give it when it is accepted and show the biological parents there can be a better life for them, she says.

"Sometimes, you are the only normal person they know on the planet," she said.

While she felt all the work they do for others helps them as a family, Erika says, "I didn't know for sure how this was affecting our biological kids."

Then their daughter Essy wrote this essay for a class project.

## Addicted to the Joy: Life Lessons Learned at a Young Age

### An essay by Essy Durham

I am an open book. I don't close off certain parts of myself. I enjoy the fact that I am known. I am 17, play soccer, want to become a veterinarian, love shoes, and I will continue to play soccer at Central Washington University. People are interested in those aspects of my life so they are known by many.

Although, rarely do people ask about my family because they only care to know me on an amateur level. People don't know that I have 105 siblings located across several states that I will never see again. I am an open book; but some pages of mine have yet to be read.

Growing up, my parents were divorced when I turned three, so in stating that, I had a substantial amount of attention wherever I went. I was the center of all the parties, conversations, and family gatherings. It remained this way for the first five years of my life until my mom got remarried. Her new husband's name was Brent and he had a shy, naïve daughter named Baily. Fortunately she was only two years older than me. We flourished in the attention as flowers do in the sun.

One day, this all changed... when we accepted our first foster child. At 18 months old, he was very delayed due to the trauma and neglect he had suffered since birth. The spotlight slowly migrated from me and my sister to our little (foster brother).

When his half-sister stepped up to take full custody of him, we grieved, but continued to stay positive, for (he) was returning to family.

Suddenly, we were addicted to the joy of having new bright children in our home. Soon it became routine to add another plate at the dinner table until one day the call came and we added two at the same time, teen siblings.

Throughout our journey, more experienced foster families gave us tips and pointers to guide us on the ideal path that would fit our family. One tip that applied to our family dealt with placing a teen into our home.

When my mom received the phone call for two teens, ages 14 and 16, she urged us to say yes. After hearing their story, I felt compelled to agree. Since I am outgoing, I look forward to every new child that is placed in our home. Nevertheless, two girls my age was the icing on the cake.

Immediately the three of us were attached at the hip. We shared thoughts, friends, food, and all-nighters. I was devastated when they moved to Utah to enter into a guardianship with their brother, but I knew that was what they wanted and the best decision for them. (We) visit once a year and (they) continue to impact my life every day.

One of the biggest misconceptions is that foster children are all damaged and will never be productive members of

society. There is a quote by former foster youth Josh Shipp that reads "Every kid is one caring adult away from being a success story."

Though they might not realize as they enter our house, they don't just get one caring adult, they have an entire family supporting their journey through foster care. The smells, movie nights, soccer games, and even the disagreements; that is my family. That is my home. We are a blended family consisting of my mom, stepdad, stepsister, adopted brother, almost adopted sister and 105 beautiful souls.

I am so thankful that I have grown up with love and attention, and now it is their turn. Some people question me if I ever feel left out with 4 to 6 other children in the house at any given time, but the way I see it, it is their time to heal and shine.

I am who I am because of the way these children have impacted me so deeply with outlooks and lessons that are unlike anyone my age. In a way, I love soccer and shoes, and my determination to be a veterinarian, but most importantly, I love the changes in myself that are introduced by interacting with these children.

The best part of the book of my life is that there is always a new chapter waiting to be read.

# Parenting The Positive Discipline Way

Penny Michel, Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence trainer



One of the most important issues parents face in raising children is how to discipline them.

The University of Washington's Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence, which provides training for foster parents and other caregivers, offers a 15-hour in-service class called Parenting the Positive Discipline Way.

Alliance Trainer Penny Michel helped get the program started and was interviewed about this course.

Penny describes how Parenting the Positive Discipline Way is based on experiential methods that help parents enter the world of children to discover what really works and what doesn't – what children are really thinking, feeling and deciding based on their parent's parenting methods.

In the classes, parents practice their new skills through role play and experience encouraging feedback as they learn how difficult it can be to change old habits. The parenting classes invite active participation rather than passive learning. The classes are fun and easy because participants learn from their personal experiences.

Penny states, "teaching parenting experientially...including activities that reach the heart and gut is where real change takes place."

Penny added, "Behavior is determined within a social context. Children make decisions about themselves and how to behave, based on how they see themselves in relationship to others and how they think others feel about them.

Does misbehavior seem different to you when you think of it as a 'survival mode' behavior? The 'mis' behavior that we see is really the child's unskilled

solution to another problem (that you may not see)."

Discipline teaches children and helps them learn for the future. Punishment makes children pay for the past. Punishment does not help children feel a sense of belonging and significance. Tactics that humiliate and deprive a child of dignity and respect are the means that do not justify the end.

Penny is always excited when we start a Parenting the Positive Discipline Way class and she sees all the caregivers there who want to learn new tools to parent and help meet the needs of the children placed in their care.

Please join us when a Parenting the Positive Discipline Way class is scheduled in your area! Come and refresh or learn new and fun tools to help you help children feel that they belong and are significant.

Penny said the class provides "real problem-solving ideas" to the job of parenting. Many adults parent in the way their parents raised them. This class will help check "old habits" that may not be as effective in helping children grow and thrive.

**Much work has been done in recent years about brain science, and how different parts of the brain react to specific situations.**

Knowing how both children's and adult's brains react to especially stressful situations can be very helpful in developing "self-calming" skills to use during angry situations.

"Our kids have anger down pretty good," she noted.

She talked about the use of "time-out" and how it really helps adults more than the kids. It can be done well, giving everyone a chance to "reconnect their brains" to a

**Positive discipline is based on concepts developed by well-known psychologist Alfred Adler. They include these:**

1. **Children are social beings.**
2. **Behavior is goal-oriented.**
3. **A child's primary goal is to belong and to feel significant.**
4. **A misbehaving child is a discouraged child.**
5. **Social responsibility or community feeling.**
6. **Equality.**
7. **Mistakes are wonderful opportunities to learn.**

## Three Basic Needs of Children

1. **Sense of belonging and significance.**
2. **Personal power and autonomy.**
3. **Life skills (social and problem-solving skills) for success.**

## Criteria for Positive Discipline Tools

1. **are based in kindness, firmness, dignity and respect**
2. **all consider the long-range results**
3. **all teach children important life skills for success**

~continues

calmer place, but she says time-outs can be seen by the child as punitive and may have the opposite effect than that intended.

“At the time they need us the most, we push them away,” she said.

Children can go to a “time-in spot” where they can calm themselves as another way to deal with kids who are upset. This reframes the time-out to a positive experience rather than a negative experience.

Setting up routines – such as a step-by-step process at bedtime – or being willing as an adult to say you are sorry after a blow-up are among the many other ideas discussed at the class.

Another benefit of the class is the same group of people stay together for the entire 15 hours. Many parents make connections with others who are in the same or similar situations – creating an informal support group that lasts after the training is over.

“It’s a fun class. I really like it,” Penny said.

For more information about this training, please visit the Alliance course catalog at: <http://allianceforchildwelfare.org/node/2685/course-signup>

Here are a couple websites to find out more information and resources about Positive Discipline.

<https://www.positivediscipline.com/>  
<http://www.sounddiscipline.org/>

## New Training Helps Caregivers of Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth

Youth in the foster care system are a targeted population for those who engage in sex trafficking.

The Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence will soon begin offering a new three-hour in-class training to

help caregivers support young people who are at risk of or are engaged in commercial sexual exploitation.

The Alliance reports the training will provide a framework for understanding this issue that impacts

many adolescents in the child welfare system. Caregivers will develop an understanding of the basic practices to support these youth in reaching positive outcomes.

### Here are the training’s learning objectives:

- Know the legal definition of commercial sexual exploitation of children.
- Understand how commercial sexual exploitation might happen to a youth.
- Understand how experiencing commercial sexual exploitation may impact a youth.
- Be able to spot signs that youth are at risk for becoming (or are) commercially sexually exploited.
- Have strategies to care for youth who are at risk of becoming (or have been) commercially sexually exploited.

The Alliance training staff will be trained on the curriculum in December, and will offer in-person training for caregivers after that.

Check out the schedule for this training and others by the Alliance at: [allianceforchildwelfare.org/course-catalog](http://allianceforchildwelfare.org/course-catalog)

# Time To Apply For Scholarships

This is the time of year when youth who are graduating from high school should be lining up financial aid for college or technical schools.

Foster youth seeking financial help to attend a college or university have a number of places to check resources.

The most important site is:  
[independence.wa.gov/education/pay-for-college/fafsa-2/](http://independence.wa.gov/education/pay-for-college/fafsa-2/)

## The Free Application for Student Aid

(FAFSA) is your first step in a financial aid search. When completed, the FAFSA – is the gateway for nearly all financial aid. A good place to find information about the FAFSA and about many other financial resources and other support available to Washington students who are or have been in foster care is  
[www.independence.wa.gov](http://www.independence.wa.gov)

## Washington State Governors' Scholarship

Applications for the 2017 Governors' Scholarship for Foster Youth open on Tuesday, Jan. 3, and close on Tuesday, Feb. 28.

The Washington State Governors' Scholarship for Foster Youth is a

scholarship program that helps young men and women who are currently in an open-dependency court order in Washington, or who are in an open-dependency tribal court order, continue their education and earn a college degree. Eligible students must meet specific criteria. The program is supported by Gov. Jay Inslee, former Gov. Chris Gregoire, former Gov. Gary Locke and other former governors of Washington.

Proceeds from the Governors' Cup, an annual golf tournament, provide funding for approximately 40 new scholars each year. Scholarship award amounts range from \$2,000 to \$4,000, depending on the college the student is planning to attend.

Selected students can renew the annual scholarship for up to five years to complete their undergraduate study. Students must be enrolled full-time and maintain satisfactory academic progress to renew the scholarship each year.

More information about student eligibility and the application for the scholarship can be found at:  
[collegesuccessfoundation.org/wa/scholarships/governors/eligibility](http://collegesuccessfoundation.org/wa/scholarships/governors/eligibility)

## Education and Training Voucher (ETV)

This scholarship is for foster youth, or those who have exited foster care. The ETV, as it is often called, offers up to \$5,000 per academic year. Awards are determined after a student's cost of attendance is formulated by the school they have chosen. ETV funds are awarded based on any unmet needs students have within their financial aid award.

## Passport To College Promise Scholarship

This scholarship program, often known as "the Passport scholarship," assists students who have spent at least one year in foster care in Washington after their 16th birthday. Passport offers up to \$4,500 annually to assist with tuition, fees, housing, transportation and some personal expenses. For more information, go to [www.wsac.wa.gov/passport-foster-youth](http://www.wsac.wa.gov/passport-foster-youth) or contact Dawn Cypriano-McAferly, program manager, at 360-753-7846; [passportcollege@wsac.wa.gov](mailto:passportcollege@wsac.wa.gov).

## Other Resources

- College Board ([bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search)) has the number one scholarship search engine, according to US News and World Report magazine. It has a scholarship database that contains more than 2,300 scholarship opportunities, totaling nearly \$3 billion. The website does not share user information.
- FastWeb ([www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)) is another great site that has helped more than 50 million students find scholarship money. Fastweb currently has a 1.5 million scholarships in their database worth \$3.4 billion. According to Fastweb, they update their database daily. Fast-web privacy policy states that it does not share private user information with third parties unless the user opts in.
- The Pride Foundation awards scholarships to LGBTQ and straight allies student leaders in the Northwest. Scholarships can be used for any post-secondary education (college, university, trade school, etc.). Applications must be submitted no later than January 13, 2017. Learn more and apply at: [www.pridefoundation.org/what-we-do/scholarships/](http://www.pridefoundation.org/what-we-do/scholarships/)
- Washboard is a website that enables a student to create a profile similar to Facebook, then matches the student up with scholarships opportunities...it's FREE!  
[www.thewashboard.org/](http://www.thewashboard.org/)

# How Foster Parents can Get Tax Information

Foster parents may claim a tax deduction on certain foster care payments for children who have been placed in their care for more than half of the tax year. Exceptions may apply for a foster child who was born within the tax year.

To do so, caregivers need the child's social security number, which can be obtained from the child's caseworker.

Children's Administration staff members cannot provide tax advice; caregivers are encouraged to check with their tax advisor if they have tax questions.

However, the following resources are also available for help:

- The Internal Revenue Service (IRS), 800-829-1040; [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)
- IRS publication 501, information on Exemptions related to Dependents and Qualifying Children. [www.irs.gov/publications/p501/ar01.html](http://www.irs.gov/publications/p501/ar01.html)
- The State Department of Social and Health Services office of accounting services, tax desk: (866) 563-8155; [taxinfo@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:taxinfo@dshs.wa.gov)

The State's accounting services desk can help providers and vendors with:

- Requests for copies of tax documents sent by DSHS to the provider.
- Address changes.
- Adjusting tax documents to reflect repayment of overpayments.
- IRS correspondence the provider has received about DSHS payments.

## Free Legal Clinic for Kinship Providers In Thurston County

Navigating the legal maze that is the child welfare system can be difficult for anyone.

Foster parents have a somewhat easier time finding their way, since they have been trained about the system during their licensing process and have support systems in place for advice afterwards.

But relatives who begin caring for a child who has been removed unexpectedly from their biological home because of abuse or neglect issues may feel alone, isolated and unsure where to turn for help.

Free legal support and advice has been available through a program operated by the Northwest Region Council in limited areas of the state. Kinship providers in Thurston County will now have access through the program, enabling them to receive free legal guidance as they go through the steps of establishing non-parental custody for children placed in their care.

The Council's program started in Whatcom County during 210 by just-retired Kinship Navigator Laina Berry. The Thurston County branch will be

coordinated by the kinship program at Family Education and Support Services (FESS) in Olympia.

The program helps non-parental caregivers who are 55 years of age or older and who have an income no greater than 300 percent of the poverty line. The 2016 Federal Poverty Line for a family of three is \$20,160.

"It's like a self-help clinic," says Lynn Urvina, who runs the FESS kinship program. She said the program has funding for someone to provide legal guidance, although he or she cannot represent clients in court. In most cases, court representation is not necessary, since these are for court appearances where the biological parents are not contesting the non-parental custody arrangement.

FESS expects to serve about five people at its first monthly clinic. Those who attend will learn about court procedures, receive guidance to help

them complete court paperwork and learn how to represent themselves in court and obtain a court order.

A similar program is available in Yakima, and although there is no free legal clinic in Tacoma, the HopeSparks organization, for whom Kinship Navigator Rosalyn Alber works, offers a class in third-party custody, Rosalyn said.

Laina said the Council program was busy with many clients from the moment it began.

"Ever since it was opened, there have been people standing in line," she said. It was one of those (issues) I was hearing over and over again," she added. "The most requested service to the kinship program is legal services."

A bonus for caregivers coming who attend the clinic is an opportunity to meet other people with similar problems, so they can help each other, she said.

# Sharing the Holidays with Children in Your Care

By Deanna Partlow

Many people have family rituals surrounding the holidays. We have treasured stockings we hang; they were made years ago by a dear aunt, and it isn't Christmas until they are hung. We always pick out that perfect tree at a tree farm, packing along a thermos of hot chocolate to get us through the hard work. On Christmas morning, presents don't get opened until after breakfast. While the children play with new toys, we grown-ups drink coffee and reminisce about Christmases past.

It's a happy time – unless you're a foster child and feel like an outsider to all these warm family traditions that just serve to emphasize that you are no longer with your parents or with your brothers and sisters.

Alongside feelings of isolation, children of other faith and cultural traditions may find the festivities in your home strange and sometimes overwhelming.

Here are some steps you can take to make sure the children in your care feel like they're included.

- Acknowledge the child's grief. Talk about how natural it is to feel sad and alone this time of year because of their separation from family. Listen.
- As a caregiver, another important thing you can do with each child in your care today is talk about how he or she usually celebrates the holidays in their families. Ask about any special customs and rituals they used to mark the holidays. That's especially true if the child is used to celebrating Kwanzaa instead of Christmas, or Christmas instead of Hanukkah, or already celebrated the Muslim holiday of Eid which was in July this year.
- Incorporate some of the child's traditions into your holiday. For children of other faith and cultural traditions, the festivities in your home may be new, strange and sometimes overwhelming. Honoring some of their traditions helps them feel welcome and important, and can also be a time of discovery and learning for the whole family.
- Prepare the child for your particular holiday traditions: Talk about how your family celebrates and those special things you'll be doing this year. If your holiday includes a religious observance, explain what will be happening ahead of time. And if your ditzzy Aunt Mabel is coming for dinner, talk about her and the silly things she does. If auntie normally brings gifts for your children, make sure to have something on hand for her to give to the children in your care, as well.
- Be prepared for behavior setbacks. If the child in your care has had behavior problems, the extra chaos, stress and homesickness of the holidays can cause problem behaviors to reappear. Also watch for signs of depression, and keep the communication lines open.
- Remember your foster child's mom, dad, brothers and sisters. As they enjoy the holidays, you can help lessen the sense of divided loyalties they may be feeling in many ways. Here are just a few:
  - Get a Christmas photo taken, maybe one with Santa, then frame it and wrap it up for the child's parents. Hopefully you have been able to connect with the child's biological parents and you can show the child you want them to have some of the joy of the season, as well.
  - Help the child shop for something for his family members. Even if your money is tight, take a trip to the local dollar store and let him or her choose little gifts to wrap up for each of his family members.
  - Alternatively, help the child in your care craft small gifts and greeting cards.
  - Make cookies, candy, Chex mix or other items together, then pack a basket of goodies that the child can take on his or her next parental visit.

A final thought: I knew a wise woman who always kept a gift stash on hand in case she received the gift of a new foster child during the holidays. Many a child has been placed in a new home on Christmas Eve, she said, and they need to know that Santa will find his way to where they are!



## Gifts Made With Love!

Most parents love to receive something special and handmade from their kids; most kids enjoy crafting something special for them! Some remain in a family for years and bring call up wonderful memories and stories. Without further ado, here are a few cool gifts kids can craft, with a little help from adults, for someone special in their lives.



### Sparkling glass luminaries

A beautiful glass votive is a good project for 'tweens and teens, since it involves using a glue gun. Most younger children will need help and close supervision. It is not an appropriate project for small children, but there are lots of other gift-making ideas out there for this age group.

**Supplies:** One 8 oz. to 12 oz. straight-sided glass jelly or jam jar; one piece of course-grained sandpaper; a package of glass gems, any color, about ½ inch to ¾ inch in diameter; a tea candle or battery-operated tea candle; glue gun (preferably one of the cooler models) and glue sticks; sanding paper; ribbon and/or other holiday adornments. Look around your home for supplies and you may find the project costs very little.

**Directions:** Spread a newspaper or a paper towel on your work area. Sand the outside of the glass jar so that the glass gems will adhere better. (The glue gun may not hold the gems tightly, so taking this extra step is important.) Wipe the sanded glass off with a towel and place the glass bottom-side up on the work area. Using the glue gun, make

a glob of glue on the side of the jar and immediately push a glass gem onto it. Continue around the jar. You must do them one at a time so the glue doesn't cool off before the gem is pressed onto it. Once the bottom row is done, begin a second row. You can flip the jar right-side-up at any time to make the work a little easier. When your rows reach the rim, unplug the glue gun and let your decorated jar sit long enough for the glue to thoroughly set. Tie a festive ribbon or other trips around the top, if desired. Place a tea light inside the jar, and the gift is ready for wrapping and giving.

### Shadow box photo montage

**Supplies:** One small shadow box (check the discount stores); a photo, card or picture sized to fit into the back of the shadow box; small objects to use in the foreground of the box. (The nice little ledge in the box will give your child room to glue things in front of whatever photo or picture is used; consider using flowers, jingle bells, village trees or other small holiday accents).

**Directions:** Begin by removing the box's back cover and glass for your child; lay it aside in a safe place. If the photo you're using is on thinner paper, help them mount it with glue on card stock or construction paper the same size or smaller than the glass. I made mine smaller to allow room on one side to write a message on the margin.



You can help your child either glue or tape objects around the photo and/or fix little objects onto the wooden ledge that will be in front of the picture when it is mounted. When the child is done decorating the box, place the picture in the back of the shadow box and reattach the cover. Note: Instead of writing a message on the inside, your child can write a message on the front glass with a sharpie marker made for writing on glass.

### Projects for little ones

*Think simple.*

- Let them decorate cut-out cookies for a relative. Put them in a festive tin and add a ribbon.
- Take a photograph or a piece of the child's artwork from school or home, place it in a simple frame with a broad boarder and let kids decorate the boarder with sequins, glitter and trims.
- Help them choose a nice, big mug, then add cocoa packets and a candy cane or chocolate kisses inside. Wrap it all up in pretty paper or in cellophane.
- Or help them wrap up a super-sized candy bar in festive paper and ribbon. Accompany the gift with a card made by the child in your care.

## “A Home for the Holidays” to be Shown Again

The award-winning CBS show, “A Home for the Holidays,” which raises awareness about the importance of adoption of children waiting in foster care, will be broadcast at 9 p.m., Friday, Dec. 23, Pacific Time on your local CBS station. *Because times have varied in press releases, please check your local listing guide in advance to confirm the broadcast time.*

This is the 18th year for the TV special. Hosting this year’s show is Grammy Award-winning singer-songwriter Miranda Lambert. The show will feature film segments of adoptive families and their children who were adopted from the child welfare system. Along with the adoptive family stories, there is a

great line-up of talent who will be performing for this special.

If you are looking for a great family show during the holidays, don’t miss this one.

## Coordinated Care Holiday Access

Coordinated Care offices are closed Friday – Monday (December 23 – 26, 2016) for the long Christmas weekend. If a child is placed in your home during that time or if a child already in your home needs medical care, you can still access health care services. The 24 hour nurse line is still available and can be reached at 1-844-354-9876 (TTD/TTY: 711). The nurse can answer questions about health care as well as assist with pharmacy approvals.

Another tool that can help when a child doesn’t have their Apple Health Core Connections card, is the Interim Voucher which can also be located here:

[www.coordinatedcarehealth.com/content/dam/centene/Coordinated%20Care/foster-care/pdfs/508\\_2016-070%20approved%20030716%20-%20AHFC%20Interim%20Voucher%2005032016\\_Vs.1.pdf](http://www.coordinatedcarehealth.com/content/dam/centene/Coordinated%20Care/foster-care/pdfs/508_2016-070%20approved%20030716%20-%20AHFC%20Interim%20Voucher%2005032016_Vs.1.pdf)

**Thank you for opening your hearts and homes all year long.**

# Meet Our Recruitment Partners Who Support You



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),

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

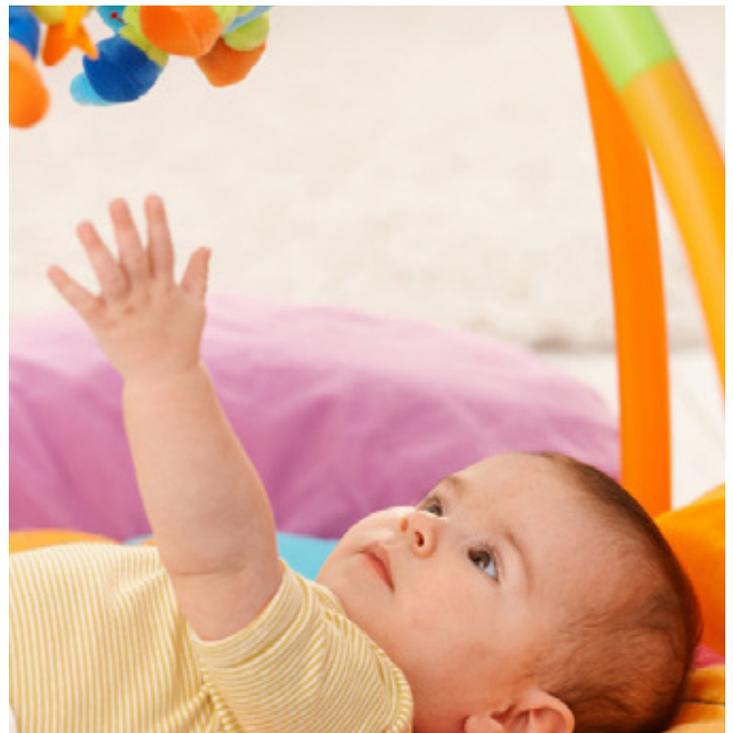
Prospective foster parents are welcome to license through either CA's Division of Licensed Resources (DLR), or any private child placing agency licensed in Washington. Our recruitment partners serve all families, regardless of where they choose to become licensed. Prospective foster parents are welcome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

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.



# Eastern Washington University's Fostering Washington Liaisons Region 1:

Last name	First Name	EWU Email	Position Title	City	County	Cellphone
Acosta	Mirna	<a href="mailto:amirna@ewu.edu">amirna@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Yakima	Yakima	(509) 307-3628
Arellano	Cecelia	<a href="mailto:carellano@ewu.edu">carellano@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Pateros	Okanogan	(509) 630-2602
Borrego	Carmina	<a href="mailto:cborrego@ewu.edu">cborrego@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Sunnyside	Yakima	(509) 830-2036
Bilbruck	Lynsey	<a href="mailto:lbilbruck@ewu.edu">lbilbruck@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Oroville	Okanogan	(509) 560-3423
Bludau	Melike	<a href="mailto:mbludau@ewu.edu">mbludau@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Spokane	Spokane	(509) 714-7728
Budrow	Amy	<a href="mailto:abudrow@ewu.edu">abudrow@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Twisp	Okanogan	(509) 846-5603
Burrer	April	<a href="mailto:aburrer@ewu.edu">aburrer@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Spokane	Spokane	(509) 216-5571
Cammack	Heather	<a href="mailto:hcammack24@ewu.edu">hcammack24@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Colfax	Whitman	(509) 288-0207
Carr	Rachal	<a href="mailto:rcarr3@ewu.edu">rcarr3@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Richland	Benton	(509) 308-1013
Conner	Stacey	<a href="mailto:sconner7@ewu.edu">sconner7@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Spokane	Spokane	(509) 288-0207
Crossley	Cheryl	<a href="mailto:ccrossley1@ewu.edu">ccrossley1@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Zillah	Yakima	(509) 985-7038
Farnsworth	Crystal	<a href="mailto:cfarnsworth1@ewu.edu">cfarnsworth1@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	CleElum	Kittitas	(509) 304-7000
Flowers	Meaghan	<a href="mailto:mflowers1@ewu.edu">mflowers1@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Spokane	Spokane, Lincoln	(509) 991-9692
Fordham	Kim	<a href="mailto:kfordham@ewu.edu">kfordham@ewu.edu</a>	Director	Coeur d Alene	NA	(208) 659-7401
Gardee	Tamera	<a href="mailto:tgardie@ewu.edu">tgardie@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Wapato	Yakima	(509) 314-8354
Gilk	Teri	<a href="mailto:tgilk1@ewu.edu">tgilk1@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Goldendale	Kittitas	(360) 942-9001
Hancock	Windy	<a href="mailto:whancock2@ewu.edu">whancock2@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Richland	Benton	(509) 528-6392
Harris	Ruth	<a href="mailto:rharr28@ewu.edu">rharr28@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Colville	Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille	(509) 684-5449
Holcomb	Rick	<a href="mailto:rholcom1@ewu.edu">rholcom1@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	All Regions	All Regions	(509) 468-9564
Jones	Ken	<a href="mailto:kjones21@ewu.edu">kjones21@ewu.edu</a>	Fiscal Specialist	All regions	All regions	(509) 359-6125
Lesley	Molly	<a href="mailto:mohallor@ewu.edu">mohallor@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Spokane	Spokane	(509) 326-6250
MacNeil	Angela	<a href="mailto:amacneil@ewu.edu">amacneil@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Ephrata	Grant	(509) 750-8943
Morehead	LaDeana	<a href="mailto:lmorehead@ewu.edu">lmorehead@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	East Wenatchee	Chelan	(509) 670-7270
Muse	Mon Ra'	<a href="mailto:mmuse@ewu.edu">mmuse@ewu.edu</a>	Asst. Director/ RPC	Spokane	Spokane	(509) 359-0791
Oldridge	Lynsey	<a href="mailto:loldridge@ewu.edu">loldridge@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Walla Walla	Walla Walla	(509) 240-017
Potter	Gail	<a href="mailto:gpotter@ewu.edu">gpotter@ewu.edu</a>	Program Asst.	Spokane	Spokane	(509) 359-6130

# Eastern Washington University's Fostering Washington Liaisons Region 1:

Last name	First Name	EWU Email	Position Title	City	County	Cellphone
Powers	Druska (Dru)	<a href="mailto:dpowers8@ewu.edu">dpowers8@ewu.edu</a>	RPM/FIRST Program	FIRST Program	R1 N & S	(509) 928-6697
Redford	Kim	<a href="mailto:kredford@ewu.edu">kredford@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Moses Lake	Grant	(509) 750-0232
Robinson	Mary	<a href="mailto:mrobinson6@ewu.edu">mrobinson6@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Cashmere	Chelan	(509) 393-3123
Rogers	Linda	<a href="mailto:lrogers13@ewu.edu">lrogers13@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Spokane	Spokane	(509) 389-7192
Sherman	Amber	<a href="mailto:asherman4@ewu.edu">asherman4@ewu.edu</a>	RC	Spokane	Spokane	(509) 359-0874
Simpson	Jessica	<a href="mailto:jsimpson4@ewu.edu">jsimpson4@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Riverside	Okanogan	(928) 201-6288
Slowe	Barb	<a href="mailto:bslowe@ewu.edu">bslowe@ewu.edu</a>	RPM		(509)833-6391	(509) 230-4668
Stoebner	Hayley	<a href="mailto:hstoebner@ewu.edu">hstoebner@ewu.edu</a>	RC	Leavenworth	Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Okanogan	(509) 322-1191
Thompson	Karen	<a href="mailto:kthomps9@ewu.edu">kthomps9@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Spokane	Spokane Valley	(509) 230-4668
Torres	Yereida	<a href="mailto:ytorres@ewu.edu">ytorres@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Pasco	Franklin/Benton/WallaWalla/Columbia	(509) 851-0815
Warwick	Ivy	<a href="mailto:iwarwick@ewu.edu">iwarwick@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Clarkston	Asotin	(509) 552-9927
Whitworth	Tyann	<a href="mailto:twhitworth@ewu.edu">twhitworth@ewu.edu</a>	RC	Yakima	Yakima, Kittitas, Klickitat	(509) 731-2060
Wilson	Danielle	<a href="mailto:dwilson21@ewu.edu">dwilson21@ewu.edu</a>	RPM	Moses Lake	Grant & Adams	(509)398-1553

## Olive Crest's Fostering Together Liaisons Region 2:



Last Name	First Name	Email	Counties	Phone
Crow	Shala	<a href="mailto:Shala-Crow@olivecrest.org">Shala-Crow@olivecrest.org</a> Program Director	Region 2	360-220-3785
Parra	Deena	<a href="mailto:Deena-Parra@olivecrest.org">Deena-Parra@olivecrest.org</a> Staff Support	Region 2	360-572-4271
McClure	Leilani	<a href="mailto:Leilani-McClure@olivecrest.org">Leilani-McClure@olivecrest.org</a>	NE King County	425-681-2094
Smith	CeCe	<a href="mailto:cece-smith@olivecrest.org">cece-smith@olivecrest.org</a>	South King County	509-201-7069
Anderson	Maia	<a href="mailto:Maia-anderson@olivecrest.org">Maia-anderson@olivecrest.org</a>	King West County, MLK, White Center	425-346-8336
Harp	Megan	<a href="mailto:Megan-Harp@olivecrest.org">Megan-Harp@olivecrest.org</a>	Smokey Point	425-350-3839
Buckles	Summer	<a href="mailto:Summer-Buckles@olivecrest.org">Summer-Buckles@olivecrest.org</a>	Everett, Sky Valley and Lynnwood	425-830-9400
Pitts-Long	Angela	<a href="mailto:Angela-Pitts-Long@olivecrest.org">Angela-Pitts-Long@olivecrest.org</a>	Central District	425-614-6176
Uratsun	Christina	<a href="mailto:Christina-Urtasun@olivecrest.org">Christina-Urtasun@olivecrest.org</a>	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	<a href="mailto:Leeann-marshel@olivecrest.org">Leeann-marshel@olivecrest.org</a> Regional Director	Region 3 Coordinator	360-909-0421
Fowler	Michelle	<a href="mailto:Michelle-Fowler@olivecrest.org">Michelle-Fowler@olivecrest.org</a>	Support Assistant for Region 3	360-772-1955
Thompson	Erika	<a href="mailto:Erika-Thompson@olivecrest.org">Erika-Thompson@olivecrest.org</a>	Pierce	206-406-2398
Johns	Jeanie	<a href="mailto:Jeanie-Johns@olivecrest.org">Jeanie-Johns@olivecrest.org</a>	Kitsap	360-265-3398
Hatzenbuehler	Niki	<a href="mailto:Niki-Hatzenbuehler@olivecrest.org">Niki-Hatzenbuehler@olivecrest.org</a>	Mason and Thurston	253-219-3355
Cortani	Linda	<a href="mailto:Linda-Cortani@olivecrest.org">Linda-Cortani@olivecrest.org</a>	Jefferson and Clallam	360-640-0869
Mitchell	Tristan	<a href="mailto:Tristan-mitchell@olivecrest.org">Tristan-mitchell@olivecrest.org</a>	Grays Harbor & Pacific	360-581-3590
Moore	Jeanmarie	<a href="mailto:Jeanmarie-moore@olivecrest.org">Jeanmarie-moore@olivecrest.org</a>	Lewis, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum	360-442-9605
Glover	Kim	<a href="mailto:Kim-Glover@olivecrest.org">Kim-Glover@olivecrest.org</a>	Clark and Skamania	360-433-7150

## Trainers in Your Region

REGION	NAME	EMAIL	TELEPHONE
R1 Spokane & surrounding areas	Jan Hinkle-Rodriguez, Supervisor	<a href="mailto:janh5@uw.edu">janh5@uw.edu</a>	509-836-5499
	Vacant		
	Renee Siers, Trainer	<a href="mailto:siersr@uw.edu">siersr@uw.edu</a>	509-363-3399
	Kebbie Green, Registrar		1-866-577-1915
R1 Yakima, Tri-Cities, Ellensburg & surrounding areas	Jan Hinkle-Rodriguez, Supervisor	<a href="mailto:janh5@uw.edu">janh5@uw.edu</a>	509-836-5499
	Ryan Krueger, Trainer	<a href="mailto:krry300@uw.edu">krry300@uw.edu</a>	509-358-3096
	Patty Orona	<a href="mailto:po5@uw.edu">po5@uw.edu</a>	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	<a href="mailto:ymarzest@uw.edu">ymarzest@uw.edu</a>	206-923-4955
	El-Freda Stephenson, Trainer	<a href="mailto:elfreda@uw.edu">elfreda@uw.edu</a>	206-923-4922
	Cara Mbaye, Trainer	<a href="mailto:mbayec@uw.edu">mbayec@uw.edu</a>	206-923-4914
	Janice Jackson, Registrar		1-866-577-1915
R2 Bellingham, Everett, Mount Vernon & surrounding areas	Yolonda Marzest, Supervisor	<a href="mailto:ymarzest@uw.edu">ymarzest@uw.edu</a>	206-923-4955
	Joan Sager, Trainer	<a href="mailto:sagerj2@uw.edu">sagerj2@uw.edu</a>	360-594-6744
R3 Tacoma, Bremerton, Puyallup & surrounding areas.	Arthur Fernandez-Scarberry, Supervisor	<a href="mailto:sart300@uw.edu">sart300@uw.edu</a>	206-276-4549
	Gracia Hahn, Trainer	<a href="mailto:hahng@uw.edu">hahng@uw.edu</a>	253-983-6362
	Luanne Hawley, Registrar		1-866-577-1915
R3 Tumwater, Olympia, Centralia, Long Beach, South Bend, & surrounding areas.	Penny Michel, Trainer	<a href="mailto:mpen300@uw.edu">mpen300@uw.edu</a>	360-725-6788
R3 Clallam County and Jefferson County	Robert Judd, Trainer	<a href="mailto:juddre@uw.edu">juddre@uw.edu</a>	360-344-3003
R3 Aberdeen, South Bend and Long Beach.	Stephanie Rodriguez, Trainer	<a href="mailto:steph75@uw.edu">steph75@uw.edu</a>	206-321-1721