

JANUARY 2017

Caregiver Connection

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



MentoringWorks
WASHINGTON

January is National Mentoring Month

One theme that echoes throughout the child welfare community emphasizes the importance of how “one caring adult” can have a positive influence on the life of a young person.

Foster parents, relative caregivers and adoptive parents provide daily support to children who come into their lives, seeking to create that positive influence.

But many adults find the day-to-day care of a child or young person challenging for their life situations. A caring adult who is unable to assume that type of care has another way to help, though. He or she can mentor a young person – becoming a role model to provide guidance and support.

January is National Mentoring Month. Mentoring programs can ask for different levels of monthly time commitments. Most ask for a commitment of a year spent being a mentor for a young person.

Mentoring was described this way by President Obama in a presidential proclamation issued last year:

“By sharing their own stories and offering guidance and advice, mentors can instill a sense of infinite possibility in the hearts and minds of their mentees, demonstrating that with hard work and passion, nothing is beyond their potential. Whether simply offering a compassionate ear or actively teaching and inspiring curiosity, mentors can play pivotal roles in young peoples’ lives. When given a chance to use their talents and abilities to engage in their communities and contribute to our world, our nation’s youth rise to the challenge. They make significant impacts in their communities and shape a brighter future for coming generations.”

–President Barack Obama

The College Success Foundation (CSF) provides mentoring among its many other support programs for youth through a program called “Hometown Mentor.”

This is how the organization describes it: *“Mentoring is a critical part of student success at the College Success Foundation. Our high school Hometown Mentors are caring community individuals who share their time and talents with high school students helping them prepare for college and beyond.”*

Caregiver Connection is published by:

Alliance
for **Child Welfare Excellence**
in partnership with the Washington State
Department of Social and Health Services,
Children’s Administration



Transforming lives

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A Hometown Mentor at Garfield High School, Anne Patnaude, shares how she got involved with the CSF high school program and what it means to her.

Q: How did you learn about the CSF Hometown Mentor Program and when did you get involved?

A: My husband, John, and I moved here from Chicago three years ago, where we were part of a scholarship and mentoring program for underserved youth, similar to CSF. We learned about CSF through Joe Gaffney, a founding board member, and we knew immediately that CSF was exactly what we were seeking in a program. We were most impressed with all that CSF does to help students prepare for, attend and graduate from college, and I wanted to be a part of their mentoring team. I started as a Hometown Mentor at Garfield High in the fall of 2014.

Q: What has your experience been like so far as a Hometown Mentor?

A: I have had a lot of fun working with CSF Scholars. The students are motivated, interested, excited and diverse. My job as a mentor is to help students with their college and scholarship applications. I especially enjoy working on college essays and strengthening writing skills.

Many of the students I've encountered are the first in their families to go to college. They often have questions about what to expect after high school, and it has been a pleasure to share my experiences with them.

Q: What advice would you give someone who is considering becoming a mentor?

A: To be open-minded and to know that being present is a huge part of being a mentor. I see myself as an extra adult in a student's life to check in with them and to make sure they are making their application deadlines. Beyond that, I have enjoyed listening to the students, meeting them where they are and helping them with whatever they might need – from college essay questions to interview advice. It's been amazing to be a small part of a student's journey and to participate in making college dreams a reality.

Pam Gant, who works with Mentoring Works Washington said they are always looking for good mentors to help young people.

“Certainly there is a gap between what we have and what we need,” she said. “We’re always looking.”

To link to the Mentoring Washington web site: www.mentoringworkswa.org/

New Registration Help Desk

The Alliance wants to make sure caregivers can easily register for trainings and use our system. One system improvement we are making is the creation of a new Registration Help Desk. The Alliance recognizes that caregivers have a wide range of technological access and technological know-how. Our skilled staff are here to assist and support everyone, especially those who feel “computer challenged” and “internet impaired”. The new and improved Help Desk went into full force on December 1st after two months of testing.

1-866-577-1915 or email help@acwe.on.spiceworks.com

The Registration Help Desk provides the following services:

- Profile creation (necessary to register for Alliance trainings)
- Class registration
- Class cancellations
- Information about classes
- Website navigation assistance
- Certificate retrieval

Services are available in English, Spanish, and other languages upon request.

Get “Mentored” with these New Coaching Sessions by the Alliance



Ann and John Patnaude with Gracie

Another kind of mentoring is being offered by the Alliance For Child Welfare Excellence at the University of Washington, which provides training to relative, foster and adoptive parents.

Here is how Jean Brownell, at the Alliance, describes these two new coaching sessions being offered throughout the state, “These are different from standard classroom trainings, and instead focus on individualized coaching for caregivers. They’re a new method of caregiver training for us where we try to address individual needs at a more in-depth level than a general classroom training might. One session helps caregivers learn to write report to the court. The other session covers caregivers’ roles in visitations.”

Stephanie Rodrigues, a Trainer with the Alliance, began the trainings in Grays Harbor and Pacific counties; they have since expanded statewide.

“We were responding to what the caregivers asked for,” she said.

She said a beneficial aspect of individualized training is that it can be “specific to the children in their care.”

“These are different from standard classroom trainings, and instead focus on individualized coaching for caregivers. They’re a new method of caregiver training for us where we try to address individual needs at a more in-depth level than a general classroom training might....”

Another setting where this kind of training can be helpful is in the support group meetings held across the state.

“We want to get those skills out there so caregivers can use them,” she said. She said the training was “educational, not therapeutic” and more such trainings on other topics may be possible in the future.

For more information about the trainings, you can link to the Alliance course catalog webpage: allianceforchildwelfare.org/course-catalog

The individual coaching sessions are the first two listing in the catalog under “in-service” training.

➡ *Caregiver’s Report to the Court Coaching Session:* The two-hour Coaching Session for Caregivers builds on information contained in Caregivers Core Training and provides detailed training related to the writing and submitting of the Caregiver’s Report to the Court (DCFS 15-313). Participants will understand the caregiver’s role in the court process and how to effectively communicate with the court and other parties through the Caregiver’s Report to the Court. During the session, the caregiver will have the opportunity to compose an actual court report about the child in their care and receive specific feedback from the child welfare trainer.

➡ *Caregiver’s Role in Visitation:* This two-hour Coaching Session for Caregivers builds on information contained in Caregivers Core Training and provides in-depth training around the need for visitation from the child’s perspective, the caregiver’s role in visitation, and how caregivers can support the child to help visitation be as successful as possible. Caregivers will more deeply understand the need to support children’s relationships with birth families and gain skills to successfully team with others involved in the child’s visitation. This coaching session includes activities that allow the caregiver to assess the effects of visitation on the child(ren) in their care and create a plan to address any concerns which may arise in the future.

New Free-Access Pass to Pacific Science Center for Youth and Foster or Relative Caregivers

The Seattle Pacific Science Center inspires a lifelong interest in science, math and technology by engaging diverse communities through interactive and innovative exhibits and programs. The Science Center is pleased to announce its Youth Access Membership. If you are a foster parent, relative caregiver, Tribal caregiver or Kinship caregiver you will want to learn more about this amazing resource for children, youth and caregivers throughout Washington.

Who is Eligible?

- Any homeless youth age 14 to 18.
- Any youth 14 to 18 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.
- Any foster parent or relative caregiver providing care for a child under the age of 14, through 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,

- Any youth 14 to 18 being raised by a relative or kinship caregiver who lives in Washington State.
- Any Relative/Kinship caregiver living in Washington State raising children under the age of 14, and is served through a Washington Kinship Navigator Support Program, or is a member of a Washington state federally recognized tribe.

Children under the age of 14 years, must be accompanied by an adult when visiting the Science Center.

If you think you or your child may not be eligible, please check back as the program continues to expand; the Science Center identifies it as a “Work in Progress.”

How Do I Sign Up?

Youth age 14 and older should call the Science Center’s membership phone line 206-443-2924 to request their own individual membership. This membership allows the youth to bring two unnamed adults with them, as well as up to six unnamed youth per visit.

Foster parents, relative and kinship caregivers and Tribal caregivers can obtain a membership and receive the same benefits for children in their care under the age of 14, or for those youth 14 and older who are unable to complete a request on their own by calling 206-443-2924, or by emailing: membership@pacsci.org. The membership serves children and youth throughout Washington with many options and opportunities for children and youth.

Examples of how a youth could use their membership at the science center:

- Visiting with their siblings.
- Attending the center with foster parents and other children in the home.
- Bringing a teacher, mentor or friends.
- Bringing their birth parents.

Children’s Administration is very grateful to the Pacific Science Center for its partnership in helping meet the needs of children in out-of-home care.

If you have questions, contact the Seattle Pacific Science Center.

Youth access membership – benefits include:

A one-year membership to Pacific Science Center include:

- Unlimited admission to our permanent exhibits for named youth/caregiver, as well as up to two unnamed adults and up to six unnamed youth per visit.
- Free admission to planetarium and matinee laser shows.
- Fifteen free documentary IMAX® movie passes.
- Discounts on feature-length IMAX movies.
- Free or discounted admission to special exhibitions.
- Discounts at the Pacific Science Center Store, café and IMAX concessions, as well as on educational camps and programs, including birthday parties.

Youth under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult when visiting the science center.

More Discounts For Caregivers

Foster parents and relative caregivers in Washington also have access to other discounts that can make it easier to take part in activities as a family.

- Free Washington State Park passes are available for foster parents and relatives caring for children in state custody. You can use your foster care license or card for access to the parks.
- Free passes are also available for visits to the Seattle Aquarium. 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 State 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 360-902-7563; boydcha@dshs.wa.gov.

You can learn more about parks in the system at www.parks.wa.gov. For more information about these passes, go to

www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/CA/fos/documents/CCSEPT15.pdf

In May, foster parents and relative caregivers can obtain discounted tickets to a Seattle Mariners game at Seattle's Safeco Field as part of the annual We Are Family Day. You will want to plan

on purchasing tickets as soon as they are announced, as they go quickly. The attendance at last year's We Are Family game was 3358 people.

This year's game date will be May 7 and will feature the pre-game ceremony with giveaways and lots of useful information. More details about the game and the pre-game event will be provided in upcoming issues of the Caregiver Connection.

Local discounts, services and resources. Please check with the Fostering Together Liaisons in western Washington and the EWU Fostering Washington Resource Peer Mentors in eastern Washington, their names are listed on the last pages of the newsletter.

Current and Former Youth in Care Can Make Their Voices Heard

The best people to tell stories about living in foster care are those who have done it.

If you are a current or former youth in care, here are some resources that can make your voice heard and help make improvements to the child welfare system.

Answer the Call – Take the National Survey

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) survey is one way to make your voice heard. The survey is overseen by the Federal Office of the Administration for Children and Families, which describes the survey on their website, as follows:

“The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) collects information on youth in foster care, including sex,

race, ethnicity, date of birth and foster care status. It also collects information about the outcomes of those youth who have aged out of foster care. States began collecting data in 2010, and the first data set was submitted in May 2011.”

Washington is currently doing the survey, as described in this request for youth to participate: “Our survey team is currently reaching out to eligible foster youth in Washington state who are turning 17 years old. We want their voice heard so they can help improve the foster care system for thousands of young people! Please encourage your foster youth to take the survey if they are contacted by the Washington State Survey Office.”

The survey is conducted three times during a five-year period, said Charles Pollock, who works on the survey with the Research and Data Analysis section of the State Department of Social and Health Services. The section does the survey for our state.

Those doing the survey contact young people when they are 17, 19 and 21. Youth who are 17 receive a \$15 gift card for taking the 10-15 minute survey. For 19-year-olds, the gift card is \$25, and for those who are 21, it is \$35.

Charles said the research section gets a list of 17-year olds who are in the state's child welfare system. It sends a letter to the young people to let them know they will be called about the survey. By law,

the research section has to reach youth within 45 days of their 19th birthday. They reach about 400 young people a year, he says. The research section's 80 percent rate of response is one of the highest in the nation.

Survey questions

Young people are asked about a range of subjects, including education, work history, any public assistance or scholarships the youth may be receiving and whether they are on Medicaid. Former foster youth are eligible for Medicaid until age 26. Survey respondents are also asked about where they are living and the living arrangements, their relationships (including family) and advice they might want to give to social workers, among other questions.

Monica Stanley, supervisor of the survey team for research section said it is important for youth to take part in the survey when the call comes.

Some foster parents think it may be bogus, she said. Surveyors sometimes have to talk to social workers to let the foster parents know the survey is legitimate. But responding to the survey can help improve foster care, she stressed.

Once the federal government has gathered the information, "they are asking the states to look at the information and figure out what specific programs are needed – particularly independent living – to give the kids what they need when they leave foster care," Monica said. "They really want the states to take the information and better foster care in the states."

She said the information has proven very helpful. "We've learned a lot about the kids in foster care," she said.

Anyone with questions can call **1-800-974-5456**.

Foster Care Alumni

Another good way to be heard is through the Foster Care Alumni of America, an organization that builds support for and networking among those who are or were in foster care in the past. The organization's website is www.fostercarealumni.org/.

This is how the organization describes its mission.

"Foster Care Alumni of America (FCAA), founded in 2004, was created in direct response to the growing number of individuals who have experienced, or are currently experiencing, the foster care system. FCAA ensures high quality of life for those in and from foster care through the collective voice of alumni. FCAA is the only national organization that provides opportunities for the estimated 12 million alumni in the U.S. to use their experience from foster care to enhance research, planning and implementation of approaches in today's foster care system. We are also the only national peer support network for alumni of care."

FCAA has a Washington state chapter that was established in 2013. For more information about the state chapter, click here:

www.fostercarealumni.org/washington-chapter/

Decrease In Mileage Reimbursement Rate For Caregivers

Washington's Office of Financial Management announced effective January 1, 2017 a decrease in the mileage reimbursement rate for privately owned vehicles from \$0.54 to \$0.535. This decrease reflects the rate set by the United States Treasury Department which, pursuant to RCW 43.03.060, is the maximum rate the state can pay. This reimbursement rate applies to foster parents and relative caregivers requesting mileage reimbursement for children placed in their care by Children's Administration. You can find the Caregiver Monthly Mileage form on Children's website under "Important Forms for Caregivers" www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/foster-parenting/important-forms-caregivers

Tax Time is Upon Us . . .

Have you obtained your foster child's social security number from the child's caseworker? 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.

The following resources are available for help:

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS), 800-829-1040; www.irs.gov

IRS publication 501, information on Exemptions related to Dependents and Qualifying Children. 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

What You Should Know About Using Weighted Blankets

By Lily Koblenz, M.D.

Regional Medical Consultant, Region 3 South | Department of Social and Health Services

What are weighted blankets and what are they used for?

Weighted blankets are quilts filled with some type of dense material, such as metal beads, plastic pellets, or flax seeds. Some people find the extra weight of the blanket helps some children with sensory-processing disorders, anxiety disorders, autism spectrum disorder and/or sleep disorders to fall asleep and stay asleep. The theory is that the deep pressure from the weighted blanket gives consistent sensory input, which calms the child, decreases stress and improves sleep.

Weighted blankets are occasionally recommended by occupational therapists and others who work with children with sensory disorders. There is not a lot of research documenting a true benefit from these devices.

An August 2014 issue of the American Academy of Pediatrics' journal, *Pediatrics*, contains an article entitled "Weighted Blankets and Sleep in Autistic Children— A Randomized Controlled Trial," by Paul Gringras, et al. The conclusion of the article was that "the use of a weighted blanket did not help children (ages 5-16 years) with Autism Spectrum Disorder sleep for a longer period of time, fall asleep significantly faster or wake less often. However the weighted blanket was favored by children and parents, and blankets were well tolerated over the study period (two weeks)."

A May 2015 study published in the *Journal of Sleep Medicine and Disorders* titled "Positive Effects of a Weighted Blanket on Insomnia" by Ackerley R., et al, reported on the effect of chain-weighted blankets on insomnia. This study involved adults. The conclusion of the study was that, "The weighted chain blanket used in the present

study had a positive impact on sleep, both objectively and subjectively, where a number of physiological and behavioral measures were improved during weighted blanket use ... they had a calmer night's sleep, with a decrease in movements."

What are the concerns/precautions about weighted blankets?

- **Weighted blankets are not intended for infants and should never be used for children of any age who have difficulty moving.** A death has been associated with the use of a weighted blanket in a seven-month-old infant. A young infant or a child who does not move normally can become trapped under the blanket and can suffocate.
- **Weighted blankets should never be used to restrain a child.** In 2008 in Quebec, Canada, the suffocation death of a 9-year-old autistic boy who had been wrapped tightly in a weighted blanket when he refused to be quiet in class was reported.

Recommendations related to use of weighted blankets:

- Weighted blankets should never be used for any child younger than three years of age.
- Weighted blankets should not be used for any child who has mobility issues. A child needs to be able to freely move and remove the blanket themselves.
- The weight of the blanket should never exceed more than 10 percent of the child's body weight. (For example, if a child weighs 40 pounds, the blanket should weigh no more than four pounds.)

- If a child tends to mouth and/or chew on clothing/ bedding/ blankets, then great caution should be used in choosing a weighted blanket. Blankets that contain small plastic or metal beads are choking hazard and may not be used in a weighted blanket.
- The weighted blanket should be placed no higher than the middle of a child's chest. It should never cover the child's head.
- Weighted blankets should never be used to restrain a person or to restrict his or her movement.

If a social worker or licensor hears that a foster parent wants to use a weighted blanket for a child in their care, he/she should review the recommendations that are outlined. They should not allow use of the weighted blanket if there are circumstances that conflict with what is outlined above.

For example: The foster family of a 7-year-old child with chronic severe developmental delays and medical problems, including hypotonia (very low muscle-tone with generalized weakness) requests a weighted blanket to help the child sleep at night. This child does not walk, crawl or even sit alone. Use of a weighted blanket would be completely inappropriate and potentially dangerous for this child. The child would be unable to remove the blanket or move from under the blanket if needed. There is a risk of suffocation with use of the weighted blanket.

I hope that this information will help you to keep children in your care and on your caseload safe. Feel free to contact your regional medical consultant if you have specific questions related to the use of weighted blankets.

Laying Out a Banquet for the Birds – Or Should I Say “Avian Dinosaurs”



At Montana’s Museum of the Rockies, where many dinosaur skeletons and fossils are on exhibit and dinosaur information is in abundance, my husband realized that they had fossilized birds, and the birds were not called “birds,” but rather “avian dinosaurs.” Why? Because birds evolved from dinosaurs! What a cool topic to discuss with kids, especially the young dinosaur-enthusiasts in your crowd!

This winter, spur on their imaginations with fun bird facts, and while you’re at it, invite some avian dinosaurs to your yard for dinner! Feeding the birds is a great learning experience about the natural life around us. And for the birds, the extra food can provide important calories, especially when the weather is harsh or snow covers the ground. (If it’s snowy or below freezing, set out some water in an old pan, too, since the birds’ normal sources of water may be frozen.)

Below are some ideas for making some simple bird-feeders, or “avian dinosaur” feeders, if you prefer the latest terminology. Different bird species eat different foods, so make a buffet of bird feeders, then place them outside where the kids can observe these feathered friends. Arrange bird feeders at various heights, since different birds prefer to eat at different levels.

Kids can have the fun of looking up the birds online and learning who’s who in the bird world; who sticks around through the winter and which ones migrate south; what birds eat; how they get along and all sorts of interesting things. Setting out food in the spring and summer can bring in whole new groups of birds, along with nest-building and baby-raising. A pair of binoculars is helpful but not necessary. If your children are especially caught up in this project, get out the art supplies and have a photo, painting or craft session.

So, cooking for the birds ... basic ingredients to draw from include the following. You don’t have to have them all:

- Lard or suet (you can get this from a butchers’ shop) for calories
- Dried berries, raisins and other fruits
- Oranges, apples, berries, grapes, bananas
- Nuts, including peanuts and peanut butter, for protein and oil
- Unsalted sunflower seeds, either/or the regular striped ones or black oil seeds, for protein and oil
- Cornmeal and/or cracked corn; oatmeal
- Millet (available in health food sections or sometimes in bins)
- Bugs (you can buy live or dead insects such as meal worms and crickets at pet stores if you want to include them)
- Broken up pieces of eggshell (For minerals and grit)

You can use your imagination and your pantry to come up with simple, bird-friendly recipes by combining ingredients. Use melted lard or suet as a base, and stir in some other ingredients. Spoon the mixture into Jell-O molds or cupcake tins or whatever you have, then unmold them just like you unmold gelatin and candles and place the “suet cakes” outside.

Here are more specific recipes:

Fruit Salad

Supplies: a clean, shallow bowl or pan to be placed outside; a mix of fruits, such as oranges, apples, grapes; lard or suet.

Place a lump of lard – about a fourth-cup or so – in the bottom a bowl or pan. Peel an orange and cut it in half, then in sections. Slice up an apple, skin and all. Cut a handful of grapes in half. Mix all the fruit together and lay it over and around the suet. If you want to, sprinkle a few sunflower seeds or nuts over the top. Place the “feeder” a couple feet from ground level – on a stump or a large overturned flower pot.

Note: Alternately, you can string fruit chunks onto a kabob stick, then tie a length of string at each end of the kabob to make a hanger and create a fruit kabob.

Dressed-Up Pine Cones

SUPPLIES: medium-sized pine cones, string, lard or suet, nut pieces, seeds.

DIRECTIONS: Tie a piece of string about 15 inches long around the top of the pine cone to create a hanger. The grown-up in charge of this project melts about a half-cup of lard or suet for each pine cone (don’t let the lard get hot – you just need it liquefied). A pine cone for each child is a good idea, if you have enough supplies.



Lay out pieces of waxed paper so clean-up will be easier. Have the nuts and seeds ready in a bowl. If the lard is deep enough, kids can dip the pine cones in the lard. Otherwise, have them tip the pinecone upside down and spoon the lard over the cones. Before the lard sets up, either roll the cone in the nuts/seeds or sprinkle the nuts/seeds onto the cone. To speed cooling, set the pinecones on waxed paper and place in the refrigerator for an hour. Hang on a branch or hanger outside.

Peanut Butter Rolls

SUPPLIES: Toilet paper or halved paper-towel tubes; string; peanut butter; a mix of seeds, nut pieces, diced-up dried fruit, millet – whatever you have on hand. You might want to have paint shirts or old clothes on for this project, which can get a little messy.

DIRECTIONS: Make a hole on each side of the tub and tie each side of a length of string to form a handle. On a dinner plate, mix the dry ingredients you want to use. With a butter knife, cover the tube with a thick layer of peanut butter, then roll the tube in the dry nut/fruit mix until it is covered. Hang the feeders from a branch or hanger outside.

Bird Cookies

SUPPLIES: A lazy day, cookie cutters, string, a plastic straw cut into about one-inch pieces, a big bowl, a cookie pan, unflavored gelatin packets, a mix of small seeds, millet, cornmeal, nuts and if you want it, dried fruit.

DIRECTIONS: Place the cookie cutters on a cookie sheet. In the bowl, mix about two or so cups of nuts, seeds and cornmeal together. The grown-up in the project brings $\frac{2}{3}$ cup water to boil, then mixes in two packets of gelatin until it is dissolved.

Pour the gelatin mixture into the bowl of dry ingredients. The kids can have the fun of mixing everything together. Make sure that everything gets coated with gelatin, since this holds the dry stuff together. Let the mixture sit for a few minutes until the liquid is all absorbed, then give the kids a teaspoon and let them fill up the cookie cutters with the mixture until each cutter is very full. Push the mix gently down so that the nuts and seeds will be tightly compacted and hold together when they're done. Push a piece of straw into the cookie. This will create a hole for a hanger when the cookie is done.

At this point, the cookies need to dry out for about two hours.* Flip them over gently on the cookie sheet and let them dry for a couple more hours. At this point, gently push the cookies out of the cookie cutters and remove the straws. Depending on the child's age, this may be an adult undertaking so the cookie doesn't break. Place the cookies back on the sheet and let them dry fully overnight. Tie a string on each cookie and decorate a tree outside with them!

** At this point in the process, kids working with food ingredients will be hungry and want their own cookie, so break out the milk or juice and snack away!*

Three bird-related websites for kids:

Ducksters, a website with grade-specific information and projects.

www.ducksters.com/animals/birds.php

National Geographic Kids, a website with information with an array of science topics, including birds:

kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/hubs/birds/

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology – BirdSleuthK-12: www.birdsleuth.org/teaching-bird-id/

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

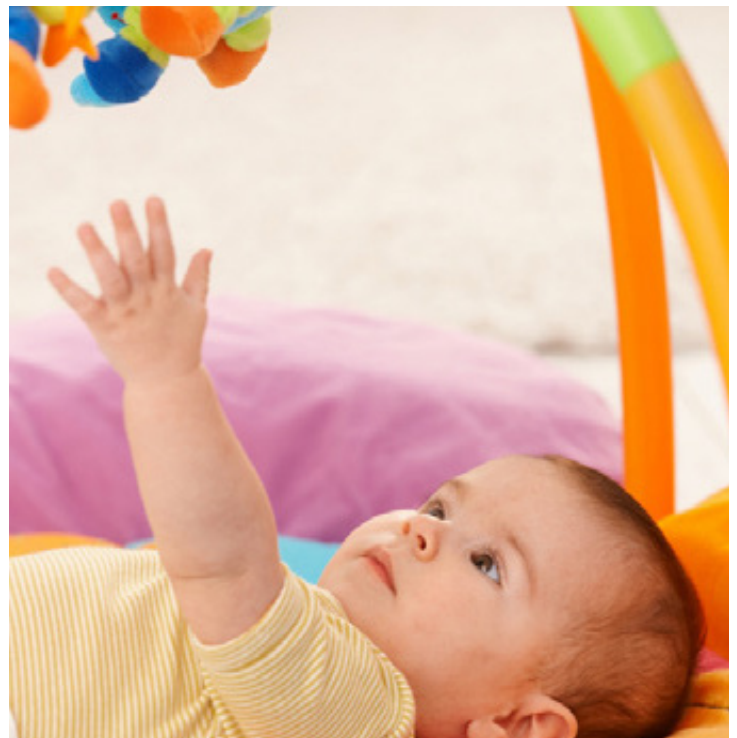
Prospective foster parents are welcome to license through either CA's Division of Licensed Resources (DLR), or any private child placing agency licensed in Washington. Our recruitment partners serve all families, regardless of where they choose to become licensed. Prospective foster parents are welcome 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
Arellano	Cecelia	carellano@ewu.edu	RPM	Pateros	Okanogan	(509) 630-2602
Borrego	Carmina	cborrego@ewu.edu	RPM	Sunnyside	Yakima	(509) 830-2036
Bilbruck	Lynsey	lbilbruck@ewu.edu	RPM	Oroville	Okanogan	(509) 560-3423
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Potter	Gail	gpotter@ewu.edu	Program Asst.	Spokane	Spokane	(509) 359-6130
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Thompson	Karen	kthomps9@ewu.edu	RPM	Spokane	Spokane Valley	(509) 230-4668
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Anderson	Maia	Maia-anderson@olivecrest.org	King West County, MLK, White Center	425-346-8336
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Cortani	Linda	Linda-Cortani@olivecrest.org	Jefferson and Clallam	360-640-0869
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