Legislative Allies Work to Improve Foster Care

Foster kids and their caregivers now have a strong group of allies in the Washington State Legislature.

One of them is Rep. Michelle Caldier, R-Port Orchard, co-chair of the informal legislative “Kids Caucus” – lawmakers who worked to produce legislation in 2017 to improve the lives of both the children in care and their foster parents. Rep. Tom Dent, R-Moses Lake is the other co-chair.

Caldier brings personal experience to her passionate advocacy for improving the system for foster kids and foster parents. She has been both.

Michele grew up on the Kitsap Peninsula, a victim of an abusive stepfather, living many of her teen years in and out of foster homes and with friends – “I was on my own at 17.”

One factor that helped her overcome her early life?

“I was blessed in that I had the same junior high and high school growing up. I had a stable support system.”

On her web page, she credits junior high school teachers as helping show her the way forward.

Although the life outcomes for many young people in her situation are not positive, she was able to find the resilience to move forward. She attended Olympic College, then the University of Washington, where she earned a bachelor of science degree in cell and molecular biology. She then completed a doctorate in dental surgery.

Along the way, at age 19, she became a single mom to a daughter, Cassandra. Her other siblings also got pregnant at young ages – a byproduct, she suggested, of their younger years.

Throughout her educational and personal journey, she said she never lost one goal.

‘I was always very passionate about wanting to help others,” she said.

Hers was a passion born in large part from her early years.

“Absolutely,” she says when asked if it was those years that drove her to help others in her position. “I wanted to make a difference in other kids’ lives.”

For example, after achieving her dream of becoming a dentist, “Michelle devoted her practice to caring for the nursing home population and donated dental care to children in Jamaica and Honduras, as well as vulnerable seniors here at home,” according to her website. She also taught as an affiliate professor at the UW for more than a decade and chaired the Access to Care Committee.

In 2004, she became a foster parent. She had two foster children at the time, and frustrations with the system led her to forego renewing her license. She spent time lobbying at the state capitol before successfully running for Washington’s House in 2014. She was re-elected in 2016.

What she quickly learned when after joining the legislature was that

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many legislators didn’t have the same understanding of foster care that she did. “I assumed everyone knew about the problems with the foster care system,” she said. “But for many legislators, it is not in their wheelhouse – they are not connected to it.”

One of the strongest longtime advocates to fix the system is Rep. Ruth Kagi, who has often worked for change. She worked for many years without a group of legislators like the current Kids Caucus.

Caldier and other legislators who do understand the issues set about trying to educate their colleagues. They arranged meeting around the state between local legislators and their constituents. She remembers one legislator who was a bit apprehensive about meeting with foster parents.

“I told her just sit and listen,” Caldier said.

After she did, Caldier said the legislator told her, “My gosh, I did not understand the problems that are facing us.”

Conversations like this happened all over the state, which helped build a base of support for the changes that occurred in 2017, including creation of a new Department of Children, Youth and Families.

“When you hear the same concerns going on all over the state, you ask yourself what I can do to fix that” Caldier said.

The Kids Caucus, which has about 15 lawmakers who attend regularly, proved to be a good way for other legislators to come and hear the stories and information. And many in the caucus have personal connections to the system. Having personal knowledge of it, they can become the strongest advocates for fixing it.

Caldier said it is clear to her that “we need to support quality foster parents and quality caseworkers.”

Part of House Bill 5890 that Caldier worked on was to create support systems for foster parents. The bill report outlines what is envisioned as a broad group of people whose mission is to “identify a system of support services to be provided to foster parents to assist foster parents in their efforts with foster children, and a plan to implement these support services statewide, which may include contracts with (community-based organizations). Support services are defined for this purpose to include, but are not limited to, counseling, educational assistance, and hands-on assistance for children with high-risk behaviors.”

Caldier said it is not so much a question of money – she debunks the notion that foster parents become caregivers for the money – but more about how the money gets spent.

She said half the money in the system is spent on the 10 percent of kids with the greatest needs, thus other parts of the system have less money.

Caldier said the system is in dire need of support. As an example, she cites the fact that children are now sleeping in hotels and staying in Children’s Administration offices because of the shortage of foster homes.

“Kids already feel rejected, and now they feel even more rejected when they see you can’t even find a home for them,” Caldier said.

She said ways must be found to help social workers “drowning in paperwork.” More drivers taking kids to visits and more support staff to do the routine paperwork would help, for instance. Foster parents in crisis with their child have no clear place to turn. She is looking at a “mobile crisis team” concept that would give foster parents somewhere to turn at all hours for help.

She has also worked on a part of the bill that expedites re-licensing for foster parents who have left the system in the last five years.

And she wants to work on the “culture” piece to create better relationships among groups in the system caring for kids. She says she believes new leadership in the new agency can lead to those improved relationships and a new culture.

While no agenda has yet been set by the Kids Caucus for the 2018 legislative session, she is preparing to talk to her co-chair, Rep. Dent, about moving forward. She intends to keep pushing.

“We can have a better system,” she said.
Improving Retention of Foster Parents

A new short-term support system will be established by Children’s Administration to support licensed foster parents, resulting from the passage of House Bill 5890 this year. This legislation provides supports to foster parents through case aide support contracted through non-profit community based agencies.

The final legislative bill report describes the new system this way:

“Subject to funding appropriated specifically for this purpose, short-term support shall include case aides who provide temporary assistance to foster parents as needed with the overall goal of supporting the parental efforts of the foster parents except that this assistance must not include overnight assistance.”

“The idea was first suggested in 2008 by Beth Canfield, former co-president of the Foster Parents Association of Washington State, said her husband and FPAWS Executive Director Mike Canfield. It was included in the bill this year.”

“If we want to deal with the foster parent crisis, we have to work on things that make foster parents happy,” Mike said. “We can reach out to them and ask them when they need help. We want to help foster parents, not make things worse.”

The bill report describes the new system:

The Department of Social and Health Services “is required to contract with nonprofit community-based organizations (CBO) in each region to establish a statewide pool of individuals to provide this short-term support. These individuals must be hired by the CBO and must have the appropriate training, background checks, and qualifications as determined by DSHS. At the request of the foster parent or as offered by a CBO, short-term support must be available to all licensed foster parents in the state as funding is available and must be phased in by geographic region. If the requests for short-term support exceed the funding available, the CBO must have discretion to determine the assignment of case aides.”

Children’s Administration staff are working on a plan to create the policy, structure and determine how the resource will be phased in.

Finally, the bill requires the Washington State Institute for Public Policy to prepare a way to evaluate the effectiveness of the program, particularly as it affects foster parent retention, the number of moves a child makes from home to home and the return on investment to the state. The first report will be due in December 2018.

September Is Attendance Awareness Month

As the school year starts, we are sending out this reminder about the importance of school attendance. It is developed by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Department of Social and Health Services.

Why are we focusing on attendance?

Every absence, excused or unexcused, is a learning opportunity lost and can have significant impacts on a student’s success in school and life. A student who misses 18 or more days (10 percent) for any reason is considered chronically absent. These youth are less likely to graduate high school.

We all share responsibility in helping youth develop good attendance habits and in reducing absenteeism. Share your concerns about attendance with the student, case worker, school. Make arrangements and appointments that do not affect school attendance when at all possible.

For more information go to [www.k12.wa.us/attendance/](http://www.k12.wa.us/attendance/)
A new Kinship Care Advisory Committee has been created within the state’s Children’s Administration (CA) to build support for kinship caregivers, said Shelly Arneson, program manager for kinship care. Her fulltime position was created late last year as one of the first steps to give greater emphasis and support to this group of caregivers.

“We have always wanted to help children, but we thought there would be some golden years – and we hope we will still have them – but they will just have to be delayed,” says Nancy, 63. After a career in the military, her husband John, 62, installs and fixes generators.

After raising their four biological children, now in their 30s and 40s, they became foster parents, first in Connecticut and then in Washington.

Of the approximately 40 children who came into their lives through foster care between 1995 and 2005, they adopted five. Nancy said that two of their adopted daughters struggled with addiction issues. Although the young women are now clean, she and John took in their children, now ages 13, 10 and 7. Another 18-year-old adopted son with autism also lives with them.

She said there are a number of differences in raising young kids at her and John’s ages. They have to juggle more logistical problems – visits with parents, for example. And the kids seem less willing to do as their grandparents want, compared to when they raised their biological children, Nancy said.

“Our life is totally changed by the life we’ve had, but I wouldn’t have given it up at all.”

“Kids think they can do what they want,” she said, adding, “You just don’t have the energy” you do when raising children at a younger age.

A new Kinship Care Advisory Committee has been created within the state’s Children’s Administration (CA) to build support for kinship caregivers, said Shelly Arneson, program manager for kinship care. Her fulltime position was created late last year as one of the first steps to give greater emphasis and support to this group of caregivers.

“This committee will focus on the experiences of kinship caregivers who have involvement with CA,” Arneson said.

Recent statistics show that about 9,100 children in Washington are in state care. Of those, about half are living with relative caregivers, like the Livingstons. Those children have a social worker, and their relative caregivers have the same obligations as foster parents. For instance, they have court appointments and home visits by the social worker.

But most of these relative caregivers are not licensed foster parents, sometimes because they are leery of intrusions into their lives by the state.

Arneson said these unlicensed kinship caregivers could substantially increase the financial support they receive if they became licensed. For example, many currently receive Temporary Assistance For Needy Families (TANF), through the Economic Services Administration, but this is a much lower level of financial support than the state reimbursement received by foster parents.

“They are going to have a social worker anyway and maybe a CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocate), so it’s not that much more to take the (training) courses and get that support,” Shelly said.

Relative caregivers who are involved with CA – either licensed or unlicensed – represent only a small number of the total number of Washington’s kinship caregiver community. A much larger number of kinship caregivers are part of what is called “the informal system,” and have no state involvement. It is estimated that for every child in foster care, another nine or 10 are living with relatives.

CA may have been initially involved with these families through a Child Protective Services (CPS) investigation, and a relative stepped forward to voluntarily care for a family member’s
Relative Support and Service Funds

Money is available to help support unlicensed relative caregivers with children placed in their home by Children’s Administration. If you are part of this group of relative caregivers, your social worker can assist you in getting help with specific expenses through the State’s Relative Support and Service Funds (RSSF), according to CA.

Social workers can access the money when a concrete good or service will support placement or help facilitate the home-study process.

Sometimes social workers are unaware these funds are available or are uncertain how it can be used.

For instance, money can be supplied to purchase baby gates, diapers, formula, a crib or bed, safety latches, first-aid kits, car seats, bike helmets and more.

It can support a kinship caregiver’s home if they need such things as a fire extinguisher or escape ladder to pass a home study.

Funds also can be used for child-specific items. For instance, a teen in kinship care can get help with specific equipment needed for a class at school; an unlicensed aunt may need help paying for a wheelchair ramp; an unlicensed grandfather may need financial help to move into a larger apartment to accommodate the sibling of a child already in care; or an unlicensed sibling may need safety repairs done to prepare for placement of a younger sister or brother.

All of these examples fall under the broad category of “placement support” and are possible with these funds.

Funds cannot be used for ongoing payment of bills, but can be used to assist in a crisis. For some payments, such as emergency rent assistance, the kinship caregiver needs to show that the payment can be sustained post-assistance.

It’s important to understand that funds are not immediate. Requests must go through an approval process once a social worker has requested the funds. For this reason, it is essential for kinship caregivers to make their social workers aware of needs in a timely manner and to communicate clearly when the situation emerges.

How to Contact Your Social Worker

Children’s Administration has provided a quick and easy way to find contact information for your child’s social worker and the worker’s supervisor.

Click on this link: fortress.wa.gov/dshs/ca/employeedirectory and you can locate the information you need.

This information is updated regularly.

New Focus on Supporting Kinship Caregivers continued

child. some situations where a child came to live in a relative’s care. Whether Children’s Administration stays involved with a child living with relative, depends on a judge’s decision based on a recommendation by CA after it has completed a risk-assessment of safety factors in the child’s life, Arneson said.

The new Kinship Care committee charged with building kinship caregiver supports held its first meeting in August. Its written goal is to “develop and strengthen communication, policy, training, data and resources as they relate to kinship care within CA.”

The committee represents many perspectives, including those of kinship caregivers, youth in kinship care, kinship navigators who work in the informal system, the Attorney General’s Office, public defenders, private agencies and others, Arneson said.

Initially, they want to look at updating the materials that will help caregivers navigate this somewhat complex system, she said.

They’re also gathering data, which they will use to help guide their work and seek more effective ways to communicate with the caregivers.

Unlike foster parents, who are more organized as a group and have a statewide organization to advocate for them, relative caregiver have few such organizations and thus, have been harder to reach. Building better ways to communicate with them will be part of the group’s goal, Arneson said.

Anyone who wishes to learn more, contribute ideas or support the group can reach Arneson at 360-902-8109; shelly.arneson@dshs.wa.gov
Talking To Kids About School

By Sara Goldstein Reprinted with permission of parent.co

With fall comes the beginning of a new school year and the same old dilemma: How do you entice your child to tell you about his or her day at school? Sara Goldstein compiled this imaginative list. Similar lists can be found with a Google search.

“When I picked my son up from his first day of 4th grade, my usual (enthusiastically delivered) question of “how was your day?” was met with his usual (indifferently delivered) “fine.”

Come on! It’s the first day, for crying out loud! Give me something to work with, would you, kid?

The second day, my same question was answered, “well, no one was a jerk.”

That’s good…I guess.

I suppose the problem is my own. That question actually sucks. Far from a conversation starter, it’s uninspired, overwhelmingly open-ended, and frankly, completely boring. So as an alternative, I’ve compiled a list of questions that my kid will answer with more than a single word or grunt. In fact, he debated his response to question 8 for at least half an hour over the weekend. The jury’s out until he can organize a foot race.

Questions a kid will answer at the end of a long school day:

1. What did you eat for lunch?
2. Did you catch anyone picking their nose?
3. What games did you play at recess?
4. What was the funniest thing that happened today?
5. Did anyone do anything super nice for you?
6. What was the nicest thing you did for someone else?
7. Who made you smile today?
8. Which one of your teachers would survive a zombie apocalypse? Why?
9. What new fact did you learn today?
10. Who brought the best food in their lunch today? What was it?
11. What challenged you today?
12. If school were a ride at the fair, which ride would it be? Why?
13. What would you rate your day on a scale of 1 to 10? Why?
14. If one of your classmates could be the teacher for the day who would you want it to be? Why?
15. If you had the chance to be the teacher tomorrow, what would you teach the class?
16. Did anyone push your buttons today?
17. Who do you want to make friends with but haven’t yet? Why not?
18. What is your teacher’s most important rule?
19. What is the most popular thing to do at recess?
20. Does your teacher remind you of anyone else you know? How?
21. Tell me something you learned about a friend today.
22. If aliens came to school and beamed up 3 kids, who do you wish they would take? Why?
23. What is one thing you did today that was helpful?
24. When did you feel most proud of yourself today?
25. What rule was the hardest to follow today?
26. What is one thing you hope to learn before the school year is over?
27. Which person in your class is your exact opposite?
28. Which area of your school is the most fun?
29. Which playground skill do you plan to master this year?
30. Does anyone in your class have a hard time following the rules?”
Free and Discounted Activities for Foster Children and Their Caregivers

Another organization has stepped up to offer free access to children in foster care.

This is what Seattle Children’s Theater (SCT) has posted on its website:

“Access SCT makes the theatre arts and education accessible to young people and low-income families through financial aid, scholarships and reduced ticket costs.

We are very pleased to announce the expansion of our Access SCT initiative, which now offers all foster children free admission with an accompanying adult.”

Here are the details:
Active foster parents can receive complimentary children’s tickets for all foster children in their care by showing their foster parent ID card, license or caregiver authorization to redeem this offer (faxed or emailed copies are acceptable). Children attending a show must be accompanied by an adult.

Tickets can be purchased in advance or at the time of show, subject to availability. This offer can be combined with other discounts for accompanying adults or children.

For more information, or to redeem this offer, contact the theater’s ticket office, 206 441-3322; tickets@sct.org.

For more information about the Seattle Children’s Theatre, please visit: www.sct.org.

Other organizations in Washington that offer free or discounted prices for foster parents/children include:

• Washington State Parks
• Pacific Science Center
• Seattle Aquarium
• YMCA locations throughout Washington

Updated information about these organizations’ specific guidelines will be included in the October Caregiver Connection.

2018 Seattle Mariners We Are Family – First Pitch Search

Children’s Administration is looking for a teen girl to throw out the ceremonial first pitch during We Are Family’s 2018 event, held at Safeco Field, says Meri Waterhouse, program manager who coordinates the event for CA. “It’s been about five years since a teen girl has taken the Mariners pitching mound to deliver the pitch and I’m betting there are some girls out there with a great pitching arm who would love to be considered, says Meri.

If you know a teen girl, ages 12 -18, who would like to be considered to throw the Mariners first pitch in honor of We Are Family, contact Meri Waterhouse. To be eligible, you must now be in foster or relative care placement, adopted from foster care, now a legal guardianship after a foster care placement, or in a permanent Third Party Custody with a relative. Contact Meri at 360-902-8035 or by email at waterML@dshs.wa.gov.
Protect Your Kids from the Flu, HPV and Meningitis With Vaccines

Coordinated Care’s Apple Health Core Connections covers vaccines at no cost.

**Flu:** As kids head back to school, prepare for flu season! Get protected before the flu enters the school. According to the CDC, the flu (influenza) affects millions of people every year, sometimes leading to hospitalizations and death, so it’s important for you and your child to receive the flu vaccine every year. The flu vaccine is recommended for everyone 6 months and older. Two doses are recommended for children 8 years old and younger getting vaccinated for the first time. After that, it is an annual vaccination. Remember, you cannot get the flu from the flu vaccine. Get vaccines at your doctor’s office. Kids 7 and older can get the shot at a participating pharmacy.

**HPV:** We can protect loved ones from getting Human Papillomavirus (HPV)-related cancers as adults by making sure they get the HPV vaccine. This is a vaccine that is recommended for both boys and girls and is done in a series of vaccinations. The series can be started as early as age 9. Learn what you can do to protect children in your care from the risks of contracting HPV by talking with your child’s doctor.

**Meningitis:** The meningococcal vaccine protects against meningococcal disease, a serious infection. The bacteria can infect the bloodstream, the lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis), or both. It can be life-threatening if not quickly treated. Children who live in or travel to countries where the disease is common, who are present during an outbreak or have certain immune disorders should receive the vaccine. It is recommended for children 11-to-12 years old, with a booster after the age of 16.

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**Childhood Obesity and How We All Can Help**

During the past 30 years, childhood obesity in the United States has more than doubled. September is National Childhood Obesity month, a time to learn more and understand what we all can do to encourage healthy choices.

**The Facts about Child Obesity Rates**

- In 2012, more than one-third of children and adolescents were overweight or obese.
- Obese adolescents are more likely to have prediabetes, a condition in which blood-glucose levels show a high risk of getting diabetes.
- Children and adolescents who are obese are at greater risk for bone and joint problems, sleep apnea and psychological problems such as anxiety and depression.

**You can help children in your care buck this trend by:**

- Giving them healthy food options.
- Setting an example.
- Encouraging activity, such as biking, dancing or playing tag.

**Need help finding a primary care provider?**

**Need assistance finding a specialist in your area?**

**WE CAN HELP! Call 1-844-354-9876.**
The Need for Suicide Prevention

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth between 10 and 24 years of age. You can help by being aware of common signs exhibited by young people who are suicidal. These include:

- Talking about suicide or a focus on death.
- Changes in personality, behavior, school performance, sleep patterns or eating habits.
- Giving away prized possessions.
- Harming themselves, others or pet.
- Reckless or dangerous behaviors.
- Loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy.
- Isolating themselves from family, friends and peers.

Sometimes suicidal thoughts can be caused by other issues, such as being bullied or experiencing depression. Not all children and youth who have thoughts of suicide show warning signs. And not all children and youth who express warning signs will attempt suicide.

**It's important to take any mention of suicide seriously.**

If you have a concern, ask. If you see an unexplainable change, such as suddenly isolating themselves and no longer doing well in school, start a conversation. Talking about suicide does not create or increase risk; it actually reduces it.

If you have seen any warning signs, chances are the child/youth is already thinking about suicide. Talk to them!

### How do you talk with children and youth about suicide?

It is important to talk in a calm, non-accusatory manner. Focus on concern for the child’s well-being and keeping them safe. Ask about their feelings and avoid trying to come up with a solution to their problem. Ask directly about suicidal thoughts. Encourage them to talk to you, a crisis line and other professionals who can help. Helpful questions or statements include:

- Are you thinking of hurting yourself?
- Are you thinking of killing yourself?
- Have you thought about how you would kill yourself?
- It sounds like you are really hurting right now. I’m here for you and I’m willing to help.

If a child or youth shares that they have thoughts of suicide, remain calm. Keep them safe, ask for more information and, most importantly, reach out for help.

The Alliance offers a training called Suicide Prevention: safeTALK that can prepare caregivers to be suicide-alert helpers. To learn more or register for the course follow this link: [www.alliancecatalog.org/node/9351/course-signup](http://www.alliancecatalog.org/node/9351/course-signup)

### Take Care of Yourself!

Being a foster parent is a rewarding job. But caring for children who have experienced trauma is challenging. The emotional and physical impact of caring for these kids is often overwhelming. This can lead to Compassion Fatigue, so it is important to take care of yourself, too. One key step is to ask for help. We tend to isolate ourselves in difficult times. Research shows that reaching out to your support system in times of need helps prevent exhaustion and burn-out. It takes a village!

Below are links to suicide prevention and intervention resources:

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**
  1-800-273-TALK (8522)
- **Crisis Text Line (CTL)**

**Washington Teen Link**

- **Now Matters Now**
- **Trevor Project**
  (Crisis intervention and suicide prevention for LGBTQ youth)

If you need help accessing and/or coordinating any behavioral health service for your child, please call Apple Health Core Connections Member Services, 844-354-9876.
Kids’ tea parties: a fun escape from the real world!

There’s something about a tea party that kids love. Maybe it’s leaving the ordinary behind; maybe it’s dressing in costume or eating cute little finger foods; or maybe it’s just slowing down and being with friends. And while older boys may balk at a tea party with the traditional frou-frou, the party can be tailored into something more fun for them while still maintaining a tea party's essential: inviting food, good company and a respite from everyday life.

I recently asked my grandsons – 4 and 6 years old – if they’d like to have a tea party, and their eyes lit up! We spent time planning the occasion, since that’s part of the fun. To child no. 2, the most important element was having gingerbread boys, so we made cut-out cookies. We also made tea sandwiches, and I threaded fresh fruits on a skewer and fancied up some graham crackers with frosting and sprinkles. Because baking cookies took time, we ran out of time to decorate, but I covered the table with a tablecloth and put a vase of flowers on the table with the teapot and cups. It was quick and easy, and to them, it spelled p-a-r-t-y!

I thought I’d use this month’s column to share a few easy tea party ideas, most of which kids can help with. Adapt your party to your own tribe – simple, fancy, costumed, decorated, themed, special occasion, for girls, for boys or for both.

The party plan:

Decide how much time and effort you, the adult, have to put into the party. If it’s for a birthday, you can go all out, but if it’s a tea party for your toddler and her teddy bear, you can do it on the fly and party more often. Then pick a place – kitchen, dining room, deck, kids’ room, back yard.

- Decorate. If you’re going to have decorations, maybe the kids can make placemats, a pot of paper flowers or invitations to the neighbor kids.
- Discuss whether you’ll have a theme and/or costumes. Whether it’s dressing up in cast-off finery and jewelry, last year’s Halloween costumes or some kind of specific costume, like superheroes, dressing up is usually a winner.
- Figure out the food. Very important! If you have toddlers and no time, just use an assortment of finger-foods: fish crackers, min-cookies and cupcakes, animal crackers, along with fruit and raw veggies. For older children, you can get more sophisticated.

Supplies:

- Teacups and a teapot or a good-quality child’s tea set (If you’re buying one, make sure that if it’s plastic, it’s BPA-free and food-safe); small plates. If you don’t have any lonely china teacups sitting around, you can find them at a thrift store – it’s more charming if they don’t match. Or buy some small paper cups and plates, which may be fun if you’re having a themed tea party.
- A sugar bowl and creamer, if you are serving real tea (choose from the many herbal, decaf or fruit teas on the market or in your cupboard). Unneeded if juice, lemonade or cocoa is on the menu.
- Spoons, forks and napkins. If you have demitasse spoons and dessert forks, you’re in the minority. Colored plastic silverware is good – just make sure the spoons are not so big that the little cups will tip over when a child is stirring.
- Serving ware. It isn’t a tea party unless the food looks fantastic. Use nice serving plates, and now’s the time to pull out the pedestal cake plate you haven’t used since your last baby shower. After arranging the food, trim the plates with some parsley, fresh mint, flowers or fruit slices to up the wow factor.
Tea party treats (Think small and fun!)

- Make melon balls or strawberry fans, the latter by slicing a strawberry part-way through three or four times on the diagonal and pushing on it slightly until it fans out.
- Roll cream cheese into nickel-sized balls and dip them in chopped nuts.
- Use a small flower or heart-shaped cookie cutter to cut shapes from sliced cheese or cucumber.
- Spread a soft tortilla with softened flavored cream cheese; roll it up, refrigerate it for an hour and cut it into one-inch wide slices to make pinwheel tea sandwiches.

Some fast fixes:
- Powdered mini-doughnuts topped with a raspberry.
- Ice-cream wafer cookies dipped in chocolate or white chocolate dip and candy sprinkles.
- Graham crackers snapped into fourths and covered with a little frosting – and candy sprinkles.

Here are two quick tea party sandwiches. Freeze the bread for an hour or so before making them for easier cutting and spreading.

Peanut-butterflies
For each sandwich, you will need two slices of bread, peanut butter, jam or honey and a butterfly cookie cutter. Use the butterfly cutter to cut two butterflies from the bread. Spread one butterfly piece with a peanut butter, then with a small amount of jam or honey. Spread the other butterfly with a thin layer of butter so that the jam won’t bleed through the bread if you don’t serve them immediately. Top the pbj piece with the buttered piece to form the sandwich.

Double-decker finger sandwiches
To make three finger sandwiches, you’ll need three slices of bread, butter – and mayonnaise, if desired, a slice of cheese and some wafer-thin lunchmeat. Spread a thin layer of butter on each bread slice of bread. On the first, place a slice of cheese. Top it with a second bread slice and meat. Top it with the third bread slice to form a stack. With a serrated knife, cut the crust off each side of the stack, then slice the stack into thirds to create three sandwiches. Place a tiny dollop of butter on top of each sandwich and trim with parsley or a cherry tomato slice. (Alternatively, you can use tuna or egg salad. Use what you have on hand.)
# CA Foster Parent Consultation Team (1624)
## Foster Parent Regional Representatives 2017 - 2018

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<td>509-846-5603</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angela Stiner, Reg. 1 South</td>
<td><a href="mailto:leena83@hotmail.com">leena83@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>509-859-3180</td>
<td>2017 – 12/31/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg. 1 South #2 Rep position remains vacant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leilani McClure, Reg. 2 North</td>
<td><a href="mailto:leilani.mcclure@gmail.com">leilani.mcclure@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>425-681-2094</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray Deck III</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Raydeck3@gmail.com">Raydeck3@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>518-290-0729</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanna Alvarez, Reg. 2 South</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:CAFPTR2S@outlook.com">CAFPTR2S@outlook.com</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Teena Williams, Reg. 3 North</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Amy Gardner, Reg. 3 South</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cara Leyshon, Reg. 3 South</td>
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<tr>
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<td>360-990-1011 (c)</td>
<td>As appointed by FPAWS</td>
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<td>360-377-1011 (h)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Canfield, FPAWS</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mkbeth@comcast.net">mkbeth@comcast.net</a></td>
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<td>As appointed by FPAWS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>360-377-1011 (h)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Please do not distribute outside of the 1624 Team.*
Caregiver Training from the Alliance

Explore our wide variety of caregiver training options designed to increase understanding and strengthen skills. These upcoming in-person classroom sessions provide in-depth information on relevant topics for the caregiver community at convenient locations across the state.

Trainings offered in Region 1: Eastern Washington

September

- As They Grow: The Drug Impacted Child
- Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma
- DLR/CPS Allegations: An Overview of the Investigative Process
- Identifying and Supporting Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (for Caregivers)
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Parenting the Positive Discipline Way
- Resilience Trumps Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)
- So You Have a New Placement…Now What?
- Youth Missing from Care (for Caregivers)

October

- Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma
- Introduction to Positive Discipline
- Kinship 101
- Parenting the Positive Discipline Way
- So You Have a New Placement…Now What?
### Trainings offered in Region 2: I-5 corridor north of Seattle to Whatcom County

#### September
- Parenting the Positive Discipline Way
- Introduction to ICWA for Caregivers

#### October
- Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma
- DLR/CPS Investigations
- Emotion Coaching
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Introduction to Positive Discipline
- Parenting the Positive Discipline Way
- Paper Trail
- So You Have a New Placement…Now What?
- Youth Missing From Care
### Trainings in Region 3: Olympic Peninsula and I-5 corridor south of Seattle, (including Tacoma)

#### September **LEARN MORE**
- African American Hair and Skin Care
- As They Grow: The Drug Impacted Child
- Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma
- Cultural Diversity for Foster Parents and Caregivers: Being Culturally Responsive to Our Children and Youth of Color
- How You Can Become An Effective Educational Advocate for Your Child (The Family Guide to Working With Schools)
- Infant Safety and Care (for Caregivers)
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others
- Minimizing the Risks of Allegations
- Paper Trail: Documentation Training for Caregivers
- Parenting the Positive Discipline Way
- So You Have a New Placement…Now What?
- Verbal De-escalation
- Why Children Lie

#### October **LEARN MORE**
- ABC’s of Autism, Behaviors, and Coping Strategies
- As They Grow: The Drug Impacted Infant and Toddler
- Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma
- Caring for Children with Physically Aggressive Behavior Concerns
- Emotion Coaching
- Fostering Children and Youth Through Transition, Grief, and Loss: Helping Children With Their Feelings
- Healthy Engagement with Children of Trauma
- How You Can Become an Effective Educational Advocate for Your Child (The Family Guide to Working With Schools)
- Invitation to Aggression Replacement Training
- Kinship 101: Information for Relatives and Suitable Others
- Paper Trail
- So You Have a New Placement…Now What?
Your Child Welfare Training Team for Region 1
Eastern Washington
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Patty Orona........ 509-834-8535 po5@uw.edu
Ryan Krueger....... 509-660-0350 krry300@uw.edu
Sherry Colomb....... 509-322-2552 scolomb1@uw.edu

Your Child Welfare Training Team for Region 2
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Cara Mbaye .......... 206-923-4914 mbayec@uw.edu
El-Freda Stephenson ... 206-923-4922 elfreda@uw.edu

Your Child Welfare Training Team for Region 3
Pierce County & South to Clark County plus the Olympic Peninsula & Coast
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Penny Michel ........ 360-725-6788 mpen300@uw.edu
Stephanie Rodrigues .... 206-321-1721 steph75@uw.edu
Robert Judd ........... 360-344-3003 juddre@uw.edu
Gracia Hahn .......... 253-983-6362 hahng@uw.edu

Your Registration Help Desk
Registration Help ... 866-577-1915 help@acwe.on.spiceworks.com

Join us on Social Media for inspiration, tips, trainings, the latest events and to be part of a caregiver community

Caregiver Training from the Alliance
Explore our wide variety of caregiver training options designed to increase understanding and strengthen skills.
These upcoming in-person classroom sessions provide in-depth information on relevant topics for the caregiver community at convenient locations across the state.

Trainings offered in Region 1: Eastern Washington

- Caregivers Report to the Court (Coaching Session)
- Caregiver Teaming for Visitation (Coaching Session)
- Youth Missing From Care
- Cultural Diversity for Foster Parents and Caregivers: Being Culturally Responsive to Our Children and Youth of Color
- Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma: A Workshop for Resource Parents from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- Introduction to Adoption from Foster Care
- So You Have a New Placement, Now What?
- Talking with Children About Race
- Verbal De-Escalation
- Infant Safety and Care
- Compassionate Parenting
- Emotion Coaching
- How You Can Become an Effective Educational Advocate for Your Child (The Family Guide to Working with Schools)
- Introduction to the Indian Child Welfare Act
- African American Hair and Skin Care
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. 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>EWU Email</th>
<th>Position Title</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Cellphone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fordham</td>
<td>Kim</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kfordham@ewu.edu">kfordham@ewu.edu</a></td>
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<td>Coeur d Alene</td>
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<td>Mon Ra'</td>
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<td>Rick</td>
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<td>RPM</td>
<td>All Regions</td>
<td>All regions special projects</td>
<td>(509) 468-9564</td>
</tr>
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<td>Jones</td>
<td>Ken</td>
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<td>Gail</td>
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<td>Powers</td>
<td>Druska (Dru)</td>
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<td>RPM</td>
<td>Spokane</td>
<td>All region special projects</td>
<td>(509) 389-7192</td>
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## Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, Walla Walla, Whitman

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stinson</td>
<td>Mary Kathryn (Katie)</td>
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<td>Heger</td>
<td>Ashlee</td>
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<td>Asotin</td>
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<td>St. John</td>
<td>Whitman</td>
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<td>Kimberly</td>
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<td>RPM</td>
<td>Pullman</td>
<td>Whitman</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Druska (Dru)</td>
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<td>FIRST Program and RPM</td>
<td>Walla Walla</td>
<td>R1 N &amp; S, Columbia and Walla Walla</td>
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<td>Ivy</td>
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<td>RPM</td>
<td>Clarkston</td>
<td>Asotin, Whitman</td>
<td>(509) 552-9927</td>
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## Benton, Franklin, Kittitas, Klickitat, Yakima

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<td>(509) 945-0317</td>
</tr>
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## Eastern Washington University's Fostering Washington Liaisons Region 1:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
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<th>Position Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>Schlegel</td>
<td>Rebekah</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rschlegel@ewu.edu">rschlegel@ewu.edu</a></td>
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<td>Pend Orielle</td>
<td>(509) 671-7132</td>
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<td>Colville</td>
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<td>Karen</td>
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<td>RPM</td>
<td>Spokane</td>
<td>Spokane Valley</td>
<td>(509) 230-4668</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stoebner</td>
<td>Hayley</td>
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<td>Recruitment Coordinator</td>
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<td>(509) 322-1191</td>
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<td>Wenatchee</td>
<td>Chelan &amp; Douglas</td>
<td>(206) 250-5068</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Okanogan</td>
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<td>(509) 468-9564</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Ephrata</td>
<td>Grant</td>
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<tr>
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<td>LaDeana</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lmorehead@ewu.edu">lmorehead@ewu.edu</a></td>
<td>RPM</td>
<td>East Wenatchee</td>
<td>Chelan and Douglas</td>
<td>(509) 670-7270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redford</td>
<td>Kim</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kredford@ewu.edu">kredford@ewu.edu</a></td>
<td>RPM</td>
<td>Moses Lake</td>
<td>Adams, Grant</td>
<td>(509) 750-0232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinson</td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mrobinson6@ewu.edu">mrobinson6@ewu.edu</a></td>
<td>RPM</td>
<td>Cashmere</td>
<td>Chelan and Douglas</td>
<td>(509) 393-3123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams</td>
<td>Vanessa</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vwilliams2@ewu.edu">vwilliams2@ewu.edu</a></td>
<td>RPM</td>
<td>Quincy</td>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>(509) 398-7668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>Dani</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dwilson21@ewu.edu">dwilson21@ewu.edu</a></td>
<td>RPM</td>
<td>Moses Lake</td>
<td>Grant &amp; Adams</td>
<td>(509) 398-1553</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Olive Crest’s Fostering Together Liaisons

## Western Washington Staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Program Director</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Region 2 Staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Region 2 North Staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Skagit, Island, San Juan and Whatcom Counties Liaison</td>
<td>(360) 720-0969</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Christina-Urtasun@olivecrest.org">Christina-Urtasun@olivecrest.org</a></td>
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<td>Summer Buckles</td>
<td>Everett Liaison</td>
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<td>Danielle Martin</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:Danielle-martin@olivecrest.org">Danielle-martin@olivecrest.org</a></td>
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## Region 2 South Staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angela Pitts-Long</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Olive Crest’s Fostering Together Liaisons

## Region 3 Staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td><a href="mailto:Joann-Elvin@olivecrest.org">Joann-Elvin@olivecrest.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regina Hopkins</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Region 3 North Staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erika Thompson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Pierce County West Liaison</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeanie Johns</td>
<td>Kitsap County Liaison</td>
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## Region 3 South Staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linda Cortani</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Teneille Carpenter</td>
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