



Wait No More[®]

Preparing Hearts and Homes
for Kids in Foster Care

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NOVEMBER 10, 2018

Greetings from Focus on the Family and our local partners.

We're so glad you're here! Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the waiting children and youth in our state who desperately need the love of a foster or adoptive family.

Today, we've brought together local faith-based agencies and ministry and church leaders who are all united with us in one goal: to find foster and adoptive families for all the children and youth who are waiting in foster care in this community.

You and your family are who we've been waiting for! Thank you for your willingness to explore the role you might play in helping these waiting kids.

It is our goal that today you will be:

- Inspired by the stories of real foster and adoptive families, as well as youth formerly in foster care
- Educated about the thousands of kids waiting for loving families in Colorado foster care and the process involved in foster care and adoption
- Informed about the next steps for exploring foster care and adoption

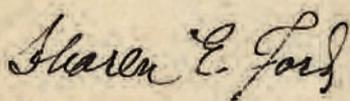
- Inspired to provide support services for a foster or adoptive family
- Equipped to access relevant supportive resources for you and your family
- Connected with key agencies, which will walk you through the process

At the close of our program, you will have ample time to attend a breakout session specific to either foster care, adoption from foster care or support, as well as visit the information booths to get answers to any and all of your specific questions.

And the best part is, before you leave, you can take steps to move forward. Simply leave your green initiation form in one of the many marked boxes.

Again, thank you for your attendance.
It's going to be a great day.

Sincerely,



Dr. Sharen Ford
Director, Foster Care & Adoption
Focus on the Family



NEXT STEPS

Today

Please utilize the information on the following pages of this guide and your opportunity to interact directly with those organizations today to select the agency, ministry or organization that seems best for your family.

Next Steps:

- Attend a breakout session on foster care, adoption or support
- Visit the exhibitor booths
- Determine which agency, ministry or organization you prefer to work with
- *Fill out and turn in the green initiation form*
- Obtain any relevant paperwork
- Find out their orientation and training schedule

If you are planning to further explore foster care, adoption or support, please fill out the green initiation form and place it in one of the marked boxes throughout the church or hand it to one of our event volunteers.

It is important to do this even if you are not sure which agency or organization you prefer to work with yet.

In the Future

Each of the agencies and ministries listed in this attendee guide has specifically identified the next step for an interested family to take as you explore your role in meeting the needs of a waiting child or supporting families.

For more information on any of the orientations, trainings, or other events listed on the pages that follow, please contact the agency hosting the particular event. Thank you again for your willingness to help waiting kids!

Next Steps:

- Continue to pray about how God will use you and His specific plan for your family
- Tell someone you trust about how God is leading you and the steps you are taking
- If you have not heard from an agency after three weeks, contact the agency you listed on your initiation form or Focus on the Family
- Be proactive about any paperwork, training or requirements

MINISTRY & ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Ariel Clinical Services



Service area: Front Range - Pueblo to Fort Collins

Ariel Clinical Services is a Child Placement Agency with four offices across Colorado. We are a collection of committed, positive, creative individuals who believe in the inherent worth of every child and adult. We are committed to high standards of care, clearly demonstrated knowledge and good communication with all team members. We want each child, adult, parent, case worker and contracting authority to feel valued and genuinely supported by our services.

Contact Information:

Shiloh Jones, Placment Coordinator
4660 Wadsworth Blvd
Wheat Ridge, CO 80033

sjones@arielpca.org
(303) 703-9351
www.arielpca.org

Upcoming Events:

November:

Info Meetings: 11/14/18 2-3pm, 11/15/18 6-8pm
Ariel Orientation Training 11/16/18 5:30-9pm

December:

Info Meetings: 12/5/18 2-3pm, 12/6/18 6-8pm

January:

Info Meetings: 1/17/19 6-8pm, 1/23/19 2-3pm
Ariel Orientation Training 1/25/19 5:30-9pm

Notes

Beautiful Redemption



Beautiful
Redemption

Service Area: Colorado

Beautiful Redemption is the bridge between the foster care system and the faith community. We are the implementation partner for CarePortal where case workers enter needs and the faith community responds to those specific needs through a unique email system. Event though we are not all called to the same thing, CarePortal allos every person to do something.

Contact Information:

Mike Worley, President
363 Suncrest Rd #33
Palmer Lake, CO 80133

mike@BeautifulRedemption.com
(719) 659-2780
www.BeautifulRedemption.com

Upcoming Events:

November 11th - Concert with Leif Horrell - 7pm at Vanguard Church

December 9th - Beautiful Redemption Dinner - 5:30pm at The Hideaway

December 10th - DHS Kinship Christmas Outreach - 6pm at Pulpit Rock Church

December 12th - CarePortal Interest Meeting (for El Paso County Churches)
9am at Panera Bread on N. Academy/ I25

Notes

AGENCY, MINISTRY & ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW (continued)

Bethany Christian Services

Service area: Families within 25 miles of both Denver and Colorado Springs



Bethany Christian Services is a global nonprofit organization that brings families together and keeps families together. Strengthening families for the well-being of children is our top priority. In Colorado, our services include adoption, foster care, and pregnancy counseling. The work we do equips families to be the answer for children in need—as Christ intended.

There is a growing need for families willing to open their hearts and homes to children and teenagers who have been removed from their families because of neglect or abuse. These children need a loving family who will walk with them during a time of crisis and welcome them unconditionally into a caring home. Every child deserves a loving family—that’s where children thrive best—but so many children don’t have this blessing.

Bethany caseworkers strive to provide foster families with the support and training needed to thrive. We recognize that fully-supported foster parents ultimately lead to a more stable and loving environment for the child.

Bethany is reviewed by the Council of Accreditation on a regular basis to receive its reaccreditation. The accreditation process is designed to identify providers that have set high performance standards for themselves and have made a commitment to their constituents to deliver the highest quality services.

Contact Information:

Cami Haussler
3000 S. Race St.
Denver, CO 80210

chaussler@bethany.org
(303) 903-7486
bethany.org/denver / bethany.org/colorado-springs

Upcoming Events:

We provide informational meetings and CORE training every month.

Bridges Child Placement Agency



Service Area: Southern Colorado, primarily the counties of: El Paso, Pueblo, Fremont, Alamosa, Las Animas, Huerfano, Rio Grande, Teller, Costilla, Conejos, Crowley, and Otero.

Bridges Child Placement Agency is a non-profit organization licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services to certify and supervise family foster homes for children under age 18. Working closely with county Departments of Social Services, Bridges accepts for placement children in need of care. These children become part of the household and family of persons of extraordinary character and skill- foster parents. Bridges focuses on providing nurturing, structured homes for children to begin healing from abuse or neglect. Responding to the call to love our neighbors, we seek to strengthen our community by connecting children in need with loving, highly skilled foster parents who are deeply committed to cultivating strong character in children. As an agency, we believe in providing practical and emotional support to our foster families in order to empower them to have a lifelong positive impact on the children in their care.

Contact Information:

Gregory Hinkle, Executive Director
1225 N Main St, Ste 102
Pueblo, CO 81003

secretary@bridgescpa.com
(719) 583-2200
www.bridgescpa.com

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AGENCY, MINISTRY & ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW (continued)

CASA of the Pikes Peak Region



Service area: El Paso and Teeler Counties

CASA of the Pikes Peak Region trains and supervises volunteers to represent the best interests of victims of child abuse, neglect, and severe domestic conflict. Casa volunteers are appointed by judges to be a voice for these children in court and in the community. The desired result is that children are placed into safe, loving homes where they can thrive.

Contact Information:

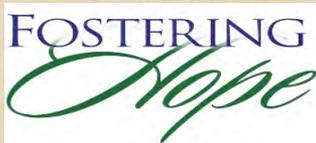
Crystal Erickson, D& D Program Manager
418 S. Weber St
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

CrystalE@casappr.org
(719) 447-9898
www.casappr.org

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Fostering Hope



Service Area: El Paso and Teller Counties

Our mission is to affirm and support foster parents in their task of caring for abused and neglected children and youth, before and after leaving foster care. We recruit, train and support volunteers from faith communities to serve as a support team to a foster family, adding the type of emotional, practical and natural support that aunts, uncles and grandparents do. Their faithful service and relationship enhances the stability, enriching experiences, and community connections that all children need to thrive. For teams that serve foster parents that care for teens in their home, the volunteers have the option of walking with the youth as they negotiate the challenges of early adulthood after leaving foster care.

All volunteers receive training and support by a Fostering Hope Coordinator and the organization at large. Fostering Hope administers the background checks, relationships with partners in the child welfare system, and all other program operations so that church leadership is free to minister to the spiritual needs of their members. A participation fee is not necessary.

Contact Information:

Barbara Lara
111 S. Tejon, Ste 102
Colorado Springs, CO 8

Barbara.lara@fosteringhopefoundation.org
(719) 634-8588
www.fosteringhopefoundation.org

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AGENCY, MINISTRY & ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW (continued)

El Paso County Department of Human Services



Service area: El Paso County

CEI Paso County Department of Human Services contracts with Child Placement Agencies that provide placement for foster care, group home care, treatment or adoption for county children. We serve not only children being adopted through foster care, but also children who are being adopted through kinship or kin-like providers. The Child Placement Agencies, handle training, support and recruiting. Foster and adoptive families truly change the lives of children in our community. If you are interested in becoming a foster parent in El Paso County, please contact one of the Child Placement Agencies listed on our website, www.elpasoco.com/fostercare.

Contact Information:

Yvonne Sletta
1675 W. Garden of the Gods Rd
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

yvonesletta@elpasoco.com
(719) 444-5973
www.elpasoco.com/fostercare

Upcoming Events:

Celebration of El Paso County Adoptive Parents, November 15th, 2018

WIMS (Walk In My Shoes) Event for Foster/Kin Providers: December 10, 2018 at Rocky Mountain Calvary Church.

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Flying Horse Foundation

The guiding mission for Flying Horse Foundation is to advance the long-term physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of children, families and seniors in our community with special emphasis on at risk and underserved individuals.



All volunteers receive training and support by a Fostering Hope Coordinator and the organization at large. Fostering Hope administers the background checks, relationships with partners in the child welfare system, and all other program operations so that church leadership is free to minister to the spiritual needs of their members. A participation fee is not necessary.

Contact Information:

Trisha Tarleton
9663 E Palmer Divid Ave.
Colorado Springs, CO 80132

ttarleton@flyinghorsefoundation.org
(719) 439-8744
www.flyinghorsefoundation.org

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AGENCY, MINISTRY & ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW (continued)

Grafted Vines of Woodmen Valley Chapel



Service area: Colorado Springs and surrounding area

The purpose of Grafted Vines is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ by building a community fellowship where adoption and foster care is embraced, encouraged, and supported. This is accomplished through community groups, parenting classes, support groups, and other activities aimed at connecting foster and adopt families. Please find our group page on Facebook: Grafted Vines of Woodmen Valley Chapel.

Contact Information:

Golden Phillips
8292 Woodmen Valley View
Colorado Springs, CO 80908

graftedvines@yahoo.com
(720) 323-2155
<https://woodmenvalley.org/graftedvines>

Upcoming Events:

November 26, 6:30 to 8:30 pm: BREATHE – A night of fellowship, dinner, teaching, and prayer. Located in the Woodmen Heights Atrium. Please RSVP for dinner. Childcare available with registration.

December 10, 6:30-8:30 pm: SUPPORT GROUP – Trained psychotherapist, Danielle Wortley, addresses the challenges that may come up while parenting kids from hard places. Woodmen Heights Room 205. Childcare available with registration.

December 14, 6:30 to 8:30 pm: DESSERT WITH A PURPOSE – Moms connect for an evening without the kids. RSVP for location.

January 14, 6:30 to 8:30 pm: SUPPORT GROUP – Trained psychotherapist, Danielle Wortley, addresses the challenges that may come up while parenting kids from hard places. Woodmen Heights Room 205. Childcare available with registration.

**Griffith Centers
for Children, CHINS UP**



Service Area: El Paso, Teller, Pueblo, Douglas, Arapahoe, Denver, Adams, Jefferson and Weld counties

Griffith Centers for Children began in 1927 in Denver, Colorado. As a foster or adoptive parent with the Griffith Centers for Children, you can expect a myriad of services and support along your journey: initial and on-going trainings, access to a number of audio and visual continual education units, support meetings, agency hosted holiday events and celebrations, 24/7 professional support, crisis intervention, financial reimbursement, respite care, and wrap-around services.

Because the continuity of care is important to us, we do not simply place a child in any foster home. Our goal is based on a goodness of fit model – to place foster and adoptive children in a home that would complement and enrich the lives of everyone involved. Our foster and adoptive families are changing the lives of Colorado’s children, and you can too! We are looking for caring and dedicated people who love spending time enriching the lives of children, giving back to their community, and are ready to be the change they wish to see in the world!

Contact Information:

Maggie Petock, Foster Care Program Director maggie.petock@griffithcenters.org
17 N. Farragut Ave. (719) 327-2013
Colorado Springs, CO 80909 <http://www.griffithcenters.org>

Upcoming Events:

November 12th 6:00PM to 9:00PM, Foster Care and Adoption Orientation

December 10th 6:00PM to 9:00PM, Foster Care and Adoption Orientation

January 14th 6:00PM to 9:00PM, Foster Care and Adoption Orientation

AGENCY, MINISTRY & ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW (continued)

Hope & Home

Service area: Hope & Home serves kids and families all across Colorado. Our highest concentrations of families are in El Paso County, Castle Rock region, Denver Metro area, Fort Collins, and Alamosa. However, we are not limited to only those areas – if you live in another area of the state, contact us to learn more about the possibility of being licensed with Hope & Home!

As a nondenominational Christian ministry, Hope & Home trains and actively supports foster families all across Colorado who feel compelled by Christ's command to take care of "the least of these."

Abused and neglected children who've been removed from their birth homes get a stable and nurturing family to live with until it's safe to go home again, or — when that safety isn't possible — a family to give them a "forever home" through adoption.

Since our start in 1998, we've been guided by our core belief that no child should ever feel less than loved. Our foster and adoptive parents have helped write stories of redemption for countless kids, helping over 2,500 kids in foster care. We have been recognized by the State of Colorado for our innovative and successful approach and work tirelessly towards a better tomorrow for kids and families.

As one of our foster parents says, "we all have front doors, let's open them up." Find out why families across Colorado are choosing Hope & Home and open your front door today.

Contact Information:

4945 N 30th St
Colorado Springs, CO 80919

fostercareplus@hopeandhome.org
(719) 575-9887
www.hopeandhome.org

Upcoming Events:



HOPE & HOME

November:

- Building/Information Tours: by appointment
- CORE Classes: 14, 19, 26
- Love to Nurture Classes: 14
- Taste of Italy: 16
- CPR Class: 17
- Fellowship Support Groups (multiple locations): 13, 15, 20, 27, 29
- Newcomer Support Groups: 21, 28
- Foster Parent Christmas Party: 30

December:

- Building/Information Tours: by appointment
- CORE Classes: 3, 10
- CPR Class: 15
- Decoration Days: 3-6
- Family Christmas Party: 8
- Toy Drive Drop Off Week: 10-13
- Christmas Store Open: 17-20

January:

- Building/Information Tours: by appointment
- CORE Classes: 7, 14, 21, 28
- Love to Nurture Classes: 2, 9, 16, 23
- Colorado Springs Launch Weekend: 11-12
- Denver Launch Weekend: 25-26
- CPR Class: 19
- Fellowship Support Groups: 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29, 31
- Newcomer Support Groups: 16, 23

AGENCY, MINISTRY & ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW (continued)

Lutheran Family Services

Service area: State Wide: Pikes Peak Region, Denver Metro. and Northern Colorado

Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains is a Christian non-profit child placement agency. Our agency's focus is finding homes for children in need of permanency. The Foster Care/Foster Adopt Program recruits families who are willing to provide a nurturing environment in their home for a single child or sibling group. The children will remain with the family until a permanency plan is established. At LFS, we believe there is no such thing as "other people's kids," and we work diligently with our families to support them through the foster process and beyond. We care deeply about our kids and work with you to help restore hope for children in foster care. We provide the support, you provide a stable home, structure and love.

. By opening your heart and your home, you can restore hope for a child in foster care as they wait to reunite with their family or to join a new family through adoption. LFS needs families for children, teens, sibling groups of two or more, children with medical or behavioral issues and Unaccompanied Refugee Minors separated from their family due to war or unrest. We need families who can provide temporary care until children reunify with their parent as well as families willing to adopt children and teens in foster care if they can't return to their families.

Contact Information:

Gwendolyn White, Foster Care Program Director
108 E. St. Vrain #20
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

gwendolyn.white@lfsrm.org
(719) 227-7575
www.LFSRM.org



**LUTHERAN
FAMILY SERVICES**
Rocky Mountains

Upcoming Events:

Orientation Dates:

- November 13, 2018 at 5:30 pm Luther Hall 1524 N. Tejon Street, C/S
- November 15, 2018 at 5:30 pm 108 E. St. Vrain Street,# 20, C/S
- December 4, 2018 at 5:30 pm 108 E. St. Vrain Street,# 20, C/S
- December 20, 2018 at 3:00 pm 108 E. St. Vrain Street,# 20, C/S
- January 2, 2019 at 5:30 pm 108 E. St. Vrain Street,# 20, C/S
- January 18, 2019 at 3:00 pm 108 E. St. Vrain Street,# 20, C/S

Upcoming Foster Core Training Dates (all Saturday classes):

- November 17th, 2018 from 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
- January 26th, 2019 from 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

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AGENCY, MINISTRY & ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Maple Star of Colorado



Service area: Colorado from Larimer/Weld County to Pueblo County

Maple Star has been a Child Placing Agency (CPA) along the Front Range of Colorado since 1994. Maple Star delivers exceptional value by creating healthy communities through exceptional people working side by side. Maple Star's trauma specific approach provides individualized and holistic services that promote wellness, durability, and healing through the context of relationship.

Contact Information:

Patricia Dirkson
1465 N Union Blvd # 102
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

patricia.dirkson@pathways.com
(719) 344-2140
www.maplestar.net

Upcoming Events:

Colorado Springs (1465 N Union Bl #102)

Rsvp to Patricia Dirkson 719-344-2140 or patricia.dirkson@pathways.com
November 17, 2018 10am – 12pm
January 12, 2019 10am – 12pm

Pueblo (807 N Greenwood)

Rsvp to Patricia Dirkson 719-344-2140 or patricia.dirkson@pathways.com
December 8, 2018 10am – 12pm

Denver (2250 S Oneida #200)

RSVP to Christi Beach 720-891-2625 or Christi.Beach@pathways.com
Nov. 12, 2018 4pm - 6pm
Jan 14, 2019 4pm - 6pm

Loveland (565 N. Cleveland Ave.)

RSVP to Ronda Carlson 970-324 4435 or ronda.carlson@pathways.com
Nov. 5th 6pm-8pm
Dec. 3rd 6pm-8pm
Jan. 14th 6pm-8 pm

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Mayfield Counseling



Service Area: Colorado

Clarity. Hope. Purpose.

Mayfield Counseling centers is a community counseling organization committed to partnering authentically to restore relationships, change lives, and discover hope for individuals, couples, and families. We want to encourage and empower our clients to enjoy life, grow toward their full potential and find clarity, hope and purpose.

Contact Information:

Adam Smith
6180 Lehman Dr, Ste 100
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

ASmith@mayfieldcounseling.com
(719) 452-4803 x 0

Notes

AGENCY, MINISTRY & ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

New Life Church Adoptive & Foster Family Support

Service area: Colorado Springs

The New Life Church Adoptive & Foster Family Ministry AIMS to:

- PRAYERFULLY support families
- VALIDATE your experience as adoptive & foster families
- Create SAFE COMMUNITIES for parents and children with challenges - Point families to JESUS, the Wonderful Counselor
- Share TOOLS for living as adoptive and foster families
- Help families reclaim HOPE for their adoption journey

Contact Information:

Neva Ringdahl
11025 Voyager Pkwy.
Colorado Springs, CO 80921

fosteradoptsupport@newlifechurch.org
(719) 234-7730

Upcoming Events:

Patchwork: (Nov. 13 & 27, Dec. 4 at New Life in room 251, 6:30-8:30 pm)

Patchwork is designed to inspire, equip and support adoptive/foster families as well as other families facing unique and challenging situations in the parenting journey. There will be a half hour of inspiration/teaching and then we will have time around our tables to discuss and apply the topic at hand, as well as an extended time to prayerfully support each other in this journey. (Registration for Children's Ministry required)

Heart to Heart - Study for Adoptive & Foster Moms, 9:30-11:30am, Rm 220

The purpose of this group is to have a place for us to develop deeper relationships with other moms and support each other, especially in prayer. Drop in any time, or come every week. Limited Children's Ministry available upon request. (Nov. 15 & 29).



Upcoming Events continued:

Adoptive & Foster Family Potluck, 5:00-6:30 pm, Room 251 (Oasis)

The purpose of this group is to provide a place for Adoptive & Foster Families to connect and fellowship over a meal before the Friday Night service. Some people stay for the service, and some don't. It's up to you. Bring an entrée for 6-8 people AND beverage or dessert to share.

Moms Night Out, 5:30-8:00 pm

We are a diverse group of adoptive and foster moms who gather on the first Sunday evening of each month for inspiration, equipping and support. We meet at Mimi's Cafe off of Powers (3005 New Center Point)

Notes

AGENCY, MINISTRY & ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Nightlight Christian Adoptions



Service area: We serve families within a 75-mile radius of our office in Loveland, including the Front Range, Denver metro, and surrounding areas. We also have a satellite office in Colorado Springs and serve families within a 30-mile radius including Parker, Larkspur, and Fountain.

Nightlight Christian Adoptions is a full-service child placement agency providing services to the community since 1959. We believe every child deserves a loving family and are seeking parents who have the compassion and desire to provide a child in need with a safe and stable family environment. Our programs include comprehensive international, foster care and foster adoption, domestic, embryo, and home study services. Our expert team of ministry-minded individuals will equip you with trauma-informed training and individualized care. We are your advocates through the process and will guide you each step of the way!

Contact Information:

Meghan Nally, Foster Care Program Manager
150 E 29th St, Ste 255
Loveland, CO 80538

mnally@nightlight.org
(970) 663-6799 ext. 124
www.nightlight.org

Upcoming Events:

- November 14th – 6-8pm: Foster Care & Adoption Info Session
3925 Centennial Blvd, Colorado Springs, CO
- November 30th & December 1st – 9-5pm: Adoption CORE Training
Loveland, CO
- January 25th & 26th - 9-5pm: Adoption CORE Training
Loveland & CO Springs
- January 29th – 6:30-8:30pm: Yes! You Can Adopt Info Seminar
Loveland & CO Springs.

Please email Meaghan at mnally@nightlight.org for more information. We anticipate additional events and trainings will be added to our calendar as the months progress!

Project 127



Service Area: Colorado

Fostering and Adopting in Faith

The mission of Project 1.27 is to inspire, recruit and resource churches and families to foster and adopt the kids in their own backyard so there is a family waiting for every child in foster care. Project 1.27 provides faith-based, state-approved training for foster and adoptive families as well as supporting pastors and lay leaders in developing foster and adoption friendly churches.

Contact Information:

Kristin Perret-Gentil, office administrator
2220 S Chambers Rd
Aurora, CO 80014

kperretgentil@project127.com
(303) 256-2874
www.project127.com

Upcoming Events:

- Foster and Adoption Info Night, Southern Colorado- Nov 27
- Foster and Adoption Info Night, Northern Colorado- Nov 29
- Support Team Training- Dec 1
- Foster and Adoption Info Night- Denver Metro- Dec 4
- Foster and Adoption Info Night- Grand Junction- Dec 6
- Certification Training, Southern Colorado- Jan 11-12
- Certification Training, Southern Colorado- Jan 25-26
- Certification Training, Grand Junction- Jan 24, 26

Notes

AGENCY, MINISTRY & ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Shining Families Ministry

Service area: Colorado



Empowering People to Shine!

Shining Families Ministry provides experiential therapy for families dealing with trauma recovery.

Shining Families Ministry is dedicated to serving families who have challenges in their families. We are a parachurch community with Friday night services 2x a month that combine a Biblical scripture passages, with a mental health coping skill, and therapeutic parenting support skill. Our goal is to support families to be healthy authentic families. We also encourage families to come in and get a Shine Roadmap which is a thorough diagnostic evaluation and treatment plan for each person in the family as well as a family roadmap. This gives families an understanding of where they have been, where they are at, and where they want to go in terms of health and authenticity.

Contact Information:

Christina Chismar, MSW, LCSW
487 Windchime Pl, Ste 300
Colorado Springs, CO 80919

Christina@christinachismar.com
(719) 659-6220
www.ShiningFamilies.org

Upcoming Events:

Gingerbread House Sensory Processing Event

DECEMBER 8, 2018 from 2:00-5:00pm at East Library Colorado Springs

Great event for kids of all ages! Individuals and Families can create their own gingerbread house. While building their house, each person will be given a sensory worksheet and encouraged to try a variety of sensory processing foods and tools then document the results on their worksheet.

ALLERGY CONCERNS??? We have you covered! The room will be a nut free environment. Several tables will be designated for different populations. Ex: Gluten Free, Sugar Free, Dye Free. If you have a specific need, please let us know when you sign up. We would love to have your family feel safe enough to join us!

Christina Chismar Counseling

Service Area: Colorado



Christina Chismar is a licensed clinical social worker, a licensed cosmetologist, and a professional therapeutic clown. She has been a counselor at Focus on the Family for 8 years. Sixteen years' experience as a trauma specialist has given her the ability to understand and help individuals and families heal. She is trained in crisis intervention, EMDR, DBT, TBRI, play therapy, art-based therapy, humor therapy, and equine-assisted psychotherapy. Her cosmetology and clown training make her uniquely gifted to bring a depth to the healing process that involves the body, mind, and soul.

Contact Information:

Christina Chismar, MSW, LCSW
487 Windchime Pl, Ste 300
Colorado Springs, CO 80919

Christina@christinachismar.com
(719) 659-6220
www.christinachismar.com

Upcoming Events:

Every Thursday Evening 6:00pm (\$30) – TBRI Webinar Training Ongoing Training – Join us to learn new TBRI skills, get problem solving tools, and get your specific questions answered about your TBRI parenting experience. (Pre-registration Required)

Babysitter Training – Do you want the babysitter your using to be TBRI trauma informed? We are frequently holding our Babysitter Trauma Informed Certificate Classes. Please have babysitter call to get on our waiting list to attend the next class.

Sensory Overload Workshop – Nov 17th, 9-12pm – (\$30) Do you dread the holidays due to crowded storefronts with lots of sounds and blinking lights? This brief workshop will give you the tools to survive holiday sensory overload. Come get survival tips and tools for a peaceful holiday season.

AGENCY, MINISTRY & ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Royal Family KIDS

Service area: Jefferson, Boulder, El Paso, Denver, Larimer, Arapahoe, and Douglas counties

Royal Family KIDS (RFK) works to create life-changing moments for children in foster care through camps and mentoring clubs. Throughout their lives, these children have been abused, neglected, told that they don't matter and forgotten. But since 1989, we've worked to change this narrative. Through a relationship with Child Protective Services and local churches, RFK has been creating programs that have written hope and love into the lives of over 125,000 foster children in 41 states and 6 countries.

For Camps outside Colorado Springs, head to RFK.org/locations. For families in Colorado Springs (COS), we have a local Camp & Mentoring Club and take 72 foster children - ages 6 to 12 - to camp each summer. If you are a foster family here in COS and want to register your child for camp, hope to apply as a volunteer at Camp next June, or would like to participate in upcoming events, please note the following:

For a Colorado Springs RFK Camper Application (available February 2019) contact Courtney Ferguson, Child Placement Coordinator, at rfkapps@gmail.com. Note: New RFK COS Campers must be in foster care at the time of camp, June 3-7.

Contact Information:

Melissa Tenpas, Director
www.rfk.org/colorado

royalfamilykidscos@gmail.com



Upcoming Events:

November 15, 2018: An intro to RFK, stories from staff, meet the team, and a showing of the CAMP Movie (thecampmovie.com) in The Tent at New Life Church. Details available at [Facebook.com/RFKColoradoSprings](https://www.facebook.com/RFKColoradoSprings).

December 9, 2018: Volunteer staff interviews (after app complete and you're offered an interview).

January 5-6, 2019: Volunteer staff interviews (after app complete and you're offered an interview).

Late February 2019: Camper applications ready. Email rfkapps@gmail.com for more info and an online application.

June 3-7, 2019: 8th Annual Royal Family KIDS Camp

Notes

HOW WILL ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE IMPACT MY CHILDREN?

By Jennifer Isaac

One of the questions many parents ask when they begin to consider adoption for their family is “what impact will it have on our children?”

When a family already has children in the home and then begins the process of adoption or foster care, they tend to get some routine guidelines from social workers:

- Don't disrupt birth order — only bring home children younger than those already in the home.
- Don't “twin” one of your children by fostering a child of the same age.
- Don't adopt a child less than a year after giving birth to a child or within a year of a previous child's adoption.
- Consider carefully how many children you can parent with medical needs.

I used to disagree with those guidelines. That was back when I was operating in a sort of “love is all you need” mentality, and I thought these were arbitrary limits on the children a family could love. Now while I realize that there are many successful stories where these guidelines haven't been followed in individual families' circumstances, I think there is much wisdom in considering these issues. Adoption and foster care do impact your children who are “already home.” There are many positive impacts; but the plain truth is, it can be hard — on parents, on kids, on everyone. Looking back at our adoptions from nine years down the road, I can begin to make out the shape of the ways those first few years impacted our older kids. Three rise to the top of the list...

1. We thought we would avoid the stresses of anyone losing their “place” in our family when we kept birth order and adopted kids younger than our biological children.

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What we know now is that our oldest daughter very much lost her place when we brought home our second daughter, even though they were nearly four years apart in age. Not only was there a new daughter in the family, she was also young, adorable, medically fragile, and different. I remember standing at a checkout line in those early months with my two girls while the cashier went on about how cute our new daughter was, and I reflexively put my arms around both girls and said something like “yes – they are both so beautiful!” But my older daughter didn’t stand out like the small, African girl with the big brown eyes in the middle of the peach family, and she still carries the displacement of that time. It will always be a part of her story. It doesn’t mean that her story took a wrong turn; because if there is one thing I am learning, it is that suffering is important and useful.

2. We didn’t “twin” our children, but...

We do have three kids who are all within about two years of age of each other – one biological and two adopted. So, without meaning to, we ended up with some odd version of triplets. There are times when these three are a lovely, well-oiled unit, complementing each others’ strengths. And there are other times when they are not. Those times are heightened by the fact that the three of them have drastically different abilities and disabilities, strengths and weaknesses. This was a challenge I didn’t anticipate, and I realize that because we kept to the “rule” of not adopting children of the same age, I falsely expected that this dynamic of competitiveness, vying for position, and squabbles over control wouldn’t happen in our home. But it does.

3. When we adopted and fostered children with special needs, our other children developed special needs of their own.

Living with a sibling who has frequent and demanding behaviors stemming from his trauma background; a child who is hospitalized multiple times a year, taking mom away with her; frightening rages and tantrums; children who inevitably require huge amounts of mom’s time as we take on the intense level of parenting required for kids from trauma backgrounds – these all trigger trauma and need in our first children. Sometimes the very things that will bring one child forward set another child back. Secondary trauma takes hold in our home at times.

HOW WILL ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE IMPACT MY CHILDREN? (continued)

I trust that God is writing our children's stories – each one of them – and I trust that He will redeem the suffering that they have encountered through our family's story. But I don't deny the fact that there is a level of suffering there because we chose adoption and foster care. So I find myself often reflecting on the topic of suffering. James tells us that we should count it joy when we encounter trials. Somehow, I find this easier to think of in regard to myself. I can understand intellectually, and I can see experientially that God uses trials in my life to shape me (so, so slowly) into someone more like Him.

But I admit that I still find this very hard to understand in regard to my children. The bottom line is that my children sometimes suffer because we chose a path of adoption and foster care. Some days, I feel the sadness of knowing that we opened a door to hardship in the lives of our kids. While I am actively trying to accept and welcome suffering in my own life, deep down, I wish I didn't have to welcome it into my children's lives too.

But we do – we open the door to hard things for our family. But we also open the door to beautiful experiences in our children's lives.

My children have regular opportunities to welcome vulnerable people into their home and their lives. This means sharing bedrooms, sharing belongings, sharing parents, sharing time. It means sometimes sacrificing their own needs to meet the needs of someone else. These could be looked at as things that have “taken away” from my kids. But my children have gained something immeasurable and not easily attained. At young ages, they have had daily practice in the virtue of putting others first. While it hasn't always been easy for them, and while we as parents haven't always navigated it all with perfect grace, I can see this take hold and grow in them. As a mother, I can list the ways I believe that the open door of adoption and foster care have benefited my children.

- They have gained an ability to see into people's circumstances and to practice empathy, compassion, and service.
- It has given them flexibility. They have certainly learned that the world does not revolve around them.

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- They continually witness and practice real world skills. They are learning how to navigate conflict, how to contribute to calming stressful situations, how to work with professionals and care providers, how to seek resources and assistance, and how to advocate for themselves and for others.
 - They see proof every day they can live missionally – not just on mission trips or weekend service projects – but in the very fabric of their everyday family life.

As I thought about this topic and what I see growing in my children, I asked each of them to share with me one positive way that they think adoption and foster care have impacted their own life...

“Adoption and foster care have helped me to see people’s hardships and understand them more than I would have before.” (Mia, 17)

“Adoption and foster care have probably helped me build character traits like patience and compassion.” (Noah, 15)

“Foster care gives you a chance to play with somebody new. It has also made me very good at taking care of babies and little children.” (Jaso, 13)

“Knowing kids who have had problems gives me a chance to help teach them things that will help them.” (Avi, 12)

Hearing their words gave me joy. Aren’t these the very things we want to see in our children? I don’t know how else I might see understanding, compassion, patience, or care taking grow in my children if I shielded them from the opportunities to practice them. May I not let my instinct to protect my children from difficulty instead lead me to stand in the way of what God purposed to do in each of them when He called our entire family to serve Him through adoption and foster care!

COMMON MYTHS ABOUT FOSTER CARE

MYTH: I could never be a foster parent because I'm not married and don't make a lot of money. I don't even own my home.

FACT: There are no such requirements. You can be married or single, a homeowner or a renter. The only financial requirement is that you have enough income to support yourself and your family aside from the money you are reimbursed to care for a child living in foster care.

MYTH: Foster parents have to stay at home with their children and I work full-time. I guess that excludes me.

FACT: No, it doesn't. Many foster parents work outside of the home and you can discuss with a licensing agency what options may be available to assist with child care costs.

MYTH: My children are grown and out of the house. I'm too old to be a foster parent.

FACT: There is no age requirement (other than you must be at least 21). Many "empty nesters" find foster parenting to be a rewarding experience.

MYTH: I don't have any children and to be a foster you need to have parenting experiencing.

FACT: Not true! Many foster parents are childless. They are, however, responsible people who have made a commitment to children and demonstrate an ability to parent or a desire to learn parenting skills.

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MYTH: Children in foster care have been abused so much that they are beyond repair. I wouldn't really be making a difference anyway.

FACT: Children are amazingly resilient. Foster parents can make the difference by providing a structured, nurturing environment. We need to remember that these children will grow up to be adults in our society. How we respond to their needs now will largely determine what kind of citizens they will be in the future.

MYTH: Once I take in a child from foster care, I'm on my own without any help.

FACT: Children need stability and agency staff offer parents plenty of support to maintain an even keel. For starters, before you even take in your first child, the agency staff works with you to develop a profile of the type of child best suited to the experience and capabilities of your family. There is respite care for those times you need a break.

MYTH: I would have to provide medical insurance for a child in foster care, once in my home.

FACT: Foster parents do not pay any of a child's medical expenses, other than over-the-counter medicines and supplies. Each child in foster care is covered by the governing jurisdiction for their medical, dental, and mental health care needs.

MYTH: All children in foster care are emotionally disturbed and damaged beyond repair.

FACT: Miracles happen all the time with kids who are in foster care and that's because of the relationship they develop in the foster and adoptive homes they're placed in.

COMMON MYTHS ABOUT FOSTER CARE (continued)

MYTH: You have to be wealthy to be a foster parent and you need to own a home.

FACT: Foster parents must be financially stable, but they do not have to be wealthy at all! Home ownership is not a requirement, although there are rules around how many children you can foster based on the number of bedrooms in your residence.

MYTH: You have to be married to be a foster parent.

FACT: Single people can be foster parents too.

MYTH: Someone has to be at home with the kids during the day so people with full-time jobs can't foster.

FACT: People work full-time when they have biological children and it's no different with foster children. Your licensing agency can advise you on childcare options.

MYTH: You don't have any choice of the types of children who get placed in your home, whether they are perfectly health or have a disability.

FACT: You do have control over which children are placed in your home. However, the broader your parameters are the more quickly you will receive a placement.

MYTH: I can't be a foster parent because I would get too attached. It would be hard to see them leave.

FACT: It's true — you will get attached, and it will be painful when children you love leave. But these children have suffered through things no child should ever face and they need the love and care foster parents provide when they open their hearts and homes.

COMMON MYTHS ABOUT ADOPTION

MYTH: There are no orphans in the United States.

REALITY: There are more than 100,000 children in U.S. foster care who are legally free and currently waiting for an adoptive home.

MYTH: It's easier and faster to adopt internationally than from U.S. foster care.

REALITY: New regulations governing international adoptions have made adoption from other countries more challenging for U.S. citizens. In most cases, it takes roughly a year to adopt a child from the U.S. foster care system. The average time it took to complete an international adoption in 2011 ranged from 79 days to almost two years.

In addition, most adoptions from U.S. foster care are free and any minimal costs associated with them are often reimbursable. For international adoptions in 2010, service providers charged anywhere between \$0 to \$64,357, with half charging less than \$26,559.

MYTH: You have to have a lot of money and own a house to adopt from foster care.

REALITY: You don't need to own your own home, be wealthy, have children already, or be a stay-at-home parent to adopt. Most adoptions from U.S. foster care are free and any minimal costs associated with them are often reimbursable. In addition, there are many different types of post-adoption resources, such as medical assistance and financial adoption assistance, based on the special needs of a child to help support and sustain adoptions from the U.S. foster care system.

COMMON MYTHS ABOUT ADOPTION (continued)

MYTH: All children in foster care have special needs.

REALITY: Many children in foster care have a specific factor or condition, or combination of factors and conditions, that make the child more difficult to place for adoption. Each state sets its own special needs definition, which may include the child's ethnic background; age; sibling group status; medical condition; or physical, mental, or emotional disabilities.

MYTH: You're not allowed to adopt children you foster.

REALITY: While slightly more than half of all children who enter foster care return to their birth families, there are still thousands of children who cannot return home. Of the 51,000 children in foster care adopted last year, 54 percent were adopted by their foster parents.

MYTH: Only married couples with a stay-at-home parent can adopt children from foster care.

REALITY: In most instances, a person's marital status, age or income do not automatically disqualify them from eligibility to adopt. You don't need to own your own home, have children already, be young, be wealthy or a stay-at-home parent.

MYTH: Each child has to have a room of their own.

REALITY: Each child needs a bed of their own, not a room of their own. In addition, children of the opposite sex may share a room if they are under an age specified by the State (usually around 6 years old). In some instances, there may be child-to-square-foot requirements or behavioral concerns that will prevent children from being able to share a room.

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MYTH: You can't adopt if you're in the military.

REALITY: Military families stationed overseas and within the U.S. are eligible to adopt children from the U.S. foster care system.

MYTH: You have to be of child-bearing age to adopt.

REALITY: Experienced parents and empty nesters are encouraged to adopt. In most instances, you're eligible to adopt regardless of age, income or marital status.

MYTH: Adopting or fostering a child who's been removed from the care of their birth parents is dangerous.

REALITY: Children in foster care are regular children who, through no fault of their own, had to be removed from their families due to abuse, neglect or abandonment. As for a child in foster care having continued contact with their birth family, it will vary depending on the specifics of the case and the placement being considered for the child.

For adoptive placements, very few birth parents reappear after their parental rights have been legally terminated. In the instance where children have continued relationships with birth relatives, it's because the arrangement will be beneficial, safe and healthy for all involved.

For foster care placements, most children placed in your home will have regular, court-ordered visits with their birth parents. This is an important part of the reunification process and you play an important role by working with the child's caseworker to decide the location and time of the visits. The court decides whether the visits will be supervised.

COMMON MYTHS ABOUT ADOPTION (continued)

MYTH: Sibling relationships don't matter.

REALITY: Placing siblings together is almost always the best thing for them after being separated from their birth parents. It helps provide continuity and protects them from suffering additional loss.

MYTH: You can't adopt a child or sibling group from another state.

REALITY: There are more than 100,000 children in U.S. foster care awaiting adoption. Families adopt children from outside their state every single month. Sometimes these adoptions can take a little longer because of the process involved with moving a child from one state to another. However, the wait is worth it in the end.

MYTH: You have to be perfect to adopt a child from foster care.

REALITY: You don't have to be perfect to be a perfect parent. There are thousands of children in foster care who would be happy to be part of your family. To a child in foster care, waiting to be adopted can feel like waiting for a miracle. You could be that miracle.

MYTH: A birth parent or another relative can take an adopted child back.

REALITY: Adoptions of children from U.S. foster care are legally binding agreements that do not occur until the rights of all parents have been legally terminated by a court of law. It's very rare that an adoption is challenged in court by a child's birth relative. More than 98 percent of legally completed adoptions remain intact.

TEN QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS PREPARING TO ADOPT OR FOSTER

We believe it is critically important that parents who are preparing to adopt or foster a child must be honest and realistic about the journey and the challenges that lie ahead. Just as Jesus in Luke 14 challenged those who would follow Him to “count the cost,” so too parents who respond to God’s call to adopt or foster must be willing to count the cost of the adoption journey and prepare to “lay down their lives” to love their child and help him or her become all that God intends.

The following questions are designed to help parents (and parents-to-be) begin to honestly assess the journey ahead...and what it will require. We encourage you to thoughtfully and prayerfully consider these questions. They are not meant to scare you or in any way discourage you from continuing on this amazing path. Instead, our desire is simply that these questions will point you toward the hope and help that you need to form a strong and lasting connection with your child as you faithfully follow God’s call in your life.

1. Are you willing to acknowledge and fully embrace your child’s history, including that which you know and that which you will likely never know?
2. Are you willing to accept that your child has been affected by his/her history, possibly in profound ways, and as a result that you will need to parent your child in a way that exhibits true compassion and promotes connection and healing?
3. Are you willing to parent differently than how you were parented, how you have parented in the past, or how your friends parent their children? Are you willing to “un-learn” certain parenting strategies and approaches that may not be effective with your child, even if you have used these strategies and approaches successfully with your other children in the past?
4. Are you willing to educate yourself, your parents, family and friends on an ongoing basis in order to promote understanding of your child’s needs and how best to meet those needs?

TEN QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS PREPARING TO ADOPT OR FOSTER (continued)

5. Are you willing to be misunderstood, criticized and even judged by others who do not understand your child's history, the impacts of that history and how you have been called to love and connect with your child in order to help him/her heal and become all that God intends?
6. Are you prepared to advocate for your child's needs, including at school, church, in extracurricular settings and otherwise, in order to create predictability and promote environments that enable your child to feel safe and allow him/her to succeed?
7. Are you willing to sacrifice your own convenience, expectations and desires in order to connect with your child and help him/her heal, even if that process is measured in years, not months?
8. Are you willing to fully embrace your child's holistic needs, including his/her physical, emotional, relational and spiritual needs?
9. Are you willing to seek ongoing support and maintain long-term connections with others who understand your journey and the challenges that you face? Are you willing to intentionally seek and accept help when you encounter challenges with your child that you are not equipped to adequately deal with?
10. Are you willing to acknowledge that you as a parent bring a great deal to the equation when it comes to how your child will attach and connect? Are you willing to honestly examine (on an ongoing basis) your motivations and expectations relating to your adoption journey? Are you willing to look at your own past (including your past losses and trauma, both big and small) and consider how your past may impact your interactions with your child? Are you willing to consistently examine your role as parent as you experience challenges and difficulties along the journey?

As you read through the above questions, you may have concluded that some of the questions didn't apply to you and your situation. That may be the case to some extent, as every adoption and foster care experience is unique. However, we encourage you to spend some time reading and talking with other experienced adoptive and foster parents about what you should realistically expect as you travel this journey. We find that parents sometimes start with less than accurate assumptions about how the adoption or foster care journey will unfold, and as a result they are more likely to form unrealistic expectations. We believe that these questions are helpful and instructive for all parents considering or pursuing adoption and foster care, and we hope that as you work through them they will lead you toward greater insight and understanding.

RESOURCE FAMILY TIP SHEET FOR SUPPORTING REUNIFICATION

Reunification is the most common outcome for youth in out-of-home care and foster parents can be one of the most important resources to help children reunify with their families. The American Bar Association's Center on Children and the Law spoke with foster families who were outstanding supporters of reunification to gather their insights on this topic. These resource families were recommended by state and tribal child welfare agencies.

What follows are the tips and themes shared by these families.

- Respect birth parents and be compassionate
- Encourage visitation and regular contact
- Communicate with the family regularly
- Remember that safe reunification is best for the children



Respect the Birth Parents and Be Compassionate

Across the board, the resource families we interviewed emphasized the importance of respecting parents from the start. Several said to treat birth parents not only with respect but with love. Many of our supporters highlighted the cyclical nature of dependency cases. A resource parent from Oregon said, “Often times in foster care, parents are villainized and judged. Foster parents need to love them and never make them feel like they are being judged. We need to encourage them and become cheerleaders for them.”

Among the practical tips to show your respect and compassion, resource families suggested:

- Express genuine concern
- Be honest with birth parents
- Let the family know that your goal is to help them get their children back
- Understand how scared they are and try to alleviate it
- Refer to birth parents using parental terms such as “Mom” or “Dad” when with their children and ask your foster kids to call you by another name
- Believe people can change
- Look for positives and assume that things will go well
- Understand that the families often have different life experience than you
- Look for ways to break down barriers
- See birth parents as people and help them as people
- Act as a support for family

RESOURCE FAMILY TIP SHEET FOR SUPPORTING REUNIFICATION (continued)

Encourage Visitation (Parenting or Family Time) and Regular Contact

Many of the resource parents stated that visitation is an opportunity not only for parenting, but to improve the relationship between the foster family and birth family. When physical visitation is limited by court order or scheduling, the resource families suggested having regular phone contact between parents and their children. When physical visitation is not limited, the resource parents said it was best for both the children and the birth parents to have as much visitation as possible.

Some practical ways resource families encouraged visitation and contact include:

- Advocating for increased visitation whenever safe
- Encouraging children to have phone calls with family, especially during the week and multiple times per week
- Helping children video chat with their birth parents and family members
- Inviting families to community events for visitation where the birth parents and children can act like a family and do activities when it is safe to do so
- Transporting the parents or children to visitation when possible or safe to do so
- Sending children with everything they might need on a visit such as games, snacks, and activities they can do with their parents; meeting spots can be boring

Communicate with the Family Regularly

The resource families we interviewed said that knowledge is power. Birth parents need to know what is going on with their children and foster parents need to know the children and family's background. A resource parent from Osage Nation/Oklahoma said, "Birth parents are the experts on their kids."

The resource families offered these tips to maintain communication with the birth family:

- Ask parents about life before and the history of the children
- Involve parents or other family members in school functions/meetings
- Stay in constant contact; tell them it's ok to call any time
- Send pictures, photos, art projects, grades, etc. with the children to visits
- Have as many early conversations with parents as possible
- Transport kids to visits rather than using transporters if you are able
- Show an interest, not just in the child, but in the family as a whole
- Go to doctor appointments and other meetings together
- Include birth parents in decisions

RESOURCE FAMILY TIP SHEET FOR SUPPORTING REUNIFICATION (continued)

Remember that Safe Reunification is Best for the Children

To a person, the resource families we interviewed stated that keeping families together was better for the children. Each supporter focused not only on the parent's need for their children but the children's need to be with their parents and families whenever possible.

Resource families discussed their attitudes towards reunification and what they wish each foster family was taught during training:

- Reunification is the first and best option
- It is comforting for the kids to know that the foster parents understand that the kids want to be with their birth parents
- Foster families need to try to get children back where they belong, with their families
- Supporting reunification is a must
- Foster families should have a deep, strong belief that families should be together
- Family units are important; parents should have their children when at all possible
- Agencies and foster families need to prioritize reunification over adoption when possible
- Foster parents need to be on board with reunification from the beginning

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- As long as the family is trying, it's always better to focus on reunification
 - Remember it's not all about the foster parent, it's about the child's best interest
 - Everyone needs some training about reunification

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Abuse: harm inflicted on a person through physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual means; may cause victim to develop emotional or behavioral problems, some of which may not appear until later in life. Help from an experienced counselor or therapist may be needed to work through abuse issues.

Adoption: a legal process in which parental rights of a child are granted to adoptive parents.

Adoption: Certificate/Decree: also known as the Certificate of Adoption, this is the document that is signed by the presiding Judge upon finalization of the adoption. This official document allows for a new birth certificate to be issued for the adopted child by the appropriate authority. This new birth certificate will reflect the child's new information (name, adoptive parents, etc.) and will replace the original birth certificate.

Case management: The ongoing follow-up and review of the safety and well-being of a child who has been removed from parents or caregivers. A child who is in out-of-home care will see a case manager at least once a month, and the case manager will work with the parents, the child and the child's current caregivers to determine the best interests of the child.

Case plan: The court document that all parents or caregivers of dependent children must follow. Case plans have goals for the parents and the child so that the parents can reunify with the child and safely care for the child.

Child protective investigation: These investigations are handled by DCF child protective investigators whenever an allegation of abuse, neglect or abandonment is made to the Abuse Hotline. The investigations typically last up to 60 days.

Child Welfare Professional: An individual who is primarily responsible for case activities that has met the criteria for certification as a Child Protective Investigator, Case Manager or a Licensing Counselor.

Child protective investigator (CPI): A child protective investigator checks into allegations of abuse, neglect and abandonment of children by their caregiver. The investigator will interview the child, caregivers, and other contacts to determine if a child is safe or not. If a child is not safe, the CPI can remove the child from the home.

Closed/Confidential Adoption: an adoption in which neither the adoptive parents nor the birth parents have any identifying information regarding each other.

Dependent child: A child who has been removed from their home and needs to be under state supervision. This child could live with a relative, non-relative or in foster care.

Disruption: for whatever reason an adoption has not become final, even though the adoptive parents were identified as the parents to adopt the child and the child may have even been placed in their home for a period of time.

Dissolution: an overturning or termination of an adoption after it has become legal.

Finalization: the stage in the adoption process when the court awards parental rights to the adoptive parents.

Foster Care: Licensed foster care is made up of individuals or families who have requested to be able to take dependent children into their home. Foster homes are licensed and inspected regularly, and foster parents go through a rigorous interview process before being approved.

Foster Child: a dependent child who is has been removed from their parent or guardian and is living in a licensed foster home.

Foster Parents: state-licensed adults who provide a temporary home for children in state custody whose birth parents are unable to care for them.

Group home: A group home is a home for several foster children that is licensed by the state. Group homes are run either by house parents, who live with the children, or by shift staff, who transfer in and out during every 24 hours.

Guardian ad Litem: A volunteer advocate for a dependent child in court. This advocate is represented by an attorney and speaks to the judge on behalf of the child they represent.

Home Study: the in-depth review prospective foster or adoptive parents must go through to be able to legally adopt. A home study typically includes evaluations of the prospective parents' relationship, inspections of their residence, parenting ideals, medical history, employment verification, financial status, and criminal background checks.

Independent Living: Program for teens in foster care that prepares them for adult life.

In-home care: Some children are under state supervision but are able to safely re-main in their own homes with regular case management.

Licensing: The licensing process includes interviews with prospective foster parents, a home study and a review of financial records, among other things.

Legally Free: a child whose birth parents' rights have been legally terminated or relinquished so that the child is free to be adopted by another family.

Legal-risk Adoption: Is the placement of a child in an adoptive home, when birth parents' rights have not yet been voluntarily or involuntarily terminated.

Matching: the process of combining the best interest of the child with qualified adoptive parents.

Medicaid: The federal program that funds health insurance for low-income families. Medicaid provides the health and dental care that is needed for children in foster care.

Neglect: Failure of a parent or other person with responsibility for the child to provide needed food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision to the degree that the child's health, safety, and well-being are threatened with harm.

Non-relative placement: A child who has been removed from their parent or guardian and placed with a family friend. Non-relatives are not eligible for additional funding.

Open Adoption: birth parents and adoptive parents in the process of an adoption are given information that could be used to identify them.

Out-of-home care: This term includes all children who have been removed from their home and are living with a relative, non-relative or in foster care.

Parental Rights: all legal rights and corresponding legal obligations that come with being the legal parent of a child.

DEFINITION OF TERMS (continued)

Permanent guardianship: Many children will be placed in permanent guardianship, usually with appropriate relatives, if the parents' rights have not been terminated but the child cannot safely return home.

Placement: describes the point in time when the child goes to live with his/her legal adoptive parents.

Post-Placement Supervision: upon placement, a caseworker will be assigned to complete post-placement supervision of the adoptive family. The caseworker will visit the home several times during a set period of time (according to state requirements) to determine if adoption of the child was in the "best interests of the child."

Private agency: An agency licensed by the government in whose jurisdiction the agency operates. Private agencies generally operate on a fee for service basis.

Public Agency: An agency funded by the government in whose jurisdiction they operate. Most services provided by public agencies are provided with no cost, but for some services there may be charges.

Relative placement: A child who has been removed from their parent or guardian and placed with a relative. Relatives can get some funding to help with the child's expenses through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

Relinquishment: when a birth parent voluntarily forfeits his or her parental rights to a child. The parental rights are typically transferred to an agency, rather than directly to the new adoptive parents.

Respite Care: childcare and other services designed to give parents temporary relief from their responsibilities as care givers.

Reunification: The process of returning a child who has been removed from the home to the parents or guardians and ensuring that the child will remain safe. The majority of children who are removed from their home have reunification as their case plan goal.

Social worker: An individual who has earned a bachelor's degree in social work (BSW) after successfully completing four years of college. An individual with a master's degree in social work (MSW) has completed a graduate program and is eligible to pursue licensure.

Special Needs Adoption: an adoption where it is known or suspected that the child may have a disability of some sort; may also be used when the child/children are hard to place (e.g.: sibling set, older kids, etc.).

Therapeutic Foster Home: a foster home where the parent or parents have received special training in dealing with a wide variety of children with special needs. Parents in therapeutic homes are also supervised and assisted more than parents in regular foster homes.

Waiting Children: children in the care of the public child welfare system (children and youth in foster care) who cannot return to their birth homes and need permanent, loving families to help them grow up safe and secure.

WaitNoMore.org

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