Fostering Communications

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

May 2017

Appreciation Central

Each May we are given the opportunity to recognize all of the children in foster care across our nation as well as show appreciation for all of the individuals who contribute to the care and safety of our children. Governor Burgum has once again declared May as "Children's Foster Care Month".

Pictured Above:

***Back Row*:** Kelsey Bless, Permanency Administrator, Children and Family Services Division, ND Department of Human Services; and Kevin Miller, Assistant Regional Supervisor, West Central Human Service Center.

***Front Row*:** Kelly Crawley, Burleigh County Foster Parent; Kim Osadchuk, Director, Burleigh County Social Services; Governor Doug Burgum; Barb Stegmiller, Foster Care Licensor, Burleigh County; and George Crawley, Burleigh County Foster Parent.

State of North Dakota
Office of the Governor

Doug Burgum
Governor

PROCLAMATION
CHILDREN'S FOSTER CARE MONTH
MAY 2017

WHEREAS, strong families are the foundation of our communities; providing the love, support, and guidance our children need in order to succeed; and

WHEREAS, North Dakotans have a long-standing tradition of opening their hearts and homes to children in need of stability and caring surroundings; and

WHEREAS, compassionate foster families play an important role in assuring children and youths are able to grow and develop in a safe, stable, and nurturing environment until they can be reunited with their families; or achieve permanency through adoptions and other lifelong connections; and

WHEREAS, dedicated foster families frequently adopt foster children who cannot return to their birth families, resulting in a greater need for more foster families; and

WHEREAS, Children's Foster Care Month is an opportunity to recognize the nearly 750 licensed foster families who provide quality foster care in the State of North Dakota; and

WHEREAS, foster families, county social services, child welfare professionals, and others involved in foster care deserve recognition this month and all year long for their continued teamwork and steadfast devotion to the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and youths; and

WHEREAS, this annual observance calls attention to the value of foster care as a temporary service that provides help, healing, and hope to children and youths in our state.

NOW, THEREFORE, as Governor of the State of North Dakota, I do hereby proclaim May 17, 2017, **CHILDREN'S FOSTER CARE MONTH** in the State of North Dakota.

Doug Burgum
Governor

ATTEST:
Alvin A. Jaeger
Secretary of State

600 E Boulevard Ave. • Bismarck, ND 58505-0001 • Phone: 701.328.2200 • www.governor.nd.gov

Governor Burgum's Proclamation can be found also at:
Children's Foster Care Month

President Trump's 2017 Proclamation shares the following message:

In the last year alone, America's foster families opened their homes and hearts to more than 300,000 young people. But we can do more…

We encourage you to read the rest of the 2017 Presidential Proclamation for
National Foster Care Month

Foster Care….
because a child can never have too many people to love them!!!

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Department of Social Work
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Upcoming State Conferences…

North Dakota Children and Family Services Conference, Bismarck, ND
July 24-27, 2017
Registration open
Click HERE

Family Based Services Conference, Fargo, ND
April 3-6, 2018
www.ndfbsa.org

Additional Training

Check out CFSTC calendar for upcoming foster parent trainings at:
CFSTC

PRIDE Link

The PRIDE Model we follow highlights the competency of "**Supporting children's relationships between children and their birth families.**" We support these relationships in many ways, including visitation. "As a foster parent, you have the opportunity to help children and families develop stronger connections, whether or not children return to their birth family. Family visits can be one of the most valuable opportunities for children to heal and cope with the trauma of being separated from their family. Research shows that when children have regular, frequent contact with their family while living in foster care, they experience shorter foster care placements, less re-entry into foster care, more successful reunification, and overall improved emotional well-being". The following link connects us to a portion of Wendy Negaard's guide to "*Putting the pieces of family visits together*". Negaard shares how caregivers can make the transition to and from visitations a little less painful.

Putting the Pieces of Family Visits Together: Transitions

Empathy

Children who are placed into foster care experience trauma and from this, emotions can be hard for them to manage, often being displayed in hard to handle behaviors. The children in our care have experienced events that we will never know about. Events that have left their mark far greater than we would often like to believe. This makes it hard for caregivers to see life from the child's perspective. "Empathy is often defined as seeing things from the other person's point of view. But empathy is actually a physical event, controlled by the insula in our right brain. The structure of the right brain is formed during the first two years of life, before your baby becomes verbal. Scientists suspect that the right brain is the orchestrator of intimacy. The insula connects the brain with the heart, digestive organs, and skin. So when our heart leaps, or our stomach turns, or our skin crawls, the insula is sending us a message. And when we feel deep empathy, we feel it in our bodies. That means a more accurate definition of empathy is "feeling" from the other person's point of view. Empathy strengthens the relationship bond. Empathy helps the child to feel understood, less alone with her pain and suffering. Empathy heals"(Dr. Laura Markam, Aha!Parenting). The following article from *Aha! Parenting* shares what empathy is and isn't along with a follow-up article that shares what to do when empathy does work.

Empathy: Foundation for Emotional Health

LIKE US ON facebook

We encourage you to follow us on Facebook as we share ongoing resources and articles throughout the month. We also advertise various upcoming training opportunities. Find us on Facebook at: Children and Family Services Training Center

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Fostering Communications is published by the UND Children and Family Services Training Center under the sponsorship of the Division of Children and Family Services, North Dakota Department of Human Services. It is intended for all foster parents, foster care providers, and child welfare agencies. Comments should be directed to the Training Center.

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ONE….

One tree can start a forest;
One smile can begin a friendship;
One hand can lift a soul;
One word can frame a goal;
One candle can wipe out darkness;
One laugh can conquer gloom;
One hope can raise your spirits;
One touch can show you care;
One life can make the difference;
Be that ONE today!!

~Author unknown

13 Reasons Why

A new Netflix series was released the end of March and has raised a variety of concerns. "13 REASONS WHY" centers around a teenager who commits suicide and leaves behind a box of tapes that details what led her to end of life. This is a raw, graphic series that depicts not only concerns of youth depression and suicide, but also bullying, sexual assault, alcohol and drug usage by minors, and many other circumstances our youth face today. This series does not shy around the "tough stuff" which could be concerning material for vulnerable youth without proper discussions to follow. This article offers great talking points if you choose to watch this series with your youth.

Talk to Your Kids About Suicide or 13 Reasons Why Will

We encourage you to take the time to become educated about this series so you can make an informed decision on whether or not the youth in your care should be allowed to view the graphic material. Another insightful article comes from social worker, Brooke Fox. She shares a number of concerns about the series as it relates to vulnerable youth.

13 Reasons Why, and its Unintended Consequences

This series is rated TV-MA (Mature Audience Only, specifically designed to be viewed by adults and therefore may not be unsuitable for children under 17); however, many youth have open access to Netflix, so would be able to view without a caregivers permission or even knowledge

Cost of Vicarious Trauma

In honor of Foster Care Month, we wanted to re-share the message from Amy Cunningham on the impact of vicarious trauma in hopes of reminding caregivers once again to take the time for self-care. "Vicarious Trauma" is a significant change in oneself within trauma situations as a result of being involved with another individual's trauma story. To best care for others, you must also take the time to care for yourself.

Drowning in Empathy: The Cost of Vicarious Trauma

Appreciation Central

The staff at CFSTC want to take a moment to say "thank you"…

THANK YOU for opening your homes and your hearts to the children placed with you. **THANK YOU** for making the effort to ensure that the youth in your care get the services they need, along with taking the time to transport them to and from appointments, visitations, etc. **THANK YOU** for your openness to case workers and other professionals into your homes. **THANK YOU** for your unending patience as you walk through the stressful moments of the "unknown" and doing what you can to ease the minds and hearts of the youth who also wonder when permanency will come.

THANK YOU for stepping into the role of a foster parent…
it is appreciated more than words can say!!!

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