Fostering Communications

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

May 2018

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

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". As noted in the below in Governor Burgum's proclamation, North Dakota currently has close to 950 licensed foster home. The Children and Family Services Training Center along with the Children and Family Services Division of the Department of Human Services would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all who open their homes and hearts to care for our children and families when they need it most! North Dakota currently has over 1,600 children placed into foster care. It is wonderful to know that 86% of these children are placed into a family setting.

President Trump stated the following within his proclamation for Foster Care Month:

"Providing a stable, secure, and nurturing home environment is one of the greatest gifts a foster parent or guardian can give a child. This critical investment in their well-being, safety, and sense of belonging brings precious hope to children in need. We acknowledge, with gratitude, the tremendous sacrifices made by our Nation's foster families as they open their hearts and lives and provide secure and supportive homes for the hundreds of thousands of infants, children, and youth in foster care."

We encourage you to read the rest of the 2018 Presidential Proclamation for National Foster Care Month

State of
North Dakota
Office of the Governor

Doug Burgum
Governor

PROCLAMATION
CHILDREN'S FOSTER CARE MONTH
MAY 2018

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

WHEREAS, North Dakotans have a longstanding 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, Children's Foster Care Month is an opportunity to recognize the nearly 950 licensed foster families who provide quality foster care in the state; and

WHEREAS, dedicated foster families often engage to finalize permanency through adoption when foster children cannot return to their birth families, resulting in a greater need for more foster families; and

WHEREAS, foster families, county social services, child welfare providers and 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 2018, **CHILDREN'S FOSTER CARE MONTH** in the State of North Dakota.

Doug Burgum
Governor

ATTEST:

Alvin A. Jaeger
Secretary of State

Deputy

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Upcoming State Conferences…

North Dakota Children & Family Services Conference, Bismarck, ND
July 23-27, 2018

Registration available soon on CFSTC website

ND Conference of Social Welfare
Baymont Inn, Mandan, ND
September 26,-28, 2018
www.ndcsw.org

ND Family Based Services Conference, Holiday Inn, Fargo, ND
March 27-29, 2019
www.ndfbsa.org

PRIDE Link

The PRIDE Model we follow highlights the competency of "**Meeting children's developmental needs and addressing developmental delays.**" During the academic part of our year, much of the child's developmental needs are addressed through their educational provider or within another professional setting. With summer approaching, changes in schedules and structure provide additional challenges in meeting the child's unique developmental needs. Children who have experienced trauma often find security in knowing what they can count on. Children, like the most adults, handle change best if it is expected and occurs in the context of a familiar routine. The Child Mind Institute provides a variety of tops for managing downtime this summer.

Strategies for a Successful Summer Break

Kids and Yoga

"Despite the conveniences of the modern world, kids don't necessarily have it as easy as we might think. With obesity on the rise, increasing school workloads, and other demands of extracurricular activities, many children are unhealthy and stressed out as a result" (Andrea Rice, How Yoga Helps Kids Deal with Stress). Pair all of this with the trauma that youth placed into foster care have faced, we are sure to see some unpleasant behaviors surface from time to time. Research has shown that yoga can help one become more aware of their body through healthy movements as well as learn how to monitor their breathing and meditate. The following link offers "five kid-friendly poses to help suppose in those seemingly impossible moments".

Kid-Friendly Yoga Poses to Help Your Child Avoid a Meltdown

The Necessity of Self-Care

It is easy to say that foster parents often have a desire to give more than they receive, and that individuals who foster hope to make a difference in the world. It is also easy to say that most foster parents don't put themselves on the top of the list, which means self-care often gets pushed to the bottom of the list, if it even makes it onto the list at all. Parenting is far from easy these days, and parenting a child who has experienced trauma can be nearly impossible some days. With this being National Foster Care Month, it seems appropriate to remind all caregivers that you honestly can't give your best to the children in your care unless you take care of yourself first. We encourage you to take the time to implement pieces of the self-care from the following two links as shared from *Fostering Perspectives.*

A Trauma-Informed Approach to Self-Care
Self-Care: Do it for Yourself, Your Family, and Your Kids

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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

Survey

The CFSTC is once again asking for your input for this coming year's **Regional Foster Parent Trainings** that are held across the state. We ask that you complete the following survey to help indicate what training needs you have as well as to share any additional ideas in regards to potential trainings. The information you provide will help us offer trainings within your region that are more specific to your needs. Please click **HERE** to complete this short survey.

Through a Child's Eyes

"It's one thing to read about learning and attention issues. It's another thing to see them through your child's eyes. Experience firsthand how frustrating it is when your hand won't write what your brain is telling it to. Or how hard it is to complete a simple task when you have trouble focusing". The following link from *Understood* offers a variety of unique simulations and videos to better understand your child's world. The simulations cover the topics of reading, writing, attention, math, and organization issues. The videos cover the same areas but allow you to chose from three different age groups. *Understood* also offers a variety of tools to help you assist the youth in your care through their struggles.

Through Your Child's Eyes

Change in Mindset

As caregivers to children in foster care, we all should have the mindset to be trauma informed. The trauma informed perspective would ask the question "What happened to you?" rather than "What's wrong with you?". This outlook can be hard to embrace when you have a child who is acting out in an intense manner. The following link offers personal insight on how one family came to the conclusion that the behaviors they were struggling with were not a choice, but as result from what the child in their care had gone through prior to being placed in their home.

My Child Doesn't Remember the Neglect as an Infant, But His Body Does

Here is one more link to assist in understanding the impact of trauma.

How Brains are Built: The Core Story of Brain Development

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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