

Fostering Communications

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

October 2020

Upcoming State
Conferences...

Due to the impact of
Covid-19, there are
no state conferences
scheduled at this time

Foster Parent Fall Festivals
Pending Online Training
Opportunity
Details to come



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PRIDE LINK

In the PRIDE Link we generally take a closer look at one of the PRIDE competencies. In this issue we are taking a closer look at implicit bias and how it may influence all five PRIDE competencies. Bias does not just include race or ethnicity, but can also include gender, sexual preference, economic status, age, the list goes on. We must acknowledge that as human beings we all have implicit bias. Because we carry our own implicit bias the first and important step is to take the time and explore what those biases may be and understand how our own personal implicit bias may present in our day to day lives. If one gathers a better understanding of our biases it allows us, as caregivers, to better meet the needs of any child in our home. It allows us to maintain and nurture relationships that are important to the child and their biological family, support birth families, meet children's individual developmental needs, work successfully as a member of a professional team, and lastly to appropriately protect and nurture the children in our homes.

Below are two resources regarding implicit biases for you to check out. The first article, *Excuse me, your bias is showing: Our unconscious stereotypes affect everything, but can be changed*, is from our friends at Lutheran Social Services (LSS) in regarding steps you can take right now to be more aware of implicit bias and to challenge those ideas. The article also includes a link to complete free online Implicit Association Tests (IAT) through Harvard. Please click on the link below to read the article and take the IAT test

[Excuse me, your bias is showing](#)

The second resource is a link for a TED Talk with Verna Myers, activist and diversity and inclusion trainer, where she provides a presentation about biases and recommendations on how we all can do better in addressing the implicit bias we all carry with us.

[How to overcome our biases? Walk boldly toward them](#)

PARENTS LEAD TOOL KIT

Parenting can be challenging, and parenting during a pandemic takes it to a new level. Parents Lead has developed the wonderful Tool Kit for parenting during a pandemic that provides guidance and support regarding numerous parenting topics as it relates to the pandemic. Parenting topics include, back to school, mental health while social distancing, talking to kids when a family member is seriously ill, media use, and much, much more!! Please click below to get access the entire tool kit.

[Parenting During a Pandemic Tool Kit](#)



*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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Are you or someone you know interested in becoming a foster parent?

Please call the **NEW** Toll Free Inquiry Line

1-833-FST-HOME
(1-833-378-4663)

And speak with Sheila Muus, Foster Parent Recruitment & Retention Specialist



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Children & Family Services Quality Assurance Case Reviews

Amy Bakken, QA Lead Reviewer-Children and Family Services (CFS) Division

Greetings from the North Dakota Children & Family Services Quality Assurance Unit!

We would like to take a few moments to share about the ongoing effort of quality assurance in child welfare services and how foster parents play an integral role in this process. Foster caregivers may be contacted by someone in the Quality Assurance Unit or their foster child's agency about potential involvement in this process.

CFS Quality Assurance Case Reviews

What are the CFS QA Case Reviews?

North Dakota conducts child welfare case reviews in order to obtain feedback and assess areas where our state is doing well and areas where we can make improvement; so that children and families can achieve safety, permanence, and well-being. It is also an opportunity to learn what services are helpful, and what services are needed or missing in communities to meet the needs of children and families. The review will focus on program areas that include child protection services, foster care, adoption, family preservation, and family support.

To support the state's ongoing efforts to improve outcomes, a minimum of 33 randomly selected cases are assessed during each review event. Case evaluations are currently completed by child welfare workers from the QA Unit that are employed by the ND Department of Human Services. Another important feature to know is that each CFS QA Case Review consists of a review of the case records, as well as interviews with the key case participants including the foster child (when developmentally appropriate), the child's parents or caregivers, foster care provider(s), and agency workers.

The CFS QA Case Review ensures that the state child welfare system meets applicable federal and state requirements and regulations.

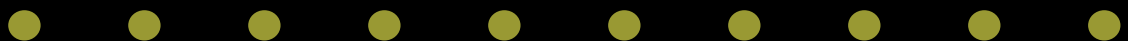
How do foster parents play a role in the CFS QA Case Reviews?

All foster caregivers (licensed/unlicensed homes, facilities) play a vital role in this process. The information you share is extremely valuable and can be used to help make program improvements in the child welfare system.

Who would contact me about the CFS QA Case Review?

If you are/were a foster provider for a foster child's case that was randomly selected to participate in the review, you will be contacted by the Quality Assurance Unit or from the foster child's agency.

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... Quality Assurance Case Reviews continued below

If I am contacted, does that mean the case will be reviewed?

When you are initially contacted, this means that the case was randomly selected for the review process. However, first the team needs to ensure that all of the key players of a case are able to participate. Once the team confirms that all of the key case participants (or someone to speak to their perspective) have agreed the case is confirmed. Then the case is assigned a review week, at which point you will be contacted again to arrange an interview time.

What would I be asked during a CFS QA Case Review interview?

This interview is your time to talk about the services the foster child and you received. The review team members will ask questions about three main areas: safety, permanency, and how the agency assessed and addressed your needs as a foster care provider. The interview may last about 30 minutes and will focus on the quality of services received, as well as services the child may have received while in your care.

Your comments will not be identified by name. Information you share will be used with comments received from other individuals interviewed to prepare a report on how well North Dakota's child welfare system does in meeting the needs of children and families who receive services. The information provided will not adversely affect the services you or the family are receiving through the agency.

When are these fabulous reviews?

Currently, review events occur every six months. Foster parents could expect to receive contact about the potential for their participation in a case review every six months. The next review event begins September 2020.

Quality Assurance Stakeholder Feedback

Are there other opportunities to provide feedback?

In addition to case specific feedback made possible by the CFS QA Case Reviews, the review process is intended to gather information from various stakeholder groups, including foster caregivers, about how the child welfare system is functioning in certain areas statewide.

In the past, stakeholder feedback has been collected through in-person focus groups. Meetings specifically to gather the input from foster caregivers were held in each region. This process is currently under review. Details on future opportunities for all foster caregivers to provide overall comments on how the child welfare system is doing is expected in October 2020. Please watch for more details later this fall!

Thank you for your time, and partnership in the review process; as well as your support, and dedication serving as foster parents for our state's children and families.

For additional information, we encourage to you check out the links below:

[Regional Onsite Case Reviews Final Reports & Child & Family Services Reviews](#)
[Children's Bureau- Child & Family Services Reviews](#)

Foster Parent Training

Foster Parent Fall Festivals
Pending Online Training
Opportunity
Details to come

Some Online Training
Options Include:
Foster Parent College Courses
or
CFSTC Archived Webinars



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Back to School

School is in full swing and one thing is for certain this school year is different than any from our past. Whether you are social distancing in the classroom, have a hybrid education model, or even full time distance learning, one thing is for certain, there will be many challenges for students, teachers, and parents. Some of these challenges can be overcome with time, support, and a little creativity. One struggle you may be facing is trying to establish and maintaining a before and after school schedule in this new normal. Below are links to an article from Understood.org with 8 ways to make the school morning routine easier and also organizational pintables that you may find helpful for your family.

[8 Ways to Make School Morning Routines Easier](#) [Organizational Pintables](#)

One of the many things we have learned during this pandemic is that online/distance education can be a challenge! It can be extra challenging when you have a child that struggles with focusing and/or keeping their attention on school. Please check out this link to a quick you tube video that provides some tips that may work for your child who struggles with keeping their attention.

[Tips for Distance Learning](#)

And finally, below is a link to an article that provides tips for social distancing in school for children who struggle with impulsivity, sensory issues, and trouble focusing.

[Social Distancing Challenges: Tips to Help Kids at School](#)

MORE INFORMATION TO COME...

ND Safety Framework Practice Model

This is an exciting time for North Dakota Child Welfare! If you haven't heard already you soon will be hearing all about the new Safety Framework Practice Model (SFPM) that North Dakota has chosen to be utilize in all of our child welfare programs (Child Protection Services, In Home, & Foster Care). This new SFPM will be used to assess if children are safe or unsafe, and what needs to change in the family for children to be safe in their homes.

The "new" SFPM is a model is being used in a number of states and with the support of ND Children and Family Services (CFS) and The Casey Family Foundation, Human Service Zone child welfare works will complete five days of training. The training started August 24th and will be taking place for 9 weeks, through November 6th. The scheduled roll out date for this model to be implemented in North Dakota is December 14, 2020.

We, at CFSTC, are VERY excited about the positive changes this model will bring to the children and families that are served in ND. Please stay tuned to receive more information about the SFPM in the future issues of Fostering Connections newsletter.

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



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