

# Fostering Communications

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

July 2020

## Upcoming State Conferences...

ND Children & Family Services Conference,  
Bismarck, ND  
July 27-30, 2020  
**HAS BEEN CANCELLED**

ND Conference of Social Welfare  
Bismarck, ND  
September 23-25, 2020  
Bismarck, ND  
**HAS BEEN CANCELLED**

Foster Parent Fall Festivals  
Pending Online Training Opportunity  
Details to come



**C • F • S • T • C**  
Children and Family Services Training Center  
Department of Social Work  
University of North Dakota

## PRIDE LINK

The PRIDE Model we follow highlights the competency of “**protecting and nurturing children**”. In honor of June being “Pride month”, we are taking a closer look at fostering children who are a part of the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning) community and how LGBTQ youth can be supported while in foster care. Studies have indicated that LGBTQ youth are over represented in the child welfare system and that youth identifying as LGBTQ face higher risk of abuse and harassment in the child welfare system. The article, “Support LBGTQ Youth In Foster Care”, provides helpful information regarding fostering LGBTQ youth to include, how foster parents can be supportive to any child in their home who identifies as LGBTQ, identifies common misconceptions about LGBTQ youth in foster care, tips on how foster parents can make their home more welcoming and safe for a youth who identifies as LGBTQ, along with additional resources for foster parents. “Like all young people, LGBTQ youth in foster care need the support of a nurturing family to help them negotiate adolescence and grow into healthy adults.”

[Support LGBTQ Youth In Foster Care](#)

## Disobedience or Triggered Behavior?

As many foster parents know when parenting children who have been impacted by trauma certain items, such as smells, places, etc., can be triggering to children. The response may manifest in a child’s behaviors by acting out. This can be more than challenging to determine if certain behaviors are disobedience or simply reactions to triggers from past trauma. The following blog from the Archibald Project provides a summary of the podcast from *Honestly Adoption: Is it Disobedience or Triggered Behavior* with Adoptive Parents, Mike and Kristin Berry, where the four ways to differentiate between disobedience or triggered behavior is further explored.

[\*\*Blog: 4 Ways to Tell If Its Disobedience or Triggered Behavior\*\*](#)

The link below offers the full complete *Is It Disobedience or Triggered Behavior* podcast (approximately 30 mins.) from *Honestly Adoption* where adoptive parents Mike and Kristin Berry have an in-depth discussion on how triggered behavior can look like disobedience and strategies on how parents and caregivers can navigate these behaviors.

**Podcast: [Is it Disobedience or Triggered Behavior](#)**

Once you click on the link above, scroll down the page to find the podcast with the title on page 2. The podcast was recorded on July 12, 2019 for your reference.



*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.*

# Fostering Communications

*Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System*

July 2020



Are you 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



**C • F • S • T • C**  
Children and Family  
Services Training Center  
Department of Social Work  
University of North Dakota

## Resource Parents: Most Essential Recruiters!

Sheila Muus, Foster Parent Recruitment and Retention Specialist

One of my first tasks upon joining the staff at the CFSTC was to meet with each of the eight regional representatives to discuss the history of recruitment and retention in their regions. We spent time discussing what had worked, what had not, largest areas of need, and other related topics. I learned a great deal about the flavor of each region. An important question that I posed to each Region, was for them to identify their **best, most effective recruitment tool**. All eight regions, without hesitation, stated that their most effective recruitment tool is **YOU**, our foster, adoptive, and kinship parents and families.

You are living this mission of walking children and families home to reunification or permanency: our walking, breathing, real life billboards. You demonstrate to others that this not some abstract concept but that these are real children and families who need others to step up and move their sphere of caring to encompass them. Resource families show others that expanding your family this way is realistic and can be done. **You can share this message and move others to action in a way that no other messenger can accomplish.**

It may be difficult to know what to share, but here are some tips and talking points of how to spread the message:

Talk honestly about YOUR experience as a foster, adopt, or kinship parent. Tell people how you feel and how you manage your household with additional children in your care. Keeping the information focused on you and your family will help you avoid sharing any confidential information about the children placed in your home.

### People may also want to know:

- \*Why you decided to become a licensed foster parent?
- \*How you handle knowing the child will be returning home and cope when children leave your home?
- \*How do you work with the biological family?
- \*How your family has adjusted to having new and unfamiliar children in their home?

### Facts to share about foster care for children:

- \*Foster care is providing substitute parental care to a child or children who have been temporarily separated from his/her biological or legal parents, guardian, or custodian.
- \*Reasons for the separation may include the inability of the child's parent, guardian, or custodian to provide appropriate care such as food, shelter, security and safety and guidance.
- \*The length of time a child is in foster care varies depending on the reasons for being placed out of his/her home.
- \*The Child and Family Team process guides the plan for each child and is reviewed every 90 days. Foster parents are a part of this team process.

Article continued on Page 3

# Fostering Communications

Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System

July 2020

## ...Most Essential Recruiters! continued below

- \*There are opportunities to provide foster care on a part time basis through providing respite care or other programs.
- \*A foster parent must be at least 21 years of age. There is no maximum age for a foster parent if he/she can meet the needs of children in his/her care.
- \*Foster parents can be single, married, or co-habiting and do not have to have children of their own.
- \*All applicants and adults 18 and older living in the home must submit to a fingerprint criminal history background check and be cleared prior to a license being approved. Applicants provide 3 references and complete a home study.
- \*All foster parents complete PRIDE training (27 hours) and Fire Safety (2 hours) and may have additional training requirements depending on the type of foster care provided. All foster parents have annual on-going training requirements.

### Ways to share the message of foster care:

- \*Share the Toll Free Foster Parent Recruitment/Inquiry line phone number **#1-833-FST-HOME** (1-833-378-4663) or email ND Foster Parent Recruitment & Retention Specialist, [sheila.muus@und.edu](mailto:sheila.muus@und.edu) with friends, family members, community members that express an interest in foster care.
- \*Share contact information for your licensor or social worker with friends, family members, community members that express an interest in foster care.
- \*Share information related to foster care on social media.
- \*Offer to speak about foster care at a community group or in your church community or arrange for a child welfare professional to be a guest speaker.

**You, our resource parents, have the strongest voice to express this need and to inspire action in others. Thank you for all you do for children and families and thank you for helping spread the word about the need for more people to commit to fostering children and families!**

*\*\* A special thanks to Lisa Piche for her contribution to this article!*

YOU MIGHT BE TEMPORARY  
IN THEIR LIVES. THEY MIGHT  
BE TEMPORARY IN YOURS.  
BUT THERE IS NOTHING TEMPORARY  
ABOUT THE LOVE OR THE LESSON.

-TONIA CHRISTLE

## Foster Parent Training

Foster Parent Fall Festivals  
Pending Online Training  
Opportunity  
Details to come

Current Online Training  
Options Include:

[CFSTC Archived Webinars](#)  
or  
[Foster Parent College Courses](#)

\*Watch our [CFSTC calendar](#)  
for upcoming LIVE webinar  
trainings as well.



**C • F • S • T • C**  
Children and Family  
Services Training Center  
Department of Social Work  
University of North Dakota

# Fostering Communications

*Building a Network of People in the Foster Care System*

July 2020

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



**C • F • S • T • C**  
**Children and Family  
Services Training Center**  
Department of Social Work  
University of North Dakota

## Cultural Connections

When children are in foster care they can experience many losses, and one loss they can experience is the loss of their cultural identity. Studies have indicated that a child's ability to maintain their cultural identity can be related back to a overall positive well being. When children are placed in a home that is of a different culture foster parents and case workers need to work hard on ensuring that the child continues to have ties to their culture. Often times foster parents may find this to be challenging and feel uncertainty in how they can help maintain those connections. Foster Club, a national network for young people in foster care, noted that "Foster parents may need to take unique steps to ensure the young person's maximum well-being if the child's cultural background is different than their own. This means a thorough respect and understanding of the young person's religion, cultural values, customs, and beliefs." Please check out the YouTube link below from Foster Club of a round table discussion of former and current foster care youth sharing their experiences being in foster homes of a different culture then the one that they were raised in. They provide insight on what were their positive experiences were as well as their thoughts on what they would have been helpful in their foster care experience.

### [Foster Club-Transracial Parenting](#)

In addition, the link below provides helpful ways that an adoptive parent can keep a child connected to his/her culture. Even though this article is directed towards adoptive parents, the tips are also appropriate and relevant for all caregivers.

### [10 Ways to Keep your Adopted Child's Cultural Connection](#)

## SAFE TRAVELS

Warmer weather often brings on plans for summer road trips. According to our ND Foster Care licensing guidelines, foster parents need to follow ND law in regards to child restraints/safety belts. This includes:

- Children younger than age 8 are required to ride in a child restraint (car seat or booster seat). The restraint must be used correctly following the manufacturer's instructions.
- A seat belt may be substituted for children younger than 8 who weigh more than 80 pounds and are more than 57 (4'9") inches tall.
- Children ages 8 through 17 must be properly secured in a seat belt or child restraint (car seat or booster seat).

Please click [Child Restraints and Safety Belts](#) for the full policy. And check out [State Law Tracker](#) from Safe Kids to read more about North Dakota's child passenger safety laws, seat belt laws, and guidelines. You can also click on other states to view their state laws/guidelines as it relates to passenger safety.