

# ♥ foster roster

A BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR FOSTER & ADOPTIVE FAMILIES IN UTAH • VOL 2, APR & MAY 2011



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Children in Foster Care**



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*Thanks to*



*For years of support*

# College Bound?

By Darcey Hirst, Utah Foster Care Foundation

**D**o you have a youth in foster care ready to graduate from high school? Does he or she need money to attend college? The Olene S. Walker Transition to Adult Living Scholarship can help!

Young people who were in Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) foster care after age 14 or adopted after age 16, may be eligible. Youth can be awarded up to \$5,000.00 per year for college tuition, books, fee, supplies and living expenses. Besides cash, they will get to participate in extracurricular activities and work with a mentor who will help youth succeed.

Cindy has been receiving the Transition to Adult Living scholarship for a year now. She shared her story with us, in hopes of encouraging other teens currently in foster care and foster care alumni to apply for this scholarship.

“Once you receive the scholarship you meet with a mentor once a month and have at least five hours a week of volunteer service, extracurricular activity or participation in some kind of campus event. It is a good way to get involved in the community and build your resume,” says Cindy.

“The scholarship has helped me out so much, especially because I have a little girl and it has helped me be a mother and focus more on school, instead of trying to work full time, go to school full time and be a full time parent and get overwhelmed. The scholarship is so helpful in so many ways! Those who have been in care should realize how important it is to go to college and how lucky we are to have so many resources available to help us.”

To apply for the scholarship you need to:

- show documentation of having been in foster care,
- fill out the application,
- apply and be accepted at an accredited college,



## Utah Foster Care Foundation Offices

### Murray

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400  
Murray, UT 84107  
Phone: 801.994.5205  
Fax: 801.994.5206  
Toll Free: 877.505.KIDS

### Ogden

3340 S. Harrison Blvd. #200  
Ogden, UT 84403  
Phone: 801.392.1114

### Orem

252 N. Orem Blvd.  
Orem, UT 84057  
Phone: 801.373.3006

### Price

475 W. Price River Dr. #152  
Price, UT 84501  
Phone: 435.636.0210

### Roosevelt

RR 3 Box 8008  
Roosevelt, UT 84066  
Phone: 435.724.0959

### Vernal

1052 W. Market Dr.  
Vernal, UT 84078  
Phone: 435.781.4224

### Moab

180 S. 300 E., Suite C  
Moab, UT 84532  
Phone: 435.259.3345

### St. George

321 N. Mall Dr. #B102  
St. George, UT 84790  
Phone: 435.656.8065

### Richfield

201 E. 500 N.  
Richfield, UT 84701  
Phone: 435.896.1232

- apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA),
- type a personal statement of 1-2 pages double spaced,
- get one or more letters of recommendation,
- get your high school or college transcripts,
- take your ACT/placement test
- and send this all off!

“This may sound a little overwhelming, but trust me it’s not that bad and it is definitely worth it!” says Cindy. “My experience with the application process was great. It helped me learn to become more independent and gave me an idea of what I needed to do to graduate.”

“The scholarship can cover anything from tuition and books, to living expenses such as housing, food, clothes or any other bills. I use the scholarship to help pay for my apartment and my other bills such as insurance, phone bill, etc.”

Thank you Cindy for sharing your experience with us! We wish you the very best as you attend college and work toward a bright future.

The deadline to apply for this scholarship is April 15, 2011 for Fall Semester 2011. For more information about this opportunity visit: [www.justforyouth.utah.gov/education](http://www.justforyouth.utah.gov/education) or call Patti at 801.652.2173 or email [pwestern@utah.gov](mailto:pwestern@utah.gov) or Jode at 801.707.9734 or email [jlittlep@utah.gov](mailto:jlittlep@utah.gov).

# Statewide Announcements

## Adoption Tax Credit

By Marty Shannon, Adoption Program Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services

**M**any of you have heard about the new Adoption Tax Credit. You can find information authorized by the federal government Children’s Bureau at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). When you arrive at the website, search for Adoption Credit. The search will take you to a page, “IRS Issue Guidance on Expanded Adoption Credit Available for Tax-Year 2010.”

Remember that you need to seek advice from a tax professional regarding your specific situation.

Other sources of information that are not authorized by the Children’s Bureau, but have been helpful to adoptive parents are:

- [www.nacac.org](http://www.nacac.org) The North American Council on Adoptable Children is an adoption advocacy organization that has put together “easy to read” information that can be accessed on their home page.

■ — continued on page 13



# Test Your Knowledge: Medicaid Coverage for Children in Foster Care

By Chris Chytraus R.N., BSN, CPM, Program Manager, Fostering Healthy Children Program

**T**he majority of children who are in foster care are eligible for Medicaid. Children who may not be eligible are those who receive social security benefits, have trust accounts, are not legal residents and some that are transferred here from other states. It is important to follow-up with the caseworker and nurse to identify if the child in your care is eligible for Medicaid.

- |   |      |       |
|---|------|-------|
| 1. All children in foster care are eligible for Medicaid.                   | True | False |
| 2. The Medicaid plan is the same wherever you live in the state of Utah.    | True | False |
| 3. It is not necessary to take the Medicaid card to the appointments.       | True | False |
| 4. My name should be listed as the guarantor on all accounts for the child. | True | False |
| 5. All medical requests are covered by Medicaid.                            | True | False |

### The Medicaid plan is not the same throughout the state of Utah.

Along the Wasatch Front, Medicaid plans require a Health Plan Selection. These plans include Healthy U, Molina and Select Access. The Medicaid card will identify in which Health Plan your child in foster care is enrolled. You **MUST** use providers within the Health Plan Network. If you go outside of the Health plan, it may not be covered. If there is a PCP listed on the Medicaid card, you will need a referral to use another provider.

The selection of the Health Plan is based on multiple factors:

- Compatibility with the biological parents' private insurance. If there is insurance, it is the child's primary insurance and Medicaid is secondary.

- Which plan the child was on previously.
- The child's current health care providers and insurance accepted by them.
- HMO's that have openings for clients.

In the other areas of the state Medicaid does not require a Health Plan Selection and children may use any provider that accepts Medicaid or the PCP listed on the card.

You must always show the Medicaid card prior to the child receiving medical, dental or mental health services. If you do not show the Medicaid card, you could end up with bills that will not be covered.

The guarantor on accounts for children in foster care should be listed as Fostering Healthy Children. You should receive a copy of the Designation of Responsible Party from the caseworker as part of your home to home packet. If you did not receive one, ask them for a copy.

Not all medical or dental services are covered by Medicaid. Like other insurance plans, many tests and medical procedures require a prior authorization. The medical or dental provider is responsible to submit the information and request a prior authorization. The test or procedure cannot be completed until the prior authorization is received by the provider. If Medicaid denies the prior authorization and the physician believes it is necessary he/she can appeal to a higher level.

If you would like further information you can go to the website <http://health.utah.gov/umb>.

*(Answers: all answers are False)*

## Division of Child and Family Services

### Resource Family Consultant (RFC) Contact Information

**Brenda Barrus 801.631.6583**  
84044 84081 84084 84118

Magna, West Valley City,  
Kearns & West Jordan

**Caren Atkinson 435.224.2702**  
84029 84074 84071

Tooele, Grantsville, Stansbury  
Park, Lake Point, Stocton,  
Wendover, Rush Valley, Dugway

**Dana Guertin 801.451.8620**  
84047 84102 84103 84104  
84105 84108 84110 84111  
84116 84119 84120 84128

Salt Lake, South Salt Lake,  
Rose Park, West Valley City

**Esmeralda Malili 801.755.7162**  
84020 84065

Draper, Riverton, Bluffdale  
All Spanish speaking providers

**Lori Zumbrunnen 801.755.7646**  
84081 84088 84095 84096

South & West Jordan,  
Copperton, Midvale, Herriman

**Yolanda Copeland 801.755.7491**  
84070 84092 84093 84094  
84106 84107 84109 84115  
84117 84121 84123 84124

Taylorville, Murray, Holliday,  
Sandy, Cottonwood Heights

**Susannah Holden 801.755.7018**

Placement Coordinator For Salt  
Lake Region.

Clinical support for resource  
homes



# Honoring Foster/ Adoptive Moms

In honor of the work they have done with children in foster care, Annica Winters, Lucy Walbeck and Olga Lastra will be recognized at the Treehouse Athletic Club in May for their outstanding contributions as foster mothers. Watch Facebook and Utah Foster Care Foundation's website for dates and times.

## Annica Winters Named Foster Mother of the Year

by Caren Atkinson, DCFS Resource Family Consultant



To meet Annica for the first time, you would not believe that this petite, soft-spoken young woman is the mother of 8 children ranging in age from 6 to 19. Seven children are currently in the home. Their oldest is serving an LDS Mission.

Russ and Annica Winters had their first placement in March of 2005, when their two biological children were very young. The Winters family adopted six children from DCFS and Annica is an active participant in the Tooele Cluster and mentors other Resource Parents.

Annica has expressed that she is only able to share their home with others because of the amazing support of her husband.

She was very humbled when told of this recognition of her service.

Russ says that Annica's greatest quality as a mother is the unconditional love she has for children.

"From the first day they are placed with us, she welcomes them as if they have been in our home their whole lives, and she never looks back," says Russ. Russ shares that Annica knows that each day cannot be perfect. Raising children is hard work, with no guarantee that mistakes will not be made. Each day learning is done on both sides and comfort comes from seeing the progress in each of your children's lives.

## An Even Dozen

by Alan Walbeck



It started about 7 or 8 years ago for Lucy and me. Since then, there have been 30 or 40 children in foster care in our home. Lucy has been a tremendous advocate of foster care, navigating the state court system, supporting reunification services, and helping other families follow in her steps. She relentlessly fights for the rights of these little children, caring for them, taking them to hospital visits, juggling the needs of FIVE newly placed children while simultaneously seeing after the needs of THREE other children adopted through private adoption agencies. She also provides for the needs of her FOUR biological children...yes, that makes TWELVE total...and we are finished...therefore, graduating from the foster care program.

It has been a wonderfully rewarding ride, but our cups are full, as is our home and our hearts. We are grateful for all that we have been given and the service opportunities we have had. Lucy is not looking for recognition, but as her husband, I have seen her sacrifice so much over the years and give her heart and soul as she puts the lives and well-being of these children ahead of hers. She has worked tirelessly, has more energy and enthusiasm than I have ever seen in any individual and is truly one-in-a-million.

Lucy has done so much for these children that have come into our home. She has truly given her all, and I am so proud of her, so grateful for her charitable heart and desire and ability to serve. Clearly I love her more than words can express.

## Felicitaciones Olga For A Job Well Done

by Christina LeCluyse, UFCF Recruiter, Salt Lake Valley Region



Olga Lastra and her husband Francisco have been doing foster care for the past 7 years. Olga has had approximately 70 to 100 children come through her home. Like most experienced foster mothers, she has cared for children who came from a wide range of different backgrounds and experienced severe forms of abuse.

Olga said her most rewarding experiences are watching children “come back to life, smile again, learn to trust others and be a child once more.” Olga says she felt a sense of pride and joy when a little girl,

who had suffered frequent nightmares and frightened easily, told her that she no longer needed the night light because she wasn't afraid of the dark anymore, noting that “I'm a big girl now and I am no longer afraid.”

In describing Olga's work as a foster mother, Esmeralda Malili, a Resource Family Consultant for DCFS who works with Hispanic foster families, says Olga has worked with children who have suffered “severe physical abuse as well as witnessed extreme cases of domestic violence.” Esmeralda told me Olga is so patient and is able to help the children get to a place where they are “emotionally and physically healthy.”

**“ A mother is a person who seeing there are only four pieces of pie for five people, promptly announces she never did care for pie.” ~Tenneva Jordan**

## Salt Lake Valley Region

### Salt Lake Valley Office

5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400  
Murray, UT 84107  
Phone: 801.994.5205  
Fax: 801.994.5206  
Toll Free: 877.505.KIDS

### Area Representative

Dan Webster

### Foster/Adoptive Family Recruiters

Amy Boyack  
Christina LeCluyse  
Jordan Ames

### Trainer

Liz Rivera

### Retention Specialist

Tina Porter

[www.utahfostercare.org](http://www.utahfostercare.org)



# Trauma & Attachment

2ND ANNUAL UFCF SYMPOSIUM

2011 : A CLOSER LOOK

APRIL 13 & 14

Join foster parents, social workers, child advocates, law enforcement, and their allies for an amazing two-day symposium!

[utahfostercare.org/symposium](http://utahfostercare.org/symposium)

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Utah Foster Care Foundation's

# Chalk art Festival

June 17 & 18  
Salt Lake City

# Call for Artists!

[chalkartfestival.org/registration.html](http://chalkartfestival.org/registration.html)

Early-bird registration closes APRIL 15th!

# Register Today!

Photo Credit: Alex Gallivan







# Teen Forum

By Amy Boyack, UFCF Recruiter, Salt Lake Valley Region

Photo by Tom Smart, Deseret News

**T**he purpose of the Fostering Teens Forum is for families to hear the perspectives of caring for teens from those who are doing it. It gives them the opportunity to ask their questions and express their concerns about bringing teens into their home. Teens need somewhere to come home to. A place they can enjoy the holidays together as they grow up.

Panel members mentioned that they did not initially get involved with Foster Care with the interest in caring for teens, but they opened their minds to this idea, and now they truly enjoy it. If you are interested in attending future Fostering Teens Forums, call us at 877.505.KIDS.

**“You don’t have to suffer to be a poet. Adolescence is enough suffering for anyone.” ~John Ciardi**

## Wishing Well Funds

Utah Foster Care Foundation has funds available to meet the special needs of children in foster care when DCFS is unable to meet these needs for any reason. *Funds are limited.*

Requests **MUST** include the following:

- Child’s first name, last initial and age
- Foster parent’s name and home address
- Caseworker’s name and contact information
- The item being requested and the associated costs
- Brief description of how the child will benefit

Request should come in writing by a foster parent, the child in care or the caseworker.

### PLEASE NOTE:

- Dispersal of funds can take up to 4 weeks
- Checks are mailed to the foster parent’s home address
- Funds are for children in foster care ONLY
- Items covered by the foster care reimbursement or by Medicaid are not eligible.

### VACATIONS:

- A child in care can receive vacation funds only ONCE in their lifetime
- Vacations are restricted monetarily & may not cover all costs

### SUBMIT REQUESTS TO:

Tina Porter  
Utah Foster Care Foundation  
5296 So. Commerce Dr. #400  
Murray, UT 84107  
801.994-5205  
or [tina.porter@utahfostercare.org](mailto:tina.porter@utahfostercare.org)

# Cluster Meetings/Training



## Salt Lake Valley Cluster Information

For in-service training details, see the training pages.



**Murray/Midvale/  
E. Salt Lake**  
Facilitator: Terumi  
Phone: 801.699.9769



**Kearns**  
Facilitator: Michelle  
Phone: 801.755.4766  
mostmark12@aol.com



**Magna/West Valley**  
Facilitator: Linda  
Phone: 801.690.6490  
peerparenting@gmail.com



**Salt Lake Metro**  
Facilitator: Rachel  
Phone:  
rlhharb@yahoo.com



**Sandy/Draper**  
Facilitator: Tina  
Phone: 801.994.5205  
tina.porter@utahfostercare.org



**South Vally West/  
West Jordan**  
Facilitator: Valerie  
Phone: 801.608.1871  
valerie.bangert@yahoo.com



**Tooele/Adoptive Parents**  
Facilitator: Maia  
Phone: 435.843.1090  
jmblaame@juno.com



**Tooele/Adoptive Parents**  
Facilitator: Cami  
Phone: 435.830.6195  
camimead@hotmail.com



**Spanish/Cluster en  
Español**  
Facilitator: Jessica  
Phone: 801.577.7161  
steadmanjessica@aol.com

### Trauma 1-2

#### Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

Presented by  
Liz Rivera

An introduction to trauma and its effects on the developing child.



April 26  
6 pm – 9 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation  
5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400  
Murray

### Trauma 3-4

#### Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

Presented by  
Liz Rivera

Understanding trauma's effects & building a safe place.

May 31  
6 pm – 9 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation  
5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400  
Murray

### Trauma 5-6

#### Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

Presented by  
Liz Rivera

Dealing with feelings and behaviors & connections and healing

June 13  
6 pm – 9 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation  
5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400  
Murray

### Trauma 7-8

#### Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma

Presented by  
Liz Rivera

Becoming an Advocate & Taking Care of Yourself

June 27  
6 pm – 9 pm

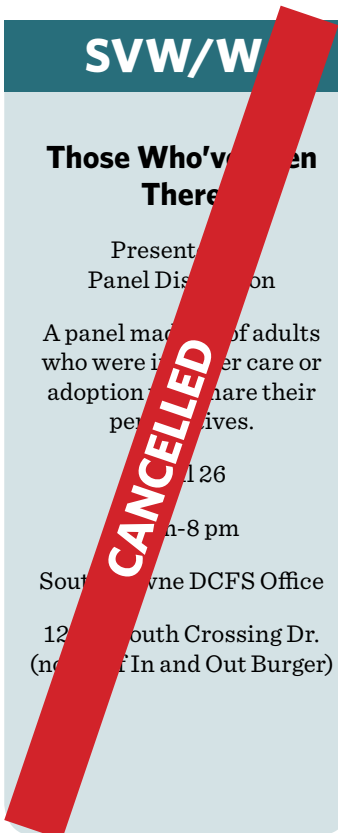
Utah Foster Care Foundation  
5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400  
Murray

# Cluster Meetings/Training



Circle of Security	Tooele Cluster	Kearns Cluster	SLC Cluster
<p><b>Chapter One</b></p> <p><b>Presented by</b> Liz Rivera</p> <p>The Circle of Security series is an 8-week attachment based model. The next series will begin in July of 2011.</p> <p>July</p> <p>South Towne DCFS</p> <p>12537 S. Crossing Dr. (just north of In and Out Burger)</p>	<p><b>Food Sense</b></p> <p><b>Presented by</b> Michelle</p> <p>Michelle from Tooele USU Extension will be coming to share a food sense class on making freezer meals. Please RSVP to Cami or Maia by April 4th.</p> <p>April 7</p> <p>7 pm – 9 pm</p> <p>1784 Aaron Dr., Tooele</p>	<p><b>Gang Awareness</b></p> <p><b>Presented by</b> Metro Gang Unit</p> <p>The Metro Gang Unit will educate us about gang activity signs and intervention efforts</p> <p>April 18</p> <p>6 pm – 8 pm</p> <p>Utah Foster Care Foundation</p> <p>5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400</p> <p>Murray</p>	<p><b>Color Matters</b></p> <p><b>Presented by</b> Kathy Searle and Susan Egbert</p> <p>Kathy and Susan will present the research (and personal experience) about Transracial adoption.</p> <p>April 19</p> <p>6 pm – 8 pm</p> <p>Sprague Library</p> <p>2131 South 1100 East</p>

Mur/WVC/Mag	SVW/W	Kearns Cluster	Tooele Cluster
<p><b>Nutrition Basics</b></p> <p>Presented by USU Extension</p> <p>USU will share how to incorporate nutrition into meals that are family-friendly. Demonstrations which means samples—yum!</p> <p>April 20</p> <p>6 pm – 8 pm</p> <p>UFCE</p> <p>5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400</p> <p>Murray</p>	<p><b>Those Who've Been There</b></p> <p>Presented by Panel Discussion</p> <p>A panel made up of adults who were in foster care or adoption will share their personal lives.</p> <p>April 26</p> <p>6 pm – 8 pm</p> <p>South Towne DCFS Office</p> <p>12537 South Crossing Dr. (north of In and Out Burger)</p>	<p><b>The Importance of Culture</b></p> <p>Presented by Jordan Ames</p> <p>This training will help us recognize the differences between race, ethnicity, nationalism and culture, and why it is important to help children keep in touch with their culture while they are in foster care or after adoption.</p> <p>May 10</p> <p>6 pm – 8 pm</p> <p>Utah Foster Care Foundation</p> <p>5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400</p> <p>Murray</p>	<p><b>Women's Retreat</b></p> <p>Please RSVP to Cami or Maia to reserve your spot for the Women's Retreat. Refreshments and daycare will be provided.</p> <p>May 19</p>



# Cluster Meetings/Training



## SVW/WJ Clusters

### Goodbye Rituals

Presented by  
Liz Rivera

Goodbyes, temporary and permanent, are a part of all our lives. We'll talk about ways to make goodbyes healing and hopeful.

May 19

6 pm – 8 pm

South Towne DCFS Office  
12537 South Crossing Dr.  
(north of In and Out Burger)

## Life Books

### West Valley City/ Magna/Kearns/ Spanish Speaking

Join us to work on those very important lifebooks. Children 8 and older are welcome to attend too!

May 20 and August 19

5 pm – 9 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation  
5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400  
Murray

## SLC Cluster

### Domestic Violence

Presented by  
Del Bircher, DCFS

DV Specialist

Del will discuss the dynamics of domestic violence, why the problems persist and the effects on children.

May 23

6 pm-8 pm

Sprague Library  
2131 South 1100 East

## SVW/WJ Clusters

### Suicide Prevention

Presented by  
TBD

This class will focus on recognizing signs of potential self-harm and prevention.

June 14

6 pm – 8 pm

South Towne DCFS Office  
12537 South Crossing Dr.  
(north of In and Out Burger)

## SLC Cluster

### Understanding Mental Illness

Presented by  
Pam Childs, NAMI

A realistic and compassionate view of mental illness.

June 22

6 pm – 8 pm

Sprague Library  
2131 South 1100 East

## WVC/Mag Clusters

### Lesbian, Gay, Transgendered, Questioning Youth

Presented by  
Pride Center

LGBTQ youth are more likely to become homeless and be victims of violence. This class will help us understand the issues in working with this population.

June TBD

6 pm – 8 pm

Utah Foster Care Foundation  
5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400

## What are Clusters?

Clusters are groups of foster, adoptive and kinship families that meet together on a monthly basis.

Clusters can help you:

- Obtain in-service training hours
- Meet other foster, adoptive and kinship families
- Get support
- Arrange respite care
- Attend fun family activities

Contact the Cluster facilitator nearest you or contact Tina at 801.994.5205 for more information.

## How to Register for Training

### Contact:

Liz Rivera  
Salt Lake Valley  
Region Trainer

801.994.5205

[liz.rivera@utahfostercare.org](mailto:liz.rivera@utahfostercare.org)

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- [www.davethomasfoundation.org](http://www.davethomasfoundation.org) Dave Thomas Foundation promotes foster care adoptions. They have a link on their home page to a video conducted by Jackson Hewitt tax service that describes the adoption tax credit in everyday language – it does promote their services, which are not endorsed by the State of Utah Division of Child and Family Services or Utah Foster Care Foundation.

## Did You Know?

**C**hildren and youth in foster care qualify for the federal nutrition programs available in schools. The Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 has expanded nutrition assistance for children in foster care. For more information, please visit: <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=2011/02/0048.xml> or contact your child's caseworker.

## Save the Date



Utah Adoption Council Annual Conference  
Wednesday, May 11th and Thursday, May 12th  
South Towne Expo Center  
9575 South State; Sandy, Utah 84070

Registration is online only: [www.utahadoptioncouncil.com](http://www.utahadoptioncouncil.com)

If you have questions, contact Marty Shannon (801.540.0833) or Amy Boyack (801.994.5205).

## Private Pay Pre-Service

As of March 1, 2011, the fee for families to pay to take pre-service classes in order to adopt privately or from out of state will increase from \$200.00 to \$300.00 per family.

Families will be asked to pay for the classes in advance.

**“Our most basic instinct is not for survival but for family. Most of us would give our own life for the survival of a family member, yet we lead our daily life too often as if we take our family for granted.” ~Paul Pearshall**

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## Seth S.

**Birthday:** 10/1996

**Grade in School:** 8th

**Heritage:** Caucasian

Kids who are Seth's age normally dream and fantasize about an array of things, but Seth's dream is simple. What he wants most is to have a "normal life", outside foster care, with a family who loves and appreciates him. This fun guy has a lot of positive characteristics to add to his forever family. He is outgoing, energetic, respectful, well-mannered, has a great sense of humor, and LOVES to make people laugh! Seth's favorite pastimes include football, basketball, hanging out with friends, and watching movies.

For more information, please contact

**The Adoption Exchange**

(801) 265-0444

[www.utdcfsadopt.org](http://www.utdcfsadopt.org)





## Jamie T.

**Birthday:** 04/1995  
**Grade in School:** 9th  
**Heritage:** Caucasian

This fashionista is Jamie. She is a trendy teenager who loves to look nice and dress up. Music, shopping and hanging out with people are just a few of her favorite things to do. Jamie dreams of being part of a family and having someone to whom she is connected. A people-person, this young woman has a great sense of humor and is easy to engage and talk to.

For more information, please contact

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## A message from Molar Man

Burg Pediatric Dentistry, [www.burgpediatricdentistry.com](http://www.burgpediatricdentistry.com)

# The Tooth, the Whole Tooth and Nothing But the Tooth...

**A**s the story goes... the tooth fairy comes when a child has lost a tooth. Commonly, she is very small, and she comes in the middle of the night. The child is to leave the tooth under his/her pillow, so that the tooth fairy can take it during her visit. Once she has taken the tooth, she leaves monetary reimbursement under the pillow (this action is done by a parent). The teeth are then taken to her tower, and used for her purposes.

So, where did this story come from – and more importantly, what really happens to all those teeth?

The tooth fairy has appeared in folk tales throughout the western world – and parts of South Africa, in various forms since the 18th century. While most tooth fairy experts (yes, they really do exist) agree that it is likely that the modern version of the fairy stems from a much loved French story about a tooth gathering mouse that turns itself into a fairy. However, for history buffs – the tooth fairy has its roots with the Vikings in 900 AD. Apparently, the Vikings had a “tooth fee” – a monetary gift for children in exchange for their teeth; which were later used in jewelry or amulet making. The Vikings were a superstitious bunch and held a widespread belief that having an article of clothing, a piece of hair or a tooth belonging to your child in your possession brought power and luck in battle.

The tooth fairy has no religious significance and no holiday affiliation – so it can readily be accepted by everyone. However, perhaps like the Vikings – parents for generations have found a certain charm in the tooth fairy and the attention she brings to the rites of passage for our children as they grow – loosing their “baby teeth” for their permanent “grown up” ones.

In modern times – the fashion for teeth necklaces has gratefully diminished and the general consensus is that the tooth fairy simply collects the teeth, labels them and neatly files them away in a museum-like castle.

As with all other commerce transactions – the tooth fairy has; in her infinite wisdom kept up with the times. Rosemary Wells, acknowledged as the world’s leading authority on the tooth fairy, actually tracked the exchange rate for teeth from 1900 to 1980, against the consumer price index and found that the tooth fairy has kept pace with inflation. The going rate for a tooth these days? According to Securian Dental Plans... \$2.00 per tooth.

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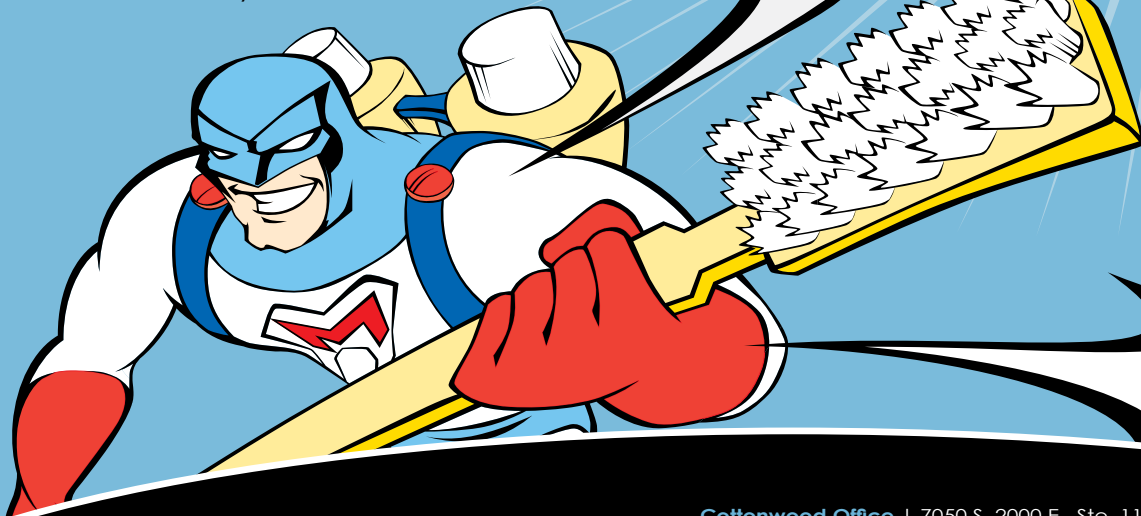
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