

FOSTER ROSTER

Utah's Foster Family Magazine

LOOKING BACK ~ 25 YEARS OF UTAH FOSTER CARE

Fostering Conversations page 9

TRAINING

Find upcoming training
info on pages 6 & 7

FOSTER THREADS

Order Utah Foster Care
Apparel at a discount on page 4



SENIOR STAFF

Nikki MacKay
CEO

Dan Webster
OPERATIONS

Liz Rivera
EDUCATION

Heidi Naylor
RETENTION

Jennie Shepard
RECRUITMENT

Gina Phillips
COMMUNICATIONS

Tami Carson
CARE COMMUNITIES

Crystal Ashton
DEVELOPMENT

BOARD

Matt Moore
CHAIR

Belia Paz

Emmanuel Nnah

Heather Roxburgh

Jacee E Ballard

Kenneth Boggs

Kirsten Rappleye

Liese Rodger

Nikki Walker

Rob Mooney

Robin Huling

Trigena Halley

Wynne Schweitzer

Editor
GINA PHILLIPS

Print & Fulfillment Services
PRESTO PRINT

UTAHFOSTERCARE.ORG



Join us for our annual statewide appreciation event
on Monday, August 12th, from 6:30 to 9:30 pm at
Cowabunga Bay in Draper.

It's a fantastic chance to spend quality family time
and cool off during the summer. Connect with other
foster families from across the state and let your
kids enjoy the water activities.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



**WE WOULD BE DELIGHTED
TO HAVE YOU WITH US!**



DCFS LISTENING SESSIONS

Utah Foster Care Community,

DCFS has finalized the schedule for statewide listening sessions with staff and resource families. These sessions are invaluable for building relationships, sharing our goals and vision, and providing an opportunity to hear feedback on what is going well and where we can improve.

DCFS is collaborating with the Executive Director's Office for the Department of Health and Human Services, the Division of Licensing and Background Checks, and Utah Foster Care to participate in these sessions.

[SCHEDULE HERE](#)

[FAMILIES RSVP HERE](#)

UTAH FOSTER CARE OFFICES

Murray

5296 South Commerce Dr.
Suite 400 Murray, UT 84107
Main: 801-994-5205
Fax: 801-994-5206
Toll-Free: 877-505-5437

Ogden

3340 South Harrison Blvd. Suite 110
Ogden, UT 84403
Main: 801-392-1114

Orem

274 West Center Street
Orem, UT 84057
Main: 801-373-3006

Price

475 West Price River Dr. Suite 152
Price, UT 84501
Main: 435-269-5978

Vernal

1680 West Highway 40 Suite 100
Vernal, UT 84078
Main: 801-743-7336

Moab

125 West 200 South Suite 121
Moab, UT 84532
Main: 801-514-7692

St. George

230 North 1680 East W-113
St. George, UT 84790
Main: 385-758-3661

Richfield

201 East 500 North
Richfield, UT 84701
Main: 435-979-2233

UTAHFOSTERCARE.ORG

2024

EASTERN FOSTER FAMILY OF THE YEAR



JENNIFER & ED COLLER

Complete dedication and love for their community, every child and adult the Collers' meet are touched by their love. They are supportive of all aspects of foster care adoption.

Jennifer & Ed are a loving foster family who have taken on a lot and continue to stay positive and hopeful throughout their case.

The Collers' kids also participate by loving their foster siblings. It takes a lot to be able to function and help out as a child who has foster siblings, and the Coller family does it perfectly.

Thank you Jennifer & Ed for creating a safe environment for Utah's children in need!

Foster Threads

RAISING AWARENESS, ONE THREAD AT A TIME



Foster Threads, where fashion meets compassion. Our t-shirts are more than just apparel; they are a statement of support for children in care, raising awareness, and driving positive change. Foster families will forever receive a discount to purchase apparel.

All funds go to support children in care.

[SHOP NOW](#)

LICENSED AND WAITING: NEXT STEPS IN FOSTER CARE

By Carmen Hall, Retention Services Specialist, Utah Foster Care

You are officially licensed and ready for that call, now what? You jump every time an unknown number pops up on the screen, run through scenarios in your head and can't stop thinking about when your journey will begin...

While you are waiting there are several opportunities you may be overlooking. For example, you can consider being a respite provider. This allows the primary foster parents to take a short break or attend to personal matters while knowing that the children are in a safe and nurturing environment. Respite care can last from a few hours to several days and is a crucial part of being a provider. This can help you open your home to children outside of your initial parameters.

"Foster care changed out lives forever. You will have 'all the feels' as you navigate your way through it and every journey is unique. You will NEVER regret it!" -Debbie Worthen

Continue to attend classes to familiarize yourself with the system, which can be overwhelming at first. Learn more about trauma and attachment. Learn about their effects and how to provide a supportive environment for children from a variety of situations. Develop friendships that will be valuable to you in times of need. Making friends who are fellow foster parents is crucial because they understand the unique challenges and rewards of fostering, offering empathy and support that others may not fully grasp. This connection provides emotional support during tough times and valuable advice on navigating the system, managing positive relationships with biological families, and addressing issues only familiar to us as foster care providers. Friends who are likewise navigating the system can share resources and create a supportive community that reduces feelings of isolation and gives a sense of normalcy.

Lastly, check in regularly with your RFC. They are there to support you and answer your questions as they arise. When the time comes, they can play a vital link between you and DCFS, ensuring that you are well-supported and that the children's needs are met.

Good luck and welcome to our community!

EASTERN REGION UFC STAFF

Kobi Prettyman

LEAD FOSTER-ADOPTIVE CONSULTANT

McKay Esplin

TRAINER

Shannon Smith

RETENTION SERVICES SPECIALIST

Stephanie Benally

NATIVE AMERICAN SPECIALIST

Joel Redd

FOSTER-ADOPTIVE CONSULTANT

Kristen Sands

RETENTION SPECIALIST

UTAH DIVISION OF CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES (DCFS)

DCFS HQ

195 North 1950 West,
Salt Lake City, UT

Eastern Region DCFS Offices

**Need to Reach Your RFC?
Call your local DCFS Office**

Blanding (435) 678 - 1491

522 North 100 East

Castle Dale (435) 381 - 4730

1060 North Desbee Dove Road

Moab (435) 261 - 2368

1165 South Highway 191, #1

Price (435) 636 - 2360

475 West Price River Drive, #152

Roosevelt (435) 722 - 6550

140 West 425 South, #330 - 15

Vernal (435) 781 - 4250

1052 West Market Drive

UTAHFOSTERCARE.ORG

CLUSTERS



Support groups for foster, adoptive, and kinship families who meet monthly for support & training.

UINTAH BASIN | ROOSEVELT

Shannon Smith
shannon.smith@utahfostercare.org

UINTAH BASIN | VERNAL

Jennifer Collier (719) 252-2136

CARBON / EMERY

Jennifer Eden
jenisthebomb@gmail.com

GRAND/ SAN JUAN

Kristen Sands
kristen.sands@utahfostercare.org

RSVP FOR TRAININGS:

Please register for all classes on Bridge. If you need help, please contact your regional trainer.

CARBON/EMERY CLUSTER

BUILDING YOUR VILLAGE

Aug. 7, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Price DCFS, 475 W. Price River Dr.
All licensed foster parents and those interested in learning more about foster care are invited.

UINTAH BASIN CLUSTER

WHEN BLOCKED CARE EXISTS

Les Harris
Aug. 8, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Vernal Library, 204 E. 100 N.
Watch the Bridge app for more info.

EASTERN

SUMMER ACTIVITY

Aug. 10, 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Warren House, 7981 US-40, Lapoint
Join us for our monthly support group.

EASTERN

WHEN BLOCKED CARE EXISTS

Les Harris
Aug. 14, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Children's Justice Center
80 S. Fairgrounds Rd.
Watch the Bridge app for more info.

STATEWIDE

SELF-CARE FOR MENTORS

Aug. 19, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Online
Watch the Bridge app for the link and other info.

GRAND/ SAN JUAN CLUSTER

WHEN BLOCKED CARE EXISTS

Les Harris
Aug. 20, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
UFC Moab, 125 W. 200 S., #121
Watch the Bridge app for more info.

STATEWIDE

IMPACT OF BULLYING

Denice Beacham
Aug. 22, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Online
This is an open forum training. I'm learning from you! Come ready to share thoughts and motivations in this important work.

GRAND CLUSTER

SINGLE FOSTER PARENTS CLUSTER

Topic: TBA
Presenter: TBA
Aug. 26, 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm
We meet every fourth Monday. Watch the Bridge app for the link and other info. Google Meet:



STATEWIDE

ASK A FOSTER PARENT? LET'S HEAR FROM YOU!

Denice Beacham
Aug. 28, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm
Online
This is an open forum training. I'm learning from you! Come ready to share thoughts and motivations in this important work.

EASTERN

TBRI OVERVIEW

Kobi Prettyman
Sept. 9 & 16, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Price DCFS, 475 W. Price River Dr.
Watch the Bridge app for more info.

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart." -Helen Keller

GRAND/ SAN JUAN CLUSTER

5 DOMAINS OF EFFECTIVE PARENTING

Les Harris

Sept. 17, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

UFC Moab, 125 W. 200 S., #121

Watch the Bridge app for more info.

EASTERN

PURPLE NIGHT OUT

Sept. 17, 7:00 pm

Union High School, 50 E. Lagoon St.

Wear purple in honor of UFC. Licensed families can get into the game for free.

STATEWIDE

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Denice Beacham

Sept. 18, 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Online

Suicide in our kids is on the rise. Come learn signs and ways to help prevent suicide.

CARBON/EMERY CLUSTER

5 DOMAINS OF EFFECTIVE PARENTING

Les Harris

Sept. 18, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Children's Justice Center

80 S. Fairgrounds Rd.

Watch the Bridge app for more info.

EASTERN

DESSERT & DEVELOPMENT TRANSITION DISCUSSION

Sept. 23, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Local DCFS Office

Join us for a discussion about transitions and how to make them easier on all members of the child and family team.

STATEWIDE

SINGLE FOSTER PARENTS CLUSTER

Topic/Presenter TBA

Sept. 23, 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

We meet every fourth Monday. Watch the Bridge app for the link and other info. Google Meet:



STATEWIDE

ASK A FOSTER PARENT? LET'S HEAR FROM YOU!

Denice Beacham

Sept. 25, 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Online

This is an open forum training. I'm learning from you! Come ready to share thoughts and motivations in this important work.

TRAINING



To register for in-person classes, please contact the Cluster Facilitator sponsoring the training or your region trainer.

You are welcome to attend any class being offered.

When you've completed the training, please complete the class assignment in the Training Portal.

Brian Young, Northern Region
brian.young@utahfostercare.org

Terumi Sagers, Salt Lake Region
terumi.sagers@utahfostercare.org

Terri Rowley, Western Region
terri.rowley@utahfostercare.org

McKay Esplin, Eastern Region
mckay.esplin@utahfostercare.org

Denice Beacham, Southwest Region
denice.beacham@utahfostercare.org

Liz Rivera, Director of Education
liz.rivera@utahfostercare.org

TRAINING KEY

Online

In-Person

Both

SURVIVE & THRIVE

By: Kobi Prettyman, Lead Foster-Adoptive Consultant,
Utah Foster Care

A couple of years ago, a family in Castle Dale offered up their space at Swell Retreat for foster families to come and enjoy time in their facility while playing at the lake with kayaks, zip lines, and an obstacle course on water. As this relationship grew, the owners, Lacy and Ben Hardman, wanted to have a greater impact on the lives of the youth, so they offered to host a two-day camp for all children impacted by foster care. This included children currently in care, siblings in the foster home, children who have been adopted, as well as children who have returned home to their families.

*THEY ACCOMPLISHED THINGS ON THE SECOND DAY
THAT THEY WERE TERRIFIED TO DO ON THE FIRST.
I HEARD THROUGHOUT THE CAMP,
"IT WAS SCARY, BUT I WOULD DO IT AGAIN"
AND "THOSE ARE SOME OF MY NEW BEST FRIENDS."*

The camp was held in June, and 35 kids attended. The theme of the camp was "Survive and Thrive." The youth that attended learned how to improve emotional regulation, build skills such as cooking, and make connections with youth in similar situations. The owners led discussions focused on letting go of life's burdens and gaining skills to remain calm when life gets challenging, rather than reacting in a fight-or-flight state. As we watched horse demonstrations, a new phrase became well known to all those who attended the camp: "calm like a cookie," referencing a horse that maintained calm under stressful situations.



We watched over the two days as amazing things happened. The youth faced their fears and accomplished things on the second day that they were terrified to do on the first day. I heard throughout the camp, "It was scary, but I would do it again." They made new connections throughout camp and many of the youth were heard saying, "These are some of my new best friends." Attendees also partnered with a buddy for a blindfolded hike. It was heartwarming to see the older kids take on the responsibility of being a buddy to the younger kids. The connection the youth and children made with each other touched both the children and the adults who witnessed it.

The camp was a resounding success, and we are thrilled to announce that we plan to host it again next year. We encourage you to keep an eye out for the announcement and register your children and youth early for this transformative experience.

Finally, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Hardman family and Swell Retreat. Their generosity and commitment to the well-being of these children has left a lasting impact.

We cannot thank them enough for their invaluable contribution to this event.

www.swellretreat.com



CLINICAL CORNER

By: Les Harris, LCSW, Clinical Consultant, Utah Foster Care



Several years ago, a foster mother reported the success of a boy who had joined their family through foster care. The initial months were difficult, and there were many challenges. Eventually, he connected with the family and was able to join the military and begin a career that, at last report, continues to this day.

I have always described foster parenting as a system of delayed gratification due to the uncertainty often associated with whether your efforts “made a difference.” While the above example may provide some immediate positive feelings, the truth is fostering can have some distressing effects on families.

Utah Foster Care is dedicated to helping families through some of these difficulties by helping address the difficult emotions resulting from caring for children with sometimes overwhelming behaviors. Beginning this month, our newsletter will include some helpful information addressing these difficulties and identify possible resources—support, individual and group sessions or reading material—designed to help your fostering journey. So join me each month as we share information to assist with your efforts to help Utah’s most vulnerable children.

What began as a bold experiment in Utah now celebrates 25 years of nurturing families and transforming lives. As we reflect on a quarter-century of dedicated service in foster care, we take a moment to appreciate the profound impact that Utah Foster Care has had on countless children, families, and communities.

[LISTEN HERE](#)

Episode:
49

Looking Back: 25 Years of Utah Foster Care



A BIT MORE HOPE...

By: Cinda Morgan, LCSW

A GLIMMER OF HOPE

A fourteen-year-old girl, Ashley, was removed from everything and everyone she knew because of the choices of her parents. Ashley was plopped into a foster home with her younger brother, who she had always been more of a mother to than a sister. Because of her past experiences, including the kind of trauma that most people only see on television, Ashley didn't trust others and didn't believe good things in her life would last. Her foster parents participated in Handful of Hope, a non-profit family resilience program (handfulofhope.org). In the beginning, when her foster parents presented ideas and activities about gratitude, growth-minded, generosity, courage, and connection, she was very cranky about the whole thing. Ashley said, "I'm not grateful for anything." She couldn't even think of a food that she liked or was grateful for. As she experienced the security of a stable home life and as her foster parents persisted in teaching the Handful of Hope concepts designed to increase positive emotions through hands-on activities, there was a shift in Ashley. After some time, she grasped a glimmer of hope. The first positive thing Ashley said, albeit reluctantly, was, "I'm grateful I had a peanut butter sandwich today."

THE HOPE OF POSITIVE EMOTIONS

Researchers have been working for decades to uncover the benefits of positive emotions. Scientists have been interested in negative emotions for more than a hundred years, but positive emotions are a late-comer to the research party. To some people it might seem frivolous to study positive emotions. Even a young child knows she feels better when she is excited about playing a game rather than throwing a tantrum when she doesn't get her way. Is there really anything more to positive emotions than feeling good?

As it turns out, positive emotions have a life and death impact on us, but because it is not immediate, they often get overlooked. The now-famous nun study on aging also gives us some evidence of the power of positive emotions. Over the course of a few years, hundreds of Catholic nuns entered a convent in Minnesota in the 1930s. These young nuns were asked to write about the major events in their lives before joining the order. Sixty years later, in a gesture of complete selflessness, the nuns dedicated themselves to scientific study. While the nun study is primarily known for its insights into Alzheimer's disease, it also discovered that the nuns who expressed more positive emotions as young adults lived an average of 10 years longer than those who expressed few positive emotions.

HOPEFUL WAYS TO BUILD RESILIENCE

We still do not know all of the reasons why positive emotions boost life expectancy, but Dr. Barbara Fredrickson, the foremost expert on positive emotions, has uncovered at least one reason. Positive emotions can actually undo the effects of negative emotions. Interject negative emotions and your heart rate and blood pressure go up. Follow with positive emotions and your cardiovascular system quickly returns to baseline.

Perhaps the most surprising finding from Dr. Fredrickson's research is that positive emotions create a spring-board effect—positive emotions build resilience. When we go down emotionally, we can actually bounce higher than we were when we started. Her research has shown it is never too late for the power of positivity to help you and your family members.

THE COURAGE TO EMBRACE HOPE

As Ashley's foster parents taught about the core concept of courage from Handful of Hope, they were also packing up boxes to move the family, including Ashley and her brother, to another state. This disruption in her life, even though she was staying with a family that she was growing to love, hurled Ashley into a tailspin. It felt like her whole world was crumbling again. "You don't care about us. I'm running away and there is nothing you can do about it," she shouted at her foster mother. Ashley's understandably frantic reaction to moving threw her younger brother off kilter too. He became anxious and scared as he looked to Ashley for how to react. Ashley's foster mother quietly said to her, "Sometimes we choose to be courageous for someone else." In a matter of hours, Ashley chose to display heroic courage about the upcoming move in order to help her brother. And she embraced a little more hope.

THE HOPE OF CHANGE

Ashley's hope for something better started from what seemed like a grain of sand. From that begrudging bit of hope, Ashley cultivated a handful of hope. She became noticeably happier and more optimistic. Ashley's hope, and as a result her increased positivity, started when she had a different internal experience—a meager amount of the positive emotion of gratitude.

Certainly, Ashley's foster parents wanted something more for her than her negative emotions could generate. In fact, if you think about it, parents want the same thing—they want different results. Parents want a different bedtime result from their preschooler or they want their teenager to connect with the family rather than shutting themselves in their room.

Cinda Morgan, LCSW, is the founder and executive director of Handful of Hope and the clinical director of Wellspring Child and Family Counseling Center.

However, parents often get stuck trying to just talk others into a different result. Effective change comes from providing new experiences. If you want a different result, you start with a different experience. Different experiences shift our understanding which leads to different results—or different behaviors. The Handful of Hope resiliency program utilizes this principle. Over 135 activities in the program are designed to give your family many choices of ways to have different experiences and help your family increase their positive emotions. This is what the Handful of Hope hands-on activities taught by Ashley's foster parents did for Ashley and her brother. With these new experiences, Ashley made an internal shift and eventually delighted in designing positivity-building experiences for her family.

HANDFUL OF HOPE - WE TURN SCIENCE INTO FAMILY FUN

One Christmas, Ashley suggested that as they took turns hanging ornaments on their tree, they also describe something for which they were grateful. This was Ashley's own hands-on activity to help her family build positive emotions. Ashley had moved way beyond struggling to be grateful for a peanut butter sandwich.

Handful of Hope includes five Rezillion Superheroes who are reminders of the concepts. There are five fun, new songs that reinforce the concepts throughout the day and ten original children's stories to help your children see the concepts in action. Each of the five core concepts (gratitude, growth-minded, generosity, courage, and connection) has been shown through research to increase positivity and help individuals flourish.

You don't need to be super-human or poised for a parenting award for the concepts to help you and your family. If just a sliver of hope is enough to shift you into motion, then a handful of hope is enough to see you through the ups and downs of life. It doesn't take a mountain of hope or even a mound of hope—a handful is sufficient. That's the premise behind the Handful of Hope resiliency program. It is founded on the belief that within each of us is the capacity to thrive—even when we face challenging or less-than-ideal circumstances—when we leaven a little bit of hope and increase our positive emotions.

There certainly are times as a parent, and especially as a foster or adoptive parent, when things are difficult—and things can feel hopeless. But my hope is when you know the science of positive emotions and understand that simple things can create change and resilience, this will instill in you a bit more hope.

A BIT MORE HOPE...

As the founder and developer of the program, I have always envisioned offering Handful of Hope in an online learning format to provide foster parents with a bit more hope. After years of developing and refining—and with the help of Utah foster and adoptive parents—the dream of an online program is now a reality. With this program, parents learn fun, hands-on ways to teach their children ages 4 to 18 skills that will boost resilience. Whether you live in Blanding, Bear River or anywhere else in the state, busy parents have access to the program on-demand and at their convenience.

As a thank you to Utah Foster Care and the foster parents whose ideas and suggestions were invaluable to improving the program, we are offering foster and adoptive parents a significant discount on the Handful of Hope program!

SALE PRICE: \$99
ORIGINAL PRICE: \$250

COUPON CODE:
ROSTER24

Visit handfulofhope.org and click "Start learning"

In-service credit will be hour-for-hour and may vary depending on how many topics you complete

WISHING WELL



UFC limited funds available to meet special needs of children in care when DCFS is unable to.

QUESTIONS?

Northern Region

Anna Gibson - (801) 392-1114

Salt Lake Valley Region

Tina Porter -

tina.porter@utahfostercare.org

Western Region

Carmen Hall -

carmen.hall@utahfostercare.org

Eastern Region

Shannon Smith -

shannon.smith@utahfostercare.org

Southwest Region

Diane Fillmore - (877) 656-8065

REMINDER:

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

A Word on Vacations:

A child in care can receive vacation funds 1x in their lifetime. Vacation funds are restricted monetarily & may not cover all costs.



Utah Foster Care
5296 South Commerce Drive #400
Murray, UT 84107

utahfostercare.org

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage **PAID**
Salt Lake City, Utah
PERMIT N^o. 750



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH UTAH DIVISION OF CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES