

# FOSTER ROSTER

Utah's Foster Family Magazine

## LOOKING BACK ~ 25 YEARS OF UTAH FOSTER CARE

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## FOSTER THREADS

Order Utah Foster Care  
Apparel at a discount on page 5





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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

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## *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

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# 2024

## SALT LAKE FOSTER FAMILY OF THE YEAR



**HEATHER JOHNSON**

Heather Johnson has accepted five placements from newborns to preteens since 2019, including a double-placement to keep siblings together. She ensures foster children can attend their original schools, even driving from Rose Park where she lives, to Jordan School District!

Most importantly, Heather has built lasting relationships with parents, adoptive parents, and kin, continuing support even after DCFS involvement ends. Heather supports the reunification process, maintaining contact with families post-reunification and advocating for current placements despite challenges.

Thank you Heather for your efforts to create a safe space for Utah's children!



Thank you to Hannah Carlin, who made individualized care packages for children in foster care.

She collected more donations than expected as part of her Girl Scout Bronze Award.

**girl scouts** 

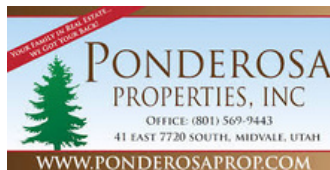


# BACKPACKS FOR BACK-TO-SCHOOL



This dedicated group ensures that children in foster care receive new backpacks and school supplies at the start of each school year. Move Forward by Giving Back @ moveforwardbygivingback and Ponderosa Properties, along with their friends, families, and community partners, support Utah Foster Care in providing these donations to students returning to the classroom. We are deeply grateful for their outstanding efforts!

If you would like to pick up backpacks and school supplies, please join us at our Back-to-School Distribution event at the Utah Foster Care Murray Office on Saturday, August 10th, from 10:00 am to noon.



## 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**

## SALT LAKE REGION UFC STAFF

**Tara Gailey**

LEAD FOSTER-ADOPTIVE CONSULTANT

**Esmeralda Malili**

FOSTER-ADOPTIVE CONSULTANT

**Melanie Montelongo**

SPANISH SERVICES CONSULTANT

**Terumi Sagers**

TRAINER

**Jenny Hill**

TRAINER

**Tina Porter**

RETENTION SERVICES

## UTAH DIVISION OF CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES (DCFS)

### DCFS HQ

195 North 1950 West,  
Salt Lake City, UT

### Salt Lake Region DCFS Offices

Need to Reach Your RFC?  
Call your local DCFS Office

**Metro (801) 488-2620**

1385 South State

**Midtown (801) 253-5720**

10008 South Creek Run Way

**Oquirrh (801) 952-4100**

2655 South Lake Erie Drive

**Southtowne (801) 253-5720**

10008 South Creek Run Way

**TAL (801) 488-2620**

1385 South State

**Tooele (435) 833-7350**

305 North Main Street

UTAHFOSTERCARE.ORG



# CLUSTERS



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

## **Kearns/Magna/WVC**

Kylie Neff (801) 916-8484  
kylie.neff@live.com

## **Sandy/Draper**

Janet McLain (801) 867-1552  
jmclain6@outlook.com

## **South Valley West**

Flor Purziani (435) 714-9370  
florpurziani@gmail.com

## **West Jordan**

Ruthanne Young (801) 652-5500  
ruthannelovesme@gmail.com

## **Murray/Midvale/East Salt Lake**

Nan Taylor (801) 808-3399  
ntalor@yahoo.com

## **Tooele**

Katie Fowler (435) 553-1164  
katie.ann.will@gmail.com

## **F.L.Y.**

Adrienne Shearer (801)-722-8195  
redshoelady@gmail.com

## **Single Foster Parents**

Shannon Wu (650) 804-4321  
shannonawu@gmail.com

## **RSVP FOR TRAININGS:**

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

### **SALT LAKE**

#### **DANGERS OF VAPING**

Steven Hanson, Utah Health Dept.  
Aug. 7, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
UFC Murray Office  
5296 Commerce Dr., Suite 400  
Come learn how to talk to your kids about the dangers of vaping.

### **MONTHLY SUPPORT GROUP**

#### **FOSTERING CONNECTION**

Mike Hamblin, CSW  
Aug. 9, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
UFC Murray Office  
5296 Commerce Dr., Suite 400  
Fostering is challenging. Connect and get the support you need.

### **SOUTH VALLEY WEST CLUSTER**

#### **BOOK CLUB "NO DRAMA DISCIPLINE"**

Aug. 12, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Herriman Library  
5380 W. Herriman Main St.  
Discover how to turn everyday parenting challenges into opportunities for learning and bonding.

### **SALT LAKE**

#### **NAVIGATING KINSHIP**

Jenny Hill  
Aug. 16, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
UFC Murray Office  
5296 Commerce Dr., Suite 400  
How to navigate the ups and downs of foster care and what happens when kin enter the picture.

### **STATEWIDE**

#### **SELF-CARE FOR MENTORS**

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

### **SALT LAKE**

#### **PERMANENT CUSTODY & GUARDIANSHIP VS ADOPTION**

Jenny Hill  
Aug. 23, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
UFC Murray Office  
5296 Commerce Dr., Suite 400  
Get real answers to help navigate the differences between adoption, permanent custody, and guardianship.

### **STATEWIDE**

#### **SINGLE FOSTER PARENTS CLUSTER**

Topic/Presenter TBA  
Aug. 26, 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Online

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





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

## 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.

## SALT LAKE

### DAD'S NIGHT OUT

Mike Hamblin  
Sept. 13, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
UFC Murray Office

5296 Commerce Dr., Suite 400  
Get ready for great food, and unforgettable memories as a group of dads take a well-deserved night out!

## TOOELE CLUSTER

### CPR & FIRST AID

Michelle Ostmark  
Sept. 14, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm  
Location TBD

Get hands-on training and licensure hours, too. Learn DCFS policy and procedure for foster parents to prevent allegations with documentation.

## 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.

## FLY CLUSTER

### MOVIE "LARS AND THE REAL GIRL"

Sept. 20, 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm  
UFC Murray Office  
5296 Commerce Dr., Suite 400  
Discover the value of empathy, the power of unconditional acceptance, and the healing potential of a supportive community.

## STATEWIDE

### SINGLE FOSTER PARENTS CLUSTER

Topic & Presenter TBA  
Sept. 23, 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
We meet every fourth Monday!

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.

## SOUTH VALLEY WEST CLUSTER

### INTERNET SAFETY

Sept. date TBD  
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Herriman Library  
5380 W Herriman Main St.

Learn how to achieve a secure online experience for your kids.

# 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](mailto:brian.young@utahfostercare.org)

Terumi Sagers, Salt Lake Region  
[terumi.sagers@utahfostercare.org](mailto:terumi.sagers@utahfostercare.org)

Terri Rowley, Western Region  
[terri.rowley@utahfostercare.org](mailto:terri.rowley@utahfostercare.org)

McKay Esplin, Eastern Region  
[mckay.esplin@utahfostercare.org](mailto:mckay.esplin@utahfostercare.org)

Denice Beacham, Southwest Region  
[denice.beacham@utahfostercare.org](mailto:denice.beacham@utahfostercare.org)

Liz Rivera, Director of Education  
[liz.rivera@utahfostercare.org](mailto:liz.rivera@utahfostercare.org)

### TRAINING KEY

Online

In-Person

Both





# HELPFUL TIPS TO EASE INTO A BACK-TO-SCHOOL ROUTINE

Organized by: Tina Porter, Retention Services Specialist, Utah Foster Care



Ease back into a school-based sleep schedule. Those early mornings will be here soon, so start putting the kids to bed and waking them earlier at least a week before school starts.



Get your family's calendar organized. All of the soccer practices and school holidays need to be on one calendar where the whole family can see it.



Take advantage of any meet-the-teacher opportunities. It will help your children feel more comfortable when school starts if they have met the teacher in advance. This is especially important with children who have back-to-school anxiety or if they are attending a new school.



Create a structured morning routine. Having as many things ready to go as possible in the morning will help keep everyone on track. Make sure all of the homework has been completed the night before and limit screen time to avoid distractions.



Plan out lunches in advance. Involving the kids makes a big difference during the school year and can help them eat more nutritious foods.



Stay positive about any stress or anxiety your children are expressing. A parent's attitude has a strong influence on how children view the beginning of school.



Create a launch pad! This is where all of the next day's items are gathered, such as school bags, coats, shoes and afterschool items. This will help everyone know where to find those items in the morning and it will empower your children to stay organized.



Nurture independence. Your children can help with many of these tasks, which foster ownership and speed up the process. Involve them in some of the smaller decisions by letting them decide between two acceptable choices. The more your children are able to do for themselves, the more confident they will be.

Source: [gideonmathandreading.com](https://gideonmathandreading.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](http://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](http://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](mailto:tina.porter@utahfostercare.org)

### Western Region

Carmen Hall -

[carmen.hall@utahfostercare.org](mailto:carmen.hall@utahfostercare.org)

### Eastern Region

Shannon Smith -

[shannon.smith@utahfostercare.org](mailto: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](http://utahfostercare.org)

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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH UTAH DIVISION OF CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES