

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



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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

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

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Orem

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Price, UT 84501
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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

2024

WESTERN FOSTER FAMILY OF THE YEAR

THE GARRETTS

The Garretts are always looking for ways to help. They treat their kids in care as their own by helping them get involved in activities, taking them on vacations, and so much more. The Garretts are very supportive of reunification and consistently go out of their way to help the bio families be successful.

They work hard to help other foster parents with respite, transportation, and by being someone to talk to. They freely give of themselves to others in need. When they found out that there was a family involved with DCFS that needed help with Christmas, they jumped right in to provide gifts for the entire family.

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

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!

WESTERN REGION UFC STAFF

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TRAINER

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RETENTION SERVICES SPECIALIST

UTAH DIVISION OF CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES (DCFS)

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Western Region DCFS Offices

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

Heber City (435) 657-4200
69 North 600 West

American Fork (801) 763-4100
861 East 900 North

Orem (801) 224-7820
1106 North 1200 West

Salem (801) 794-6700
609 North State Road 198

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1403 South Main St

Delta (435) 864-3869
39 South 300 East Rd

Fillmore (435) 743-6611
55 West 100 North

UTAHFOSTERCARE.ORG

CLUSTERS



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

NORTH CLUSTER

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RSVP FOR TRAININGS:

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

WESTERN

UTILIZING RESOURCES FOR KIDS 0-8

Beth Hardman & Brittany Littlefield
Aug. 8, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Salem DCFS, 609 UT-198
With years of experience in provision of services and years accessing services we have the best coming to guide us.

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.

SUPPORT GROUP

RELATIONSHIPS FOR HEALING SUPPORT GROUP

Terri Rowley, LCSW
Aug. 22, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
Online
Your experiences matter. We want to surround you with a group that sees and understands the emotional demands. Watch the Bridge app for the link and other info.

WESTERN

ANNUAL BARBEQUE

Aug. 24, 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Orem Windsor Park, 1356 N. 200 W.
Join us for our annual barbeque!
Watch the Bridge app for more information.

STATEWIDE

SINGLE FOSTER PARENTS CLUSTER

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:



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.

SUPPORT GROUP

SUPPORT GROUP

Les Harris, LCSW
Sept. 6, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
UFC Orem | 274 W. Center St.
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

TIMPANOGOS AND NORTH CLUSTER

5 LESSONS FOR SUCCESS AS A TEEN IN FOSTER CARE

Robert Mooney

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

UFC Orem | 274 W. Center St.

Parents and teens date night! Pizza, ice cream, and identifiable information that matters to youth in foster care and navigating young adult experiences.

STATEWIDE

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Denice Beacham

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

Timpanogos Park Provo Canyon

Suicide in our kids is on the rise. Come learn signs and ways to help prevent suicide. Watch the Bridge app for the link and other info.

STATEWIDE | ONLINE

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 | ONLINE

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

TRAINING KEY

Online

In-Person

Both

ADVOCATING FOR YOUR CHILD IN CARE: A GUIDE FOR FOSTER PARENTS

By Carmen Hall, Retention Services Specialist, Utah Foster Care

After attending a recent training, I gained valuable insights on effective advocacy, communication strategies, and fostering positive relationships to support and empower our children in care.

Advocating for your child is a vital part of being a foster parent. It involves consistent communication, effective tracking, and fostering positive relationships with everyone involved in your child's life. Here's how you can ensure that your advocacy efforts are effective and beneficial for your child.

Write a Weekly Email

A weekly email to the caseworker, Resource Family Consultant (RFC), and assigned nurse can be incredibly effective. This email should provide updates on your child's well-being, any incidents, progress in school, and health concerns. Including everyone in the loop ensures that all parties are informed and can act swiftly when needed. Keep your Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) informed. The information you provide can help them effectively advocate for your child.

Track and Document Everything

Keeping detailed records of your child's behavior, health, and educational progress is crucial. This information can be invaluable for future diagnoses and helps professionals understand your child's needs better.

Communicate with Teachers

Maintaining regular communication with teachers is vital. Teachers can provide insights into the child's academic and social progress. Sharing these updates with the rest of the team ensures that everyone knows the child's development and any challenges they may face in school.

Foster Positive Relationships with the Bio Family

Building a good relationship with the child's biological family can significantly impact the child's sense of stability and security. Show respect and empathy towards biological parents and make an effort to keep them informed about their child's progress. This helps them feel involved and valued, which in turn supports your child's emotional well-being.



Advocate for the Child's Best Interests

Always prioritize your child's best interests in your advocacy efforts. This means putting aside your personal feelings and focusing on what is most beneficial for your child. Being the constant in your child's life gives you a unique perspective to advocate effectively for their needs.

Validate Biological Parents

When meeting with biological parents, it's essential to validate their role in their child's life. One foster mom suggested starting with acknowledging their efforts and complimenting them on something positive about their child. This shows you recognize their contributions and respect their relationship with the child. Asking them questions about their child also helps validate their ongoing role as parents. Consider sending photos occasionally to the caseworker for the parents to view. This allows them to feel part of their child's life still.

Conclusion

As a foster care parent, you play a pivotal role in advocating for your foster child. Through consistent communication, thorough tracking, positive relationships, and a focus on your child's best interests, you can significantly impact their well-being and future. Remember, your advocacy is a cornerstone of your child's stability and growth, and your efforts are invaluable in helping them thrive.

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

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Western Region

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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
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Murray, UT 84107

utahfostercare.org

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