

Fostering Together Welcome Packet Whatcom County



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Contact Numbers

Intake: 1-866-end-harm (1-866-363-4276)

After Hours Foster Parent Support Line: 1-800-301-1868

If you need support, assistance or help with a child in your care after normal business hours, on weekends or holidays. If you are experiencing an emergency with a child's health, mental health or out of control behaviors that could cause injury to the child or others, DO NOT hesitate to call 911.

CA Staff Phone List

Go to the CA foster parent web page at: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/foster-parenting>
Click on the hyperlink: **Get contact information for Children's Administration staff**

Fostering Together Liaisons: <http://fosteringtogether.org/about/staff/regional/>

Washington State Federally Recognized Tribe Directory:

<http://www.goia.wa.gov/Tribal-Directory/TribalDirectory.pdf>

Foster Parents Association of Washington State (FPAWS):

[Fpaws.org](http://fpaws.org) or (800) 391-2273

Resource List

Clothing & Personal Items

Foster Closet

Services Offered: Clothing and childcare equipment and accessories.

- Location: 1504 Larrabee Ave, Bellingham, WA.
- Website: Coming Soon
- Email: whatcomfostercloset@gmail.com
- Area Served: Whatcom & Skagit County
- Eligibility Requirements: ...Youth must be state dependent or low income & 0 to 18 yrs. old
- Referral required from social worker: ... No

Blue Skies for Children

Services Offered: Academic and educational assistance programs, Little Wishes, Winter Warm Up Program, and many other programs.

- Location: 2505 Cedarwood Ave. Ste. 5, Bellingham, WA.
- Website: <http://www.blueskiesforchildren.org>
- Phone: 360-756-6710
- Area Served: Whatcom & Skagit County
- Eligibility Requirements: ...Youth must be state dependent or low income & 6 to 18 yrs old
- Referral required from social worker: ... No

Treehouse

Services Offered: Academic and educational assistance programs, summer camp and child activity funding, 'warehouse' with essentials, like clothing, toys and teen items.

- Location: 2100 24th Avenue S. Suite 200, Seattle, WA.

- Website: <http://www.treehouseforkids.org/>
- Phone: 206-767-7000
- Area Served: Kids from King County. Call to inquire
- Eligibility Requirements: Youth must be state dependent
- Referral required from social worker: Yes
- Special Comments: Funding for childhood activities and summer camps has a child maximum per year. Please call for details. Treehouse offers a 'Holiday Magic' program each year open to all children and youth residing in Washington.

Sibling House

Services Offered: Family Support, networking, limited clothing and children's items.

- Location: Please contact for address
- Website: <http://www.siblinghouse.org>
- Phone: 425-828-2789
- Areas Served: Western Washington
- Eligibility Requirements: Must be licensed for two or more children
- Referral Required: No, but may be required to submit proof of licensure
- Special Comment: Please contact via their website

The Caring Place

Services Offered: Free clothing and children's items.

- Location: 9928 272nd PL NW, Stanwood WA
- Email: oslcstanwood@frontier.com
- Areas Served: Western Washington
- Open: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1pm to 4pm

Caregiver Camping Pass with foster license: <http://www.parks.wa.gov/>

Seattle Aquarium Free Admission with foster license: <http://fosteringtogether.org/free-entry-to-the-seattle-aquarium-for-foster-parents-and-relative-caregivers/>

Pacific Science Center Free Membership with Foster license: <http://www.pacificsciencecenter.org>

Household Items

Furnishing Hope

Services Offered: Furniture bank for licensed foster parents and/or youth

- Location: 5025 304th St. E., Graham, WA
- Phone: 253-355-7902
- Areas Served: Western Washington
- Eligibility Requirements: Open to licensed caregivers, relative placements and youth preparing to exit foster care for independent living.
- Referral Required: No
- Special Comments: This resource is operated from a caregiver's home; please call to verify what furniture and other items are available.

Placement Resources & Supports

Native American Placements

When caring for a Native American child, additional resources and supports are often available through the child's tribe(s). In some cases, a Native American child may be under the jurisdiction of a tribal court. In these cases, you may have a tribal social worker in addition to or instead of a state social worker. As a licensed foster parent caring for a Native American child, you also have access to Fostering Together's Native American Liaison for assistance and support.

In caring for a Native American child, foster parents will need to be open and available to partner with the child's tribe(s). As all families have unique culture and traditions; tribes also have unique culture and traditions. Establishing a partnership with the child's tribe(s) can afford the opportunity for foster parents to be introduced to some of the child's history, culture, and traditions, which will in turn help the foster parent better meet the child's needs.

FTDM (Family Team Decision-Making Meeting) & Shared Planning Meetings

A Family Team Decision-Making Meeting (FTDM) is a type of family meeting used by Children's Administration to make critical, placement-related decisions in an inclusive and strength-based way. An FTDM develops a Plan for a child to be placed safely in the least restrictive, least intrusive placement possible.

When is an FTDM held?

An FTDM is held whenever an out-of-home placement or placement move of a child is possible.

- An IMMINENT RISK FTDM may be held if there is a risk of placement. Hopefully, a Plan can be developed to keep the child safely at home.
- An EMERGENT FTDM is held within 72 hours of a child being placed in protective custody or a court ordered placement.
- When an out-of-home placement is at risk of disrupting, a PLACEMENT STABILIZATION FTDM is held and a Plan to support the placement or identify a new placement for the child is developed.
- An FTDM is also held when a child is returning to his parents' care or a move to an adoptive home is planned. This is called a RETURN HOME FTDM or a PERMANENCY FTDM.
- For additional information: <http://fosteringtogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/MAKING-FTDM-WORK-FOR-YOU-Foster-Parent.pdf>

Transportation to Visits

Caregivers are not required to transport children to visits. However, many caregivers prefer to transport their foster child to and from visits. Some foster parents want to help with supervision and that is okay, but foster parents are never required or expected to transport or supervise the visits.

The child's assigned worker and caregiver should establish ongoing communication to discuss the child's visit plan and arrangements, including transportation. This would be a good topic to discuss during the worker's monthly visit. Sometimes visitation plans change. It's helpful to have both the worker and caregiver prepared and ready to support the child, if the visit schedule, location, transporter, or other factors need to change.

Court Dates

As a caregiver, you are entitled to know about the date and time of the child's court hearings. Here are some ways you can learn when the court hearing is scheduled:

- When the child is first placed with you, let the assigned worker know you need the court date.
- Ask the assigned worker for the date and time of the next hearing at the child's next Health and Safety visit.
- When you receive a copy of the child's Court Report, check the front page; the date of the next hearing is printed there.
- If you attend the court review hearings, the court sets the date and time for the next review during the hearing.
- Caregivers are encouraged to submit to the child's social worker *Caregivers Report to the Court* 2 weeks prior to the court date. You can obtain the form here:
<http://fosteringtogether.org/resources/forms/>

WIC

Children placed in foster care between the ages of birth – five years of age will likely be eligible for nutrition and food services through the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) program. Under this service families can expect to receive free formula and food for children. Benefits are usually around \$50 a month.
<http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/678/Women-Infants-Children-WIC-Program>

Respite

Respite is care provided to children placed in your home to give you a break from daily caregiver responsibilities. Respite care gives you the opportunity for personal time away from home and can support you if there is an emergency that takes you away from home. Respite care can play an important role in maintaining the stability of a child's placement, avoiding disruption and supporting you.

CA policy identifies three types of respite care:

- Retention Respite – respite days earned on a monthly basis when caring for a dependent child. Paid by CA.
- Child Specific Respite – tied to the medical, behavioral or special needs of an individual child. Paid by CA.
- Exchange Respite – planned and negotiated between licensed caregivers and does not include payment of CA fund.

Licensed foster parents may be eligible for respite services provided by the department. Respite care is provided by someone who is approved by the department and is paid to care for foster children to support placement. DLR must approve the home, along with your child's social worker, if that care will exceed 72 hours (WAC 388-148-1600). Caregivers may find substitute care for their children utilizing prudent parenting for less than 72 hours (WAC 388-148-1605).

Respite care services for unlicensed relative caregivers or suitable person placements are intended to meet the needs of children and families in emergency situations and prevent placement disruptions. Respite services are paid by CA if the respite provider for an unlicensed relative caregiver or a suitable person placement is a licensed foster parent.

Foster parents and relative caregivers are encouraged to find their own respite providers when possible. Appropriate friends, family members and other foster homes may be a good place to start. Many homes

make connections and find respite providers at local support group meetings. To find out how to get your friends and family approved contact your Fostering Together Liaison or your licensor.

Under the Prudent Parent Law, foster parents now may also arrange for the foster child to spend the night away from the foster home for up to 72 hours with someone known to the foster parent. Foster parents must ensure the needs of the child will be met and any safety and supervision plans are followed. The Prudent Parenting law does not require payment for short term care of up to 72 hours. However, if a foster parent makes arrangements for the child and agrees to pay the alternate caregiver for short term care, the expenses are paid by the foster parent.

You do not need to deduct the respite days used from your monthly foster care maintenance payment. Although you are using respite care, the child is still placed in your home and will return once respite is over. However, if a child is in respite for 14 days or longer, per CA, this is considered a change in placement and requires prior approval from the child's caseworker. Make sure to talk with the child's caseworker when your respite request is 14 days or longer. The request should be made in advance because staffing and approval by a supervisor or an area administrator (AA) is required.

Utilizing Childcare

Finding appropriate childcare can be a challenge for all parents. All childcare providers should be approved and accept DSHS subsidy payments in order to be subsidized by the department. Please speak with your child's assigned social worker if you will need paid childcare services for your foster child and ensure these payments are authorized before starting care for your foster child.

Child Care Resources

Childcare Resources is a data-base that includes over 2,000 childcare programs. Resource Specialists can help find a provider for you over the phone or provide a printed list for your review. Services are free of charge for licensed providers.

Call 1-800-446-1114 or <http://www.childcare.org>

Health & Safety Information

Health & Safety Visits

Foster parents and relative caregivers of children placed by CA must receive face-to-face monthly visits.

- Visits with children and caregivers may occur during the same monthly visit; and
- Location of the visit may vary.

During Health & Safety Visits it is normal for a social worker to:

* Discuss with the verbal child in private, separate from the parent or out-of-home caregiver, either in the home or in another location where the child is comfortable:

- Whether the child feels safe in his or her home or placement.
- The child's needs, wants and progress.
- How visits with siblings and parents are going.
- The child's connections with siblings and other relatives. For youth 16 and above, this includes discussing skills and strategies to:
 - Safely reconnect with any identified family members.
 - Provide guidance and services to assist the youth.

- Maintain community and cultural connections
- Participation and interest in normal childhood activities.
- Case activities and planning such as visits and permanent plan.

The CA social worker is also required to conduct an unannounced visit with caregivers in 10% of randomly selected homes. The caregivers requiring unannounced visits are randomly selected in FamLink.

Requirements for monthly visits with out-of-home caregiver must include:

- Discussion of the child’s well-being and permanency goals;
- Observation of the child and caregiver’s relationship and home environment when a visit occurs in the caregiver’s home;
- Assessment of the caregiver’s ability to provide adequate care and maintain placement stability;
- Identification of any support or trainings needs;
- Inquiry about the child’s visit with siblings and parents and how the child is responding;
- Discussion about normal childhood activities the child participates in, or is interested in;
- Discussion of any requests to significantly change the child’s appearance. Significant changes include, but are not limited to, body piercings, haircuts, and changes in hairstyles. Prior approval must be obtained from the parent (Tribe, if the child is legally free) or court;
- Share the parent’s interest in the child’s care and requests for the child’s participation in normal childhood activities.

If you are not receiving regular monthly visits for the child placed in your home by the assigned worker, please contact the supervisor to inquire about scheduling your child’s next visit. Your assistance and partnership will help CA ensure high quality services for the child in your care and also for you as the caregiver.

For more information:

<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/CA/fos/documents/swcaregiverchecklist.pdf>

Initial Health Screening

All children and youth coming in to care will need a “Foster Care Initial Health Screen”, or a basic health check-up within five days of coming in to care. Your child’s social worker should provide this form to you.

You can also find a copy here: <https://www.hca.wa.gov/assets/billers-and-providers/13-843.pdf>

All children will need an EPSDT Well-Child exam within 30 days. (WAC 388-148-1550) Children will also need an appointment made for a dental exam within the first month of placement. You are required to maintain a file of all health care records for your child, and return those documents to the social worker when the child leaves your home (WAC 388-148-1405; WAC 388-148-1415).

CHET Screening

A CHET (Child Health & Education Tracking) social worker will contact you shortly after placement to help gather health and education information about the child, and v=be available to help make referrals for any area of concern. They may need to visit with the child in your home, and will generally ask questions about any observations or concerns you may have with the child and their development. A copy of the child’s completed CHET screen report will be provided to you once all the information is gathered, to assist in meeting the child’s needs.

Medical Services

All state-dependent children are eligible for free medical and dental services under Medicaid which is administered through Provider One or Coordinated Care Apple Health. You can locate a provider near you that accepts this insurance for Provider One here: <https://fortress.wa.gov/hca/p1findaprovider/> or Coordinated Care Apple Health here: <https://www.coordinatedcarehealth.com/find-a-doctor.html>

Peace Health

Provides medical care and has a pharmacy. Usually takes foster children without a long wait.
<http://www.peacehealth.org>

Walk in Health Clinic

Walk in health clinic. 7 days a week 8:30 to 5pm. <http://www.walkinhealthclinic.com/>

Semar

Semar provides medical and dental health. <http://www.seamar.org/>

Interfaith Community Health Center

Provides evidence-based primary care. Care includes preventive medical, dental, behavioral health, and pharmacy services. <http://unitycarenw.org/>

Harborview Foster Care Clinic

Consultations for foster children with medical, behavioral and other special health care needs.
<http://www.uwmedicine.org/locations/foster-care-harborview>

WIC

Children placed in foster care between the ages of birth – five years of age will likely be eligible for nutrition and food services through the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) program. Under this service families can expect to receive free formula and food for children. Benefits are usually around \$50 a month.
<http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/678/Women-Infants-Children-WIC-Program>

Foster Care Medical Team

If you need assistance getting pre-approval for medications or have trouble in accessing needed medical care or medications for your foster child, please contact the foster care medical team (FCMT) to determine eligibility. They can be reached at: 1-800-562-3022 X 15480

Fostering Well-Being Coordination Unit

All children in care are referred to the Fostering Well-Being Coordination Unit to assist with gathering medical and immunization records. For families with children who have complex needs, such as medically fragile children or those with developmental delays, auto-immune or physical disabilities, can request a referral for coordination through the Fostering Well-Being Unit. This team, comprised of several social workers and registered nurses, can assist you in accessing specific providers for your child and navigate referrals. Anyone can refer to the Fostering Well-Being Coordination Unit.

Phone: 1-800-422-3263 X 52626 Email: fwbccu@dshs.wa.gov

Mental Health Support

Children in foster care may benefit from being engaged in mental health supports, including therapy or school-based counseling to help process the complicated emotions related to being in out-of-home care. Please discuss with the child's social worker or case manager if you need assistance enrolling your child in therapy. Your CHET screener may also be able to help you. Below are some agencies available to provide therapy services:

- Catholic Community Service..... 360-676-2164
- Seattle Children's Home..... 206-283-3300
- Ryther.....206-517-0234

Car Seats

Caregivers are responsible for ensuring that they have proper fitting car seats for children in their care. Understanding how to properly use and install a car seat is essential for correct use.

Fire stations will often offer free installation checks for families. Seattle Children's Hospital in Seattle also offers periodic free training. You can look for a car seat check location near you at:

<http://www.800bucklup.org>

Educational and Service Support

Children in care should have an educational plan developed to ensure learning needs are met. Please follow the educational plan approved by the child's DSHS social worker. This may involve ensuring regular school attendance, assisting with homework and other tasks as needed.

(WAC 388-148-1525)

Families may find that working with an educational advocate is useful, particularly for children that may need assistance with transportation to and from school, tutoring and special accommodations, understanding and utilizing an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) or a 504 plan.

ECEAP

Children may also be eligible for ECEAP (Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program) for free developmental preschool. Check with your local school district for eligibility.

<http://web3.esd112.org/ccfs/programs-and-services/eceap>

Early Childhood Intervention

Children in foster care may have physical, emotional or social-emotional delays. It is important to be proactive about addressing these concerns. Many early childhood intervention providers are available to work with families with birth-three children. Please speak with your social worker or CHET screener for a referral. For children with delays over three years of age, please contact your local school district for an evaluation. Your social worker or case manager can also assist you with this process.

Financial Support & Reimbursements

Caring for children can be expensive. Below are a few ways that caregivers can stretch your TANF and foster care stipends. Remember, medical and prescription cost is not something a caregiver is expected to pay.

Monthly Foster Care Maintenance Payments

Caregivers will receive an invoice each month for the care of the children in their home. It comes by mail the later part of each month and the caregiver calls in the number provided on the form to process the payment. The payment will be processed at the beginning of the following month and either arrive by mail or direct deposit. If you do not receive on by the first of the following month or you have a child missing from the invoice contact your child's social worker.

Relatives of specified degree have the option of choosing TANF or foster care maintenance payments for the children placed with them by DCFS.

To receive foster care payments, the relative's home must be licensed to receive foster care payments.

When using respite care, you do not have to deduct the child from your monthly invoice. Although you are using respite care, the child is still placed in your home and will return once respite is over. However, if a child is in respite for 14 days or longer, per CA, this is considered a change in placement and requires prior approval from the child's caseworker. Make sure to talk with the child's caseworker when your respite request is 14 days or longer. The request should be made in advance because staffing and approval by a supervisor or an area administrator (AA) is required.

Mileage Reimbursement

Caregivers may be eligible to be reimbursed for mileage incurred to drive a child to medical and therapy appointments and other court-ordered services. All mileage needs to be reported to the assigned social worker. Mileage cannot be reimbursed more than 90 days after it occurs. If it has been longer than 30 days since you submitted your Mileage form to the social worker and you have not received the payment contact your child's social worker and supervisor.

The mileage form (Caregiver Monthly Mileage) 07-090 can be located here:

<http://fosteringtogether.org/resources/forms/>

Sibling Visits

Children's Administration can reimburse caregivers up to twice a month, at \$7.03 per child per visit for activities or items used during a sibling visit. This is in addition to appropriate mileage or parking expenses you may incur, if approved in advance from your child's social worker. Make sure to claim the sibling visit expenses on your caregiver monthly mileage form. If it has been longer than 30 days since you submitted your Mileage form to the social worker and you have not received the payment contact your child's social worker and supervisor.

The mileage form (Caregiver Monthly Mileage) 07-090 can be located here:

<http://fosteringtogether.org/resources/forms/>

Foster Care Rate Assessment

Foster children just entering care all area a level one and can be assessed after 30 days. Levels do not follow the child. Every time a child moves to a new foster home, a new rate assessment must be done. For example, if a child is a level 3 in his current foster home, when he moves to a new foster home, the level of the child in the new foster home will be a level 1 (FamLink automatically does that). Then a new rate assessment will need to be done with the new foster home. Based on the information provided by the new foster parent and the needs of the child, the rate assessor will enter the appropriate level into our FamLink system. The rate assessor will always back date the level to the day the child was placed into the new foster home.

Foster Parent Rate Assessment Guide:

<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/SESA/publications/documents/22-1556.pdf>

Foster Parent Damage Claim & Liability Program

In the event a foster child causes significant damage or loss, please check with your social worker whether it would be appropriate to submit a reimbursement claim, under the Foster Parent Damage Claim & Liability Program.

A checklist including all required item to submit a claim can be found at:

<http://fosteringtogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Forms-Damage-Claim.pdf>

Fostering Together Program

Fostering Together is here to answer your questions, offer guidance to you during the licensing process and provide ongoing support after becoming a licensed foster parent. All services are free to foster, adoptive and kinship caregivers. Visit us at www.fosteringtogether.org and find your liaison.

Foster Parents are PROVIDED with the following:

- Support Groups
- Training for caregivers and referrals for additional instruction
- Support foster parents at Family Team Decision-Making Meetings
- Reimbursement process guidance
- Community resources and events
- Adoption information
- A neutral bridge between the state or your private agency

Fostering Together Support Groups

To find your local liaison:

<http://fosteringtogether.org/about/staff/regional/>

To find local support groups:

<http://fosteringtogether.org/support-groups/sub-region-flyers/>

Fostering Together Facebook Support Groups

Statewide:

<http://fosteringtogether.org/support-groups/online-groups/>

- Fostering Together Foster to Adopt
- Fostering Together Deaf Children Network
- Fostering Together Kinship Caregivers

Regional:

<http://fosteringtogether.org/support-groups/online-groups/>

- Fostering Together Region 2 Support Group
- Fostering Together Whatcom County

FIRST Program (Foster Intervention, Retention & Support Team)

The FIRST Program provides neutral advice and support to licensed foster parents when an allegation of child abuse & neglect (CA/N) or a licensing allegation is made against them. The FIRST program staff will respond to your call within 12 hours, explain the investigation process, along with what you can expect.

Phone:253-219-6782

Additional Resources

Critical Support & Retention Program

The Critical Support and Retention Program support caregivers for high-needs children exhibiting behaviors such as sexually reactive children, physically aggressive children and other high needs.

This program requires a referral for the child's social worker.

DSHS Social Worker Referral Line:855-395-7990

Alliance for Child Welfare Training

- The Alliance for Child Welfare is a resource for finding additional trainings relevant to caring for the foster children in your care. All licensed foster parents are required to participate in ongoing training once licensed;
- 36 hours during their first three-year licensing period
- 30 hours during their second three-year licensing period
- 24 hours during all subsequent three-year licensing periods

Alliance for Child Welfare: <https://allianceforchildwelfare.org/>

Training Course Catalog: <https://allianceforchildwelfare.org/course-schedule>

Caregiver Trainings

<http://fosteringtogether.org/training/caregiver-training/training-options/>

Mockingbird Society

Mockingbird Society offers training and community-based support groups utilizing the constellation model of care. Families interested in joining a constellation can learn more at:

<http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org/>

Caregiver Forms

Fostering Together

1. <https://www.fosteringtogether.org>
2. Select your Region
3. Click on "Resources"
4. Select "Forms"
5. Forms are listed alphabetically

Children's Administration

1. <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/foster-parenting>
2. Click on "Important Forms for Caregivers" on the far-left side-bar
3. Search by form number

WAC's (Licensing Requirements for Foster Homes)

<http://fosteringtogether.org/resources/forms/>

Go to form called WAC's

Prudent Parenting Guidelines

<http://fosteringtogether.org/resources/forms/>

Go to form called Caregiver Guidelines for Foster Child Activities or Prudent Parenting

Foster Parent Frequently Asked Questions

<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fp-faq>

This welcome packet is intended to be a useful resource for licensed and kinship providers. This list may not contain every resource or service available to families, and services provided may vary by case plan or region. These programs may change frequently, so please contact each provider directly to verify eligibility for your child.