

# The Adams County Foster Care Connection

VOLUME 4 | MAY 2021



## Connect with Division Director, Kari Daggett's "Nuggets of Knowledge"

In the last edition, you learned what the Family First Prevention and Services Act is and what services will be reimbursed by the Federal Government effective October 2021. These services must be provided to a "candidate" for foster care to receive reimbursement.

In this edition, we take a look at who these candidates are. Let's start with three main principles that helped to inform Colorado's definition of a candidate. Colorado wants:

1. All kids who need services to have access to services and to be served in their family's home or in a relative's home whenever possible;
2. Families to have what they need to keep their family safe and together, and
3. Services to be available without requiring the family to be involved in the child welfare system.

Therefore, Colorado has defined a "candidate" for foster care as follows:

"A child (in Colorado this is defined as 0-21) is a candidate for foster care when at serious risk of entering or re-entering foster care and who is able to remain safely in the home with the provision of mental health, substance use disorder, or in-home parenting services for the child, parent, or kin caregiver. Foster youth who are pregnant or parenting are also candidates."

What is serious risk?: "A child may be at serious risk of entering foster care based on circumstances and characteristics of the family as a whole and/or circumstances and characteristics of individual parents or children who may affect the parents' ability to safely care for and nurture their children."

Does this sound vague? It's intended to. It allows flexibility for states/counties to serve families according to the needs of the family and the needs of the community.

Following are some scenarios of “candidates” for foster care:

- When an adopted child/youth is at risk of entering or re-entering foster care, prevention services can come in the form of post-adoption supports and be made available so that parents do not have to relinquish their parental rights in order to access such services;
- When a child/youth in a formal or informal kinship placement is at imminent risk of entering or re-entering foster care, these prevention services can be made available;
- When a child/youth is living with his, her, or their parents and is deemed as being at imminent risk of entering foster care, but a relative caregiver could step in to become the guardian if provided prevention services, such services can be made available;
- If a child at a young age was deemed a candidate for foster care and his, her, or their caregiver received prevention services, and years later the child/youth was again deemed at imminent risk of entry later in life, Family First would allow for the State to draw down federal funds for prevention services under Title IV-E at both points in the child/youth’s and family’s lives; and
- When a child/youth is living with his, her, or their parents and is deemed as being at imminent risk of entering foster care but can remain safely at home through the provision of prevention services, such services can be made available; and
- Youth and families involved in various junctions of the juvenile justice system (pretrial services, diversion, probation, crossover youth, and youth committed to the Division of Youth Services).

Keep in mind the federal government has not yet approved Colorado’s Family First Prevention Plan which outlines how Colorado intends to implement Family First, including the definition of candidacy, so some of this could be subject to change.

### **So why do foster parents need to know this?**

We need foster parents to begin thinking seriously about expanding their age range preferences to consider taking older children, who may have more challenging needs, but nonetheless need to live in family-like settings. There will be support and services to assist you in this new endeavor. If you are interested, please reach out to Michelle Champagne, Foster Parent Recruiter, at [mchampagne@adcogov.org](mailto:mchampagne@adcogov.org).

### **Upcoming Changes to Parent-Child Visitation**

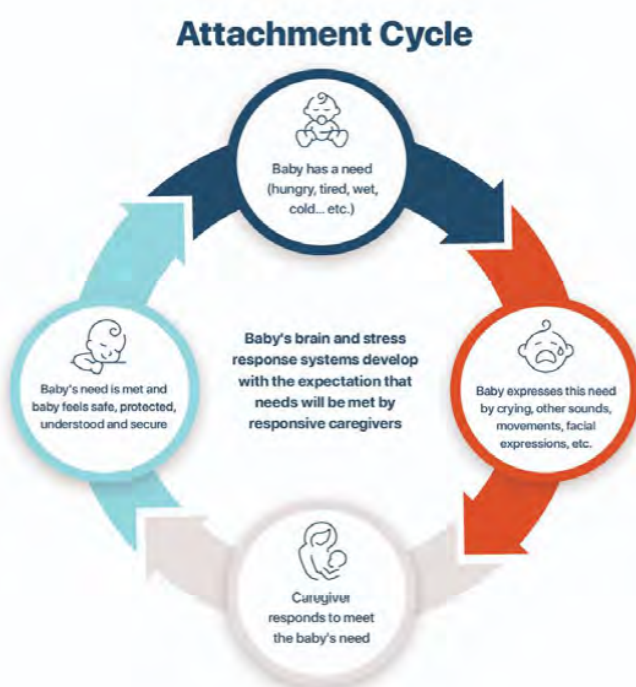
To ensure the health and safety of foster parents, children, and agency staff, in-person visits were altered in 2020 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Now that everyone is eligible for the coronavirus vaccine, we will be increasing the number of parenting time sessions we will be allowing in our building each day. Our rooms can now be scheduled back to back, which means more availability for parent-child visits. We will continue to do everything we can to ensure the health and safety of everyone. Our workers are required to clean the room (e.g. wipe down the hard surfaces) before the visit starts and after the visit. We will schedule 30 minutes between parenting time sessions to ensure enough time for cleaning and room preparation.

# Connect with Training in KP's Korner

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## All About Attachment

- Attachment is an emotional dance between two distinct people.
- Attachment is a learned skill.
- Attachment is the foundation of all parent-child relationships.
- In a healthy cycle of attachment, children express a need and the parent comes to meet the need many times a day, which teaches the child's brain and body to relax by understanding that the world is predictable and therefore, safe.
- When the parent does not come or does not meet the need appropriately, the cycle of healthy attachment is disrupted, the child does not learn to relax and their developing brain and body learn hurtful messages about people and the world, like that it is unsafe and scary.
- The way a child relates to their current caregiver is directly impacted by what they experienced with their previous primary caregivers.
- Attachment is at its core experience-dependent.
- Attachment is flexible and changes through relationships. This is why parents who are fostering or adopting become so important in children's lives!



# You Spoke, We listened

## It is finally here! The Adams County Foster Parent Mentoring Program

Adams County Foster Care and the CHAMPS program partnered together to create the Adams County Foster Parent Mentoring Program. Foster parent mentoring programs lead to increased stability for our foster families and children in foster care. Mentors can offer emotional support to new foster parents as they face a new and complicated system. As mentors share their experience with this unique system, it offers new foster parents an opportunity to learn new coping strategies, build friendships within the fostering community, and foster longer.

If you are a new foster parent and are interested in being paired up with a mentor, please reach out to your certification worker.

Are you a foster parent who is committed to creating a positive approach to guiding new foster parents?

Do you believe in partnering with the biological and extended family and child welfare professionals to achieve permanency?

Do you have strong communication and problem-solving skills?

Do you have a semi-flexible schedule?

Have you been fostering for at least 2 years?

If your answer is YES, then we need YOU! Please speak to your certification worker about this opportunity and reach out to Jennifer McCollum at [jmccollum@adcogov.org](mailto:jmccollum@adcogov.org) for additional information.



Connection Group  
**fostersource.org**  
9:30-11:30 a.m.

Join Foster Source on the Fourth  
Saturday of every month.

Start your weekend off with a good dose of self-care. Talk to or just listen to other foster parents as we explore the current joys and challenges we face. Leave feeling understood and supported. Mingle with other foster parents in your area. Exchange information and make respite plans.



# May is National Foster Care Month

## Board of County Commissioners 2021 Foster Care Month Proclamation

**Childhood is a time of laughter and play; it is time of curiosity and wonder, it is a time for making friends, learning, and exploring the world. When children feel safe, secure, and loved, they can grow strong and confident.**

**But for almost 4,500 Colorado children, this image of a happy childhood does not exist. These children's experience is often sadness and pain; it is fear and loss. It is separation, from family, friends, their community, and sometimes their pets. They are unable to remain with their birth families, through no fault of their own. These children need temporary families, who help them feel safe and secure; a place to heal from the trauma they have experienced.**

**In 1988, May was declared Foster Care Month to raise awareness of foster care, and to celebrate and honor foster families and the entire foster care community.**

**Foster parents play an amazing role for birth families. They fill in to support Adams County birth families, who need time to overcome challenges; time to be whole again. During this global pandemic, foster families have once again shown us their strength and courage. They have accepted the pandemic challenges and have unfailingly shown up for Adams County's children.**

**We want to thank and highlight the large and diverse community of nonprofit organizations, businesses, civic groups, public servants, and individuals who are committed to the cause of caring for and raising awareness of the needs of children and youth in foster care.**

**The Adams County Human Services Department understands children are the key to Colorado's future success and prosperity. They wholeheartedly accept the task to care for children, youth, and families; to strive to ensure safety and well-being, despite all of the legal, economic, and social challenges, to protect the rights of children to grow up with their families, to be safe, and to live their authentic lives.**

**Colorado is experiencing a shortage of foster families. Colorado needs more families willing to provide care for children and youth with complex behavioral and mental health needs, so they can live in family settings, and not congregate care settings, and to provide care for sibling groups, so they can remain together as they move through this difficult time in their life.**

**Although Adams County has many wonderful foster families, we are still in need of more and there is no better month to begin the process of becoming a foster parent than May, National Foster Care Month.**

**The Adams County Board of Commissioners recognize the important role foster parents play in the lives of children and youth in foster care; and the roles caseworkers and the community play in shaping the lives of children and youth in foster care.**

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, the Board of Commissioners of the County of Adams, State of Colorado, proclaims the month of May 2021 as "Foster Care Month."**

# Upcoming Training and Resources



Hey foster parents! Sign up for FREE Caregivers Training!!! Mount Saint Vincent's Child Trauma Training Academy has developed a free trauma-informed caregiving class designed to equip parents with the tools to support children who have been impacted by trauma. • 8 hours of training toward maintaining certification • Gift card incentives for completing training • Sessions are ONLINE: self-paced and video call • Training based on the Neurosequential Model



This training will give you a better understanding of the role of the Ombudsman's office within child welfare in the state of Colorado.

They are independent from the state and county agencies that work on behalf of children and families. They listen to the public about their experience with and concerns about child protection, research and investigate those concerns, and determine the best way to resolve each concern. Their work also allows them to collaborate with lawmakers, professionals and other stakeholders to advance legislation and policies that will have a lasting, positive impact on our children and families.



**COLORADO**  
**Office of Children,  
Youth & Families**  
Division of Child Welfare

The Foster Parent Learning Exchange is a support system that builds bonds among caregivers who are caring for children and youth from other parents. Weekly topic-based sessions will grow your parenting insights and skills and connect you at a deep level with other caregivers who can relate to your fostering experiences.

May 6, 4-5:30 p.m. | New to Fostering?

May 15, 9-10:30 a.m. | Mothering near Mother's Day

May 20, 4-5:30 p.m. | Creating Routines

May 29, 9 -10:30 a.m. | Camping out in the Yard

June 5, 9-10:30 a.m. | Yes Day!

June 10, 4-5:30 p.m. | So little time: Making the most of temporary placements

June 17, 4- 5:30 p.m. | Fathering near Father's Day





In this edition of the Colorado Family Support Network Newsletter by Raise the Future are some amazing learning opportunities.

Have you ever wanted to take TBRI? Now you can, from the comfort of your own home!

### **This Month's Classes (ALL VIRTUAL):**

#### INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW:

May 5, 7, 10, 18, 19, and 20

#### EMPOWERING PRINCIPLES:

May 20 and 21

#### CONNECTING PRINCIPLES:

May 13 and 14

#### CORRECTING PRINCIPLES:

May 25 and 26

### **TBRI® Connection & Implementation Groups**

#### Virtual Youth Connection Group

This group will provide youth with connections while giving caregivers a break. May 15, 10-11:30 a.m.

#### Virtual Caregiver Connection & Implementation Group

May 4 and 18, 8:15-9:15 p.m.

#### In Person & Virtual Caregiver Connection & Implementation Group

Fort Lupton Recreation Department  
May 12, 5:30-8 p.m.

### **More Learning Opportunities Free Webinars**

#### "Who Am I? Racial Identity Development in Youth"

May 13, noon-1:30 p.m.

#### "For Caregivers: Supporting Boys of Color (Part 2)"

\*NEW DATE\* June 8 noon-1:30 p.m.

### **Helping You Understand Sensory Needs**

Does your child cover their ears? Complain about how their clothing feels? Refuse to eat certain types of food? Fall down a lot? Throw themselves on the ground? Bang their head or crash into caregivers? Seem hyperactive at certain times of the day? Have big reactions to what seem like small problems? Occupational therapy can help you identify your child's sensory needs or triggers.

You now have the opportunity to talk with an occupational therapist for four FREE 45-minute virtual sessions between May 17 and July 31 for help and support in any of these areas. Join us May 4 at 7 p.m. via Zoom to learn more about this opportunity!