

RAISE HOPE & FOSTER DREAMS



REGIONAL RESOURCE TEAM: REGION 4 FAMILY NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **GROW trainings** are currently being held online. Interested families should be referred by their licensing workers. All upcoming GROW trainings can be found on our website at <https://www.fcnp.org/pridegrow-training-schedules>.
- **ORIENTATION DATES** for local agencies can be found on our website at <https://www.fcnp.org/become-foster-parent/inquiry-and-orientation>.
- Local **SUPPORT GROUPS** can be found on our website at <https://www.fcnp.org/support-group/>.
- **Additional Trainings** can also be found on our website! Browse a full list at <https://www.fcnp.org/news-events/calendar>.

GROW WITH US!

After being piloted in Region 3 since August 2020, this July marked the official, statewide rollout of the new GROW training curriculum and a fond farewell to PRIDE.

GROW was created by Eastern Michigan University's School of Social Work in collaboration with foster, adoptive, and kinship parents around the state, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, experts in the field of mental health, community stakeholders, and us—the Regional Resource Teams throughout the state.

The new and updated topics that GROW participants will explore are:

- **Child & Adolescent Development**
- **Systems, Policies & Advocacy**
- **Attachment & Relationships**
- **Toxic Stress, Trauma & Trauma-Informed Parenting**
- **Foster, Adoptive & Kinship Parent Wellbeing**
- **Diversity & Inclusion**
- **Child & Adolescent Mental Health & Special Needs**
- **Panel: Specific to foster, adoptive, or kinship families**

We can't wait to...

Grow culturally-responsive relationships,
Recognize children's developmental needs and the impact of trauma,
Obtain information and resources, and
Work in partnership with families to support healthy relationships

...with you!

THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER SAFETY

In a state that is 41.5% water, the highest in the country, the importance of water safety cannot be emphasized enough—especially with drowning listed as the leading cause of death in children.

So, what can you do to make sure everyone stays safe in and around the water this summer?

Develop a water safety plan that everyone knows and sticks to!

Consider including these expectations in your family's water safety plan:

- All swimmers must ask permission and wait for a response before getting in the water.
- For kids to go swimming, an adult must be in the water with them or supervising nearby, depending on each swimmer's skill level.
- Roughhousing or any other unsafe play in the water will result in a conversation about safety and/or a loss of swim privileges.
- If the adult responsible for supervising swimmers needs to step away, everyone must exit the water until the adult returns, unless another adult is available to fill in. Distractions such as cellphones or conversations with other adults should wait until swim time is over.

Teach your kids and teens what to do if someone else needs help!

In the event that your child or teen witnesses an aquatic emergency, it's important to know how to help without putting himself or herself in harm's way. "Reach or Throw, Don't Go" is a great model to practice!

Reach: Identify something long enough to reach out to the person, like a towel, pool noodle, or piece of pool equipment on a long pole. Lay down on your belly at the water's edge with legs spread apart to increase stability and avoid accidentally being pulled in. Extend the item out for the person in the water to grab on. Then, pull the person in using both hands!

Throw: Identify something that floats, like a pool noodle, lifejacket, ring buoy, or kickboard. Stand at the water's edge and carefully throw the item to them. Tell them to kick their feet to get to safety.

Don't Go: During a stressful situation when someone needs help, well-intended kids and teens may inadvertently put themselves in harm's way to help a friend. By teaching them the skills above and emphasizing the importance of never getting in the water when someone is in distress, we empower them to handle the situation while also prioritizing and protecting their own safety.

Teach your kids and teens what to do if they need help!

The most important skills to practice are the ones that will keep you safe in an emergency.

Back Floats: Make your body wide like a starfish and push your chin and belly up to the sky!

Rolling Onto Your Belly: When you need a breath, turn your head to the side and let your body follow!

Jumping In: Jump in, push off the bottom, then turn and grab the wall. Always check the depth first!

Bouncing: If the water is ever too deep, being able to go down and jump off the bottom to get a quick breath is a great skill! Be sure to practice this in shallow water first.

Water Safety Reminders

When talking to kids about water safety, it's helpful to have catchy rhymes and phrases to make sure they stick! Take a look at some of our favorites from the American Red Cross:

- Swim as a Pair Near a Lifeguard's Chair
- Look Before You Leap
- Think So You Don't Sink
- Reach or Throw, Don't Go
- Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket
- Too Much Sun is No Fun
- In Your House and In Your Yard, Watch for Water, Be on Guard
- Wave, Tide, or Ride, Follow the Guide

For more tips, educational tools, and videos, click [HERE](#).

Also available in Spanish.

KIDS' CORNER

Reusable "Water Balloons"

Supplies:

- Sponges
- Scissors
- Rubber bands or string

Making Them:

1. Cut sponges into strips, the long way.



2. Arrange into groups. Keep colors together or mix and match!



3. Tie or rubber band the sponges together.



Once they're assembled, fill some buckets with water or bring them to the pool/lake. Dunk, throw, repeat!

The best part? No more filling and tying balloons that'll pop before you know it. Cleanup is MUCH easier, and since they can be re-used, the fun doesn't have to end until you want it to!

[Send us pictures for a chance to be featured on FCNP social media!](#)

10 CHILDREN'S BOOK REVIEWS BY *BE THE VILLAGE*

Have you been wanting to expand your library to include more children's books that would be relatable to kids in care? Maybe you're looking for ways to help your bio kids understand what their foster or adoptive siblings may be experiencing?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9fGaHKVYmLc>

Whitney and Darcy from *Be the Village* took some time to review 10 books in their library and rated them on illustrations, readability, and relatability. Watch the whole video or use the time stamps in the description to learn about specific books that interest you!

WHAT IS OPPOSITIONAL DEFIANT DISORDER (ODD)?

According to the Child Mind Institute, "Whether your child has Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) or not, learning about the disorder can be helpful. That's because the behavior management strategies used in treatment are evidence-based techniques that all parents will benefit from knowing."

To read more on this topic, visit the article [HERE](#) or find it on the Child Mind Institute's website at ChildMind.org by clicking "For Families", then selecting "Managing Disruptive Behavior" and scrolling down until you see the article matching the title listed above.

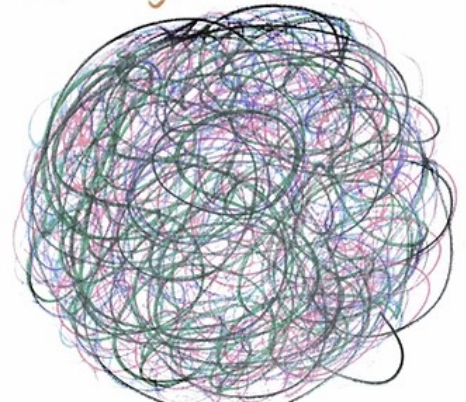
HELPING CHILDREN & TEENS COPE WITH GRIEF & LOSS

Coping with grief and loss is never easy - *especially* when it belongs to the kids and teens in our lives whose pain we wish we could just take away.

Fortunately, there are tools and resources available to us to make navigating those conversations a little more manageable.

To view an ever-evolving list of resources put together by Whole Child Counseling, click [HERE](#) or find it on their website at WholeChildCounseling.com.

My Tangled Ball of Grief



Key

- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| ■ Sadness | ■ Worry |
| ■ Anger | ■ Emptiness |
| ■ Shock | ■ Jealous |
| ■ Guilt | ■ Loneliness |



WHAT IS A FOSTER CARE NAVIGATOR?

A Foster Care Navigator is someone who serves as a liaison between current and prospective foster parents and their agency. As trained and experienced foster parents themselves, each Navigator will mentor, through their own experience, parents navigating through the world of foster care.

The Adoptive and Foster Parent Recruitment and Retention (AFPRR) Program in Region 4 is a program of Judson Center and is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. For more information about becoming a foster parent, please visit us at www.fcnp.org or call 1-855-MICH-KIDS.

Contact Us

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Recipient Name

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