



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>.



Foster moms have no easy task on Mother's Day – supporting children, respectfully honoring the children's mothers, and celebrating themselves.

SUPPORTING THE CHILD IN YOUR HOME

Like many other holidays, Mother's Day can be a confusing time for youth in care. While they may feel comfortable and safe with you – those very feelings may lead to guilt, grief, and loneliness when they think about family members who aren't able to celebrate with them.

- Youth may need your help navigating their emotions. Watch for signs of distress and meltdowns, making yourself available should they want to talk. Listen to and acknowledge their feelings, encouraging them to express them.
- Know that youth may not want to discuss their feelings with you and may even attempt to push you away as they wrestle through them. Be consistent in your availability and love.
- Ask about previous ways they've celebrated the holiday and work to incorporate their history into this year's celebration.
- Talk to teachers, coaches, youth group leaders, friends, and relatives who may come into contact with the child about any plans or special needs for the holiday that may not be "second nature" to them.

HONORING THE CHILDREN'S MOTHERS

Acknowledging family members in holiday celebrations can be important for children as they work through their trauma and heal, and Mother's Day is no exception. If youth are unable to physically spend time with their mothers consider doing an activity that honors them, such as:

- Picking out a plant or flower together and planting it in honor of her.
- Creating a homemade card, letter, or artwork to send to her.
- Making a photo book of the time youth have spent apart from her so that she can see how they've grown.

If the relationship with the child's mother doesn't allow for these types of activities, foster parents are still encouraged to honor her for having given birth to the youth in their care.

CELEBRATING YOU

- Let go of your expectations! Unburdening yourself of society's traditional views of Mother's Day can be a great relief for all moms, but especially foster moms who may be juggling visits with multiple families and tending to children's needs throughout the day.
- Recognize yourself! Have you taken placement for the first time, implemented a new parenting technique, or learned more about trauma or behaviors you're seeing in the home? Celebrate your "momming" milestones this year!
- Treat yourself to some YOU time! Whether it's on Mother's Day or the day before, take some time away from the kiddos and practice your favorite form of self-care to rejuvenate!



Spring Family Activities

- Go to the park
- Plant flowers
- Go for a hike
- Fly a kite
- Visit a petting zoo or farm
- Take a bike ride
- Have a picnic
- Watch the sunset
- Go fishing
- Stargaze
- Make a vegetable garden
- Go camping
- Play outdoor sports
- Go to a baseball game
- Bird watch



Paper Rainbow



Supplies:

- Construction or copy paper in rainbow colors
- White construction paper
- Black marker
- Googly eyes or use the black marker to draw the eyes
- Scissors
- Glue

Instructions:

1. Cut a cloud shape from the white construction paper.
2. Cut a long strip from each rainbow colored paper.
3. Glue the rainbow strips on the back of the cloud and wait to dry.
4. Draw or glue the eyes on the cloud.
5. Draw a smile on the cloud.
6. Place somewhere for decoration.

FOSTER FAMILY SPOTLIGHT: Interview with Elijah Dancer



Please tell us a little about yourself and your family.

My name is Elijah Dancer Rivera and I am a bright, loving, caring, creative person. I would like to think that my husband, Isaiah Rivera, and my two beautiful foster daughters, are the definition of what family should be. We are kind, loving, caring, understanding, sassy, passionate, brave, bold, and full of life. The best thing about my family that I'm proud to say is that we are different, but in the best way you can think of.

Why did you decide to foster?

We decided to do foster care because we wanted to make a difference in a child's life and give them some stability and make them feel loved. Foster care is so important to us. Being the right people with a stable mentality for children who need the love and support goes a long way in these beautiful children's lives. We need more people with good hearts and the time to really do right by these kids to help them grow and to become amazing adults in the future!

How long have you been fostering?

We have been fostering for about a year and 6 months now.

What has been the best moment since your children came into care?

Watching the girls grow and come into their own identity.

Who or what has been your greatest support through your foster care journey?

Our friends and family have been our support to help us with this journey.

Do you have anything fun planned for your family during spring?

We plan on taking our children to Philadelphia to the Sesame Street Park for their second birthday.



Contact Us

Adoptive & Foster Parent Recruitment & Retention (AFPRR) Program - Region 4

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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.



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