

RAISE HOPE & FOSTER DREAMS



REGIONAL RESOURCE TEAM: REGION 5

FAMILY NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **GROW trainings** are currently being held online. Interested families should be referred by their licensing workers and 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>

LOOKING FOR NEW RESOURCES? HERE ARE OUR FAVES!

Our next newsletter will introduce our awesome GROW trainers in more detail, but we just couldn't wait to share their favorite resources with you in the meantime!

Glen loves the [Adoptive, Foster, Kinship & Guardianship Parent Support Village Michigan Facebook Group](#)! He likes this one because "I am able to see others, with similar, or even other issues and take relief that I know that I am not the only one that has issues from time to time. I also like how the group comes together to support everyone with their struggles. We are all in this together."

Jackie's favorite resources are [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#) (nctsn.org) and the [Foster Parenting Toolbox](#) book!

Jasmine's favorite resources are any [Facebook groups](#). She likes them because "They will provide you real life experiences and people that prospective foster parents can relate to."

Jessica says "Although I do not have a favorite foster care resource, [I believe we are each other's resources](#). I am connected to various agencies across several counties in Michigan and have co-workers and previous co-workers that went on to work for all different child welfare agencies and court systems. If I don't have the answer, I will find it!"

Latoia's favorite resources are [Foster Parent Support Groups](#) and the [diverse trainings offered to foster parents](#). She says "Being able to talk to other foster parents that have experienced caring for children in foster care will help in specific concerns, resources, and other supports is very beneficial."

Lia says "I always suggest the book [The Tipping Point](#) for learning and understanding trauma. There are also many good resources for trauma and parenting through [The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)! Of course, [connecting with other foster parents through support groups or social media](#) is helpful to feel supported and get the real life experiences of others."

6 BACK TO SCHOOL TIPS FOR FOSTER KIDS by Iris Kelley, M.S.

This article was originally published by NECCO. To view the original, click [HERE](#).

Children are often placed in out-of-home care during the summer months and beginning of the school year. This can be a trying time for them, especially if they are starting school in a new district or even new town! While most kids are anticipating the back to school rites of passage: new clothes and old friends, foster children can be experiencing high levels of anxiety resulting from all the recent changes. They will have new teachers, meet new friends, learn more difficult subjects, not to mention try to fit in with the latest styles. All of this can be overwhelming, can cause avoidance and be a recipe for failure. What can we do to decrease that anxiety, build confidence and foster successful outcomes?

1. ORGANIZE A MEET AND GREET: Grayson, KY Foster Mom, Kim Stevens, likes to do a meet and greet before any of her foster kids step foot through the school doors, "If I have family and friends who attend the school, I introduce my foster kids to them so they know someone there who can show them around." Having an already established connection with someone in a new environment can make foster children feel more secure.

2. FIND THE SILVER LINING: South Point, OH Foster Mom, Shannon Steele, says its all about finding the silver lining. "I tell them 'It's ok if it's tough. It's ok if it's hard. Then I find something they will look forward to, like going to football games and cheering against the rival team.'" What interests your foster child about this new adventure?

3. GET A CASE OF TEAM FEVER: Hazard, KY Foster Mother, Connie Stafford, believes that team sports can go a long way toward a foster child's success. "I would talk to them about any sports they want to play. Sports can help a child feel like part of a big, loving family." Sports can also help the child with discipline, patience, teamwork, and an overall feeling of value and importance.

4. NEW YEAR, NEW STUFF: NECCO of Cincinnati foster parents had plenty to say about the importance of back to school traditions. Some of their advice includes "Turn the day of back to school shopping into a back to school celebration! Pick out new clothes and talk about back to school over lunch", "Let the child pick out things that speak to his style so he can show his personality at his new school", "Let the child pack his own book bag and lunch". The new school year signifies a new beginning, a fresh start. Clothes should be current and supplies should be pristine; ready to take on the school year!

5. SNAP A PHOTO: Nothing says you are proud of your foster child's first day of school venture like a photograph. Never mind the teenager who rolls her eyes while you're chasing her toward the bus. Take the photo anyway. The photo symbolizes more than just marking the moment. You are communicating to your foster child that you are proud of her dedication to education. Plus, it's fun to see how much they have grown by the end of the school year!

6. CHAT IT UP!: West Virginia Foster Parent Chad Messer and Macon, GA Foster Mother, Luethel Smith feel that making after school discussions a daily ritual will have a huge impact on the child's success. Chad says, "When school starts, take a vested interest in the child's day. Be excited about what they did, and don't shrug it off." Luethel believes that the communication should be about the old and the new. "Talk to them about some of the things they were involved in at their former school. Ensure them that we have a great school system."

The overall theme from our foster parents? Be involved. When foster children see that someone is taking an interest in their education, they are more likely to want to succeed, to prove themselves, to perform. Here's to a great school year of building families and celebrating the accomplishments!

Foster Closets Near You

Looking for an affordable and accessible way to provide clothes, school supplies, etc. to the kiddos in your home? Foster Closets are a great place to look!

- Genesee County - Clio
- Macomb - Mount Clemens
- Oakland - Farmington Hills
- Wayne County - Livonia
- Wayne County - Trenton

Above is a list of locations within your region, but it's by no means an exhaustive list! To view additional locations across the state or more info on the ones listed above, click [HERE](#) for a complete list!

KIDS CORNER

Salt Crystal Leaves

Supplies:

- 1 Box of Salt (cheapest brand is suggested— You will use all of it.)
- Pipe Cleaners
- Jars or glass cups

Making Them:

1. Bend a pipe cleaner into the shape of a leaf and be sure to leave a long stem! Note: The box of salt will only make 3-4 leaves.
2. Heat about 2-2.5 cups water per leaf in a pot until boiling
3. Add salt and stir until it won't dissolve any more. You should still have salt grains at the bottom of the pot — You'll know you have enough when it starts to form a sheet of salt on top of the water
4. Pour into jars and place one leaf inside each, held by a clothespin. Make sure they don't touch the sides or bottom!



5. Set in a sunny window and leave for at least two days!

Thanks Living Well Mom for this activity! View her original post [HERE](#).

LOOKING FOR NEW RESOURCES? HERE ARE OUR FAVES! (Cont.)

Mairin suggests [Foster Parent Webinars](#) because “Webinars have endless subjects depending on the need!”

Monica’s favorite resources are [The Body Keeps the Score](#) because “It offers hope for healing traumatic stress”, the movie [Instant Family](#) because “The experience of the foster mom was so relatable for me, normalizing the ambivalence of my own parenting experience”, and [PARC Support Groups](#) because they “have brought resources to life and fulfilled my need for learning and connections with others who share our lifestyle and challenges.”

Mya also suggests the movie [Instant Family](#) and says it’s her favorite! “The movie is very entertaining, but is also very close to real life for some families that are involved in the foster care system and are adopting.” She also shared her favorite book, [Three Little Words](#) because “It is well written, but also gives intimate details about what it was like for her living in foster care.” Mya is also a part of the [FAB Moms \(Fabulous Adoptive Black Moms\) Group on Facebook](#) and says “My support group is full of amazing adoptive mothers that look like me and have similar experiences to my own as an adoptive mother.”

Rachel says “The greatest help I believe a family can have is [other families on the same type of journey](#), with the same calling to be here in the trenches. This life is not for the faint hearted. You can read books, you can listen to podcasts, but I have found the biggest relief in knowing I am not alone in this journey or in these struggles. When a fellow foster family says ‘Call me sometime, lets get together’, do that! It can be weird and awkward, but it’s a chance to connect. These families will help shore up your support system. I have taken calls late at night from a frustrated foster mom who just needed someone to listen. I did. She was able to regroup and I am happy to say their family is on track to adopt the little one that had her crying to a virtual stranger late one night. Use those supports and be those supports if and when you can.”

For a list of [book suggestions](#) from our team, view our blog [HERE!](#)

HELPING CHILDREN WITH TRAUMA AT HALLOWEEN:

UNDERSTANDING A CHILD’S NEED TO FEEL SAFE WITH A FOSTER PARENT

Fear is a normal and natural part of childhood development for children. Children who are in Foster Care who have suffered trauma are often scared of the dark, frightened by thunderstorms, loud voices, or even monsters under their bed. Childhood fears may be incredibly powerful this time of year, when scary Halloween decorations, masks, and costumes seem to be everywhere. As children grow and try to figure out the world around them, they are not entirely sure of what’s fantasy and reality. They may have experienced trauma, added to their already incredible imagination; Halloween can be a scary time for them. Foster parents working with children impacted by trauma need to be intentional with Halloween.

This article was originally published by FosterVA - Continue reading [HERE](#).



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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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