

### Last 2025 Reporting Child Maltreatment Training

There's one more training for child foster care providers/ mandated reporters left this year:

**Wednesday, Dec. 3**  
6-7:30 p.m.

Access the packet forms before the training.

*You must register via email to receive the meeting link.*

Email to register.

### Child Foster Care Licensing Team's Mission

To enrich the lives of children by promoting safe and quality licensed care.



Community Services  
Child Foster Care  
Licensing  
14949 62nd Street N.  
Stillwater, MN 55082  
[Child Foster Care  
Licensing Website](#)

### Washington County Foster Provider Support Group

Caring for children in foster care is rewarding, but it can also be incredibly challenging, and no one should have to do it alone. We've launched the Washington County Foster Provider Support Group, a space for foster providers to connect, share experiences, and support one another.

We've held three meetings so far. Our final meeting (virtual) of 2025 will be on **Dec. 15**. Looking ahead, we'll continue meeting the third Monday of each month in 2026.

We'd love for you to join us! Together, we can build community, resilience, and support for one another.

Written by: Emily Angstman, child foster care licensor.

### Fire Marshal Training

On Oct. 9, Washington County Licensing proudly hosted the Minnesota State Fire Marshal's Office for an informative and hands-on fire safety training. The session focused on fire prevention strategies for everyday households, as well as homes licensed for child care and foster care.



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## Foster Parents Needed!

Word of mouth is one of the best forms of recruitment to get new foster parents in Washington County. If anyone has said to you, “I’ve always thought about becoming a foster parent” or you know of someone who is good with kids, wants to help the community, and you think has what it takes to become a foster parent, please send them our way! We need people who can provide care to a variety of youth, such as teens, sibling groups, children with mental health diagnoses, developmental disabilities, and everything in between. We need foster parents in all areas of the county. Whether families can only commit to one or two weekends per month for respite care or be a placement resource, we have a need for both! Please pass the word on so we can keep kids in our local foster homes.

Upcoming Information Meetings:

**Jan. 5 | 1-3 p.m.**

**March 3 | 10 a.m.-Noon**  
Online with Teams

For more information, call 651-430-8307.

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Nearly 30 participants attended, engaging in interactive activities designed to deepen their understanding of fire safety practices.

We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who joined us—and to the State Fire Marshal’s Office for sharing their expertise on such a vital topic.

Written by: Rebecca Knighton, senior child care licenser.

## What to Report to Your Licenser Immediately



- Death, suicide, near death, serious injury of child in foster care, vulnerable adult, or license holder.
- Law enforcement involvement at the foster home (domestic violence, missing child, execution of search warrant, etc.).
- Sexual contact between any child in the home and affiliated individual (e.g. License holder, household member, caregiver, staff, etc.) or between children in the home.
- Assault/physical abuse of any child or vulnerable adult in the home.
- Incident involving a firearm or weapon.
- Significant substance abuse impacting safety, especially if law enforcement is involved.
- Emergency relocation of foster family away from the foster home.
- Any type of report you believe may garner media attention.
- Physical health situations requiring immediate attention, including serious communicable diseases.
- Significant behaviors of a foster child and/or other household members which may affect the foster child.
- When a household member turns 13 - 18 which initiates the background check process.
- Any change in a phone number or email address.
- Anytime anyone moves into your home.
- Any remodeling planned and completed to your home.
- If you are planning on moving or have moved.

## Tips for Foster Families During the Holidays

The holiday season can be a joyful yet challenging time for foster families. Balancing traditions, emotions, and unique family dynamics requires extra thought and care. Here are some tips to help foster families navigate the holidays with compassion and connection:

- **Be Sensitive to Emotional Needs**

Holidays can bring up mixed emotions for foster children, especially if they are separated from their biological families. Encourage open conversations about their feelings and let them know it’s okay to feel sad, confused, or excited. Offer a safe space where they can express themselves without judgment.

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- **Incorporate Their Traditions**

Ask your foster child about their favorite holiday traditions and find ways to incorporate them into your family's celebrations. This helps them feel included and respected while creating new memories together.

- **Set Realistic Expectations**

Holiday gatherings and activities can sometimes feel overwhelming. Keep plans flexible and consider what is most comfortable for your foster child. If needed, it's okay to scale back on events or create smaller, more intimate celebrations.

- **Communicate with Birth Families**

If possible and appropriate, consider ways to involve your foster child's birth family. This could mean arranging a phone call, sending holiday cards, or planning a shared visit. Collaboration can help the child feel more connected and supported.

- **Focus on Experiences, Not Things**

The holidays don't have to revolve around gifts. Emphasize quality time together, such as baking cookies, decorating, or watching festive movies. Shared experiences can strengthen your bond and create lasting memories.

- **Practice Self-Care**

Foster parenting can be emotionally demanding, especially during the holidays. Make time for your

own well-being, whether through quiet moments of reflection, connecting with a support group, or simply taking a break when needed.

- **Celebrate Progress**

Take time to acknowledge the growth and resilience of your foster child and your family as a whole. Celebrating small victories and milestones can bring hope and gratitude to the season.

By focusing on inclusion, empathy, and flexibility, foster families can create a holiday atmosphere that is meaningful and supportive for everyone. The love and care you provide make a world of difference during this special time of year.

Article from: [Tips for Foster Families During the Holidays - TFI](#)

**Additional resources to help the holidays be successful:**

- Podcast from American's Kids Belong: [Episode 21 - How to Best Navigate the Holidays as a Foster Family with Bethany Hall - America's Kids Belong](#)
- YouTube videos:
  - [Supporting foster youth during the holiday season #fosterparent #fosterparenting #fostercare](#)
  - [Holidays as a Foster Parent](#)

## Respite Care

For families of children with serious mental illnesses, the physical, financial, and emotional challenges of caring for their child can be overwhelming. Often times, these children need 24-hour care and attention and the stress this puts on families takes its toll over time. Despite these difficulties, families want to care for their child at home but need to be able to "recharge their batteries."

Research has consistently shown that respite care drastically reduces the number of costly hospital visits and stays in residential treatment facilities for children with serious mental illnesses. Respite care has also been found to have a very positive impact on families, improving safety and stability and helping to increase a child's functioning. The short break respite care provides, even if it's just a few hours or a few days, is essential to

help families relieve stress and maintain their own health and well-being. Respite care gives parents a chance to spend time with their other children or their spouse, catch up on work, or take care of household chores. Respite care gives siblings a much needed break as well.

By giving families a little time-off now and then, respite care allows them to keep their child with them at home. Without the support respite care provides, many families would be forced to admit their child to long-term stays in a hospital or treatment center (at a much higher cost), away from their friends, family, and the community.

[View National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\) - Minnesota's handout regarding respite care.](#)



## **FAST FACTS: Important Considerations & Parenting Tips for Multi-Cultural Families**

- Support your child's sense of identify by encouraging them to use their original ethnic or cultural name. It helps validate their identify and foster a more positive sense of self-worth.
- Support your child by educating yourself about historical racism, interracial conflict & unhealed traumas experienced by people of color in your community.
- Initiate conversations about ethnic and race related issues to model open dialogue.
- For transracial international adoptee's, expose them to authentic people of their birth culture/country.
- Adoptee's may experience loss and grief related to their adoption story regardless of the age of the adoption. Parents can support adoptee's by allowing them to dictate adoptee's narrative and to avoid inserting saviorism themes.
- Expose and cultivate authentic relationships with people who represent the adoptee's race or culture, especially outside of a homogeneous white environment.
- Allow children to have input in grocery shopping and meal planning as food is representative of culture and directly relates to feelings of safety. Please keep in mind & be understanding that children may not be familiar with your food preference. They may not like it, it may be outside their cultural or religious background, i.e., pork or meat in general. Some children may hoard and/or hide food.
- Rituals offer structure and a sense of connection within families. Adoptive parents and foster parents and Kinship care givers should be sensitive to incorporate rituals reflective of the birth family and birth culture.
- Parents, guardians & kinship care givers should avoid taking rejection of food, mannerisms, language, traditions, and in-home norms personally. Be compassionate and compromise these cultural expectations when possible.
- The narrative around child's foster care/adoption experience will impact their cultural/racial identity. Honor who they are and the culture from whence they came.
- Regardless of past conflict, separation, or abuse a child/ may have experienced by their birth family, it is normal for the child/adolescent to still have loyal feelings to birth parent(s).
- Parents/Guardians should speak with neutrality about birth family in front of child.

*The program is funded through the Minnesota Department of Human Services.*

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### Resources:

A poem by Sha'Condria Sibley called "To All the Little Black Girls with Big Names"

The Center for Adoption Support and Education, [www.adoptionsupport.org](http://www.adoptionsupport.org)

### Books: (For younger children)

With You Always, Little Monday, by Genevieve Cote

The Invisible String by Patrice Karst and Joanne Lew-Vriethoff

Families Change: A book for children experiencing termination of parental rights, by Julie Nelson

### Information presented by:



**Yaneth Cunningham, MA, LMFT** has been working in the mental health field in a variety of roles which have enriched my clinical practice and further fueled my passion for helping young people navigate the challenges of childhood. These experiences include working as an Eating Disorder Technician at the Emily Program, a School-Based Therapist for Nystrom & Associates, and a Youth Counselor for Catholic Charities. I draw upon a strength based, resiliency building & collaborative style of therapy to empower families and individuals to find inner healing while providing tools to enhance their daily life functioning.

To learn more about Foster Adopt Minnesota and our efforts to ensure each child will have a permanent family, call 612-861-7115 or visit [www.fosteradoptmn.org](http://www.fosteradoptmn.org).

## Child Foster Care Annual Training Requirements

Each year, every child foster care license holder needs to complete 12 hours of training related to child development, taking care of children who have experienced trauma, parenting, and child foster care. Within these 12 hours of training, you must include the following: One hour of Children's Mental Health training, one hour of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD) training, and one hour of Mandated Reporter training.

- **If you are caring for children under the age of 8:** You need to complete the Basic Education for Safe Travel (B.E.S.T). car seat training every five years. *The first part of this training is online; second part is required to be in-person.*
- **If you are caring for children ages infant through age 5:** You need to complete one hour of Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) and Abusive Head Trauma (AHT) training every five years.

These training courses can be completed through different formats including but not limited to in-person training, virtual/web-based training, podcasts, and reading books. *All trainings need to be recorded on your training log in Binti.* The best practice is to get a certificate of completion from your trainings to upload to Binti.

A couple great resources for finding trainings:

- [Washington County Training Topics for Licensing site.](#)
- [Foster Adopt Minnesota's Education site.](#)
- [Training for Families site.](#)

Each year, Washington County will reimburse up to \$100 a month per license for training related to foster care licensing. *To be reimbursed for training, submit your proof of purchase and training attendance to your licensor.*

## Fire Extinguisher Servicing

Did you know your fire extinguisher (size 2A:10BC or larger) needs to be serviced every year? Here are some local fire extinguisher servicing companies:

- **All Safe Global** | Eric Olson  
26542 Fallbrook Lane, Wyoming, MN 55092  
866-958-3473 x119 | [Email Eric](#)
  - Annual inspection: \$10.
  - Major maintenance: Price varies but is much higher.
- **Becker Fire & Safety Services** | Bill Becker  
1575 Regatta Drive, Woodbury, MN 55125  
Office: 651-739-7776 | Cell: 651-373-8820  
[Email Bill](#)
  - Mobile service company (they visit residence and service the extinguishers on-site).
  - \$30 payable by cash or check.
- **Forest Lake Ace Hardware** | Sue Olson  
814 S. Lake St., Forest Lake, MN 55025  
651-464-6262 | [Email Sue](#)
  - Sells fire extinguishers.
  - Servicing: \$10 per extinguisher.
  - Drop-off on-site only.
- **Mississippi Welders Supply Company** | Brian Stevens  
1810 Webster St., Suite 3, Hudson, WI 54016  
Office: 715-381-6964 | Brian: 507-450-0225  
[Email Brian](#)
  - Option to bring fire extinguisher to storefront or service call (they come to you).
    - Annual inspection: \$7.
    - Service call: Additional \$50.
- **Nardini Fire Equipment Company / Pye-Barker Fire and Safety** | Nick Rotter  
405 West County Road E, Shoreview, MN 55126  
651-483-6631 | 888-627-3464 | [Email Nick](#)
  - Walk-in style at Shoreview site.
  - Annual service: \$12 or more.
  - Re-charging: \$30, up to \$70 depending on extent of maintenance needed.
- **St. Croix Fire & Safety, Inc.** | Dave Wyland  
4177 Kirkwood Lane N., Lake Elmo, MN 55042  
651-248-5069 | [Email Dave](#)
  - Recertification: \$7 per extinguisher | \$55 truck charge.
  - Additional cost to visit site.
- **Weber and Troseth, Inc.** | Roger Wyland  
1902 University Ave. W., St. Paul, MN 55104  
651-645-1034 | [Email Roger](#)
  - Walk-in and on-site fire extinguisher servicing.
  - Sells fire extinguishers.

## Resources

- **Foster One:**

### StoreHouse

This is a great resource for our kinship families when the child first moves into your home. You can make a request for essential items for the children such as diapers, wipes, car seats, beds, and more.

[Submit a StoreHouse request using Foster One's StoreHouse web page.](#)

- **Safe Haven Foster Shoppe**

Foster Shoppe is a program that hand delivers bags of essential items to foster children. Bags are gender and size specific and can include brand new items such as clothing, pajamas, blanket, toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, shampoo/conditioner, body wash, book, stuffed animal, socks, underwear/diapers. Many additional items are available, such as coats, shoes, formula, toys, school supplies, and much more!

*Please note the Foster Shoppe program is intended for initial placements.*

### How to request items:

Foster parents have four ways to request items:

- Call or Text: 763-742-7799.
- [Email Save Haven Foster Shoppe.](#)
- [Submit an online request.](#)
  - *Submit a separate request for each child.*

### The following information must be submitted with your request:

- Name.
- Email address.
- Request relationship (*foster provider*).
- Phone number.
- The name of the county or agency that issued you a license.
- Date of placement.
- If you would like the items delivered or if you would like to pick them up.
- Delivery address (*if requested*).

Please have this and any additional information that would be helpful - such as child's gender, age, clothing and shoe sizes - readily available. Also have available the other needs of the child, such as winter coats, school supplies, additional clothing, etc.

### Locations:

- Safe Haven Foster Shoppe and Distribution Center  
12765 Lake Blvd., Lindstrom, MN 55045
- Safe Haven Foster Shoppe Inc. (*legal, billing, and shipping address*)  
1339 Awatukee Trail, Hudson, WI 54016

## County Child Foster Care Licensing Staff

- **Jenna Stringer**  
*Senior Licensor*  
651-430-6598  
[Email Jenna](#)
- **Emily Angstman**  
*Licensor*  
651-430-6397  
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651-430-6476  
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### Team Email:

[Email Child Foster Care Licensing](#)

### Team website:

[Child Foster Care Licensing website](#)

## New Contact Information

Please keep us informed of any changes to your email address and home/cell phone numbers. Contact your licensor directly or [email Child Foster Care Licensing](#).