

FosterlineBC

BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations



Inside This Issue

- 3 President's Report and Vice President's Letter
- 4 2018 Call for Nominations
- 5 Annual General Meeting Fundraising Packages
- 6 Special Resolution Form
- 7 BCFFPA Provincial Officer Nomination Form
- 8 Celebrate BC Child & Youth In Care Week!
- 9 Agreements with Young Adults Program
- 10 2018 Regional Delegate Reports
- 11 Important Reminder to be "Photo Sensitive"
- 12 Visitations with Family Members by John DeGarmo
- 12 Don't Forget to Ask
- 13 Health Insurance for Foster Parents by GSC healthassist and BCFFPA
- 14 Foster Community Resources
- 16 Membership Form

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BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations

Provincial Office (*New Address effective June 15, 2018**)

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North	Vacant
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For Board of Directors contact information, please call the Provincial office.

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The BCFFPA is a provincial organization for foster parents, run by foster parents. We are a registered Society aiming to bring foster parents, social workers and others together in order to continuously improve the standard of care for BC's children in care. BCFFPA provides education, training and professional development as well as advocacy, support and assistance for the foster parents of BC.

Submissions—Forward articles, personal stories or ideas to the BCFFPA office. Materials may be edited for length and suitability.

Advertising—Please contact the BCFFPA office for advertising

President's Report

With Summer 2018 coming we are excited to be well underway with AGM planning and gathering of donations for our fundraiser event. This year our AGM will be a simpler event providing the essential networking opportunities, informative workshops, a business meeting, dinner and fundraiser—and of course healthy and delicious food. What's different this year is that you will have Friday night free to explore beautiful Nelson or to have a hot springs adventure a few kilometers away! We are looking forward to seeing you there.

BCFFPA, along with many other agencies in the province, has been invited to participate in the system of care review initiative with the Ministry which includes discussion about the foster parent payments and the payment model, post adoption assistance, barriers and areas for improvement with the Agreements with Youth Adults program among other topics. We will keep you informed about our experience of this initiative as it progresses.

Our monthly calls with BCFFPA branches is proving to be very informative and beneficial for all of us. We are happy with the engagement of our members across the province. One of the benefits of these calls is that we are being made aware of regional issues that are spreading. Addressing these issues is sometimes challenging, but our linkages with the Ministry provide us with the ability to request more information and a review when necessary. Recently we have forwarded a request that the trend toward 30-60 day contracts be reviewed with the information that short contracts impact foster parent retention and are also posing challenges for mortgage renewals at lending agencies.

We are hearing that many communities have a shortage of foster homes and that many homes are in overcapacity situations with 3 and 4 children placed in Level 3 homes. This is leading to foster parent burnout and a shortage of relief homes both of which are threatening foster parent retention.

School is almost out for the year. Remember that our kids can really benefit from summer community programs. It not only keep them busy and provides them with structure over the summer, but it will give you some down time as well.

I hope that many of you have applied for the Camps for Kids bursary this year. The Board has increased the bursary to \$300 to cover the cost of camp for your children and youth in care. The deadline was May 31st. If you missed it this year, put a reminder in your calendar for next year! One BCFFPA bursary is worth the cost of membership.

Wishing you all a wonderful and relaxing summer!

Marcy Perron
BCFFPA President

Vice President's Letter

Hello amazing foster parents of British Columbia!

As the former Vancouver Island Delegate, and Secretary, I am honoured—as well as privileged—to now be your recently elected Vice President of the BC Federation of Foster Parents. Words cannot explain the overwhelming excitement I have to serve this incredible organization, and the foster parents of British Columbia through this position. To be honest, three years ago I just wanted to serve the fostering community at a greater level, to “do more”. I had no idea I would have developed such a deep-rooted commitment for this Board, or such a dedicated compassion for foster parents throughout our province.

You'll be pleased to know that our current President and Board of Directors for the BCFFPA is well balanced and extremely dedicated to the advocacy of foster parents in BC. In my position as Vice President I will continue to dedicate my time and efforts to the fostering community—to do my part in advocating for foster parents in the current areas of attention—so in turn we will see an increase in the recruitment and retention of healthy, stable, safe, secure, and thriving foster care homes across this incredible province. This is how, collaboratively with MCFD and other contracted agencies, we support the children and youth entrusted to our care, to be effective contributors of society.

The children and youth of today will no doubt be our leaders of tomorrow. Together we can be an amazing part of raising up the future of this province and nation. There is a catch...this plan will only be effective if we intentionally work together. I encourage each of you to become a member, and join a BCFFPA Branch in your local area. If you don't have a Branch in your community, contact head office for direction or get in touch with your regional delegate to find out how to get a Branch started. Through this avenue you will have a voice. We are here to do what we can to listen and advocate on your behalf.

If you have any questions for me personally, or you'd just like to get to know who I am, I welcome your calls or emails. Please, do not hesitate to communicate!

Again, I'm excited to see what our future has in store. I'm excited to partner with foster parents across British Columbia...together we will make a difference!

As BCFFPA representatives, we're proud to be by your side.

See you soon at the AGM in beautiful Nelson, this coming October...book your hotel now!

Enjoy your summer everyone!!

Chad Hooker
BCFFPA Vice President

Investigation? Protocol? Need Information? Give us a call!
BCFFPA— serving BC's foster parent community
for over 50 years.

1-800-663-9999

**BCFFPA members can now join and
renew through our website**
www.bcfosterparents.ca



Annual General Meeting and Conference September 28 and 29, 2018

(see the AGM Bursary Application Information on page 8)

Prestige Lakeside Resort & Convention Centre

701 Lakeside Drive
Nelson, BC V1L 6G3

Toll Free: 1-877-737-8443
Direct: 250-352-7222

When booking, ask for the
"BCFFPA" room block.



Standard King, Queen or Twin Queen room is **\$140/night based on double occupancy**

Join us for a back to basics event featuring great workshops, good food, guest speakers and free time for you to relax on your trip away from home.

Workshops will include:

- ◆ **Transitions:** back to family, into adoption or other permanent placement, out of care, and of course the daily transitions experienced by foster families when a child leaves their home
- ◆ **BC's System of Social Care:** led by staff from the Strategic Priorities Division, foster parents and stakeholders can engage in a lively session discussing the future of our sector
- ◆ **GSC healthassist:** find out more about the health insurance options for foster parents through our joint program with Green Shield Canada (see page 13)

Additional conference features:

- ◆ Thursday evening Meet & Greet for community members and stakeholders
- ◆ Guest speaker: MCFD's Minister Katrine Conroy
- ◆ Free time to relax and rejuvenate on Friday night
- ◆ Saturday evening dinner and fundraiser

We hope to see you there!



2018 CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

BCFFPA will be holding the annual election for executive officer positions on our Board of Directors at our Annual General Meeting on September 29, 2018 at the Prestige Lakeside Resort in Nelson.

This year there are 2 positions for election on the BCFFPA Board of Directors Executive Committee:

- President
- Secretary

Each position has a two-year term. Nominations for each position **must** be received by the BCFFPA Provincial office by July 27, 2018, for distribution to the membership for our mail voting process.

The Bylaws regarding eligibility to become an Officer of the Federation, state the following:

- Paid in full member as of January 31st of current year.
- Must be present at the AGM unless excused by the President for extraordinary reasons.
- Nominations from the floor will not be accepted.
- Candidates and nominations for these officer positions shall be vetted by the Nominating Committee and are chosen for their knowledge and expertise in relation to these positions.
- If only one nominee's name is submitted for a posted position and they meet all eligibility criteria, the individual is considered to be elected by acclamation [Bylaw change 2014: Article 5, Section 2]
- The successful candidates will be elected through a combination of mail-in votes and the votes of those attending the Annual General Meeting.
- Associate Members how have been elected to hold positions on the Federation Board of Directors shall have full voting privileges during their term of office.
- Any candidate for these positions must have held a BCFFPA membership in good standing for at least three years immediately previous to running.
- Candidates running for Secretary must have served for at least one year in the previous three years on a Local or Macro regional council, or on the BCFFPA Provincial Board of Directors.
- Any candidate for the position of President must have served on the BCFFPA Board of Directors for at least two years previously.
- Nominees require a nomination form duly moved and seconded by two BCFFPA members in good standing (ie. current membership as of January 31st of the present year).

PLEASE FORWARD NOMINATIONS TO THE FEDERATION PROVINCIAL OFFICE

**BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations
208-20641 Logan Avenue
Langley, BC V3A 7R3**

Or by e-mail to: jayne@bcfosterparents.ca
(please request a response to your e-mail)
604-544-2223

Annual General Meeting Fundraiser Packages—A Sample of Packages You Can Bid On (All Funds Send Kids to Camp!)

Our staff have outdone themselves again this year! Each year the packages to bid on at the AGM get better and better. Have a look at this amazing selection of travel and activities that you can win to share and enjoy with your family.

- A luxury lakeside retreat for a family in a two bedroom suite at Nita Lake Lodge in Whistler complete with breakfast at Aura restaurant. Unwind in the outdoor hot tubs heated to perfection in the winter or in the year-round lakeside plunge pool. Enjoy a canoe, kayak, bike or paddleboard experience in the summer or snow shoe experience in the winter!
- A three-day weekend or four-day mid-week trip with Waterway Houseboat Vacations aboard the Mirage 65 - sleeps up to 22 people!
- A Vancouver Family Activity package: Enjoy a show by Ballet BC, a Vancouver Whitecaps game, a tour of BC Sports Hall of Fame and Museum, a theatrical experience at the Carousel Theatre for Young People, a visit to the Vancouver Aquarium, Science World and a fun FlyOver Canada experience!
- A two-night getaway at a choice of one of Prestige Hotels' three waterfront locations (Sooke, Salmon Arm or Nelson) complete with a credit towards food and beverage.
- An escape to Harrison Hot Springs Resort: Relax in the warmth of mineral hot pools and healing spa treatments or explore a marina that features fishing and nature tours, kayaks and bumper boats!
- A Sandpiper Resort getaway with a one-night stay in an inn room overlooking the Harrison River and framed by the backdrop of the Cheam Mountains. Explore the English-style manor with conversation pieces that include a dining table used by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. You can also enjoy a round of golf at the Sandpiper Golf Course with abundant wildlife consisting of eagles and sandpipers.
- A Copper Point Resort Family Escape (Invermere, BC): Stay in a lovely one bedroom suite, fire up your balcony's electric barbecue and enjoy the fresh mountain air, or snuggle up by the fireplace for a movie night with the family! Experience a whole new level of golf play with their two 18 hole golf courses.
- A Penticton package: Stay for one night at the Penticton Lakeside Resort and bounce all day on a giant inflatable or splash away the day at the Wibit Waterpark.
- A One-night Staycation with breakfast at the Delta Hotels by Marriott Vancouver Downtown Suites in the heart of trendy and historic Gastown!

- A Clipper Vacations travel gift card good for a relaxing and scenic cruise experience to Victoria, Seattle, Vancouver, Whistler, the San Juan Islands and Portland. Soak in the Natural Wonders and Beauty of the Pacific Northwest and Western Canada!
- A Rossland winter getaway package: A one-night stay at Prestige Mountain Resort and two lift tickets to Red Mountain Resort.
- A One night stay at Prestige Inn Radium Hot Springs situated in a panoramic mountain setting at the edge of the breathtaking Kootenay National Park and world-famous therapeutic Radium Hot Springs Pools!
- A Richmond package: A one night stay with breakfast at the Vancouver Airport Marriott with a winery tour and tasting for up to four people at Lulu Island Winery.
- A VIP Black Hills Estate Winery Portfolio Tasting Experience for 4 in a private cabana!
- A Hard Rock Casino package complete with shopping spree, dining credit in a VIP booth at the Asylum lounge and a slot play credit.
- A special piece of jewelry from Pernilla Vancouver Goldsmith!



<i>June 25</i>	AGM Registration open [registration package posted on website and emailed to members and stakeholders]
<i>July 27</i>	Nominations for President and Secretary and any Special Resolutions must be received by BCFFPA Provincial office
<i>August 15</i>	Registration and Ballot packages mailed to members
<i>August 29</i>	Notification of AGM 2018 [email and posted on website]
<i>September 19</i>	Deadline for BCFFPA office to receive mail-in votes

Special Resolutions 2018

Whereas: (state circumstance)

Therefore: (state proposed special resolution)

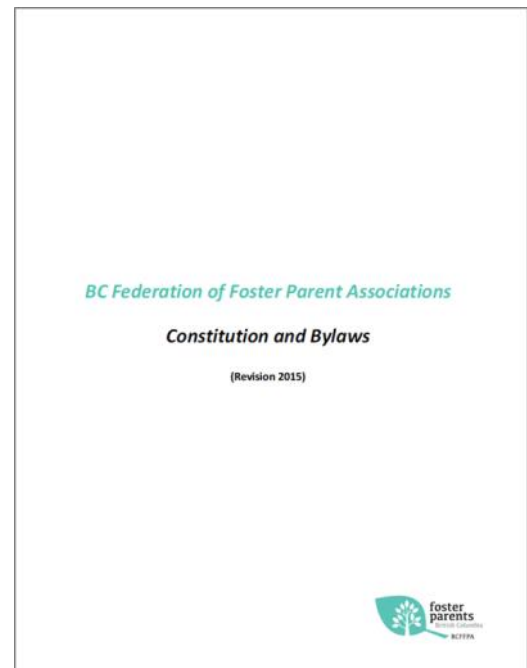
Moved By: _____ Membership Number: _____
(name)

Seconded By: _____ Membership Number: _____
(name)

Packages will be distributed for ballot voting by mail by August 15, 2018. Proposed Special Resolutions will be accepted from members in good standing (current members as of January 31, 2018). Please submit one form for each Special Resolution proposed.

“Special Resolutions”: Prior to the BCFFPA’s Annual General Meeting, we receive proposals from members in good standing for **special resolutions**. A special resolution is a proposed change to our Constitution and Bylaws. The proposed changes are presented to our membership as a whole and voted on. We require a majority vote for the special resolution to be passed. When a special resolution is adopted into BCFFPA’s Constitution and Bylaws through a membership vote, the wording of the resolution is then submitted to the governmental authorities to become part of the Association’s permanent documentation.

BCFFPA Constitution and Bylaws are the formal documents that contain BCFFPA’s fundamental objectives and principles.



BCFFPA Provincial Officer Nomination Form 2018

Name of Candidate _____ Membership Number _____

Address _____ City _____

Postal Code _____ Phone Number _____ or _____

Candidate Information

Fostering Experience

BCFFPA Experience

Related Volunteer or Employment Experience

Views and Objectives to Offer this Position

Other Comments

Nominated by _____ Membership Number _____

Nominated by _____ Membership Number _____

Signature of Candidate _____ *Date* _____

CELEBRATE

BC CHILD & YOUTH IN CARE WEEK!

JUNE 4-10, 2018

BRITISH COLUMBIA

STAND

WITH



CHILDREN & YOUTH
IN CARE

LEARN MORE:  [Facebook.com/BCCYICW](https://www.facebook.com/BCCYICW)

  #BCCYICW | [WWW.BCCHILDANDYOUTHINCAREWEEK.COM](http://www.bcchildandyoungincareweek.com)



#STANDWITHYOUTHINCARE

#BCCYICW

#YOUTHINCAREAREAWESOME

BCFFPA acknowledges and celebrates the uniqueness, diversity and resilience demonstrated by BC's children and youth in and from care. Whether a few years or months are spent in care, each individual story has worth and provides fuel and fortitude to persevere. Each child or youth has a distinctive vision of what they will become and how they will carry their individual experiences forward, glean value and significance from personal history to construct a successful future.

We are here for support.

Together we notice.

We listen.

We respect.

We stand together with children and youth in care.

BC NDP Supports Fee Waiver Program at all 26 BC Post Secondary Schools

If you haven't heard already, it was announced in September 2017 that youth from foster care now have an expanded opportunity to pursue post-secondary education through the tuition waiver program with all BC post-secondary schools.

Vancouver Island University was the first to offer the tuition waiver program in 2013. The number of former youth in care attending all post-secondary schools through the program was 229 from September through December 2017, up from 189 for the entire 2016-2017 school year.

Agreements With Young Adults Program

The Agreements with Young Adults program (AYA) helps young adults ages 19-27, who at the time of their 19th birthday were on a YAG or CCO, to successfully transition to adulthood by providing up to \$1,250 of needs-based monthly funding for a maximum of 48 months while they:

- finish high school,
- learn job skills from a vocational program,
- attend college or university,
- and/or complete a life skills or a rehabilitative program.

To learn more about AYA, talk to a social worker at a local MCFD office, or check out www.AgedOut.com.

Tickets to Events for BC Foster Parents

BC foster parents can receive tickets to events through *Kids Up Front Foundation*. To be placed on the mailing list e-mail the Provincial office at office@bcfosterparents.ca or Debbie Drewitz at debbiedrewitz@gmail.com



MOTION (06/AGM/2017) to change the AGM back to May starting in 2019.

With fiscal year end being March 31st and with our increased program and project activity, it is now impossible to complete a financial audit by the end of May. BCFFPA is expected to present annual audited financial statements at the AGM. For this reason as well as a list of others, a Motion was passed at the February 2018 Board of Directors meeting not to pursue a change of date for our Annual General Meeting.

MOTION (07/AGM/2017) that the Board reappoint the subcommittee similar to that which was formed to look into the feasibility of forming a union and continuing the work, and add 1 more member as per 2016 AGM motion carried.

BCFFPA has forwarded all prior work done by the union working group to interested individuals in the community for further follow-up. We will receive updates periodically when there is activity to report.

MOTION (08/AGM/2017) that whenever possible our elected President attend meetings to represent and advocate for all foster parents, and the goal of saving money on travel expenses not be a consideration.

BCFFPA's President will continue to represent the Federation at meetings and events as necessary. Fiscal responsibility is always a consideration given our multiple priorities that must be managed within our budget and contract dollars.

MOTION (09/AGM/2017) that BCFFPA continue to advocate on a provincial level for both a funding increase in maintenance rates and service payments.

The Minister of Children and Family Development has indicated that the work of reviewing the rates will begin in 2018-2019 fiscal year. Consultation is currently underway across the province with agencies and individuals who represent the interests of foster parents including BCFFPA.

MOTION (10/AGM/2017) that BCFFPA continue to advocate for consistent payments and reimbursements.

Continuously in process.

MOTION (11/AGM/2017) that BCFFPA advocate for foster parent training to include face to face interactions where possible with involvement of current foster parents.

Those responsible for delivering the Caregiver Training are aware of our opinions which were given in our official role as contract holder for training development. Final decisions regarding training facilitation are pending with the MCFD leadership team.

2018 Regional Delegate Reports

Interior Delegate Report by Kevin Daniel of Williams Lake

Greetings from the Interior.

It's hard to believe that this school year is almost over and summer fun is going to begin in a short time. Hopefully this will be a lot less eventful than last summer with the fire evacuations. In response to last year's fires, many of the Resource Teams throughout the Interior have sent out reminders of protocols if families are to be evacuated. With a little rain I hope this will be a much smoother summer.

Over the last few months we have hosted monthly Branch calls which I have had the privileged of attending. These calls are led by members of the provincial Board with representatives of local Branches joining the call. Several Branch presidents from the Interior region have stated that they are very happy with the information sharing and look forward to hearing what's going on through a provincial lens. This has also made an important impact on Branches being able to provide their opinion on future initiatives. With the positivity of these calls hopefully word gets out and we find some new Branches popping up throughout the Interior region and the province to give foster parents more of a voice.

Many of our Interior Branches have reported there hasn't been a lot of activity in their communities. Some areas are having regular partnership meetings and other are looking to have partnership meetings in the coming months.

Some more active Branches have been making plans to attend the yearly AGM which takes place in Nelson and are hosting exciting fundraising events to make this happen. Other Branches are focusing on building relationships with their local foster parent community.

One notable change on the regional level is that Gerri Burleigh has swapped positions with Julie Holmlund, who will take over the temporary Regional Board president role till a new election in September. I look forward to seeing those of you that are able to attend the AGM and hope you all have a great summer.

North Region Report by Tanya Tagmann (BCFFPA's Secretary) of Prince George

Well, we all made it through another BC Winter and are now in Spring and Summer mode—sunscreen and sunglasses for everyone!

Currently our Northern Delegate seat is vacant. Volunteering with the BCFFPA is rewarding! You learn about issues through a provincial lens, participate in discussions and planning at a higher level, and of course represent foster parents in the North and relay our information to the Provincial Board. We have a new support and advocacy position coming on line and with this new role will come more opportunities for growth and learning. Being on the Board has been very meaningful to me and I have really enjoyed the learning that has come from the experience. Meeting the people in the Pre-Service Orientation sessions was my very favorite piece of the work.

Please do not foster alone, join with other foster parents and share your experiences and your hope with us.

The hotel block has been secured so we can start planning to attend the 2018 AGM in beautiful Nelson BC. The venue looks very relaxing and beautiful—it's right on Kootenay Lake. The AGM experience is about connecting with other foster parents, having access to training, and of course our annual meeting. I hope foster parents can make themselves available for this event, it's always well worth the effort.

I was very blessed to be able to participate in the MCFD Rates Review Meeting held in Burnaby BC in May. Many, many, issues were presented, discussed and positive new options were brainstormed. This is the first wave of discussions and there are more meetings in the planning stages throughout the province. We had a well thought out agenda which lead to hours of great discussion and sharing. Once the meeting was over, I think it is fair to say, we were all exhausted and there was simply nothing left to say—which was a great way to leave the space. BCFFPA did a great job presenting your/our concerns and experiences.

BCFFPA is now doing monthly conference calls with the Branches. So far this has been a great opportunity for sharing and gathering important information. I encourage all the local Branches to keep connected on this call also, don't be afraid to delegate the call to someone else if you have done a few. Participating on this call introduces you to members who have been around for years and just might lead to a seat on the Provincial Board!

Vancouver Island Delegate Report by Tanya Hooker of Courtenay

Hello Vancouver Island! With Summer just around the corner, I thought it would be appropriate to take a break from the usual style of regional report and toss around a few "Summer fun ideas" for the up coming sunny season.

As we all know, the children and youth we have in our care haven't always experienced some of the family activities which we usually take for granted. The family system our CICs come from usually differ extremely from that of our own.

What am I getting at, you might ask. Are you ready for this? Road trips are one of the best ways to build bridges, relationship and connection with your child or youth in care. That's right...road trip. It's time for a "stay-cation" folks. One that will involve building a life-changing connection with your CIC. Vancouver Island is a great vacation destination for individuals across BC, Canada, and many places around the world—why leave this picturesque island? Pack a lunch, take a big bag of chips, fill the tank with expensive gas and head off across your region of the Island...or visit a new and different location. Head to one of the many beaches, pack up a bucket and shovel to collect some incredible treasures you may find along the way. Sea glass is always fun to look for, finding the many shapes and colours. Make sure to check for the tides, at low tide marine life is an exciting source of entertainment along any stretch of beach. Maybe even try taking a badminton net along with you. What a great way to spend the day as family.

Doing a tour of beaches up and down Vancouver Island, complete with a couple ice cream stops along the way, can be a reasonable - yet exciting - way to spend some time together this Summer.

Let's not forget about all the Summer Camps at your finger tips on VI. Hopefully you remembered about "Camps for Kids" bursaries

offered through the BCFFPA. With an opportunity to be subsidized for sending your CIC or Bio children to Summer Camp, for a week they'll never forget.

Try one of these incredible camps: Camp Bob, Camp Homewood, Camp Qwanoes, Camp Imadene...to name a few. A week of camp for your child or youth in care is an investment of a lifetime. Whatever you choose to do this Summer, remember to make it memorable...and take tons of pictures too—that way, no matter what happens in life, those precious memories will never be forgotten.

Until next time friends...

Have a great Summer, and see you all at the AGM in Nelson this coming October.

Vancouver Coastal Delegate Contribution by Walter Aguilar of Coquitlam

Summer is a good time to reflect on the work that we do every day. With this in mind, I'd like to share with you the guiding principles that I use every day in my work as a coach.

How Embracing The Four Agreements Can Help Us Be More Effective as Foster Parents!

Being a foster parent can be challenging in the best of times. In Don Miguel Ruiz's book, *The Four Agreements*, he shares four principles that, when adopted into our lives, can be life changing and make us more effective as foster parents.

The Four agreements are:

- Don't Take Things Personally
- Be Impeccable with Your Word
- Don't Make Assumptions
- Always do Your Best

"Life is not as personal as we think it is, but we are responsible for more than we think we are" – Walter Aguilar

When we take anything that happens or what anyone does personally, we create a stress reaction that affects how we show up in the moment. Often, we will feel that it affects our lives and can get depressed, discouraged and disengage from our role of being an effective foster parent. The other way we can show up is being angry at others or ourselves and look to see what is wrong and who's to blame. Keeping objective will keep us from becoming overly controlling or disengaged.

"When you don't keep your word you lose credibility" Robin Sharma

Being impeccable with our word is key to building trust and credibility with our foster kids and anyone else we interact with. This also means keeping our word with ourselves. Rapport in relationships is built on trust. This becomes very evident when the storms of life come upon us. The good will we have built because of our integrity, will be demonstrated in the support we receive from others during these times.

"Don't Make Assumptions. Find the courage to ask questions and to express what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness and drama. With just this one agreement, you can completely transform your life." Don Miguel Ruiz

Just because it happened in the past does not mean it will happen in the future. The past does not equal the future. What choices we make in the moment (now) are what influences our future.

Learning to foster from the present moment is one of the best ways to increase our effectiveness in what we do.

"At the end of the day, remind yourself that you did the best you could today, and that is good enough." Lori Deschene

Fostering can feel like a thankless job at times. We can allow our inner critic to beat us up because of our performance or how we mishandled this or that. Remember all we are responsible for is for doing the best that we can in any given moment. When we can do that, then not only is that enough, it is all we can do. There are so many factors that foster parents do not have control over but doing our best in the moment is not one of them. At times our best will vary due to the stress we are under, but knowing that we gave what we have will help us continue to thrive in the process despite any setbacks.

Important Reminder to be "Photo Sensitive"!

Protecting the privacy of foster children is a contractual expectation of foster parents.



With the summer season upon us you will likely be taking pictures. We would like to remind all foster parents that the foster children in your care are entitled to privacy. You are expected to refrain from posting any identifying information regarding children in care through social media.

Please ensure that all well-meaning friends, neighbors and family are aware that pictures of your foster children are not to be posted and your children are not to be in any other way identified. Be mindful that this can have an undesirable impact for children in foster care, their families and their foster caregivers.



Visitations with Family Members

by Dr. John DeGarmo

Visitations are those scheduled, face to face meetings between a foster child and his biological parents, or family members. These visitations are considered by many to be the main factor in bringing reunification between the child and parents, the end goal for foster parenting. Meetings are held in a central and neutral location; a community park, a church, a child welfare agency. During this meeting, your caseworker, or other social worker, are permitted the opportunity to assess the foster child's relationship with his parents or family members, and determine how the parents are progressing in their level of readiness for possible reunification. Visitations also allow the opportunity for parents to practice parenting skills, which the social worker will also assess. Those parents who do attend visitations on a regular and consistent basis are more likely to be reunified with their child.

For foster children, visitations have many positive attributes. To begin with, your foster child's visit with his biological family members will likely reduce his sense of abandonment by them. Hopefully, his sense of self worth and importance will be bolstered, as he feels reassurance by his parents that they continue to love him, something he may very well doubt and struggle with internally. By expressing his feelings to them, he may continue to heal emotionally. His birth parents may also reassure him that he is in a good home, with you, and that he needs to listen to you, and follow your rules, thus strengthening his own relationship with you. In fact, those children who visit with their birth parents on a regular basis are less likely to exhibit behavioral problems in your home and in school, as their level of anxiety decreases, as they become better adjusted to placement within your family.

As positive as some visitations can be, they can also be times of confusion and dread, for both the foster child, as well as for the foster parents. It can be most heart wrenching for a foster child to arrive at a central location for visitation, only to wait for birth parents never to show. Other foster children may meet with their parents, yet have them speak negatively about the foster parents. Some may struggle with feelings of loyalty to both you and his birth parents. Still, other foster children may be given false hope from their family members, hope about imminent reunification. Many of these foster children will return to their foster homes confused, frustrated, depressed, or full of anxiety. Misbehavior may increase in the home, as well as in school, as the child struggles to understand their parent's behavior, or lack of. As a result, some foster parents come to dread visitations, as they feel they have to pick up the emotional pieces from the visits, or for some, start from the beginning with their foster child.

If your foster child should come back to your home feeling sad and confused, take time to allow him to talk to you and express his feelings about his visit. Try to answer any questions he might have, to the best of your ability. If necessary, refocus him on your house rules and remind him that he is important, and that he is loved by you, as well. Inform the caseworker immediately of any negative experiences or other concerns you might have from a visitation.

About the Author: Dr. John DeGarmo has been a foster parent for 15 years, and he and his wife have had over 50 children come through their home. He is an international consultant to legal firms and foster care agencies, as well as an empowerment and transformational speaker and trainer on many topics about the foster care system. He can be contacted at drjohndegarmo@gmail.com, through his Facebook page, Dr. John DeGarmo, or at The Foster Care Institute.

Ensure You Have The Information You Need. Don't Forget to Ask!

Newer foster parents may need a reminder to ask more questions before a child comes into their care. The list of questions below are designed to assist you in your discussions with workers regarding placements.

1. Why is the child being placed?
2. What previous placement experiences has the child had?
3. What is the child's legal status?
4. Are there 2 parents on the child's file? What are the parent's names and where are they located?
5. Will the parents visit? How often and where?
6. Does this child have siblings? Where are they living and what are their names?
7. What is the expected length of the placement and is there a Care Plan in place?
8. Will there be pre-placement visits?
9. What is the child's understanding of why he/she is being moved or separated from parents or present foster parents?
10. When will the social worker visit or call?
11. What is the child's health status? Allergies, immunizations, medications, dental care? When were the last dental and physical check-ups?
12. What is the child's medical number?
13. Is religion an important aspect of the child's life, and if so, what is their religion?
14. What grade and school does the child attend?
15. Are there any problems at school?
16. Does the child have any special behavior problems or unusual habits? Any special abilities?
17. Is there a history of sexual abuse, and if so, does the child pose a danger to other children in the home?
18. Does the child have sufficient clothing, and if not, is there a clothing allowance?
19. What will make the child feel most at home (food likes and dislikes, favorite toys etc.)?
20. What is the maintenance rate and when are payments made?
21. What is the after-hours emergency number?
22. Does the child need to be transported to school or home visits?
23. Are bed wetting or bowel control an issue?

BCFFPA's Mission

We represent and support all foster parents to provide quality in-home foster care in BC

BCFFPA's Vision

Supporting children and youth to reach their full potential through excellence in foster care

BCFFPA's Belief

Resilient foster parents raise empowered children and youth

After years of enquiries and searching for affordable personal extended health benefit plans, we are excited to present...



Health Insurance for Foster Parents!

Brought to you by
Green Shield Canada and **BCFFPA**

Not covered by a group health plan? Concerned about health and dental expenses? Find the coverage that's right for you and your family with a Health Assist plan from Green Shield Canada.

As independent contractors, foster parents experience challenges accessing affordable extended health benefits.

Health Assist provides a variety of health plan options with varying levels of benefits and coverage to choose from. Many offer guaranteed acceptance* whereas for other plans, GSC asks that you complete a medical questionnaire. Each plan is competitively priced. It's all about you, your health and the financial protection you need.

Getting the coverage that's right for you can be really simple!

For more information or to take advantage of the benefits Health Assist plans provide, contact:

Candace Dodson-Willis, GBA

A strategic alliance with Group One Planning Solutions
Email: candace_dodson@icloud.com
Phone: 250-299-2768

OR click on the image below for instant access to coverage options!



(or copy and paste this link) <https://mygscadvantage.ca/Quote/AllProducts?mgaid=1598&oid=HA329&aid=N7597>

Health Assist plans are easy to use...

- ✓ *No waiting period*—with all Health Assist plans, your coverage starts the first of the month following approval of your application.
- ✓ *Benefits for life*—Once your application is approved, you have coverage as long as you need it (as long as your monthly payments are made, of course).
- ✓ *Hassle-free claiming*—Most of your prescription drug, dental, extended health care and vision claims can be processed instantly using your GSC ID card. Other claims can be reimbursed quickly with direct deposit to your bank account. (Kiss waiting for a cheque in the mail goodbye!)
- ✓ *Mobile info on the GO*—GSC's fully mobile-friendly website and GSC on the Go® app make sure you stay connected by giving you quick, easy access to your benefits, claims status, history, health care providers, and much more on your desktop, laptop, tablet or smart phone.

And easy to love...

- ✓ *Rewards for living well*—Change4Life is a free online portal that's designed to support (and encourage!) healthy life choices by providing tools, resources and health information tailored to your specific needs. You'll earn points for your activity that can be used for chances to win great rewards, including gift cards from major retailers.
- ✓ *Legal assistance*—As a GSC customer, you'll have access to a free legal advice service in Canada 24/7 via toll-free telephone to help guide you through most major types of law. The legal advice service can also give referrals to experienced local lawyers at preferred rates.
- ✓ *Travel Coverage*—Emergency medical travel benefits and out of country assistance are included in all LINK plans

Plans provided by **Green Shield Canada (GSC)**

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*Acceptance is guaranteed for select plans as long as GSC receives the initial payment, other plans require completion of a health questionnaire and medical underwriting. Any other eligibility requirements? Just easy ones. To be eligible to apply for Health Assist plans, you must be a Canadian resident with valid provincial health insurance coverage; for Health Assist ZONE, you must be under 75 years of age; for Health Assist LINK you must be under 80 years of age and GSC must receive your application within 90 days of your group coverage end date.

Foster Community Resources

Provincial Resources

BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations 1-800-663-9999
www.bcfoosterparents.ca

After Hours Foster Parent Support Line 1-888-495-4440

Indigenous Perspectives Society 1.844.391.0007 (ext. 229)
www.http://ipsociety.ca/foster-caregiving/

Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks 1-800-565-8055
www.fbcyicn.ca

Adoptive Families Association 1-877-236-7807
www.bcadoption.com

Pacific Post Partum Support Society 604-255-7999
www.postpartum.org (also supporting adoption placements)

Parent Help Line 1-888-603-9100

Parents Together 604-325-0511

Parent Support Services of BC 1-800-345-9777
www.parentsupport.bc.ca

Representative for Children & Youth 1-800-476-3933
www.rcybc.ca

FAE/S Support Network 604-507-6675

Coastal Fraser

For contact information for local foster parent groups or support in your area, please call 1-800-663-9999.

Hollyburn Family Services 604-987-8211
www.hollyburn.ca

Vancouver Aboriginal Child & Family Services Society 778-331-4500
www.vacfss.com

Foster Hub 1-877-926-1185
www.fosterhub.ca

Fraser Valley Foster Parent Association 604-533-1924

South Vancouver Youth Centre 604-325-2004
www.milieu.ca/svyc

Island

For contact information for local foster parent groups or support in your area, please call 1-800-663-9999.

Foster Parent Support

Services Society 1-888-922-8437

FPSSS (Victoria) 778-430-5459

FPSSS (Nanaimo) 250-390-9686

FPSSS (Campbell River) 250-286-0555

Interior

For contact information for local foster parent groups or support in your area, please call 1-800-663-9999.

Okanagan Foster Parent Association

www.okfoosterparents.ca

Central Okanagan 250-870-8991

North Okanagan 250-558-0939

South Okanagan 250-462-6907

Shuswap 250-253-4499

Okanagan Metis Children & Family Services

250-868-0351

Interior Community Services

1-877-376-3660

www.interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca

North

For contact information for local foster parent groups or support in your area, please call 1-800-663-9999.

AXIS Family Resources

1-877-392-1003

(24/7 support)

Press 205

www.axis.bc.ca (satellite office locations online)

Community Bridge

250-785-6021

Fort St. John

(ext. 235)

www.communitybridge.ca

Please submit your relevant regional or agency contacts to Jayne Wilson at: jayne@bcfoosterparents.ca.

Advertise Here! (1/2 page size)

Readership, Exposure & Frequency

- **FosterlineBC** reaches over 2700 foster parents, agencies, community service locations, businesses and other individuals 3 times each year.
- Increase exposure for your business by advertising in **FosterlineBC**

Cost

- 1/2 page ~ 4 issues per year ~ \$925
- 1/2 page ~ single issue ~ \$250
- 1/4 page ~ 4 issues per year ~ \$650
- 1/4 page ~ single issue ~ \$175
- Business card ~ 4 issues per year ~ \$475
- Business card ~ single issue ~ \$125

For information on advertising in FosterlineBC, contact a staff member at BCFFPA! **1-800-663-9999**

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'IT PAYS TO BE A MEMBER'

Please complete & return to: **BCFFPA - 208-20641 Logan Avenue, Langley, BC V3A 7R3** or *join or renew via our website at www.bcfosterparents.ca*

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ City & Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____ Region: _____

Local Association (BCFFPA Branch) _____

Level of Foster Home: (tick one) Restricted ___ Regular ___ Level I ___ Level II ___ Level III ___ Contractor ___ Other ___

This is a: **New Membership** _____ (OR) a **Renewal** _____

1 year: individual \$30.00 _____ OR couple \$35.00 _____

2 year: individual \$50.00 _____ OR couple \$60.00 _____

**\$10.00 of this membership fee will be used by the provincial body for administration of the program and development of services to foster parents. The balance of the fee will be returned to your regional board or local association.*

I/we contract with (i.e. delegated agency regional agency MCFD etc.) Name: _____ OR my affiliation with the BCFFPA is (i.e. staff, MCFD, non-foster parent): _____. As members of the BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations, I/we agree to abide by the Bylaws, Policy and Procedures, and Code of Ethics of the Federation.

[signature(s)]

Please bill my VISA _____ M/C _____ # _____ Expires ____/____

