

# NORTH DAKOTA

FOSTER OR ADOPT

## Foster & Adoptive Parent Diligent Recruitment & Retention



## **History & Background**

North Dakota is committed to recruiting foster and adoptive parents that reflect the racial, ethnic and cultural diversity of the children in out-of-home care. The North Dakota Foster and Adopt Recruitment and Retention State Plan has been operationalized for many years with updates made periodically. In August 2012, North Dakota enhanced the statewide recruitment and retention focus from solely addressing primarily 'general' recruitment efforts to equally addressing both general and targeted recruitment activities. During this time, regional R&R Coalitions were established statewide and required to submit a "Request for Funding" proposal which identified general and targeted recruitment activities. The coalitions were directed to analyze their regional data in order to identify gaps and needs in their region and submit their proposal based upon this determination. The amount of recruitment and retention funding made available to each region was determined based on the approximate population of children by region and budget expenditures from previous biennium.

In January 2018, request for funding changed based in the North Dakota legislative bill SB 2206, County Social Service Redesign. This law change wrapped recruitment and retention funding into the legislative bill and funds were distributed to the counties in a similar way as done prior to 2018, but most costs were embedded into the county fiscal formula and not offered as monthly reimbursement within an isolated budget.

In January 2020, the Department engaged in a formal contract with the University of North Dakota Children and Family Services Training Center (CFSTC) to hire a Recruitment Retention Specialist (FRRS) to lead statewide recruitment and retention efforts. The Recruitment and Retention Specialist was hired and began working in April 2020. The duties of the contract include:

- Engage with the department Children and Family Services (CFS) to develop and maintain the R&R plan.
- Engage with community stakeholders to provide information and referral for all incoming foster care provider inquiries via website, telephone or inquiries forwarded from other partners.
- Support and inform inquiring individuals of foster care licensing and adoption options.
- Co-facilitate Recruitment and Retention Coalition meetings.
- Provide technical assistance and training as needed.
- Assist in efficient statewide planning to maximize funding.
- Administer statewide recruitment and retention funds.
- Oversee a statewide branding effort to establish cohesive messaging to increase "brand" awareness.
- Research and engage in best practice marketing and advertisement, to develop statewide marketing efforts.
- Collect and document quarterly and annual recruitment and retention data
- Provide education and awareness related to recruitment and retention, through social media, marketing efforts, bimonthly newsletter articles, developing community partners, and promotional opportunities.
- Survey foster care providers to enhance retention efforts and overcome barriers.
- Other duties as determined necessary to carry out the goals of the plan and contract.

In April 2022, the CFS Licensing Unit was implemented. This included the transfer of ND Human Service Zone foster care licensing duties to the ND Department of Health and Human Services - Children and Families Services section. Legislative redesign efforts (SB 2086 (section 26) shifted all duties and local supervision of up to 16 staff to become licensing specialists and coordinators. The CFS Licensing Unit will provide statewide coverage licensing foster homes, engaging in recruitment and retention efforts, identifying shelter and respite care providers, while offering the PRIDE pre-service training to prospective foster care providers. The CFS Licensing Unit will also oversee the licensing of Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP), Supervised Independent Living (SIL), Licensed Child Placing Agencies (LCPA), maternity homes and certified shelter care programs.

In September 2022, the North Dakota Department of Human Services merged with the ND Department of Health and Human Services; known as ND Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). This in fact required upgrades to all recruitment and retention branded materials, etc. All rebranding was required by July 2023. In April 2023, the CFS Licensing Unit remained stable with one year of redesign underway!

In January 2023, ND state legislature allowed for the CFS Licensing Unit to develop parameters and gain approval through administrative rules to proceed with a licensing level of care specific to short-term placements (respite and emergency shelter for less than 30 days), as well as work with the federal government to gain approval for PI-23 relative licensing. North Dakota has historically licensed foster care providers under one set of standards and these three levels of licensure will help meet the varied needs of children in need of out of home placement. Effective, April 1, 2024, HHS Children and Family Services received approval under the federal Title IV-E State

Plan amendment to have separate standards for relatives licensed to provide foster care to related children. North Dakota family licensing includes:

**1. Licensed – Full**

- Care to children in need of out of home placement including long term, short term, respite, and shelter.
- Providers are licensed by the State, Nexus PATH (treatment) or Tribal Nation.

**2. Licensed – Relative**

- Care to relative children only.
- Providers are licensed by the State or Tribal Nation.

**3. Certified - Short term care**

- Care to children for 30 days or less inclusive of emergency shelter care (14 days or less), or planned respite care (4 days or less).
- Providers are licensed by the State

**CFS Licensing Unit Contact Information:**

[cfslicensing@nd.gov](mailto:cfslicensing@nd.gov)

Office: 701-328-2322

Toll Free: 1-888-334-1330

Fax: 701-328-0962

CFS Licensing Unit			
Kelsey Bless, Licensing Unit Administrator			
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Dana Lindemann, License/LOC Specialist	Brooke Kosiak, Coordinator	Natalie Straub, Licensing Specialist	Sadie Olson, Licensing Specialist
Megan Colbenson, License/LOC Specialist	Renee Grussing, Coordinator	Becka Koll, Licensing Specialist	Barb Reed, Licensing Specialist
	Jenn Puppe, Coordinator	Rachel Suda, Licensing Specialist	Teresa Wieseler-Kubal, Licensing Specialist
		Jennifer Thoreson, Licensing Specialist	Samantha Everson, Licensing Specialist
		Jenny Smyth, Licensing Specialist	Amber Nix, Licensing Specialist
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**Unit Contact Information:**

- [cfslicensing@nd.gov](mailto:cfslicensing@nd.gov)
- 701-328-2322
- 1-888-334-1330 (toll-free)

Inquiries go to UND CFSTC at 1-833-FST-HOME

**Inquiry Contact Information:**

Information related to foster care and adoption recruitment and retention efforts can be found by accessing the Department of Health and Human Services’ website at: <https://www.hhs.nd.gov/foster-care-provider-inquiry> or by calling the North Dakota Toll Free Recruitment and Retention line at **1-833-FST-HOME** or 1-833-378-4663.

Individuals interested in learning more about becoming a foster or adoptive parent can enter their name, address and telephone number, press ‘send’, and the inquiry is sent directly to the Recruitment and Retention Specialist (RRS) at The UND Children and Family Services Training Center (CFSTC). The RRS makes telephone and email contact with interested individuals immediately. The RRS gathers information about the inquiring family, shares information regarding different levels of care, agencies related to level of care, and licensing and training requirements and process. The RRS and the interested individuals plan which licensing agency(s) to forward their information or to be followed up by the RRS. At the time the interested individuals are ready to move forward, their information gathered by the RRS is forwarded to the identified agency(s).

## **ND Provider Task Force**

The ND Foster Care Provider Task Force was created in February 2022. This format offered a platform for HHS Children and Family Services to solicit feedback, gain perspective, request assistance on small projects, while engaging subject-matter experts in system change and growth opportunities. The ND Provider Task Force is made up of fifteen licensed foster care providers and or facility representatives, as well as policy administration with an equal mission to identify challenges and seek change in a meaningful respectful, solution focused manner. The Task force meets every other month and is facilitated by the CFS Licensing Unit. HHS solicited new membership in April 2023 in efforts to continue to embrace change and gain perspective from providers.

## **ND Recruitment & Retention Work Group**

The ND Statewide Foster and Adopt Recruitment and Retention Work Group was created in April 2020. This format offered a more consistent statewide representation of agency staff and partners and took the place of the historical annual Task Force meeting. Work Group members represent all areas of the state and include individuals from Human Service Zones, Division of Juvenile Services, Tribal Nations, Licensed Child Placing Agencies (Nexus PATH, Youthworks, AASK, etc), UND Children and Family Services Training Center, Children & Family Services, foster and adoptive parent/s. The goal of the work group is to review the R&R state plan, analyze data, address systemic issues for recruitment and retention, while meeting any additional requests of the Department.

## **Recruitment & Retention Coalitions**

The purpose of the Foster and Adopt Recruitment and Retention Coalition is to gather local parties to engage in conversation and support the recruitment and retention of foster care providers as well as adoptive families. The statewide goal is to continue to offer education and awareness surrounding the need for families to open their hearts and homes to children in need of safe placement.

Prior to 2020, Coalitions were structured by regional human service center boundaries and made up of various parties. In October 2020, the coalition structure was revised and repurposed to ensure consistency, efficiency and productivity statewide when carrying out the mission of recruitment and retention. Today, North Dakota has four functioning coalitions representing partners and providers from across the state. For more information about the ND coalitions, see ATTACHMENT A.

## **State Policy Limitations**

ND does not have limitations about who can become a foster care provider. The US Supreme Court decision regarding same sex marriage has not and will not have program implications on licensing ND foster homes. Currently, ND does have same-sex couples licensed to provide foster care to children and our state has had same sex couples licensed in the past. Same sex couples may also adopt children from ND foster care.

## **Fee Structures**

There are no fees associated with family foster home licensing. The Department of Health Human Services assumes costs related to fingerprint-based criminal records checks as well as costs related to private well water testing. In addition, any costs related to a physical or psychological exam required by the licensing agency is the responsibility of the individual insurance first, then the licensing agency or the Department of Health and Human Services. (NDAC 75-03-14) Fees charged to prospective adoptive families by the AASK program are minimal and relate to criminal background checks, an application fee and psychological testing. These costs can be reimbursed to the family if the child they adopt qualifies for an adoption subsidy.

## **Statewide Agencies and Service Areas**

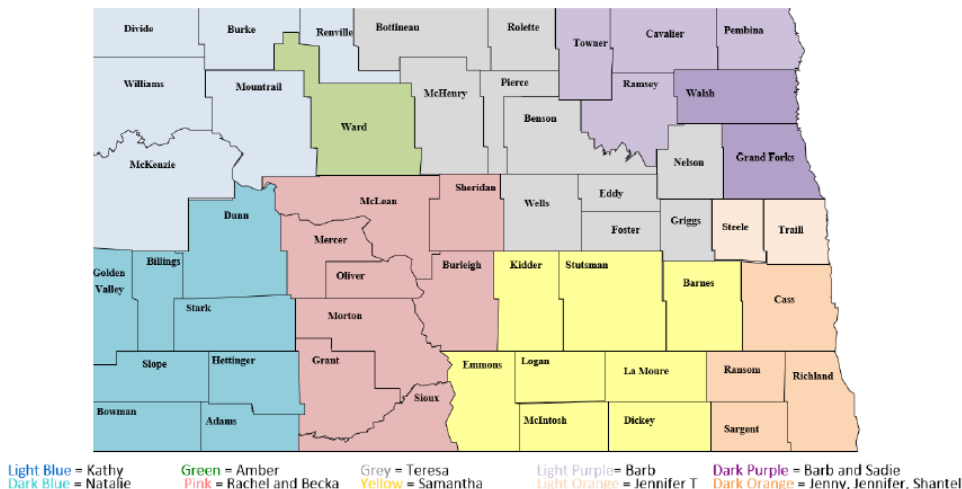
HHS, Children and Family Services Licensing Unit hires licensing specialists to administer the licensing of foster care provider homes across the state. At this time, twelve licensing specialists oversee licensure requests statewide, while various authorized licensing agent/s complete the home study process, interview prospective families, complete licensure recommendations, etc. Foster care licensing packets are received to the Department from authorized agents including:

- Nexus – PATH
- Tribal Nations
- Unaccompanied Refugee Minor program

Home Study packets for adoption are received from AASK adoption program. Located on the Department's web site at: <https://www.hhs.nd.gov/cfs/adoption-program> Links are provided to answer questions regarding the process of adoption as well as agency contact information.

### ND Children and Family Services Licensing Specialist Coverage Areas

Licensing specialists are assigned to a service area where they will meet regularly (weekly or every other week) with custodial agencies to discuss new homes, changes to homes, recruitment needs, etc. The service areas offer a primary point of contact, but do not officially require the assigned specialist/s to complete tasks or home studies. The CFS licensing Unit works collaboratively to share areas, cover for one another, etc. as needed.



### Onsite Case Review – CFSR PIP

North Dakota has one goal of the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) related to strengthening and reframing the statewide foster and adoptive parent diligent recruitment plan to support the recruitment of families who meet the needs of the children they serve and who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children served by the foster care program (CFSR Items 35 and 36). HHS made continual efforts throughout the PIP to improve the collaboration with foster and adoption providers, and relative caregivers to increase awareness of available resources or training and to better recruit prospective providers to meet the ongoing needs of North Dakota children in foster care, particularly those with specific behaviors. This has included making a more effective use of social media, newsletters and surveys to obtain feedback and input from foster care providers, relative, and adoptive families as to what is working well and where things could be enhanced in order to improve overall satisfaction and retention. HHS engaged early in the PIP period with the University of North Dakota CFSTC to offer more online and face-to-face training modules for relative caregivers and providers. The Department, CFSTC, custodial case managers and provider agencies continued to collaborate throughout the PIP to further align training to increase the ability of relative caregivers and providers to manage child behaviors and best meet the needs of children in placement, while creating ICWA resources and training to improve overall ICWA placement preference compliance. Future PIP goals and strategies will be reviewed and managed by the Recruitment and Retention Work Group and acknowledged in the state plan.

March 31, 2021, the PIP ended for North Dakota. Review of the PIP Measurement Plan had goal 5 specific to diligent recruitment. CFS did collaborate with partners early on to implement and begin efforts to redesign the recruitment and retention state plan, to centralize inquiries, efficiently and effectively engage prospective families, survey of caregivers (416 responses) and most recently, since July 2021 we engaged in the formal theory of constraint model to redesign foster care licensing, update the licensing process, paperwork and overall structure.

Spring of 2024, North Dakota gathered a committee of providers, adoptive families, case managers, agency supervisors, the Childrens and Family Services Training Center, NATI, Children and Family Services administration, and others to review the CFSR Systemic Factors. North Dakota feels that items 33, 34, 35, and 36 represent the recruitment and retention plan as well as statewide efforts very well. The standards being applied equally have greatly improved, the background check process is in place, while interstate compact on the placement of children has maintained consistent. North Dakota will opt into the NEICE system once we have our new data management system up and running, this will be a great strength for data collection and reporting.

## Data Systems and Reporting (Foster and Adopt)

North Dakota has a reporting tool in our data management system, FRAME, to provide a quick glance at foster care demographics. The “Foster Care Demographics Report” is available to all FRAME users and allows access of up-to-date data related to foster youth, i.e., # foster children in each county/Zone, region, age, race, etc. Coalitions can view demographics as specific to their local county or as regional view to determine their needs. Recruitment & Retention Coalitions can view the foster care demographics reports “moment in time” data or in larger timeframes to determine increases, decreases, recruitment strategy updated needed, etc.

### Foster Care Data – June 14, 2022

The report can be run as a statewide data report or specific to an area. Data below shows the demographic breakdown for children in foster care by age and location.

Unique Child Totals by Age

Region	Ages																						
	Total	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
I - Northwest	83	10	6	7	4	6	3	5	5	2	5		4	3	2	4		8	5	1	3		
II - North Central	173	19	17	15	15	11	2	9	5	12	7	5	4	4	5	7	9	14	6	4	1	2	
III - Lake Region	354	13	25	34	29	29	18	21	21	27	23	20	16	14	12	17	10	9	14	2			
IV - Northeast	235	18	20	16	21	18	11	15	12	11	13	11	15	10	7	7	6	11	7	1	3	2	
V - Southeast	302	25	37	26	13	16	18	14	8	15	12	15	9	9	13	10	14	14	16	10	5	3	
VI - South Central	47	1	2	2	1	2	2	5	4	1	1	5	2	4	1		3	3	2	3	2	1	
VII - West Central	314	24	20	32	17	13	22	12	12	21	10	14	8	21	11	13	20	18	12	10	3	1	
VIII - Badlands	43	1	6	3	1	2	1				1	1	1	2	4	3	3	5	7	1	1		
<b>Age Totals</b>	<b>1551</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	

Unique Child Totals by Race

Race	Total
American Indian or Alaskan Native	764
Asian	12
African American	147
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	6
White	660
Unable to Determine	70
Refusal by Client	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1659</b>

Children by Gender

Gender	Total
Male	777
Female	774
<b>Total</b>	<b>1551</b>

2022 ND data above represents:

- 1551 children are in foster care today (June 14, 2022) under the custody of one of these three public agencies: ND Human Service Zone (formerly county social services), ND Tribal Nation with a Title IV-E Agreement, or the Division of Juvenile Services (DJS).
- 42% (655) of the children are age 5 and under
- Race data includes dual races meaning a child is counted in each race category. Tribal IV-E cases are included in our statewide data, attributing to what appears to be an increase in Native American children (49%). Of the 49% of children who identify as Native American; 28% are under the public custody of a Human Service Zone or DJS.
- ND does not provide foster care services after age 21.

### Foster Care Data – May 30, 2023

The report can be run as a statewide data report or specific to an area. Data below shows the demographic breakdown for children in foster care by age and location.

Unique Child Totals by Age

Region	Ages																						
	Total	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
I - Northwest	91	10	11	10	7	4	6	4	3	5	3	4	1	4	1	5	3		4	3	1	2	
II - North Central	169	12	25	12	10	7	10	2	8	7	10	9	4	3	8	5	11	11	10	2	2	1	
III - Lake Region	291	11	18	28	28	20	16	11	14	18	22	18	19	14	13	8	15	6	7	5			
IV - Northeast	202	10	18	12	14	12	10	17	9	12	10	12	11	10	4	11	7	7	9	3	1	3	
V - Southeast	273	23	26	24	17	13	16	19	9	14	11	10	11	9	10	10	10	13	12	7	7	2	
VI - South Central	53	3	4	3	2	1	4	3	3	6		1	4	3	7	1	1	3	2	1	1		
VII - West Central	313	22	24	18	25	17	17	18	14	11	16	11	17	11	17	15	14	15	21	6	3	1	
VIII - Badlands	53	1	4	6	4	2	6	1	1	1	4	1	2	2	2	2	3	5	3	3			
<b>Age Totals</b>	<b>1445</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	

Unique Child Totals by Race

Race	Total
American Indian or Alaskan Native	725
Asian	10
African American	152
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	6
White	599
Unable to Determine	58
Refusal by Client	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1550</b>

Children by Gender

Gender	Total
Male	726
Female	719
<b>Total</b>	<b>1445</b>

2023 ND data above represents:

- 1445 children are in foster care today (May 30, 2023) under the custody of one of these three public agencies: ND Human Service Zone, ND Tribal Nation with a Title IV-E Agreement, or the Division of Juvenile Services (DJS).
- 42% (603) of the children are age 5 and under
- Race data includes dual races meaning a child is counted in each race category. Tribal IV-E cases are included in our statewide data, attributing to what appears to be an increase in Native American children (50%). Of the 50% of children who identify as Native American; 30% of the children are under the public custody of a Human Service Zone or DJS, while 20% are under the custody of a Tribal Nation.
- ND does not provide foster care services after age 21.

### Foster Care Data – May 30, 2024

The report can be run as a statewide data report or specific to an area. Data below shows the demographic breakdown for children in foster care by age and location.

Unique Child Totals by Age

Region	Ages																						
	Total	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
<a href="#">I - Northwest</a>	86	6	6	9	8	7	7	7	4	6	4	3	3	1	3	3	3	2	1	2			1
<a href="#">II - North Central</a>	156	8	10	14	15	11	10	5	9	8	5	12	5	4	2	9	5	11	5	5	1	2	
<a href="#">III - Lake Region</a>	235	12	12	18	24	23	18	14	11	14	12	15	13	10	7	11	6	9	4	1	1		
<a href="#">IV - Northeast</a>	165	8	16	14	9	13	10	5	9	8	10	8	7	8	5	5	3	5	9	3	1		
<a href="#">V - Southeast</a>	217	15	23	12	18	15	12	9	13	9	7	12	4	11	5	10	11	8	8	9	2	4	
<a href="#">VI - South Central</a>	39	1	2	2	3	1	3	3	3	2	3		2	1	1	4	1	3	2			2	
<a href="#">VII - West Central</a>	294	19	19	25	15	25	19	18	12	14	5	18	9	14	14	16	11	9	16	9	5	2	
<a href="#">VIII - Badlands</a>	38	3	1	5	2	4	1	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	1	3	1	3	1	1			
<b>Age Totals</b>	<b>1230</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	

Unique Child Totals by Race

Race	Total
American Indian or Alaskan Native	620
Asian	5
African American	103
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	9
White	530
Unable to Determine	52
Refusal by Client	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1319</b>

Children by Gender

Gender	Total
Male	601
Female	629
<b>Total</b>	<b>1230</b>

2024 ND data above represents:

- 1230 children are in foster care on May 30, 2024, under the custody of one of these three public agencies: ND Human Service Zone, ND Tribal Nation with a Title IV-E Agreement, or the Division of Juvenile Services.
- 43% (533) of the children are age 5 and under
- 47% (620) of the children identify as sole/dual race of Native American. Tribal IV-E cases are included in our statewide data. Of the 47% of children who identify as Native American; 28% of the children are under the public custody of a Human Service Zone or DJS, while 19% are under the custody of a Tribal Nation.
- ND does not provide foster care services after age 21.

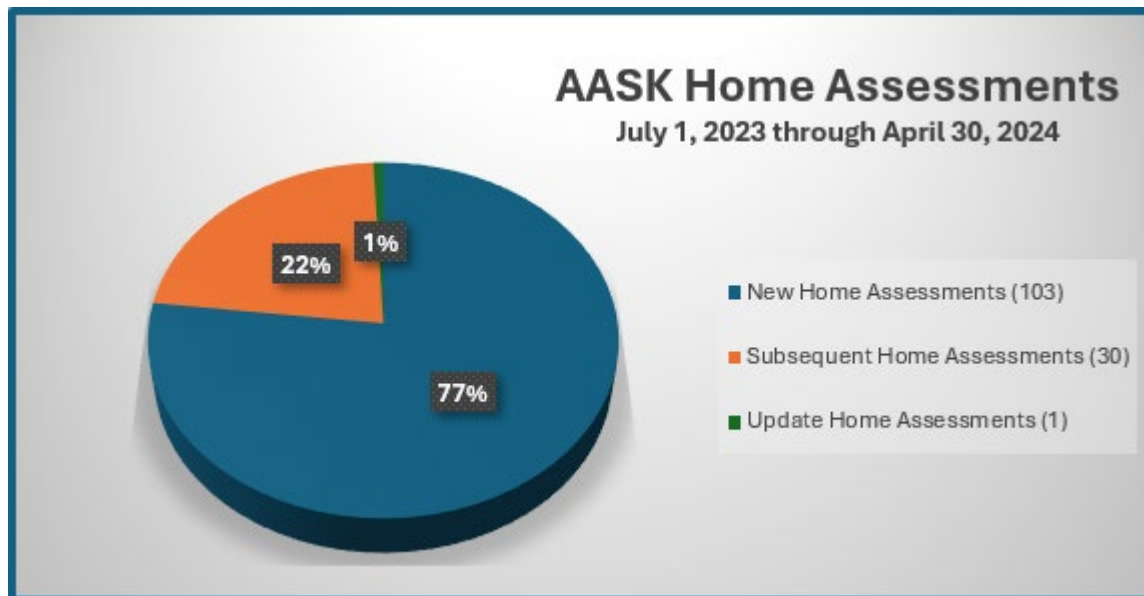
### Adoption Specific Details

The AASK program continues to serve children in the foster care system who have a concurrent or primary goal of adoption. From July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, AASK served a total of 861 children in varying stages of the adoption process. In addition, a total of 124 adoption home assessments were completed on families. In fiscal year 2023, AASK facilitated 232 adoptions. Of this number:

- 73% were North Dakota State Custody Children
- 21% were Tribal Custody Children
- 6% were Incoming ICPC Children

The average age of a child at the time of finalization during fiscal year 2023 was 7.61 years old. Children finalized ranged from 9.0 months to 17.64 years old.

In the current fiscal year (July 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024), AASK has completed 133 home assessments for adoptive families in North Dakota. Of this number, 103 are new adoptive families and 30 are families who have adopted through the AASK program in the past (see chart below).



In the Fall of 2023, The North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services, Children and Family Services Division began a formal adoption re-design effort to focus on identifying areas that could be enhanced on a child's journey to adoption. Through this process four areas of focus were identified, and workgroups were created to dig deeper into the following areas:

- Relative Search and Active Efforts (actively seeking out connections to a child prior to an adoption goal)
- Termination of Parental Rights (working with court systems to create consistency and timeliness in hearings and petitions)
- AASK Referral (creating workflows that allow a seamless transition of information from a child's custodian to meet adoption requirements)
- AASK and Foster Care Home Assessments (building a process to create efficiencies and utilizing foster care assessments within the adoption process)

Several implementations were made as a result, including many changes to the adoption home assessment. All implementations began February 1, 2024. Some high-level changes include:

- A new home assessment format, including a supplemental assessment option with the use of a foster care study
- A decrease in reference requirements
- The elimination of background check processing fees
- A decrease in home assessment visit requirements
- A decrease in application requirements

An overall goal of the adoption redesign efforts is to finalize child cases 60 days from the date of a termination of parental rights. With these new implementations and quicker timelines, some regions are experiencing a backlog of adoption cases. To mitigate this concern quickly and to ensure the adoption redesign changes can be implemented effectively, the AASK program is working on hiring additional staff and restructuring positions to support this effort.

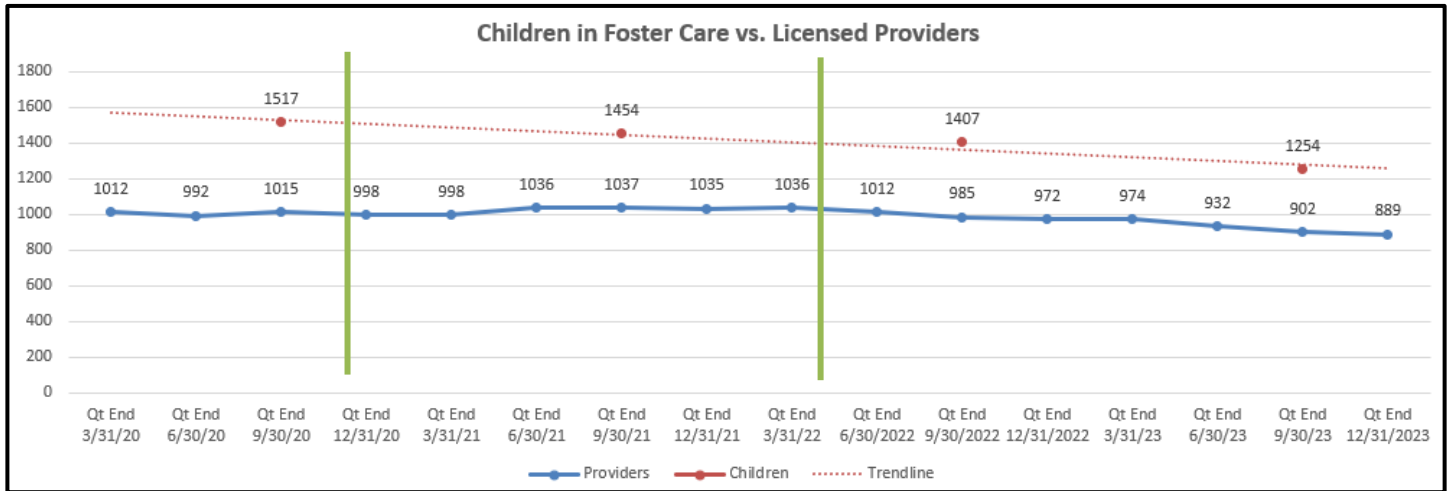
### **Children in Foster Care and Provider Data**

Historically, recruitment and retention coalitions have tracked numbers of homes, inquiries, asked what data is most relative to our work and to create a baseline of data to analyze and compare. In July 2020, Children and Family Services began extracting foster care data from CCWIPS, provider and payment data management system. This change in data analysis altered the view of the data collected and showed ND disparity in data. The chart below represents the volume of homes licensed for one day in the preceding quarter of the biennium.

ND recognized a decline in the total number of licensed family foster care providers. In reviewing the data, North Dakota has a reduction in the number of children in ND foster care as well, so the decline in placement

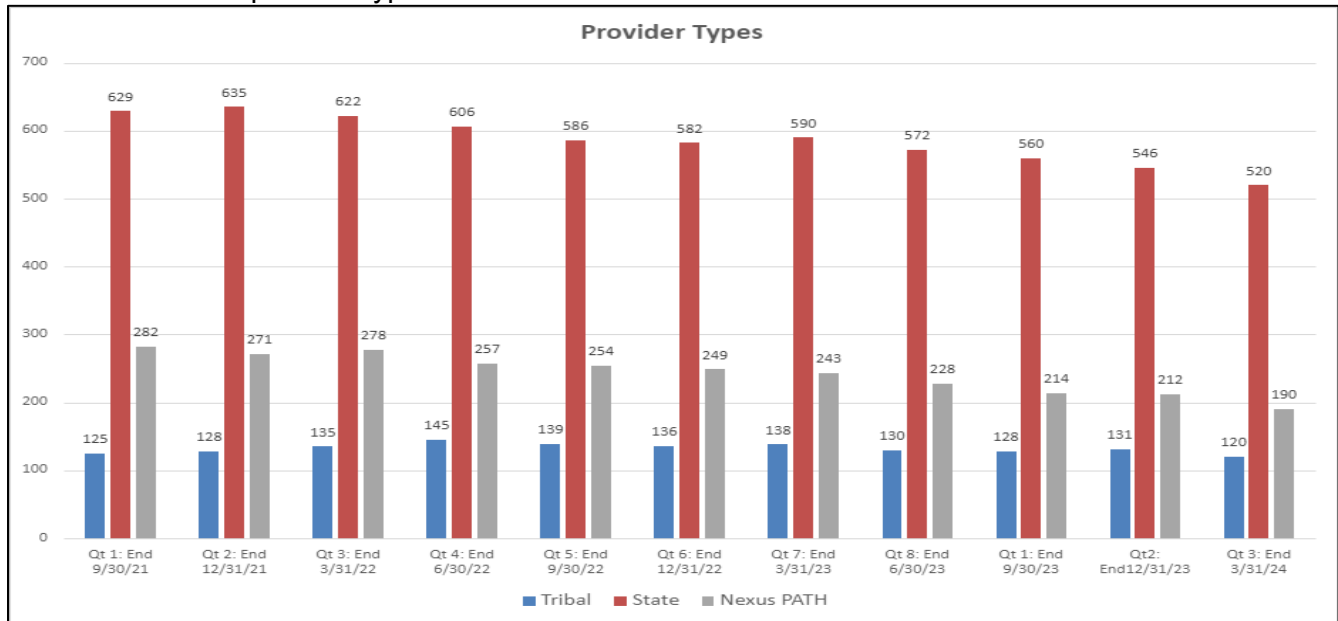


options is in alignment with the volume of children in care on any given day. In analyzing data, North Dakota highlights the decline in homes, but also wants to highlight two important timeframes that may have impacted the trajectory. The first green vertical line represents when ND Safety Framework Practice Model went into effect in December 2020, a time when the assessment of present danger versus impending dangers shifted and workers managed cases and assessed safety with a more defined model (reduction of children in care). The second green vertical line represents when the CFS Licensing Unit implementation (increase in oversight/consistency).



**Provider Types**

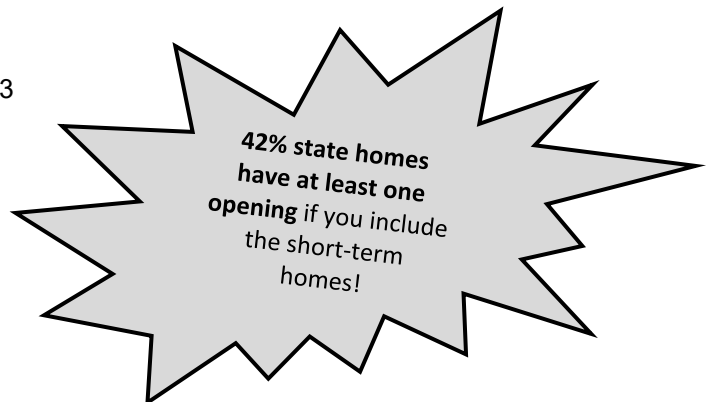
HHS issues a formal license or approval to State, Nexus PATH, and Tribal Nation homes. This chart shows a consistent trend for all provider types.



**Provider Availability**

ND Provider List shows 529 active state homes on May 8, 2023

- 164 (31%) are full
- 144 (27%) are open, with at least 1 bed available
- 53 (10%) Not Taking Placements
- 77 (15%) Short Term only; 7 days or less
- 16 (3%) CFS Hold/Do Not Call
- 75 (14%) Specific Child Only



## ND Provider List shows consistency one year later in May 2024:

- 158 (36%) are full
- 134 (30%) are open, with at least 1 bed available
- 27 (6%) Specific Child Only
- 56 (13%) Not Taking Placements
- 53 (12%) Short Term only
- 10 (2%) CFS Hold/Do Not Call
- 284 (65%) are willing to offer respite care
- 221 (50%) are willing to take emergency shelter care placements
- 40 (9%) have committed to join the on-call shelter care rotation in select parts of the state.

## Respite Care and Shelter Care

Additional services greatly support children in need of placement and offer timely assistance to our partners! From 7/1/2023-present, CFS Level of Care Unit has reimbursed licensed providers:

- \$34,000 for shelter care prevention placements.
  - **58 children served and diverted from ever having to enter foster care!**
- \$9700 for shelter care, where children did enter foster care within 14 days of shelter care.
- \$31,000 reimbursed for respite prevention cases
- \$46,700 reimbursed for respite foster care cases

In May 2021 and 2022, Children and Family Services requested specific data to include a baseline of data to consider for the remainder of the state plan. The data involving # of TPR cases, placement stability, medical conditions indicated there was topic of interest, but the data did not tell us what we needed as it relates to outcome measures. In May 2023, Children and Family Services determined the data inconsistencies did not provide the Recruitment and Retention plan relevant information, we discussed discontinuing the extraction of the data details and instead proceed to focus on the emergency/short term need for foster care to offer a safety service as well as the enhance structures and support to foster care providers who offer care to long-stayers.

## Long Stayers

In May 2023 the Zones had **154 (11%)** children in foster care for 3 years or longer. **314 (22%)** have been in foster care for greater than 2 years. 40 (26%) of the 154 cases have been in care longer than 5 years, with the longest case being a seventeen-year-old, who has been in Zone custody for 11.5 years. Tribal Nations have **115 (8%)** Tribal Title IV-E foster youth in care for 3 years or longer. **170 (12%)** have been in foster care for greater than 2 years. Longest case is a twelve-year-old, who has been in Tribal custody for 9.5 years.

In March 2024, a collective pull of all Zone, DJS and Tribal IV-E cases indicate that 480 (39%) in care less one year, with 158 (13%) in care less than 90 days. 303 (25%) children are in care over 1 year, less than 2 years. 213 (17%) children have been in care over 2 years, less than 3 years. Lastly, 230 (19%) children have been in care greater than 3 years, with longest length of time for a child is 4517 days (12.3 years). These cases present with a variety of complex needs; one contributing factor is their long length of stay in foster care without permanency.

## 2020-2024 Outcomes Reporting

The ND Foster and Adopt Recruitment and Retention (R&R) Work Group identified priorities for the state plan to include five specific outcomes embracing opportunity to identify placement options for Native American children while increasing “customer service” when engaging families.

### **Outcome 1 – ND foster children placed out of home, remain in their home community unless placed with identified relatives out of the community.**

- *Coalitions and CFS Licensing specialists report a large majority of the children are placed close to their home community, custodians work diligently to ensure proximity to school and parents and licensing is asked to amend licenses in order to maintain children in the area, etc.*
- *There are occasions when our rural communities have a child enter care and the child’s needs do require additional services in larger urban areas closer to community services. In addition, there are rural pockets of the state with a limited provider network, which does result in requests to place children out of the service*

area. For example, CFS Licensing Unit is working with Devils Lake area to recruit additional providers to serve children under the custody of Mountain Lakes.

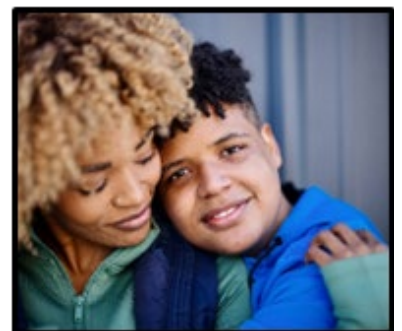
- Safety Framework Practice Model (SFPM) assists with diverting children from entering foster care and identifying relatives faster as a safety support when a family is in crisis.
- The expansion of relative licensing (4/1/24) has given greater attention and push to focusing on identified relatives as placement options. Licensing Specialist in Williston reports she had 10 families become licensed to care for relatives, the majority of the children coming from other areas of the state and from other states (ICPC). In addition, in Williston there are 7 families pending background check results, 6 are pursuing relative licenses. This reiterates that reviewing our standards and reducing the requirements on a couple areas may seem minor to us (Abbreviated instead of Full PRIDE, less training hours, physical exam form, etc), however it makes a huge difference to those who want to care for family members.
- Promoting certification as a new licensing option to families that want to help children out in their community but feel that their capacity isn't for long-term placement options. They can be respite/shelter/substitute providers on a 30 day or less and still feel that they are playing their part in a life of a child and community.
- Continued use of ND Provider list enables custodians to search first for an available foster home in a child's home community.
- With difficult to place children, ND is really pushing case managers to find relatives or reach out to fictive kin. This often times results in a license for the specific child, which on occasion results in the provider being open to take other children down the road.
- From 7/1/2023-present, CFS has reimbursed licensed providers:
  - \$34,000 for shelter care prevention placements. 58 children served and diverted from ever having to enter FC!
  - \$9700 for shelter care, where children entered FC.
  - \$31,000 reimbursed for respite prevention cases
  - \$46,700 reimbursed for respite foster care cases

#### **Outcome 2 – Sibling groups are placed together.**

- Coalitions and CFS Licensing specialists report majority of the children are placed with their siblings, together in a provider home, in their home community. Licensing is asked to amend licenses in order to maintain sibling connections in provider homes.
- There are occasions where a custodial agency may need to choose to seek a provider willing to care for a larger sibling unit (outside of the area) in lieu of splitting the children up and placing them separately in the home community, which is rare. It is considered in the best interest of the children to keep them together (even if in two homes), whenever possible. If a sibling unit is split between two providers, the custodial agencies are diligent in establishing and maintaining visitation of the children.
- Licensing standards require providers be age 21, however we have had a couple situations where we utilized the federal relative waiver to allow for the older sibling age, 19 or 20 to get licensed and care for their siblings. The new relative licensing standards continue to promote this and support those who want to care for family members.
- Licensing Level of Care (LOC) provides license amendments to increase bed capacity to allow siblings groups to stay together during shelter care.
- Licensing Level of Care (LOC) provides license amendments to increase bed capacity to allow siblings groups to stay together during respite care.

#### **Outcome 3 – Providers are available to care for children in foster care with specialized medical and high behavioral needs.**

- Coalitions and CFS Licensing specialists report providers tend to be more willing to meet the needs and accept placement for high medical needs (drug exposed newborns, cancer, developmental delays, feeding tubes, etc.) than behavioral health challenges. ND is experiencing a high need for providers to accept children with more behavioral or aggressive characteristics.
- When a provider is identified, licensing and custodial agencies do seek additional services and training to support the provider including behavioral analysts, clinical experts, or other professional staff offering hands on learning and techniques to use in the home.



- *When a provider is identified, custodial agencies do request excess maintenance payments to assist in the general costs to supervise, provide service and meet the needs of the child during placement. The excess maintenance is not an incentive, but rather a support for service.*
- *Nexus PATH Family Healing is the treatment foster care agency in ND providing specialized treatment services to children in the least restrictive setting. In May 2024, the agency began detailing enhancements to the treatment foster care program, which will go into effect on July 1, 2024.*
- *Champion for Child is a new campaign using targeted recruitment to identify a provider willing to accept a placement. Champion for a Child is intended to locate a foster care placement for a child in great need. Typically, the child's longevity in the system is a contributing factor to placement disruption, complex needs and a delay in permanency achievement. The flier describes the strengths of the child, a photo, age and permanency plan for the child. We email all providers in the state of ND and this effort has allowed for providers to consider the case and call the case manager if interested in learning more about the child.*
- *CFS Licensing Unit informed the 2023 legislative assembly of the desire to explore additional recruitment techniques to develop "specialized foster care providers" to identify a select number of specialized family foster care providers to accept placements of children with complex needs. The specialized providers will use trauma-informed care to stabilize children, engage the child in community services, while transitioning the child to their permanent home. Children in foster care in need of this specialized family setting are known to have multiple, concurrent medical and behavioral health needs, have experienced multiple placement settings and their need for supervision, services and support is high. Specialized Family Foster Care Providers will receive:*
  - *Training in managing behaviors that require enhanced supports.*
  - *Comprehensive and individualized services for children to meet their unique needs.*
  - *Assessments of the child, foster care provider and bio family to create a clear and appropriate treatment plan.*
  - *Enhanced case management and clinical support while the child is in their home.*
  - *Increased reimbursement for providing care in the least restrictive family setting.*
- *Children are able to remain safely in their home whenever possible. Foster Care providers who fully licensed and certified are able to engage in providing short term shelter care, which offers a temporary safe bed, when there is present danger exists and out of home placement is warranted. This allows children to remain in a safe space, while the agency is working to mitigate risk with the parents and return the child safely home.*
- *Respite is utilized when a child has special medical, mental or behavioral health needs. Respite is used to support placement stability, enhance provider capacity and ensure children are able to remain in a least restrictive family setting with services and supports.*
- *Western Coalition had a targeted recruitment schedule is set to focus on mental health offices (MH, OT, PT, Speech) including goodie baskets for the employee kitchen, dropping off flyers, offering email blasts including video links, and speaking at a staff meeting.*
- *Licensing Level of Care offers support to providers caring for specialized medical and high behavioral need children through respite.*
- *Transition Plan Agreements are state general funds used to bridge relationships between a child in a facility placement needing to step down into a family setting. The TPA allows for partial payment to the licensed provider who agrees to visit, send cards, call, attend therapy, learn more about skills integration techniques, etc. prior to the discharge from a facility into their home.*
- *ND Children's Treatment Services Level of Care Determinations initiative will begin July 1, 2024 to use a single evidence-based assessment tool to determine the most appropriate placement for children to ensure their needs are met in the least restrictive setting. Maximus will hire trained clinicians living in North Dakota, who are not affiliated with child welfare, the facilities or treatment foster care to complete an independent review of the documentation that is submitted by custodial agency workers. Maximus will conduct interviews with the child, custodial case managers, parents or guardians and other appropriate parties before making a determination.*

**Outcome 4 – Providers are available to meet the needs of diversity, representing racial, cultural, and ethnic characteristics of the state's foster care population.**

- *Coalitions and CFS Licensing specialists report majority of the families licensed to provide foster care to children include Caucasian (80%) and dual parent (70%) households. However, ND does have partnerships and formal agreements with four ND Tribal Nations, which in the last quarter allowed for the approval of an additional 140 tribal affidavit foster homes, predominately Native American serving Native American children under the custody of a Tribal Nation or Zone.*

- ND has seen an increase in single women; below the chart represents that in the last quarter 307 (30%) of the providers were single parent households.
- Strengthen disproportionality/cultural inclusion goal to include all cultures and LGBTQAI+
- ND has seen an increase in the number of same sex couples inquiring about foster care, who felt there was a barrier to being licensed. This tells ND that additional education and awareness has been provided to myth bust and engage additional individuals. CFS Licensing staff have put forth additional recruitment efforts to recruitment at Pride parades, events and distribute materials to the LGBTQIA+ clinic in Fargo.
- Seeking partnership and additional cultural events to recruit and show support to our Tribal Nations who are recruiting homes, but also attending Native American powwows, gathering, school functions, etc. Fargo and Grand Forks powwow attendance has been
- Quarterly data shows race data for providers including 717+307 = 1024 providers in the last quarter; inclusive of 1434 + 307 = 1741 actual adult individuals:
  - 80% Caucasian individual providers
  - 15% Native American individual providers
  - 3% African American individual providers
  - 2% other

RACE (Dual Parent) Provider Homes	717	1434
American Indian (Native American)	156	10.9%
Caucasian (White)	1192	83.1%
African American (Black)	39	2.7%
Asian/Hawaiian Pacific	10	0.7%
Multi-Race	24	1.7%
Unknown	3	0.2%

RACE (Single Parent) Provider Homes	307	
American Indian (Native American)	89	29.0%
Caucasian (White)	196	63.8%
African American (Black)	14	4.6%
Asian/Hawaiian Pacific	1	1.1%
Multi-Race	5	2.6%
Unknown	2	14.3%

**Outcome 5 – Providers will not terminate their foster care license due to lack of support, insufficient training or resources to meet the foster child’s needs.**

- Coalitions and CFS Licensing specialists report that providers are gaining support and access to necessary trainings and to one another through the newly developed Mentoring program, grief and loss counseling, licensing engagement through quarterly check ins, monthly trainings, share and support opportunities, encouraging providers to take breaks from accepting placements, encouragement to seek respite from enhanced respite homes. Provider recently told me that they appreciate the better communication since the CFS Licensing Unit was formed. They love the training emails and newsletter. They said there is no reason that we would have not completed our training hours this year because of all of the opportunities.
- Concerns from providers have been lack of supports and services to meet the child’s needs and waitlists to get children the help they need, as well as lack of timely supportive communication from case management.
- ND continues to have the goal to not lose a provider due to lack of support while providing the service. The renewal and exit surveys are helping ND glean information needed to assess further details.
- We ask providers to offer ideas for training topics that would help support them and fit their needs. We work to then provide this training opportunity whenever possible.
- Hapip’s solution, the Lily Initiative, working within Evangel Assembly of God in Bismarck, aims to address burnout by supporting foster families and encouraging others to become foster parents. The program started with 15 foster families in 2021 and has now grown to 32 families.  
<https://www.newscoopnd.org/foster-family-burnout-complexity-of-care-addressed-with-new-program/>

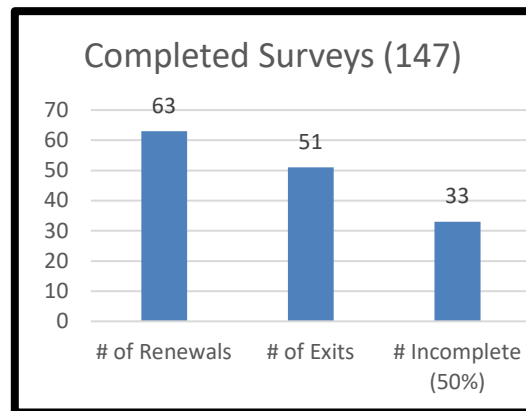
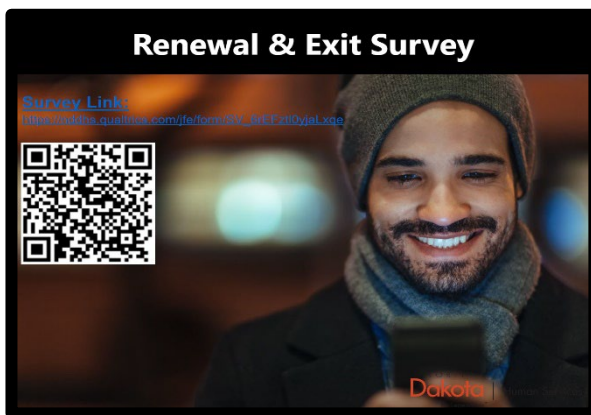
**Coalitions report the most successful approach to retain the current licensed providers/families**

- Engage in clear and ongoing communication with licensed providers
- Promote, offer and/or enhance foster and adoptive parent support groups
- Provide information, tools, resources to recharge their perspective
- Provide more frequent training for foster care providers to best meet their time schedule
- Offer sharing opportunities during training sessions to receive the support
- Offer stipends to seasoned foster care providers to mentor new foster care providers
- Give recognition awards to foster care providers for years of service, ‘above and beyond’ awards
- Give recognition through the simple act of sending a ‘thank you’ card

- Give recognition through anniversary cards
- Give recognition during the holidays (Christmas) by sending Christmas cards
- Organize appreciation events in May
- Cross agency referrals and supportive collaboration when foster care providers move across county lines or between agencies; i.e. Nexus PATH and state homes
- Offer grief and loss counseling when placement transitions occur abruptly
- Asking licensed and/or relative providers to take part in a local recruitment event. This offers connection and purpose of the work they are doing and is relevant and important for children in need. Individuals that seem to be interested in becoming licensed and talk with a licensed provider seem to connect more in conversation and want to hear more.
- Collaborate with the Bismarck Foster Care Provider Association. This helps coordinate panels that include CFS, Tribal, AASK, GAL and Zone partners to help train and get information to the providers.

**The most successful sources of targeted and general recruitment and reasons why prospective providers cease the licensing process, are noted in R&R accomplishments below.**

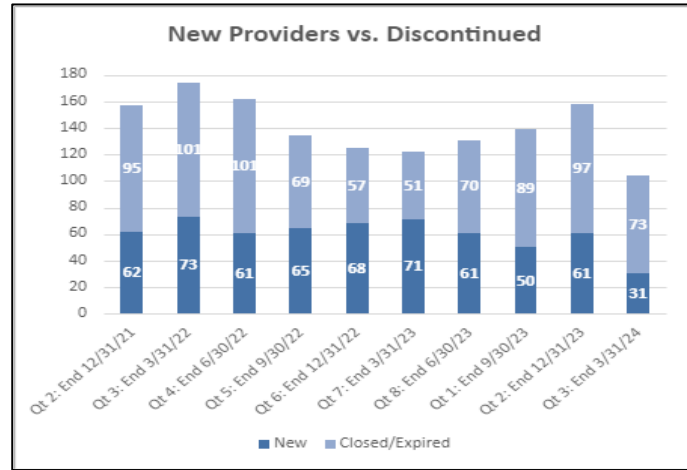
- Champion for a Child efforts will continue to solicit specific licensed providers to care for children with complex needs who have historically been difficult to place.
- Targeted Recruitment Schedule. This gives the specialists across the state area/populations to focus on and new ideas to try.
- Effective April 1, 2022, the CFS Licensing Unit created a renewal and exit interview / survey. The link is offered to providers during their renewal and closure of a foster care licensure. Data analysis from the first twelve months includes:



Strengths Noted from Providers	Challenges Noted from Providers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have felt so privileged to love the children that we have had in our home and meet their families. We have met some wonderful advocates for children along the way. Despite some really tough times, we feel that overall, this has been a good experience for our family!</li> <li>• My licensing specialist is great.</li> <li>• Foster care will always have a special place in our hearts. We would consider again if and when the time was right.</li> <li>• Licensing specialists were our listening souls. They listened and understood how we were feeling when we were frustrated.</li> <li>• COVID really changed the delivery method for trainings, finally getting online options was and is a great opportunity for foster parents. Thank you!</li> <li>• As new foster parents, we had an incredible team and social worker alongside us. We felt heard as we carried emotions that come along with fostering. We feel so blessed to have had such a great experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have enjoyed working with many case workers, but we are disheartened by the way they are overworked, laws tie their hands. Also that children are so often caught in the middle and put through trauma after months and years of working towards unsuccessful reunification with birth families.</li> <li>• The system is broken; the system is what causes a lot of heartache and frustration.</li> <li>• My opinions and input do not seem to have much value in a lot of decisions that are made.</li> <li>• Licensing renewals have become too complicated.</li> <li>• Licensing renewals seem repetitive, why the same details on multiple forms.</li> <li>• Lack of communication from case management</li> <li>• Need for transportation support to get all of the children to all of their appointments.</li> <li>• We understand the need for CPS reporting, but experiencing false allegations is heartbreaking.</li> </ul>

ND has a large volume of provider homes; however providers are discontinuing service at a higher rate than they are entering. Reasons for closure include families who start the process, but do not finish hence the greater number of responses than providers who discontinued. 40% of families are discontinuing due to their own needs or are no longer interested in providing service, while 15% have adopted a child and 4% are feel a lack of support from custodial agencies (transportation assistance, funding, call backs, communication, etc.).

Rational - Reason for Closure	#	%
Family Needs/Circumstances	21	25%
No longer Interested	13	15%
Adoption	13	15%
Moving	6	7%
Lack of Support - Custodian	3	4%
Specific Child	3	4%
Lack of Support - Licensing	2	2%
Retiring	2	2%
Health Concerns	1	1%
<b>Discontinued Never Licensed</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>25%</b>



CFS Licensing Unit and the R&R Work Group will continue to analyze ways to improve support from licensing agents and custodial agencies. It is suspected the data will improve as families gain an understanding of the difference between a licensing specialist and a case manager. In the past, the two entities were housed and employed by the Zone, but as of April 2022, licensing specialists are state employees.

### **Statewide R&R Accomplishments 2023-2024**

The department has a contract with the University of North Dakota-Children and Family Services Training Center (CFSTC) to oversee statewide recruitment and retention of foster care providers and adoptive families. The role of CFSTC's Recruitment and Retention (R&R) Specialist is to lead and support statewide recruitment and retention efforts. A large focus is placed on consistent and cohesive messaging for statewide recruitment, working closely with the four recruitment and retention coalitions across the state to support their local recruitment and retention efforts, developing efficient plans to maximize the funds available, and administering recruitment and retention funds statewide. Through the contract there is also supportive services available to assist with retention, including:

- Grief and loss counseling
- Monthly virtual training opportunities
- Foster care provider mentor program
- Post-adopt mentor program
- ICWA Cultural Liaison Program- Managed by Native American Training Institute (NATI) and supported by CFSTC

#### Tasks completed by R&R Specialist 2023-2024:

- Ongoing communication with new and past inquiries through email and phone calls. Invites to virtual foster care panels are sent to pending inquiries, or individuals who have not responded to initial contact.
- Continued creation of branded materials (as noted below) to include specialized recruitment of homes for teenagers, Native American homes, and youth who identify as LGBTQAI+.
- Ongoing use of the 15 full videos and five 30 second video PSAs produced by Chezy in 2022 for statewide recruitment. Examples of use: Video links are included in the initial inquiry email that is sent to interested families on a daily basis, videos are shared during virtual foster care panels, video links are included within the Fostering Communication Newsletter, on-screen movie theater advertising, etc.
- Arranged and coordinated efforts for movie theater ads to run in the following theaters:
  - 30 second ad for 4 months (9/22/23-1/22/24)
    - Jamestown Theater
    - Valley City Theater
  - 30 second ad for 3 months (11/24/23-2/24/23)
    - Williston Theater
    - Dickinson Theater

- Coordinated recruitment ads for:
  - Dickinson Chamber of Commerce newsletter
  - Sports programs- NW part of state
  - High school tournament booklets- NW part of state
  - Sports programs- Cavalier, ND
  - Sports posters- Grafton, ND
  - Back to School Issue- Walsh County Record
  - (3) Sports Tabs (fall, winter, spring)- Walsh County Record
  - Domestic Violence special page- Wahpeton Daily News
  - High School Sports "Thank You" special page- Wahpeton Daily News
  - Thanksgiving Kids Activity special page- Wahpeton Daily News
  - Inquiry Meeting ad- Wahpeton Daily News
  - Mandan boys hockey program
  - Boys and Girls Club of the RRV newsletter
  - Southern Valley Living magazine
  - Emmons County Record
- A targeted recruitment schedule was developed as a tool to help act as a recruitment guide throughout the year, and to offer some consistency with recruitment throughout the state. The schedule denotes targeted locations, materials available to help recruit for targeted populations (Native homes, LGBTQIA+ homes, etc.), and a list of recruitment ideas for each designated location. This schedule is reviewed at each Coalition meeting, and with the CFS Licensing Unit regularly. It is important to note that it does not replace the day-to-day general recruitment that continues to take place in North Dakota.
- Ongoing coordination, facilitation, and advertising of the virtual foster care panels offered to community members as a way to learn more about fostering or adoption through foster care in North Dakota.
- Supported coalition members with the planning and execution of community recruitment events, including:
  - Developing a payment plan, overseeing the paperwork process, and managing invoices for booth fees, parade fees, etc.
  - Ordering and distributing necessary items to supply resource booths.
  - Creating event specific recruitment materials, as needed.
- Supported coalition members with the planning and execution of provider appreciation events, including:
  - Budget planning
  - Ordering of door prizes
  - Overseeing the paperwork process and payment of trainers, catering, and completing necessary reimbursements for on-site childcare.
- Assisted coalition members in the purchasing of foster provider appreciation gifts. Gifts were selected by workers, gift ideas varied across the state, and included:
  - Custom appreciation cards
  - Flower and herb seed packets.
  - Custom flour sack towels including the "Foster Parent Definition"
- Collaborated with AASK by providing funds to purchase personalized "Every heart needs a home" signs for families in the SE part of the state that finalized an adoption during National Adoption Month. Custom National Adoption Month specific coffee sleeves were also purchased to disburse throughout the state.
- Ongoing management of the Foster Provider Mentor program, Post Adopt Mentor Program, and ICWA Cultural Liaison program.
  - Match foster provider mentors with families in need of support.
  - Complete 6-month check-ins with families matched with a foster provider mentor.
  - Facilitate 2-4 meetings per year with all foster care provider mentors to check-in, review program information, provide updates, seek feedback, answer questions.
  - Facilitate meetings individually with foster provider mentors as needed to check-in, answer questions, talk through various scenarios.
  - Follow-up with Licensing Specialists with the CFS Licensing Unit, ND Post Adopt Network workers, and NATI contacts as needed.
  - Oversee and track invoices and payment for all three programs.
- Ongoing management of Grief and Loss Counseling. Solace Counseling is set-up as the vendor for this service. Counseling is available to foster providers who are experiencing grief/loss and are in need of additional support. Each provider is offered three one-hour sessions either in person or via telehealth, plus three family sessions to include spouse and/or birth children.



Branded materials created & distributed in 2023-2024

See Attachment D for examples of publications and materials. Branded items include, but not limited to:

- Pens- 1500
- Custom post it pads- 4500
- Stress balls- 1520
- Band aid dispensers- 1000
- Can koozies- 2200
- Mints- 2000
- Foster Care Brochure- 3025
- Bookmarks- 15,000
- General recruitment post card-600
- General recruitment business card-2200
- Recruitment stickers-10,000
- Coloring sheets-13,540
- Kids Activity Placemats-1750
- National Adoption Month coffee sleeves- 10,000
- A-Frame Posters- 52 total
  - Teen- 27
  - Native American- 22
  - General- 3
- Provider anniversary cards- 913
- Half Page Flyers- 3900 total
  - General- 670
  - Teen- 180
  - Native American- 525
  - Red, White, Blue focus- 1925
  - Church flyers- 600
- Full Page flyers- 400 total
  - “Be the Village”- 200
  - Teen Myth Busters- 100
  - “Top 10 Reason” to foster a teen- 100
- Provider holiday cards-951
- General “thank you” cards- 75
- Table tents (teen focus)- 4000
- Holiday recruitment cards- 2100
- School recruitment cards-3640
- Provider appreciation cards-445
- Greenhouse recruitment cards- 1500
- Summer recruitment cards- 2125

Inquiries Received:

In addition to supportive services, the R&R Specialist manages the statewide inquiry clearinghouse phone line and email inbox. This process has improved the response time and consistency in messaging across the state. The R&R Specialist makes telephone and email contact with interested individuals within 24 hours of their inquiry. The R&R Specialist gathers information about the inquiring family, shares information regarding different levels of care, licensing agency options, levels of licensure, licensing requirements, training requirements, and process. If an inquiry would like to have a more detailed conversation, or start the licensing process, a referral is made to the authorized licensing agency of their choice.

To assist in data tracking of statewide inquiries, an online inquiry intake process has been developed. The online inquiry intake form can be found [here](#). This form is completed by licensors with authorized licensing agencies for all inquiries they receive directly through their agency. All inquiries are to be submitted to CFSTC at quarter’s end, and no later than January 5, April 5, July 5, and October 5 to assure accurate statewide data tracking and reporting. The R&R Specialist utilizes a printed copy of this form, that also includes a second page. The second page acts as a guide to get to know and to assess families that inquire directly through the inquiry Clearinghouse (reason for inquiry, experience, family dynamics, preferences, etc.). When a family is ready to move ahead with licensing, the completed form is shared in the referral process to the authorized licensing agency.

**CFSTC R&R Clearing House  
Inquiry Data by State Fiscal Year**

Qts	# of Inquiries	# Referred to Agency	Screened Out	# of Inquiries	# Referred to Agency	Screened Out	# of Inquiries	# Referred to Agency	Screened Out
	July 2021 - June 2022			July 2022 - June 2023			July 2023 - June 2024		
Qt 1	65	42	8	178	95	32	172	89	28
Qt 2	76	35	7	118	72	20	142	76	32
Qt 3	83	35	17	144	72	14	160	80	22
Qt 4	172	95	23	150	74	32	<i>pending</i>	<i>pending</i>	<i>pending</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>82</b>

**\*\*Tracking of total statewide inquiries began as follows in January 2022:**

## CFSTC R&R Clearing House Inquiry Data by Calendar Year

UND Inquiry			Partner Inquiry			TOTAL			UND Inquiry			Partner Inquiry			TOTAL					
Calendar Year 2022			Calendar Year 2023			Calendar Year 2024														
Jan	29	28	57	Jan	56	28	84	Jan	58	17	75									
Feb	19	25	44	Feb	42	18	60	Feb	48	14	62									
March	35	44	79	March	46	16	62	March	54	16	70									
April	51	14	65	April	50	25	75	April	63	21	84									
May	74	22	96	May	49	14	63	May	46	30	76									
June	47	26	73	June	51	21	72	June												
July	57	14	71	July	53	18	71	July												
Aug	64	30	94	Aug	67	32	99	Aug												
Sept	57	22	79	Sept	52	20	72	Sept												
Oct	41	20	61	Oct	39	18	57	Oct												
Nov	48	21	69	Nov	54	18	72	Nov												
Dec	29	12	41	Dec	49	14	63	Dec												
<b>Totals</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>829</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>395</b>									

**Publications 2023-2024:**

- The CFSTC R&R Specialist contributed information and resources in the following editions of the *Fostering Communication* newsletter, which can be found online [HERE](#):
  - ✓ August 2023 edition focused on the need for more foster homes for teenagers and encouraged current providers to expand their comfort zone. It included a former ND youth in care testimonial video.
  - ✓ December 2023 edition highlighted National Adoption Month (recognized in November) and provided more detail on the history of AASK’s “Red Shoe Campaign”. It included a ND AASK Adoptive Parent testimonial video.
  - ✓ March 2024 edition focused on supports available to foster care providers through the Recruitment & Retention contract. Detail was included on how to access: mentoring programs and grief and loss counseling.
  - ✓ May 2024 edition focused on National Foster Care Month and this year’s theme: “Engaging Youth. Building Supports. Strengthening Opportunities.”
- CFS Licensing Unit also creates a quarterly newsletter that is sent to providers, custodial agencies and partners. Strategically the newsletter is issued in opposite months of the CFSTC Newsletter. CFS Licensing issues a quarterly basis of July 2023, October 2023, January 2024, April 2024.

Newsletters provide information on how to learn more about fostering in North Dakota by highlighting the toll-free inquiry line (1.888.FST.HOME). Information is also provided on upcoming virtual training opportunities through the Recruitment & Retention contract. The final portion of each edition showcases the upcoming virtual foster care panels, which provide another opportunity for community members to learn more about fostering in North Dakota.

Social media posts through the CFSTC Facebook book page continue to reach a large audience. Between July 1, 2023 and May 31, 2024, the R&R Specialist made 52 posts specific to foster or adopt recruitment and retention resulting in:

- Total impressions- 70,560
- Total post reach- 60,580
- Total engagement- 21,505

**Virtual Events 2023-2024:**

➤ **Virtual Foster Care Panels**

- Panels were held four times between July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024. The panels continue to be facilitated on Zoom and advertised through the CFSTC Facebook page encouraging those interested in learning

more about foster care in North Dakota to attend. The R&R Specialist also sends email invites to past inquiries that are still pending or who have not responded to initial contacts. The panel consists of licensed foster care providers, foster care licensors with the CFS Licensing Unit and Nexus-PATH, an AASK adoption worker, and if possible, a former youth in care. The R&R Specialist coordinates the panel, facilitates the panel dialogue, and manages the zoom securities.

- Registration and attendance details:
  - September 2023- 9 registered/1 in attendance
  - November 2023- 5 registered/ 4 in attendance
  - February 2024-13 registered/ 7 in attendance
  - May 2024- 9 registered/8 in attendance

➤ **Foster Care Provider Educational Sessions:**

- A one-hour virtual educational session is offered on a monthly basis to foster care providers and kinship homes.
- Monthly flyers are created to promote the training opportunity, emailed out to all providers in North Dakota, and advertised on the CFSTC Facebook page.
- The following topics were presented on this last year during the monthly educational sessions:
  - Kids in the Kitchen
  - Teens and Mental Health
  - Firearm Safety: Keeping Children Safe
  - Sensory Input and At-Home Tips
  - Behavior Management & Trauma Responsive Care
  - Managing Behaviors: Occupational Therapy Supports
  - An Evening with AASK
  - ND Post Adopt Network
  - Safe Sleep Practices
  - Summer Safety Tips

\*Due to the CFS Licensing Unit presenting on “Respite vs. Shelter Care” and “Reasonable and Prudent Parenting”, monthly virtual trainings were not offered in August and October 2024.

**Statewide R&R Challenges**

ND continues to have discussions about the best way to retain families once they have become a licensed provider. Families have provided various reasons why they choose to discontinue the licensing process or no longer retain their license after a duration of time. Foster care providers indicate they cease the licensing process after further reflection of how additional children in their home may disrupt their own children’s schedule, they disclose they have had a change of heart, unexpected marital/family issues have arisen, or the expression that getting too attached to the children would be difficult for their own family when the foster child has to go, etc. Once licensed, providers who choose to let their license expire or discontinue providing foster care to children state the reasons they no longer remain a foster parent are; adoption of a specific child/ren, family issues, moving, no longer interested, specific license for a child who has exited care, etc.

ND Recruitment and Retention Coalitions have worked with local licensing workers to help educate prospective providers early on regarding the pros and cons of foster parenting, not intending to sway decision making, rather to assist in making an educated choice and commitment. In addition, great effort has been made to offer additional support early on for the new families to assist in answering questions and guiding them through the process of a first placement, expectations, navigating the system, understanding the payment schedule, and knowing it is ok to ask for additional support if it is needed, etc.

2023 legislative session, the department introduced HB 1091 seeking legislative approval to certify providers to provide foster care for children as emergency or for short-term respite only (placements less than 30 days). The certification would not be equivalent to full licensure, but would allow for an entry level opportunity to meet a need and determine if long-term placements would be of interest. The bill passed, HHS drafted administrative rules and received federal state plan approval, including relative licensing for an effective date of April 1, 2024. This additional opportunities to grow our provider network and offer support to licensed providers statewide.

During the spring of 2024, CFS engaged in a systemic factor review of item 35, Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes. The committee identified challenges related to this item:

1. Data shows that the number of licensed foster homes in North Dakota has declined in the past three fiscal years. Although retention efforts have strengthened during this timeframe, families continue to close their license for a variety of reasons.
2. As ND increases their licensing of relative providers, there is projected to be an increase in the large number of providers who are interested in only providing foster care to a relative child or a specific child, who discontinue once the child achieves permanency. The exit reasons have been helpful in monitoring retention and reasons why a family may discontinue service. Since March 2020, the impact of COVID pandemic had on families was significant and it has led to mental health, financial and willingness to accept new challenges, resulting in less interest and more families vocalizing they need to tend to their own family needs. Since April 2022, CFS has been collecting reasons why families discontinue their license, 40% of families discontinued due to their own needs or being no longer interested in providing service, while 15% adopted a child, 4% terminated because of a specific license for a relative child, and 4% felt a lack of support from custodial agencies (transportation assistance, funding, call backs, communication, etc.).
3. Need for Native American foster homes continues as the number of children remain stable at a disproportionate rate. Although the number of Native American foster homes remains stable for the Tribal Nations in North Dakota, data shows high disparity between the represented number of foster youth with Native American culture and the available number of Native American foster homes.
4. North Dakota does solicit preference (age, gender, race, etc.) from foster care providers, the CFS Licensing Unit and other authorized licensing agents want to be respectful of preference, however there are times that preferences of the provider cannot always be guaranteed or followed by the custodial agency placing children. This challenge is historical, as providers have become more prescriptive in the parameters they will serve, which challenges the system and restricts placement options for children in need of placement.

### **Specific Adoption Recruitment**

The AASK Program completes adoption assessments for all families seeking to adopt a child from foster care in North Dakota, including families identified for specific children being adopted from foster care and for general recruitment adoptive families. In the current fiscal year July 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024 the AASK Program has completed 103 new assessments, 1 updated and 30 subsequent adoption assessments. In this same time frame, AASK has completed 197 child adoption assessments for children whose case plan goal is adoption.

North Dakota has two full time Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) recruiters. One WWK recruiter is located in eastern ND and the other in western ND. Both have a primary focus on child specific recruitment and have caseloads with a mixture of state custody children and tribal custody children who do not have an identified adoptive option at the point of referral. The AASK program also has appointed a "general recruitment" worker to ensure all children on WWK caseloads have an opportunity to receive child-specific recruitment services as well as broader statewide and national recruitment efforts. To support adoption re-design efforts, the AASK program will be converting the "general recruitment" worker into a full-time AASK recruiter to serve children across the state who do not have an identified adoptive home.

North Dakota has a ND Heart Gallery, which facilitates a web site and photo gallery of waiting children. The photo gallery is transported across the state showcasing professional photographs of each child. ND hosts an annual "gala" where new portraits are unveiled; however, children can be added to the gallery throughout the year. The ND Heart Gallery is currently temporarily suspended with efforts being made to hire a director and update the website. Children are not able to be viewed at this time. The AASK program is monitoring the situation with a plan to feature children when there is adequate staffing within the Heart Gallery organization.

On July 1, 2023, the AASK formalized a partnership with The Reel Hope Project (TRHP). This organization provides children needing adoption recruitment with a personal video to be used for child specific recruitment activities. Since the start of the partnership, TRHP has created 15 reels/videos for 16 children. As of today, 2 additional reels/videos are in progress with 2 additional children.

North Dakota provides adoption services to Tribal custody children at the request of each Tribe, through the AASK program. After adoption re-design efforts were implemented, the Tribes makes requests directly to the AASK program to provide these services on a case-by-case basis. In the current fiscal year July 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024, AASK has placed 50 children for adoption at the request of the Tribes and has also assisted in the finalization of adoption for 46 children.

## **Adoption Call to Action Update**

A strategy implemented as a result of the Adoption Call to Action effort was quarterly zone meetings between zone representatives and the AASK program to identify and address case specific barriers to permanency for cases where adoption is a concurrent or primary case plan goal. These quarterly meetings have been established and continue in an effort to bridge any gaps necessary to ensure timely achievement of permanency.

## **National Consultation:**

North Dakota received technical assistance in the past from the National Resource Center on the Recruitment and Retention of Foster and Adoptive Parents (NRCRRFAP) and the National Resource Center for Tribes (NRC4Tribes) to gain a foundation and greater knowledge of recruitment and retention strategies focusing on recruiting homes for teens, sibling groups and to increase the pool of Native American families. In 2021, additional national consultation was requested by Adopt US Kids in efforts to support and improve the state's capacity to recruit resource families and keep families engaged, including using the state's new recruitment tagline in effective marketing approaches that support the state's broader recruitment efforts. Adopt US Kids has been provided consultation services, facilitation, and training to build staff capacity and assist the state in developing a strategic recruitment planning that includes approaches for recruiting families, supporting and keeping current families engaged, and leveraging North Dakota's tagline and any other relevant marketing resources. This consultation with Adopt US Kids was wonderful and ND was so pleased to receive additional training, technical assistance, support and ideas while revising and redesigning our licensing process and recruitment contract efforts statewide. Consultation continued through May 2022.

North Dakota also participated in a 30-month collaboration with the QIC-AG to evaluate the post permanency services the state is providing for adoptive and guardianship families through ND Post Adopt Network (a contracted post permanency service aligned with the AASK program). This effort included a survey of adoptive and guardian families regarding their need for post permanency services, a systematic review of the services provided by the program, a review of and writing of a new policy manual and other paperwork for the ND Post Adopt Network, and development of screening and case work tools. This TA experience was a positive one that affirmed the good work of the program and strengthened the case work services the program currently provides, while providing a platform for future program development.

## **Plans for the next 5 Year Plan (2024-2029)**

1. Analyze the expanded levels of family licensing (certified and relative)
2. Monitor and review the process for those who foster to adopt to ensure adequate efficiencies.
3. Engage in targeted recruitment for diversity/cultural/complexity of cases
4. Retain the volume of providers we have licensed by offering respite, support, and ongoing education.

### ***General recruitment activities:***

- Utilize the marketing videos and PSAs created for advertising on radio, television, movie theaters, etc.
- Utilize statewide branding on promotional items placed strategically in local businesses/events.
- Host foster parent inquiry meetings at public establishments/or in virtual environments.
- Utilize various social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts.
- Pursue relationships with community partners who will support recruitment efforts.

### ***Targeted recruitment activities:***

- Recruit specialized care for specific behavior challenges, inclusive of long stayer population, which is inclusive of 3% of the ND foster care population.
- Partner with the Native American Training Institute to ensure cultural liaison program is maximized and recruitment efforts made with Native American families for Native American children in care.

### ***Retention activities:***

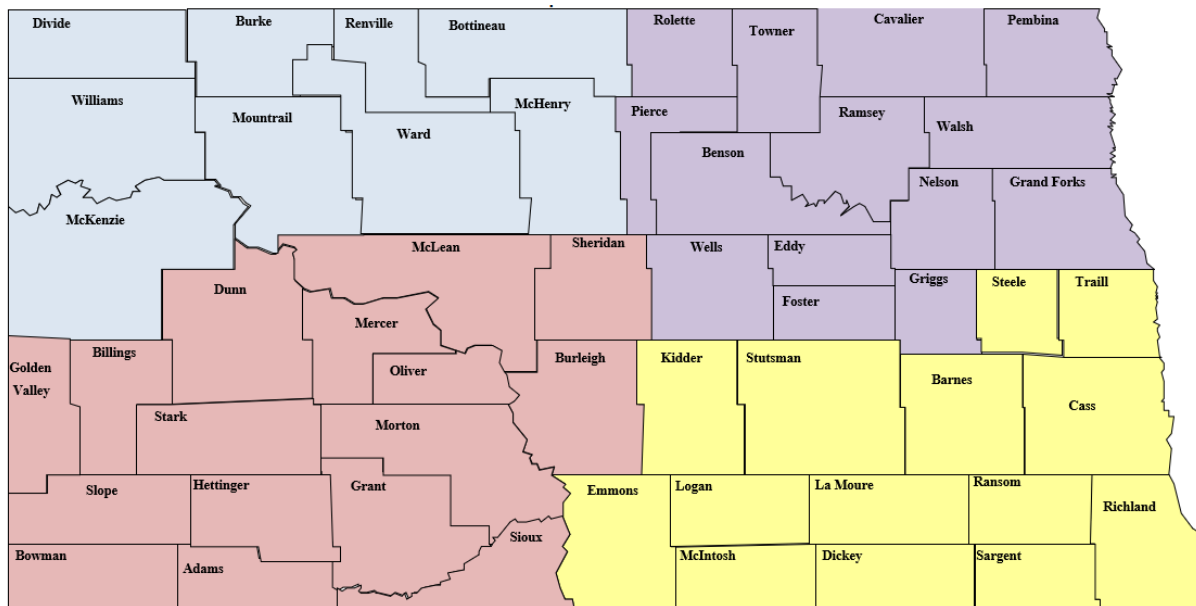
- Engage in quarterly check ins by licensing specialists
- Provide frequent trainings to best meet provider's schedules.
- Offer sharing opportunities during training sessions to receive the support.
- Give recognition in various ways on multiple platforms
- Provide grief counseling to foster families struggling with placement transition
- Promote and/or enhance foster and adoptive mentoring opportunities

**ND Recruitment/Inquiry Toll Free Line**  
**1-833-FST-HOME or 1-833-378-4663**

**CFSTC Role:** The North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Children and Family Services has a fiscal contract with UND Children and Family Services Training Center (CFSTC) to oversee statewide Recruitment and Retention efforts. CFSTC is responsible to accept and communicate with initial inquiries, collect data, participate/co-facilitate coalition meetings to assess and address local needs, manage the statewide R&R budget for fiscal purchases, etc.

**Coalition Purpose:** The purpose of the Foster and Adopt Recruitment and Retention Coalition is to gather local parties to engage in conversation and support the recruitment and retention of foster care providers as well as adoptive families. The statewide goal is to continue to offer education and awareness surrounding the need for families to open their hearts and homes to children in need of safe placement.

**Coalitions:** North Dakota has four functioning coalitions located statewide; service area varies based on Human Service Zones.



**Coalition Schedules: Monthly or Every Other Month?**

	Coalition 1	Coalition 2	Coalition 3	Coalition 4
Meeting Dates	Third Wed 10:00	Fourth Monday 2:00pm	First Wed 1:00pm (x2)	Third Monday 12:00pm
Co-Facilitator	<i>Kathy Molland</i>	<i>Jennifer Puppe</i>	<i>Shantel Froelich</i>	<i>Becka Koll</i>
Co-Facilitator	<i>Amber Nix</i>	<i>Barb Reed</i>	<i>Brooke Kosiak</i>	<i>Rachel Suda</i>
Minutes	<i>Megan Colbenson</i>		<i>Jennifer Thoreson</i>	<i>Natalie Straub</i>

**Coalition Attendance:** Each coalition is inclusive of various agency representatives; CFSTC Recruitment and Retention Specialist, CFS Licensing Unit staff, Human Service Zone, Tribal Social Service office, Nexus PATH, Youthworks, URM, AASK, Division of Juvenile Services (DJS) and Native American Training Institute. These agencies should have at least two participants at each meeting including the agency licensing worker and a supervisor/case manager. In addition, coalitions should secure local business leaders with an interest in advertising, faith-based and volunteer organizations (Churches, Lions Club, Kiwanis, etc.) driven to engage as

supports, as well as foster care providers and adoptive families who have a passion for child welfare who are willing to participate in coalition meetings.

**Coalition Participation Limits:** There is no limit to the number of members each coalition should have. Some coalitions are larger and function with various perspectives, which spreads the work around more evenly. Other coalitions are smaller in size but have great connections to recruiting agency staff or local volunteers to assist when needed.

**Coalition Participant Roles:** Each coalition will function with appointed members or volunteers to serve as:

1. **Co-Facilitator/s** – CFSTC Recruitment and Retention Specialist along with one CFS Licensing Unit Specialist, Coordinator or LOC. The CFS Licensing Unit representative will send all of the TEAMS meeting invites, generate emails to the coalition members, etc.
2. **Minutes Lead** – CFS Licensing Unit staff member will capture the discussion and take meeting minutes to share with coalition members and CFS Licensing Administration for federal reporting. Distribution of the meeting notes should occur within one week of the meeting.
3. **Expectation of all Coalition Participants:**
  - a. **Events** – Coalition members will research and review local events to advertise for families to attend (free, low cost, etc.). All members will also identify local opportunities for licensing specialists and volunteers to attend as a meet and greet, booth, parade engagement, etc. Local events will require a point of contact to lead and organize. The lead can solicit help from other coalition members in the area to attend/participate.
  - b. **Training** – Coalition members will research local training opportunities, notify licensed providers of any CFSTC and NATI trainings, and identify local speakers for event/training as needed.
4. **Other** – Retention activities, National “Months of Interest” or local advertising.

**Meeting Agenda:** Each coalition will function differently; however common themes are to be discussed at each meeting. Attached is an example of coalition meeting structure.

**Questions/Contact Information:** If you have questions regarding your role or expectations with a local Foster and Adopt Recruitment and Retention Coalition, please contact the CFS Licensing Unit representative or email the unit at [cfslicensing@nd.gov](mailto:cfslicensing@nd.gov) or 701-328-2322.

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**Meeting Date:**

**Attendees:**

1. **Licensing Agent Updates:** *This agenda item allows each agency time to share highlights and successes. In addition, agencies will share # of inquiries, # of licensed provider homes and # of families who have discontinued.*
  - a. Zone
  - b. Tribe
  - c. Nexus-PATH
  - d. Youthworks
  - e. AASK
  - f. DJS
  
2. **Training** *This agenda item allows the coalition members to reflect on training topics that would benefit providers. This also is a time to review what was offered locally and share specific details regarding future trainings (who can attend, when, how to register, etc.).*
  - a. Training requests from providers
  - b. Training offered since last coalition meeting
  - c. Training planned for future
  
3. **Recruitment and Retention Activities**
  - a. Activities completed since last meeting
  - b. Activities planned for future
  
4. **Provider Appreciation**
  - a. Activities completed since last meeting
  - b. Activities planned for future
  
5. **National Months of Interest**
  - a. November is Adoption Month *(Begin planning in August of each year)*
  - b. May is Foster Care Month *(Begin planning in February of each year)*
  
6. **Other Agenda Items:**
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
  
7. **Next Meeting**



NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER OR ADOPT

**THEY NEED YOU**

Call or scan to find out how  
**1.833.378.4663**



NORTH Dakota | Human Services  
Be Legendary.

Sticker

NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER OR ADOPT


CONSIDER THIS YOUR  
**SIGN**

Questions? Call  
833.378.4663

NORTH Dakota | Human Services  
Be Legendary.

Example Facebook Image


NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER OR ADOPT



Dakota | Human Services

Interested? Call: 833.378.4663

If you are interested in learning more about fostering or adopting from foster care, please inquire by scanning the QR code below:



North Dakota is in great need of families willing to foster or adopt older children and teens, larger sibling groups, and children with higher behavioral concerns. We are also in need of Native American families.

If you are patient, flexible, and able to provide a stable home environment during a time of crisis for a child, please reach out today!

Business Card



NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER OR ADOPT

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NORTH Dakota | Human Services  
Be Legendary.

**Facts about fostering or adopting from foster care:**

- You can be a new or experienced parent.
- You can be single or married.
- You can rent or own your apartment or home.
- You must be at least 21 years old, but otherwise no other age restrictions.
- You have support. We work as a team to guide you through fostering or adoption.

To learn more, call 833.378.4663 or scan the QR code




On any given day in North Dakota, there are roughly 1,600 children and youth in foster care. Many are waiting for a foster home. If you've ever considered fostering, now is the time!

Postcard




Branded Table Display

Give Thanks! NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT



I am Thankful for:




NORTH Dakota | Human Services

Learn how you can help! 833.378.4663


Coloring Activity Sheets

NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER OR ADOPT  
833.378.4663

*We Need Homes!*



NORTH Dakota | Human Services



Poster & Newspaper Advertisement

NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER or ADOPT



**Explore Foster Care**

VIRTUAL FOSTER CARE PANEL  
Experiences shared by

Foster Parents   Former Youth   Licensors

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2022  
7:00 PM-8:00 PM CST  
ZOOM LINK FOUND [HERE](#)

Questions? Call 833.378.4663

Virtual Panel Flyer

NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER or ADOPT



2021  
September Sessions  
**FOSTER PARENT SUPPORT AND TRAINING**

'Training hours only offered for Education Opportunity Session'

7:15-8:15pm CST <b>14</b> Foster Parent Support Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to attend Meeting ID: 857 8408 6029 Or by phone: 252-25-8782	11:30-12:30 pm CST <b>23</b> Foster Parent Support Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to attend Meeting ID: 817 1221 2850 Or by phone: 346-248-7799	7:15-8:15pm CST <b>27</b> 'Education Opportunity' Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to attend Meeting ID: 815 2384 4861 Or by phone: 346-248-7799
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QUESTIONS CONTACT YOUR LICENSING WORKER

The UND Children and Family Services Training Center sponsors these events through a grant from the North Dakota Department of Human Services, Children and Family Services Division.

Support & Training Flyer

NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER or ADOPT

FOSTER CARE AWARENESS MONTH

**Outdoor Movie Night**

At Broadway Square  
201 Broadway N.  
Fargo, ND

When: May 26, 2022  
5:00-8:00pm

Movie: Instant Family

Open & Free to the Public!

Movie Food Trucks & Resource Booths from ND and NE



Movie Night Flyer

NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER or ADOPT

CAN YOU SPARE A SLICE?

**Become a Foster Parent**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL: 1.833.378.4663



Recruitment Example

NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER or ADOPT

thank you!



Generic Thank You Card

Thank YOU for being so amazing!

NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER or ADOPT

Today, we are sending our gratitude for the time, energy, and sacrifice it takes to be a foster parent. Your choice to make a difference in the lives of children and families in North Dakota does not go unnoticed.

From your local Recruitment and Retention Coalition

GIFT CARD



Foster Care Month Gift Card Thank You

NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER or ADOPT

YOU can impact children and families with any amount of time!

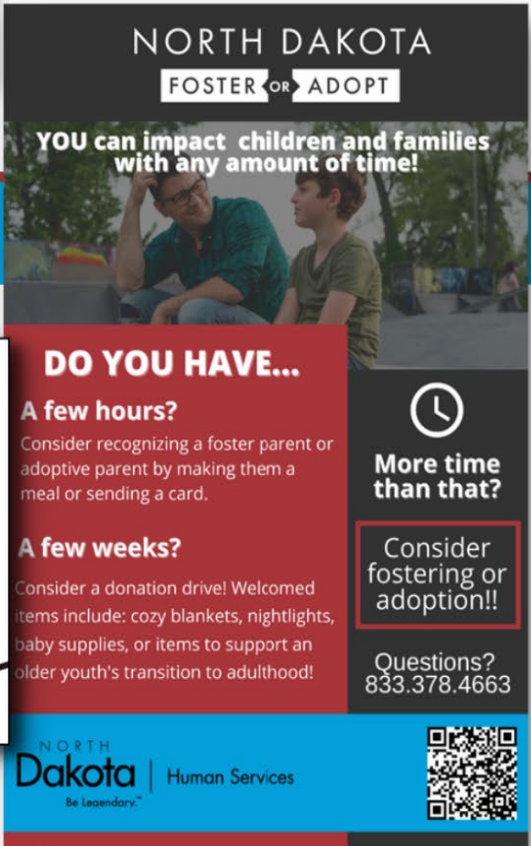
**DO YOU HAVE...**

**A few hours?**  
Consider recognizing a foster parent or adoptive parent by making them a meal or sending a card.

**A few weeks?**  
Consider a donation drive! Welcomed items include: cozy blankets, nightlights, baby supplies, or items to support an older youth's transition to adulthood!

**More time than that?**  
Consider fostering or adoption!!

Questions? 833.378.4663



Church Flyer

**THEY NEED YOU!**

CALL 833.378.4663



Vinyl Banner

NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER or ADOPT

For more information, contact your licensor or reach out to the Recruitment and Retention Specialist at UND-Child and Family Services Training Center: 833.378.4663

**WHO CAN RECEIVE FOSTER PARENT MENTORSHIP?**

Foster parents who have held a foster care license between 3-18 months are eligible for a foster parent mentor. The mentorship service will remain in place for a minimum of 6 months to a maximum of 12 months, based on need. Inquire with your licensor for more information.

**FOSTER PARENT MENTOR PROGRAM**



NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER or ADOPT

**WHAT IS THE FOSTER PARENT MENTOR PROGRAM?**

The foster parent mentor program is a supportive service available to new foster parents that can be accessed after 3 months of licensure up until 18 months of licensure. Foster parent mentors will provide support to new foster parents as they continue to learn about the foster care system, build connections in the foster care community, and become familiar with other supports available to them.

**FOSTER PARENT MENTOR PROGRAM**



**TO BE A FOSTER PARENT MENTOR YOU MUST:**

- Have one year of fostering experience
- Be in good standing with licensing agency
- Support reunification and family engagement
- Have no MOU's or corrective action plans
- Be in compliance with training requirements
- Have good communication skills
- Be referred by your licensor



**FOSTER PARENT MENTORS**

**Compensation**  
\$50 per month  
\*This is a set payment regardless of the number of families mentored.

**Responsibilities**  
Minimum 1 contact per month with mentees (more as needed), complete monthly contact log, participate in scheduled Foster Parent Mentor Program meetings

**Commitment**  
Minimum 6 month, maximum 12 month commitment to each mentee.

\*A cap will not be placed on the number of mentees assigned to each mentor. This will be assessed based on need and timeliness of mentees.



Foster Parent Mentor Program Brochure

**WHAT IS FOSTER CARE FOR CHILDREN?**

Foster care is a supportive service available to families when children are placed in the custody of a public agency (Human Services, Youth, Tribal, or Division of Juvenile Services). Foster care is considered when other options to end of home placement, including relative placement, have been explored and determined to be not in the child's best interest.

**FOSTER PARENTS OFFER A CHIEF:**

- Safe and secure
- Guidance and support
- Family support
- Nurturing and affection
- Participation in the child's care plan goals and needs, including transportation to medical, dental, or mental health appointments, school, activities, family activities, etc.

**WHY DO I SEE REFERENCE TO FOSTER OR ADOPT?**

When children enter foster care and their care plan results in a termination of parental rights, the child becomes legally free for adoption and would be in need of a forever family. Foster parents may choose to be considered for adoption upon the child.

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

Distributed By:

This brochure was created by the North Dakota Health and Human Services, Children and Family Services Division.

If you have questions about becoming a foster parent, contact:

Call 1.833.378.4663, 711 (TTY)

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER CARE FOR CHILDREN**

CONSIDER BECOMING A FOSTER PARENT

DO FOSTER PARENTS GET PAID OR RECEIVE REIMBURSEMENT?

Foster parents do receive a monthly reimbursement to offset the costs associated with caring for a foster child. In addition, specialized expenses (child care, medical fees, clothing, etc.) may also be supported depending on the needs of the child.

**HOW MANY CHILDREN CAN BE CARED FOR IN A FOSTER HOME?**

Licensed foster parents are able to provide preference as to the foster children being placed in their home. This includes age, gender, and number of children placed at one time. A regular foster home can be licensed for up to six foster children at a time depending on the available space within the licensed home. A licensed foster home is designed to care for two children, unless otherwise approved by the Department.

**HOW LONG DOES A CHILD STAY IN FOSTER CARE?**

Length of stay in foster care varies depending on the child's care plan goals. Care could range from a brief emergency of 4 days to several months.

**Foster Care Brochure**

**NORTH DAKOTA NEED LICENSED FOSTER HOMES?**

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**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

North Dakota is seeking families willing to foster or adopt children and teens, large groups, and children with behavioral concerns. This is a great need for foster care providers.

If you are patient, flexible, or provide a stable environment during a time for a crisis, please reach out.

**North Dakota Health & Human Services**

**Post Cards**

**Facts about fostering or adopting from foster care:**

- You can be a new or experienced parent.
- You can be single or married.
- You can rent or own your home.
- You must be at least 21 years old, otherwise no other age restrictions apply.
- You have support.

**Learn more by calling 833.378.4663**

On any given day in North Dakota, there are roughly 1,500 children and youth in foster care. Many are waiting for a foster home. If you've ever considered fostering, now is the time!

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**CHILDREN ARE WAITING THEY NEED YOU!**

Learn more by calling today! 833.378.4663

**North Dakota Health & Human Services**

**Business Cards**

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**North Dakota Health & Human Services**

Interested? Call 833.378.4663

Now is the time! 833.378.4663

**Recruitment Sticker**

**Table Display**  
\*Updated items have been ordered to reflect new HHS logo

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**FOSTER CARE PROVIDER TRAINING**

**TOPIC**

NDYAA Leadership Board Panel Presentation: Comes later in the session of young adults who have aged out of foster care. Please join us as they share their experiences in the North Dakota Child Welfare System.

March 7, 2023 7:00-8:00 PM CST Online via Zoom

**CLICK HERE FOR LINK**

Meeting ID: 958 2925 6665 Phone: 312 626 6799 Passcode: 987255

The LIND Children and Family Services Training Center offers a monthly one-hour virtual training as part of the recruitment and retention contract with the North Dakota Department of Health & Human Services.

**1 HOUR CREDIT**

**Questions?** 701.777.5913 or care@ndhhs.gov

**Open Chat Flyer**

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**Foster Care Provider Open Chat Sessions**

The LIND Children and Family Services Training Center offers a monthly one-hour virtual training as part of the recruitment and retention contract with the North Dakota Department of Health & Human Services.

**Are you feeling...**

- Alone?
- Stressed out?
- Exhausted?

**What is an Open Chat?**

Open Chats are a virtual opportunity facilitated by a social worker that allow foster care providers across the state to connect, provide support, and bounce ideas off each other. Open Chats are offered bi-monthly through Zoom. Links provided below.

**March 2023 OPEN CHAT Schedule**

Click HERE to attend	Click HERE to attend
<p>5:00-6:00pm</p> <p>Meeting ID: 883 4062 3671</p> <p>By Phone: 312 626 6799</p> <p>Passcode: 338332</p> <p><b>22</b></p>	<p>11:00am-12:00pm</p> <p>Meeting ID: 979 3883 5079</p> <p>By Phone: 312 626 6799</p> <p>Passcode: 980838</p> <p><b>28</b></p>

**Questions?** 701.777.5913 or care@ndhhs.gov

**Virtual Training Flyer**



**Posters (for A Frame Stands)**

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**CAN YOU BE ONE OF MY BIGGEST FANS?**

**QUESTIONS? CALL 833.378.4663**

**North Dakota Health & Human Services**

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**HAVE YOU CONSIDERED FOSTERING?**

**NOW IS THE TIME!**

**833.378.4663**

**North Dakota Health & Human Services**

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**THEY NEED YOU**

**OPEN YOUR HEART AND HOME TODAY**

**833.378.4663**

**North Dakota Health & Human Services**

## NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT

**OPEN YOUR HEART AND HOME TODAY!**  
833.378.4663

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By Legacy

### Additional Posters (for A Frame Stands)

## NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT

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### Training Flyer

## NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT

**VIRTUAL PRESENTER**  
Gaelan Elmore

# BE THE Difference

**BELONGING IS THE KEY TO UNLOCKING POTENTIAL**

Gaelan spent most of his life, and his entire childhood, on a journey to find the places in which he belonged. That journey has led Gaelan here today and to stages across the country, coming to inspire, encourage, and equip others to think differently about their work and its long-term impact on others.

### TRAINING OBJECTIVES

- Develop understanding by hearing the story of a former foster youth, 10+ years in the system.
- Comprehend the importance of belonging, especially for youth in care.
- Be able to utilize the CARE model to prioritize belonging for youth in the foster care system.
- Be inspired and equipped to be the difference in belonging!

**22** May 2023 7:00pm-8:30pm CST Virtual Training  
Click [Here](#) to Join

**NORTH Dakota** | Health & Human Services  
By Legacy

### Stickers

## NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT

**CAN YOU SPARE A SLICE?**

# Become a Foster Care Provider!

**CALL TODAY 833.378.4663**

**NORTH Dakota** | Health & Human Services  
By Legacy

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## NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT

# DONUT

**MISS YOUR CHANCE AT MAKING AN IMPACT?**

**Call today! 833.378.4663**

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By Legacy

## NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT

### 10 Reasons to Foster a Teen! YOU can:

- Be their last stop in foster care.
- Build their confidence.
- Provide a sense of belonging.
- Offer guidance through difficult decisions.
- Make a challenging time feel easier.
- Help prepare them for adulthood.
- Be a trusting adult.
- Share a lifelong connection.
- Be there for important milestones.
- MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

**Call today! 833.378.4663**

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### Teen Recruitment Materials

## NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT

**JUST LIKE EVERYBODY, TEENS IN FOSTER CARE HAVE HOPES AND DREAMS.**

**YOU CAN HELP THOSE DREAMS BECOME A REALITY!**

**Now is the time! 833.378.4663**

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By Legacy

### Community Event Flyer

## NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT

# COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Join us for an informal discussion on foster care!

**May 20, 2023**  
10:00am - 12:00pm

Market Press Coffee Co.  
1740 Market Drive  
Dickinson, ND

Grab your favorite drink and stop by our table to visit about foster care in ND, and how you can help!

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### Video Shoot Day



### Placemats

## NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT

Did you know? On any given day in North Dakota, there are roughly 1,500 children and youth in foster care. Many are waiting for a foster home. If you've ever considered fostering, now is the time!

**Fact or Fiction?**

**Singles can foster.**  
✔ Fact  
Foster care providers do not need to be married. You can be single and even have a roommate!

**I am too old to foster.**  
✘ Fiction  
Foster care providers do not need to be at least 21 years old. Outside of this, no other age requirements apply!

Interested? Call 833.378.4663

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## NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT

How many words can you make from:

**WELCOME SPRING**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Questions? Call: 833.378.4663

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### Social Media Posts

Children and Family Services Training Center

Join us for an informal discussion on foster care!

**ISAAC TERRY**

See insights and ask

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## NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT

### Foster Care Provider Spotlight

**Joe & Sierra**

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### Coffee Sleeves

**Open Hearts  
Open Minds  
Open Homes**

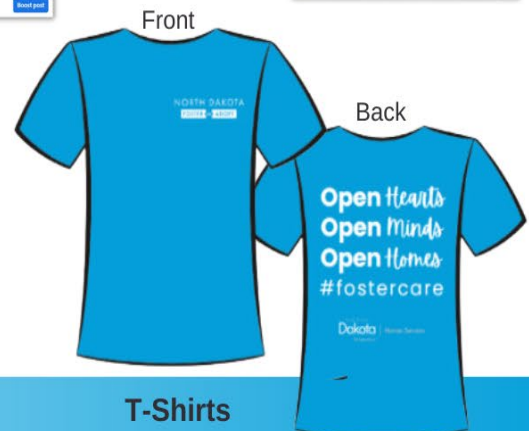
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## NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT

833.378.4663

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Pens

Band Aid Dispensers

Can Koozies

T-Shirts



Custom Post It Pads



Custom Mints



Custom Stress Balls

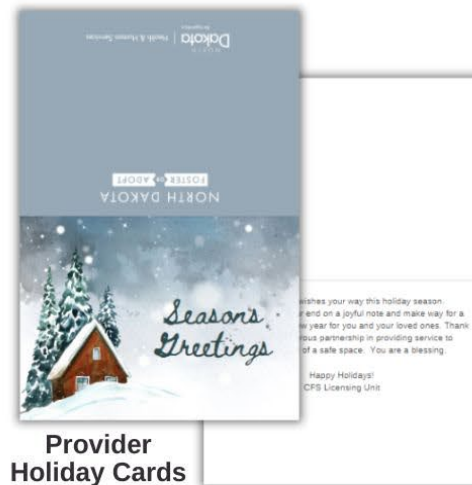


National Adoption Month Coffee Sleeves

Giving Tree Tags



Provider Anniversary Cards



Provider Holiday Cards



Provider Appreciation Cards

A Frame Posters Teen Focus



Holiday Recruitment Cards



Summer Recruitment Cards



Greenhouse Recruitment Cards



School Recruitment Cards

## Revised Foster Care Brochure- new levels of licensure

**WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF LICENSING?**

North Dakota has varied levels of need and licensure for foster care. Foster care providers can decide if they would like to be licensed or certified.

- License - Full**
  - Care to children in need of out of home placement, which may include long term placements or short term respite and shelter care.
  - Care to children in need of treatment by specialized mental providers from various faiths.
- License - Relative**
  - Care to relative children only.
  - No placement maximums unless in residential foster care.
- Certified**
  - Care to children in need of an out of home safety plan, short-term only, 30 days or less.
  - Emergency shelter care is offered during a family crisis, 14 days or less.
  - Respite care is planned and offers temporary relief, 4 days or less.

**WHAT IS FOSTER CARE FOR CHILDREN?**

Foster care is a safety service available to families when children are placed in the custody of a public agency (Human Service, Title, or Division of Juvenile Services). Foster care is provided when alternatives to out of home placement, including relative placement, have been explored and found to be inappropriate.

**DOES NORTH DAKOTA NEED MORE LICENSED OR CERTIFIED PROVIDERS? YES!**

**TO BE A FOSTER CARE PROVIDER, YOU MUST:**

- Be age 21.
- Complete and meet the background check requirements, including a child abuse and neglect risk check.
- Complete a home study assessment.
- Be financially stable with reasonable resources to meet the needs of children placed in your home.
- Be able to demonstrate the ability to interpret and understand foster care laws, rules and policies, child care plans, medication labels, etc.
- Obtain a license or certification from North Dakota Health and Human Services.

**DO FOSTER CARE PROVIDERS RECEIVE REIMBURSEMENT?**

Providers do receive a monthly reimbursement to offset the costs involved with caring for a child in foster care. In addition, specialized programs (child care, activity fees, clothing, etc.) may also be approved depending on the needs of the child.

**HOW MANY CHILDREN CAN BE CARED FOR IN A FOSTER HOME?**

Fully licensed providers are assessed for the number of beds they have available. A fully licensed or relative foster home can serve up to an children of a time. A treatment foster home is licensed to care for two children, unless otherwise approved by the Department. A certified provider can serve up to 3 children at one time, but not exceed 30 days.

**HOW LONG DOES A CHILD STAY IN FOSTER CARE?**

Length of stay in foster care varies depending on the child's case plan goals. Care could range from a brief emergency of 4 days to several months.

**Created by:** North Dakota Health & Human Services  
**Contact:** 833.378.4663 (TTY) 833.378.4663

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**RED, WHITE, BLUE KIDS NEED YOU!**

Strengthening families helps strengthen communities.

Consider fostering or adoption!  
**833.378.4663**

**Dakota** | Health & Human Services

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**OPEN YOUR HEART AND HOME TODAY!**  
**833.378.4663**

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**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**TEENS IN FOSTER CARE**

- 1,400** On any given day, North Dakota supports nearly 1,400 children in foster care.
- 25%** Of these children in foster care, 25% are teens.
- Teenagers wait the longest for homes.

Learn how you can help!  
**833.378.4663**

**Dakota** | Health & Human Services

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**BREAKING MYTHS ABOUT TEENS IN FOSTER CARE**

**Teens are too old to positively impact.**

**No!** Teen years are a pivotal time in life. Additional guidance can help change trajectory!

**Connections, trust, and stability will help teens in foster care thrive!**

Do you want to make a difference? Scan here!

**Dakota** | Health & Human Services

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**'TIS THE SEASON! CONSIDER OPENING YOUR HEART & HOME TO A CHILD IN NEED!**

**833.378.4663**

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**2023-2024 Advertisements**

**LORI & SHAWN KESSEL**  
FOSTER PARENTS' EXPERIENCE

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Distributed By:

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**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER CARE FOR CHILDREN**

**CONSIDER BECOMING A FOSTER CARE PROVIDER**

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**Interested? Call 833.378.4663**

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**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**Revised Post Card w/ QR Code**

North Dakota is seeking families willing to foster or adopt older children and teens, large sibling groups, and children with higher behavioral concerns. There is also a great need for Native American foster care providers.

**Facts about fostering or adopting from foster care:**

- You can be a new or experienced parent.
- You can be single or married.
- You can rent or own your home.
- You must be at least 21 years old, otherwise no other age restrictions apply.
- You have support.

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**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**Fostering can be a part of your story!**

- Full and part-time opportunities!
- You can be single or married.
- Renting or owning a home is acceptable.
- You must be at least 21 years old.
- Placement preferences are respected.
- New or experienced parents welcome!
- Training and support are available!

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