

Rural Nevada Caregiver Courier

March 2019 - This edition of our courier is full of information about Advanced Foster Care and the Social Media Policy. If you have anything that you would like to see featured in our Courier, please email me at KathyMcHanQPI@gmail.com



Advanced Foster Care- By Kevin Quint, Clinical Program Manager, DCFS

My name is Kevin Quint and I serve as the Manager for the Advanced Foster Care Program (AFC). AFC is a specialized foster care program that is part of the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS). The AFC Program is designed to assist foster children in Nevada's 15 rural counties who experience serious emotional and behavioral problems.

The AFC Program works with foster parents in tried and true strategies to support the children in their home who are experiencing mental health issues. Our goal is to enable the children in those homes to experience a stable life and grow up in a healthy safe environment. Over the last two and a half years, we have recruited to

our program 14 homes across Nevada's 15 rural counties. At the present time, 20 children are in the program.

Recognizing that many children in the foster system also experience mental health issues, the AFC Program was started by DCFS as a pilot project in 2013 in Pahrump, Fallon, and Elko but was elevated to a Rural Region-wide program with staff in 2015. Staff were hired by July of 2016.

The AFC Program employs four coaches who are stationed across the Rural Region. Melanie Jones-Bluford is our coach based in Carson City. Stacy Peters is our coach in the Pahrump area. Cindy Stephenson is our coach in the Elko/Ely area.

Our Fallon/Fernley Coach position is vacant right now. We also have a clerical person named Shelly Roering who is based along with me in the Carson City District Office. Each of our homes is served by one of the AFC coaches. The job of the coach is to *mentor, teach, and partner* with the AFC home to help the parents in that home to provide the best and most solid experience for their foster children with special needs. (cont.)

Social Media Policy Updated

Before You Post

- The children are not identified by name.
- The children are not identified as foster children.
- There is no discussion on social media sites and websites about the child, the child's case or the child's family (including the reason a child entered foster care, visitation, progress of parents, status of the case, etc).
- Secure your privacy settings and location settings.
- Do not post photos or text with identifying information (house numbers, where you are currently, tagged photos, weekend plans, vacation destinations etc).
- Do not "tag" a foster child in any of your photos.
- Talk to the youth and make sure he or she is comfortable with you sharing information and images.
- There are no safety issues related to the child, specifically described by the caseworker (e.g. for safety reasons, the child's family cannot know where the child is placed).

Please read the full policy on the Rural Region QPI page under Documents and Additional Resources.

QPI National Conference

April 29th-May 1st

Loews Philadelphia Hotel

Building a Relationship
Based System: Techniques
for Transformation.



Advanced Foster Care (cont)

The coach spends 1½ to 2 hours a week in the home training the foster parents in specialized parenting and in trauma related issues. These trainings help create a guide and philosophy for working with the children in the day-to-day life of the home. In addition, the coach spends time encouraging, supporting, and working together with the foster parent to help identify and modify unwanted behaviors and to help the child or children in the home to learn coping skills and self-regulation. Most of all, the coaching relationship with the parent helps promote an atmosphere of skilled caregiving that ultimately helps that child experience healing and to live a life that is meaningful and rich.

The AFCP works with the other parts of the child's team such as the caseworker, Intensive Family Services (IFS), the child's therapist, the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), and more. This coordinated approach helps everyone work together for the child's best interests and stability.

The AFCP has served over 40 children in the last two and a half years. As mentioned, 20 are in the program today but of those who have left, some children have returned to their biological family, some have been adopted, some have successfully aged out of the child welfare system, and some have had to be referred to a higher level of care to meet their special needs. Ultimately, all of the children have been provided an opportunity to live with a family who has been trained and become skilled to work with a child that desperately needs, wants, and deserves acceptance, success, and love.

If you'd like more information, please contact me at 775-684-1973 (direct office line) or kevin.quint@dcfs.nv.gov. All questions are welcome!



Information Sharing

Do you feel like your questions are just not being answered? Some information is held back for parent's privacy, but anything related to the children can be shared with you. Check out the DCFS Information Sharing Brochure on the Rural Region QPI website to make sure you are getting all the info you need. Share it with your social worker if they don't think they can share something that they should be.

Support Groups

Would you like to see a Foster Parent support group in your area? Be on the lookout for an email and possible survey on when the best time to meet would be for your family. If you have ideas on what supports would be most helpful to you please call or email me at.

208-870-6973 or

KathyMcHanQPI@gmail.com

Pride Training

Fallon- Mar 16th, 17th and 23rd

Winnemucca- Mar 22nd -24th

Pahrump- April 12th-14th

Carson City- April 13th, 14th, 27th

Lori Nichols

1-888-423-2659

