

Hey New Dads– You’re Doing Good

We all wonder if we are doing all we can as parents. But what about the *new dad*? I definitely can’t say that I have all of the answers about fatherhood. If I could offer some quick-hitting advice to new dads, this would be it.

- Find friends with children at the similar age of yours. It makes socializing much easier because they know your challenges.
- Be careful of who you choose to be friends with. They may have been fun to hang out with before kids, but now you have to ask yourself, “Do I want him/her to influence my children?” If the answer is no, you’ll probably need to make some difficult decisions.
- Have a regular date night. No child has ever suffered because his/her parents took care of their relationship.
- Be affectionate around your kids. It’s important that they learn what true love looks like.
- Be okay with not having all of the answers. Lean on friends and family to help.
- Trust your gut and don’t second guess yourself. You’ll make mistakes, but parenting is all about making mistakes and learning from them.

To kids, love is spelled T-I-M-E. They just want quality time with you, no matter the activity or place. Just follow their lead and show them you love them as they are.

Remember, this is just my two cents – but it’s working for me so far. No matter how you slice it, remember that if you’re a good, loving, involved dad you’re doing good work. Oftentimes parents beat themselves up, but they’re doing a much better job than they think they are.

Read more great articles on parenting at daddydoinwork.com/

New Foster Parent Orientation:

Do you know someone who might be interested in learning more about becoming a foster parent? Orientations are held every other Monday from 6:00-8:00pm at CFC. The next dates of orientation are **August 10th and August 24th**. Contact Linda Rathbun at 517-882-4000 ext. 140 to RSVP.

Foster Parent PRIDE Training:

Pride series training in July will be held at two different locations. **Sessions 6 and 8 will be held at St. Vincent’s Catholic Charities:**

2800 West Willow Street, Lansing, MI
Training for Sessions 7, and 9 will be held at **Ingham County DHHS: 5303 S. Cedar Street (Door #3), Lansing, MI**

RSVP to your licensing worker if you are interested in attending. The dates and times for the trainings are as follows:

- PRIDE 6: Tuesday, July 21 from 6-9pm
- PRIDE 7: Thursday, July 23 from 6-9pm
- PRIDE 8: Monday, July 27 from 6-9pm
- PRIDE 9: Wednesday, July 29 from 9am-noon

Save the Date!

The Foster Family Summer Picnic is scheduled for Thursday, August 27th from 4-6pm at **Hawk Island Park.**

Food will be provided by King of the Grill. Invitations will be sent out to all Foster Families soon.



Photo credit: [vastateparksstaff](#)

Teens Respecting & Understanding Each Other (TRUE)- a NEW group for LGBTQ teens

We have formed a new support group for LGBTQ youth in our community. This group is a safe place for LGBTQ teens and allies to come together and socialize.

If you are unfamiliar with the terms used in LGBTQ they are:

Lesbian: a female-identified person who is primarily attracted to other women

Gay: a male-identified person who is primarily attracted to other men

Bisexual: a person who is attracted to both men and women

Questioning: a person who is unsure or exploring their sexual and/or gender identity

Pansexual: a person who is attracted to all or many gender expressions

Transgender: people whose gender identity, expression or behavior is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth

Ally: someone who supports LGBTQ rights and recognizes that homo-, bi-, & trans-phobia are social justice issues

T.R.U.E. group meets on Tuesdays at 4:00 pm

For more information, please call or text : Erich N. Pitcher, MS at 725-222-TRUE (8783)

truelgbtq@gmail.com



Child and Family Charities welcomed a new volunteer to assist with some of the agency's marketing needs. Erin O'Donnell is assisting Diane Goodemote (Child Welfare Licensing Supervisor) with the monthly Foster Parent Newsletter! Ms. Goodemote is expected to go on maternity leave this month so the timing for assistance couldn't be better! Ms. Goodemote and her family will be welcoming their second child sometime at the end of the month and she will return to work later this fall.

Many Resources Available to Foster Parents and Kids

When a child enters foster care, you can almost guarantee that the child has been chronically exposed to or just experienced a very traumatic event. Although their removal was done for their "safety," children may not understand or even be fully aware of the circumstances that led to their removal. This is especially true for sibling groups when maybe one of the children was abused and/or neglected resulting in an immediate removal of all the children from the family.

As foster parents, you are on the receiving end of the emotional and mental health outcomes of that trauma, which often presents itself in a variety of ways. Children may act out aggressively, become defiant or disrespectful. On the other end, children may appear withdrawn, quiet or even compliant. Even if a child appears to be behaving normally and is an easy-going child does not mean that the child has not been exposed to trauma and may need to **deal with those emotions**. So, what happens next and what does the child need? In the event that emotional and/or mental health services are needed, the caseworker has a couple of avenues to explore. At Child and Family Charities, we have one **in-house therapist**. Mary Corrigan provides one-on-one therapy services to children, and will also invest a great deal of education and support to foster parents as well. When a child may be expressing the need for medical intervention, we also have a resource of a **child psychiatrist** who can observe the child, assess needs and prescribe medication when appropriate. Outside of these services, Community Mental Health has a program called Families Forward – Children First which encompasses a range of emotional and mental health support including home-based therapy services for the child, family/parent support workers, respite options and a medication clinic as well. Utilizing these services require a great deal of commitment on behalf of the foster parent as additional workers from these programs will be frequenting your home on a regular basis in order to provide these services. Some services are outpatient while many of their programs are focused on home-based intervention.

So, when you sense a concern that needs to be addressed, what do you do? First thing is to **talk with your caseworker about these concerns** so that the worker can make a referral to an appropriate resource. The caseworker will be able to explain the process and what time frames you might encounter in terms of getting services started. Services may range from a quick connection with our therapist to gain greater insight into a behavioral issue, or extend to a referral for home-based intensive services. The important thing to remember is to communicate any needs or concerns you have about the child(ren) placed in your home!