

# 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!

### **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			
<b>Licensing/LOC Administrator</b> Brittany Fode	<b>Coordinators/Nexus PATH, Tribal, URM Licensing Sup</b> Monica Miller	<b>Licensing Specialist Sup</b> Bob Schock	<b>Licensing Specialist Sup</b> Michelle Jacob
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
		Shantel Froelich, Licensing Specialist	Kathy Molland, Licensing Specialist

**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.

## 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

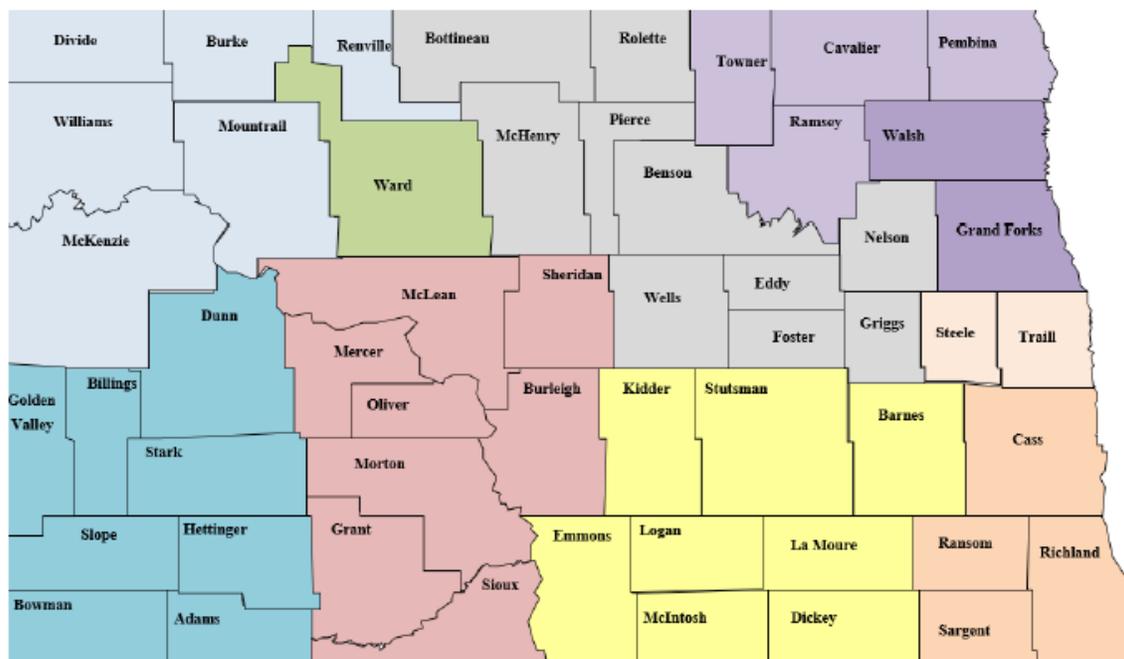
Home Study packets for adoption are received from AASK adoption program.

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.



Light Blue = Kathy  
Dark Blue = Natalie

Green = Amber  
Pink = Rachel and Becca

Grey = Teresa  
Yellow = Samantha

Light Purple = Barb  
Light Orange = Jennifer T

Dark Purple = Barb and Sadie  
Dark Orange = Jenny, Jennifer, Shantel

## **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.

## **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.

## **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.

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

**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>	1659

**Children by Gender**

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

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

**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>	1550

**Children by Gender**

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

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.

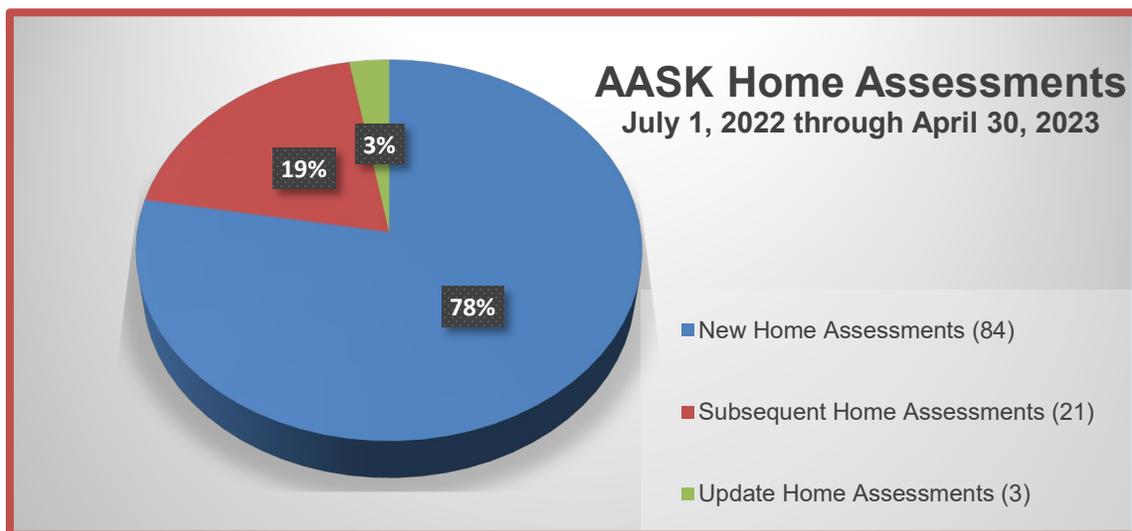
### Adoption Specific Details

The AASK program continues to serve children in the foster care system who have a concurrent or primary goal of adoption. From July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, AASK served a total of 928 children in varying stages of the adoption process. In addition, a total of 144 adoption home assessments were completed on families. In fiscal year 2022, AASK facilitated 271 adoptions. Of this number:

- 74% were North Dakota State Custody Children
- 17% were Tribal Custody Children
- 9% were Incoming ICPC Children

The average age of a child at the time of finalization during fiscal year 2022 was 6.96 years old. Children finalized ranged from 6.20 months to 17.99 years old.

In the current fiscal year (July 1, 2022 to April 30, 2023), AASK has completed 105 home assessments for adoptive families in North Dakota. Of this number, 84 are new adoptive families and 21 are families who have adopted through the AASK program in the past (see chart below).

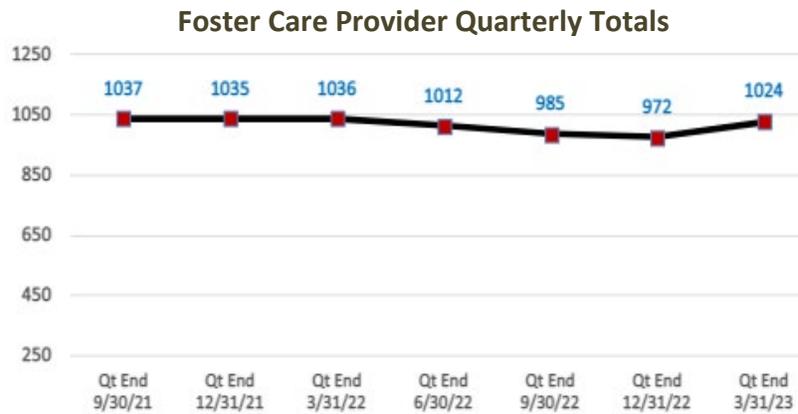


In 2019, the AASK program began tracking data on the time it takes for a family case to become active on a caseload after initial training requirements were complete. A decrease in wait times over the past three years has been evident and currently there is no wait period in any region for an adoption home assessment. Although this is the current status of wait times, this can change at any time. Recently, there have been two vacancies in a region where Tribal adoption work is heavily completed. The program may see wait times increase if staffing needs cannot be met.

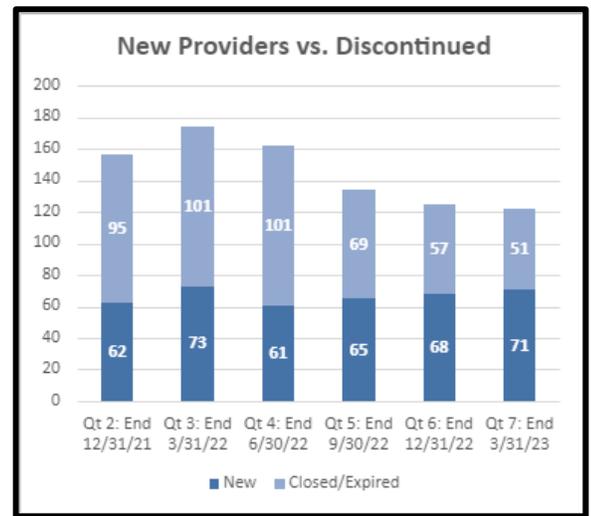
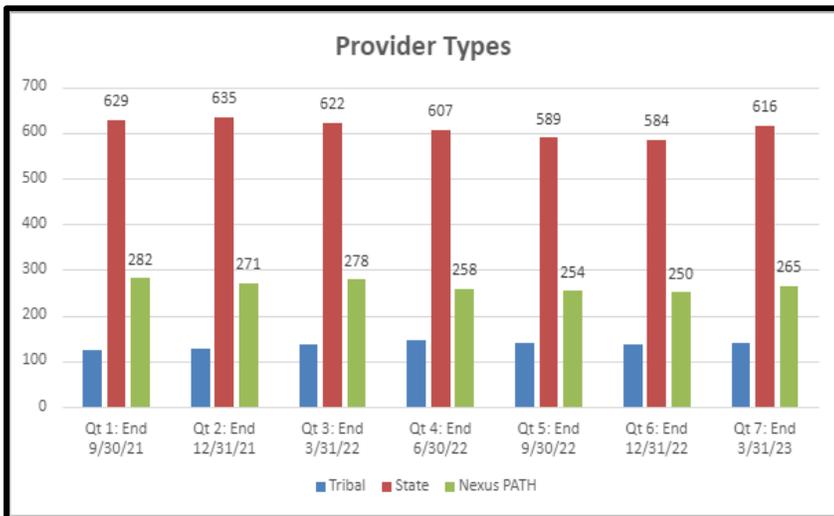
### Baseline Data and Outcomes

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.



### Provider Types Divided by Quarter

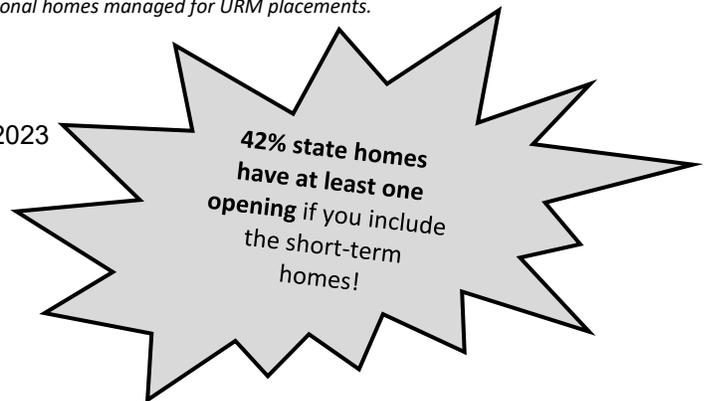


HHS issues a formal license or approval to State, Nexus PATH, and Tribal Nation homes. HHS also reviews licensing studies for the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) program administered by Agassiz Valley Human Service Zone. There are 19 additional homes managed for URM placements.

### Provider Availability State Homes Status Update

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



### Respite Care and Shelter Care

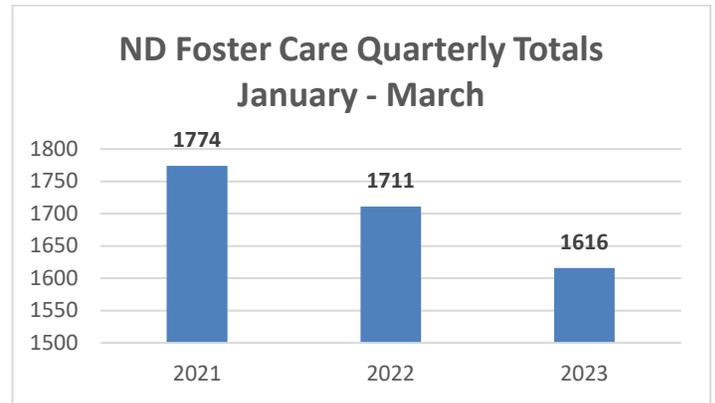
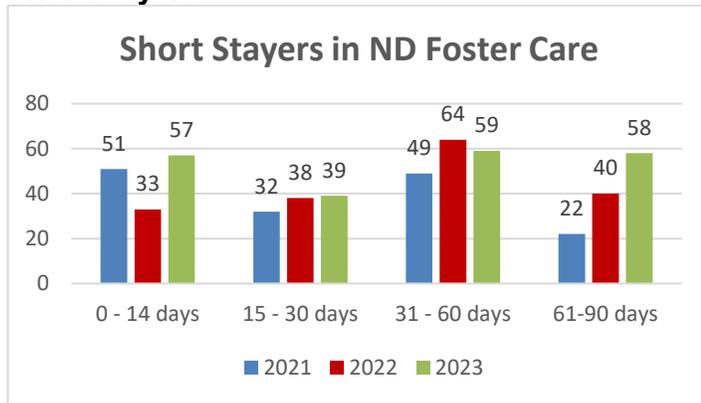
Of the 529 state providers in May 2023, 323 (61%) have committed to offering respite care, 221 (42%) have committed to taking emergency shelter care placements, while 63 (12%) have offered to join the on-call shelter care rotation in select parts of the state. These additional services greatly support children in need of placement and offer timely assistance to our partners!

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.

## Length of Time in Care

### Short Stayers



Data shows that the # of children in ND foster care in annual quarter comparisons is declining, while the number of short stayers has increased. In 2021 (154), 2022 (175) and 2023 (213) children were in ND foster care for less than 90 days. This may be contributed to the greater need to temporarily safety plan with families until other arrangements can be made to support the family. Safety Framework Practice Model (SFPM) supports diversion, but it also recognizes the need for foster care to properly safety plan.

### Long Stayers

- **Zones** = 154 (11%) have been 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** = 115 (8%) have been in Tribal Title IV-E foster 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.

## Outcomes / Annual Reporting

The ND Foster and Adopt Recruitment and Retention (R&R) Work Group began discussing the need for revision to the State Plan in spring of 2021. The R&R Work Group identified the 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.*

### **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.

**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.
- 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.



**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.
- 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.
- 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.**

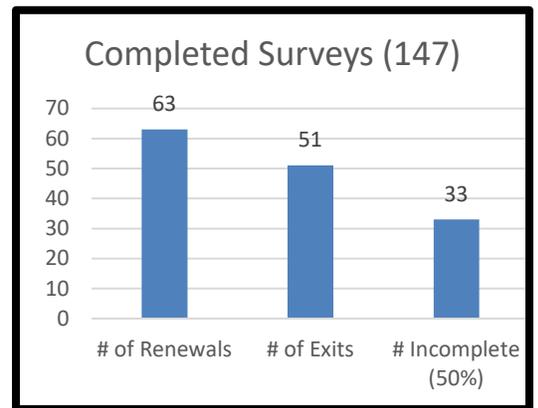
- Coalitions and CFS Licensing specialists report that providers are gaining support and access to necessary trainings and to one another through the newly developed Mentoring program, grief and loss counseling, licensing engagement through quarterly check ins, monthly trainings, share and support opportunities, encouraging providers to take breaks from accepting placements, encouragement to seek respite from enhanced respite homes.
- 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.

**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
- 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

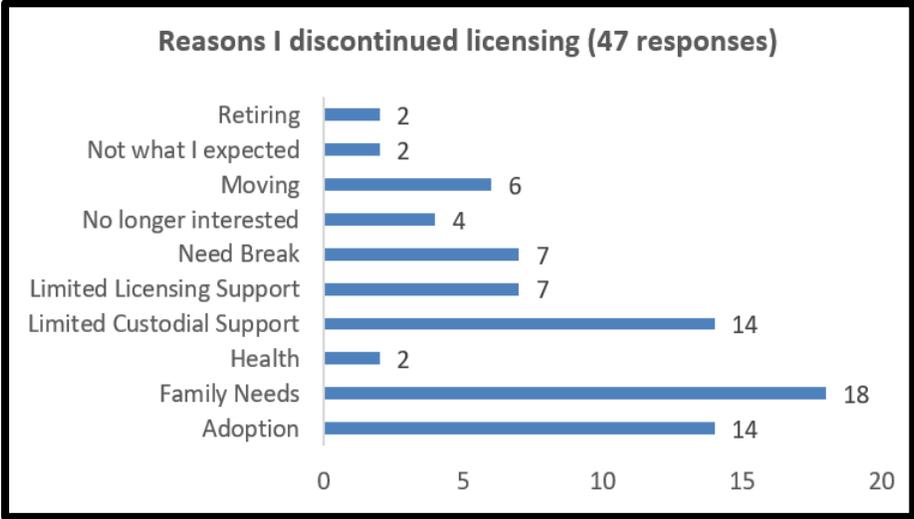
**The most successful sources of targeted and general recruitment and reasons why prospective providers cease the licensing process, are noted in R&R accomplishments below.**

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 then 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> </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> </ul>

- COVID really changed the delivery method for trainings, finally getting online options was and is a great opportunity for foster parents. Thank you!
- 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.
- Licensing renewals seem repetitive, why the same details on multiple forms.
- Lack of communication from case management
- Need for transportation support to get all of the children to all of their appointments.
- We understand the need for CPS reporting, but experiencing false allegations is heartbreaking.



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, and the separation of roles has been made clearer.

**Statewide R&R Accomplishments**

The Children and Family Services Training Center (CFSTC) manages the centralized inquiry clearinghouse, which has increased the response time and congruency in recruitment messaging across the state.

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. CFSTC’s Recruitment and Retention 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, this form is completed by the Recruitment and Retention Specialist, then shared in the referral process to the authorized licensing agency.

**Tasks completed by R&R Specialist:**

- Continued communication with new and past inquiries through email and phone calls. Monthly emails are sent inviting them to the Virtual Foster Care panels.
- Continued the creation of numerous branded materials (as noted below) to include specialized recruitment of homes for teenagers and Native American homes.
- Completed video marketing project with *Chezy*, which resulted in 15 full videos and five 30 second video PSAs to be used in recruitment efforts statewide.
  - Agencies that represented in the videos included: CFS State Licensing Unit, Nexus-PATH, Youthworks, AASK, and NATI
  - Recording day was a full day from 8:00 to 5:00pm with many meeting planning connections prior to arrange full day schedule, layout of those who were recorded, and details of R&R request/goal.

- An impressive 34 child welfare advocates, including child welfare staff, foster providers, and adoptive parents, were involved in making the vision a reality. A total of 17 people, including 7 individuals and 5 couples, were interviewed.
- Arranged and coordinated extensive efforts for movie theater ads to run across the state as follows:
  - 30 second ad for 3 months (March 15<sup>th</sup> to June 15<sup>th</sup>)
    - Dickinson Theater
    - Williston Theater
    - Jamestown Theater
    - Valley City Theater
  - 30 second ad for 3 months (March 24<sup>th</sup> to June 22<sup>nd</sup>)
    - Two Marcus Theaters Fargo
  - 30 second ad for 2 months (April 15<sup>th</sup> to June 15<sup>th</sup>)
    - East Grand Forks (partner city to Grand Forks)
- Assisted coalition members with a variety of foster provider appreciation gifts. Gifts selected by workers did vary across the state, and included:
  - “Foster Parent Definition” and “Growing our Tree” prints.
    - The digital file of each design was purchased through an Etsy store. Then prints were ordered and distributed to workers through the CFS Licensing Unit (who requested these) to share with foster care providers.
- Chocolate bars and custom foster provider themed candy bar wrappers
- Goodie bags including keychain, inspirational notepad, and encouragement card.
- Assisted in the planning and advertising for self-care and support through yoga sessions for foster providers in the Cass Human Service Zone area.
- Launch of the Foster Parent Mentoring program, Post Adopt Mentoring Program, and ICWA Cultural Liaison program.
  - Creation of mentor program brochures along with necessary fillable forms for all programs to include a mentor referral form, mentee referral form, mentor agreement form, and invoice/log.
  - Arranged and held meetings individually with foster parent mentors to review the mentor agreement, go over expectations, and answer any questions they had.
  - Ongoing facilitation of quarterly meetings with foster parent mentors to check-in and get feedback.
- Formal launch of Grief and Loss Counseling through Solace Counseling available to foster providers who are experiencing grief/loss and are in need of additional support. Each family is offered three one-hour sessions either in person or via telehealth.
- Booth representation at the ND Behavioral Health & Children and Family Services Conference where new materials providing engagement strategies for foster care providers and things to consider when a placement change occurs along with marketing materials, including pens & stress balls, were dispersed.
- Assisted coalitions in retention efforts with the purchase of carbon monoxide detectors, as needed.
- Collaborated with AASK by providing funds to purchase personalized family ornaments for families finalizing their adoptions during National Adoption Month.
- Designed new pizza flyers along with donut flyers that were printed on post-it notes to make it easier for community businesses to attach to boxes.
- Assisted in the planning of the “Hope for the Journey” Conference that was held in three locations across the state. Various flyers were created to promote the educational opportunity and a significant amount of time was spent collaborating with collation members along with hosts to ensure all was planned out and invoiced accordingly.
- Coordinated a national speaker education opportunity in honor of Foster Care Month in May with Gaelin Elmore who spent the majority of his childhood in foster care. 94 individuals attended the session that was titled “Be the Difference: Belonging in the Key to Unlocking Potential”.

Branded materials created/re-branded with new HHS logo & distributed as follows from 2022-2023:  
See Attachment C & D for examples of publications and materials!

Branded items include, but not limited to the following:

- Brochure (3,325)
- Postcards (2,375)
- Business cards (2,125)
- Half-page recruitment flyer (1,450)
- One-page foster care handout (1,450)
- Teen recruitment half-page flyer (1,000)
- “10 Reasons to Foster a Teen” handout (725)
- Teen “Breaking Myths” handout (1,000)

- Church flyers (2 versions x 1,450 each = 2,900)
- Pizza flyer (1,450)
- “Be the Village” handout (1,450)
- Thank you cards (375)
- Custom anniversary cards for foster care providers (1,100) for licensing unit.
- Custom holiday cards foster care providers (1,150)
- Holiday themed recruitment cards (4,795)
- Hockey themed recruitment cards (850)
- Yard signs with 5 to a set (10 sets)
- 15 Branded Table display sets with *\*new* HHS logo, which included:
  - Tablecloth
    - 12: 6’ tablecloths
    - 3: 6’- 8’ conversion tablecloths
  - Floor Banner
  - Tabletop Banner
  - 8.5” x 11” literature holders
  - 11 collapsible wagons (not branded) for hauling materials to and from events
- A-frame posters (86)
  - 3 poster themes included general, summer, and winter
  - Worker specific requests included: hockey (2) and Native American (2)
- Fall, winter, spring, & summer themed children’s activity placement coloring sheets (23,175).
  - Distributed with crayon packets to be used at church dinners, local cafes, restaurants, coffee shops, resource booths, community events, school events such as turkey bingo, etc.
- AASK adoption coffee sleeves for National Adoption Month (10,800)
- Pizza themed recruitment “post-it” 4”x6” sticky notes (3,000 pads with 50 sheets per pad = 150,000 notes)
- Donut themed recruitment “post-it” 4”x6” sticky notes (1,000 pads with 50 sheets per pad = 50,000 notes)
- R&R Sticker (25,000): for booth events, shake/tea/coffee shops, meetings, gatherings, events, etc.

Inquiries received:

Inquiries from July 2021 to June 30, 2022	Number of inquiries responded to by RRS	Number of inquiries were moved on to licensors/agencies.	Number of inquiries were screened out for various reasons.
Quarter One	65	42	8
Quarter Two	76	35	7
Quarter Three	83	35	17
Quarter Four	172	95	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>55</b>

Inquiries from July 2022 to June 30, 2023	Number of inquiries responded to by RRS	Number of inquiries were moved on to licensors/agencies.	Number of inquiries were screened out for various reasons.
Quarter One	178	95	32
Quarter Two	118	72	20
Quarter Three	144	72	14
Quarter Four (Final count pending)			
<b>Total through Quarter 3</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>66</b>

**\*\*Tracking of Inquires began as follows in January 2021:**

2022 R&R Foster and Adoptive Parent Inquiry Data Totals				
Month	UND Inquiry	Partner Inquiry	TOTAL	Quarter Totals
January	29	28	57	180
February	19	25	44	
March	35	44	79	
April	51	14	65	234
May	74	22	96	
June	47	26	73	
July	57	14	71	244
August	64	30	94	
September	57	22	79	
October	41	20	61	171
November	48	21	69	
December	29	12	41	
Separate Totals	551	278		829
Year End Totals			829	

2023 R&R Foster and Adoptive Parent Inquiry Data Totals				
Month	UND Inquiry	Partner Inquiry	TOTAL	Quarter Totals
January	56	28	84	206
February	42	18	60	
March	46	16	62	
April	50	21	71	157 and counting (*as of 06.15.23)
May	49	13	62	
June	22*	2*	24*	
July				0
August				
September				
October				0
November				
December				
Separate Totals	265	98		363
Totals as of 06.15.23			363	

Publications:

The CFSTC RRS contributed information and resources in the following editions of the *Fostering Communication* newsletter, which can be found online [HERE](#):

- August 2022 edition shared information on back-to-school transition and offered two resource links for tips to assist caregivers in advocating for the child in a school setting.
- November 2022 edition highlighted National Adoption Month and shared the ICWA Cultural Liaison Program video to provide education on this statewide resource.

- February 2023 edition's main focus was on resiliency and how caregivers could build resilience. A foster provider testimonial video created by Chezy was also shared.
- May 2023: featured National Foster Care Month "Strengthening Minds, Uplifting Families" by offering a resource on the importance of acknowledging a child's potential mental health needs as well as importance of self-care. One of the former North Dakota Youth Testimonials also shared a message of what he found most helpful as a teen while in foster care, which included access to mental health resources.

A new updated design of the *Fostering Communication* newsletter was published in August of 2022. Each newsletter highlights the toll-free inquiry line (1.888.FST.HOME) as well as advertises the monthly open chat support and educational sessions for foster providers. The final portion of each edition does showcase the upcoming monthly virtual foster care panel.

Facebook posts continued to reach a large audience with posts ranging all the way up to 9,129 views. Foster Parent Spotlight and Adoptive Family posts still create the largest volume of views. See sample timeline post in Attachment D.

#### Virtual Events:

##### ➤ **Foster Parent Panels**

- Panels continue to be facilitated on zoom and advertised on Facebook encouraging those interested in learning more about foster care in North Dakota to attend. The panel consists of a local former foster youth, licensed foster care providers, and foster care licensors from CFS Licensing Unit along with treatment foster care provider, Nexus-PATH. The RRS individually facilitates the panel dialogue and zoom securities.
- Registration has ranged from 6 to 24 with attendance of 4 to 13.

##### ➤ **Foster Care Provider Open Chat Support & Educational Sessions:**

- Two foster care provider open chat support sessions and one educational session are offered each month virtually.
- New flyers to better promote the monthly foster care provider training and open chat sessions were created. Prior flyer advertised for both on one document. The new flyers featured each opportunity on one flyer to better showcase and advertise.
- The following topics were provided over this last year during the monthly educational series:
  - Education sessions have included:
    - Independent Living Services
    - Healthy Sleeping Tips
    - LGBTQ+ 101 Crash Course
    - Suicide Prevention
    - Internet Safety
    - AASK: Team Selection & Adoption Assessment Process
    - Preparing for Independent Living
    - Transitioning from Foster Care to an Adoptive Placement
    - NDYLAA Panel Presentation

#### 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 is now drafting administrative rules with a projected effective date of January 1, 2024. This will allow for additional opportunities to grow our provider network and offer support to licensed providers statewide.

### **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, 2022 through April 30, 2023 the AASK Program has completed 84 new assessments, 3 updated and 21 subsequent adoption assessments. In this same time frame, AASK has completed 193 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, with a current vacancy in the east. 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.

North Dakota has an active 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 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 the new site has been completed.

We are pursuing a partnership with the Reel Hope Project. The organization will be providing children needing adoption recruitment with a personal video to be used for child specific recruitment activities. We are in the final stages of formalizing this partnership with a goal of beginning video sessions July 1, 2023.

North Dakota provides adoption services to Tribal custody children at the request of each Tribe, through the AASK program. The Tribe seeks approval of the State adoption administrator for AASK to provide these services on a case-by-case basis. In the current fiscal year July 1, 2022 through April 30, 2023, AASK has placed 32 children for adoption at the request of the Tribe and has also assisted in the finalization of adoption for 42 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 2023-2024**

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

- Utilize the marketing campaign videos and PSAs created for general 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 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.
- Create testimonial commercials specific to teens.
- 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.
- Expand foster care mentoring opportunities to match new providers with seasoned providers.
- 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 parent support groups, including online or virtual options
- Grow opportunities to provide access to family activities for foster families at reduced cost or free

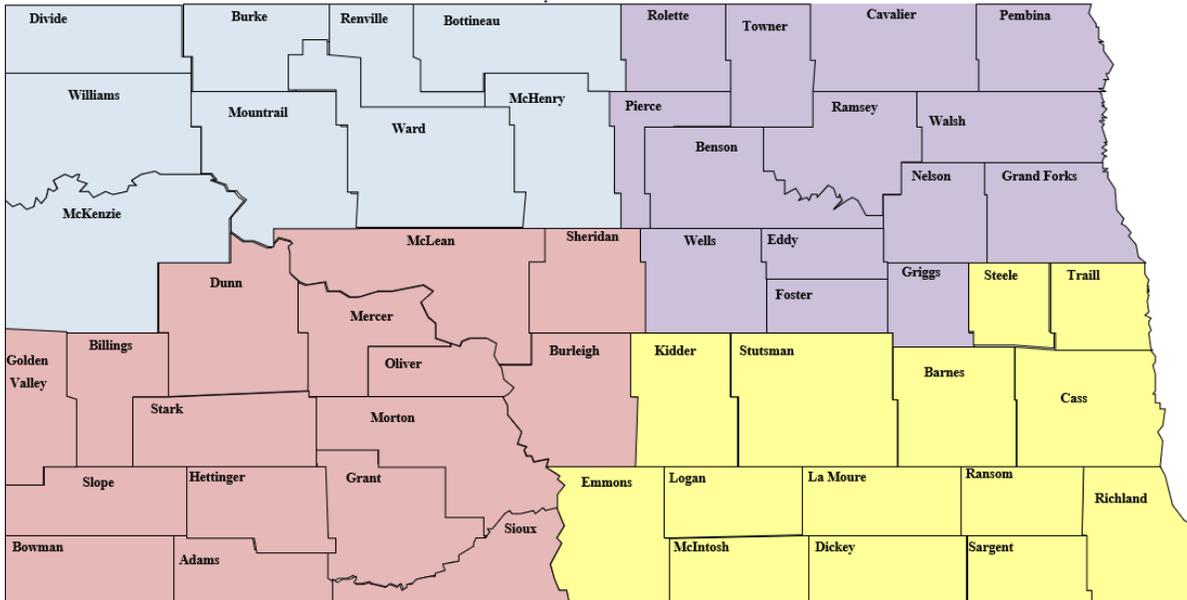


**ND Recruitment/Inquiry Toll Free Line  
1-833-FST-HOME or 1-833-378-4663**

**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 in the role of:

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.

**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 will recruit and retain foster families to meet the placement needs of children in foster care, while recruiting adoptive families to assist in permanency goal achievement for children who are free for adoption. North Dakota Coalitions will engage in general and targeted recruitment.

<p><b>Recruitment &amp; Retention Plan Outcomes Timeframe</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Year 3: July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022  <input type="checkbox"/> Year 4: July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023  <input type="checkbox"/> Year 5: July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024</p>
<p><b>Coverage Area</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Coalition 1 (Williston, Minot, Jamestown, Valley City, etc.)  <input type="checkbox"/> Coalition 2 (Devils Lake, Grand Forks, Cavalier, Spirit Lake, Turtle Mt)  <input type="checkbox"/> Coalition 3 (Hillsboro, Fargo, Wahpeton, etc.)  <input type="checkbox"/> Coalition 4 (Bismarck, Dickinson, etc.)</p>
<p><b>Average # of Coalition Participants</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> At least 5 regular members  <input type="checkbox"/> 6 to 12 members  <input type="checkbox"/> 13 to 20 members  <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(please describe)</i> Enter text</p>
<p><b>Who participates in the coalition meetings, events, and planning for recruitment?</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> CFSTC Recruitment &amp; Retention Specialist  <input type="checkbox"/> CFS Field Specialist  <input type="checkbox"/> Zone licensing worker  <input type="checkbox"/> Zone case manager/s  <input type="checkbox"/> Zone supervisor/s  <input type="checkbox"/> Zone director  <input type="checkbox"/> Nexus PATH representative/s  <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal representative/s  <input type="checkbox"/> AASK  <input type="checkbox"/> Foster parent/s  <input type="checkbox"/> Adoptive parent/s  <input type="checkbox"/> Community members <i>(please describe)</i> Enter text  <input type="checkbox"/> Business representative/s <i>(please describe)</i> Enter text  <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(please describe)</i> Enter text  <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(please describe)</i> Enter text</p>
<p><b>Average # of Licensed Foster Homes served by coverage area</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 to 25 licensed homes  <input type="checkbox"/> 26 to 75 licensed homes  <input type="checkbox"/> 76 to 100 licensed homes  <input type="checkbox"/> 101 to 149 licensed homes  <input type="checkbox"/> More than 150 licensed homes</p>

<b>Outcomes Reflection</b>	<b>Yes Successful</b>	<b>Not in our area</b>
Outcome 1 – ND foster children placed out of home, remain in their home community unless placed with family or identified relatives out of the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
Outcome 2 – Sibling groups are placed together.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
Outcome 3 – Providers are available to care for foster children with specialized medical and high behavioral needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
Outcome 4 – Providers are available to meet the needs of diversity; representing racial, cultural, and ethnic characteristics of the state’s foster care population.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		
Outcome 5 – ND providers will not terminate their foster care license due to lack of support, insufficient training or resources to meet the foster child’s needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:		

## Recruitment Activities

Coalitions are asked to check all that apply to recruitment efforts from your service area. Detail areas needing more information and comment on overall strengths and challenges of recruitment.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Parades
<input type="checkbox"/>	Service club community speaking engagements
<input type="checkbox"/>	Faith-based community speaking engagements
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facebook LIVE events
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community business engagement (pizza cutters, pizza box fliers, Scheels family days, amateur sports game days, table tents, fliers, etc.) <i>Please describe: Enter text</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:
Strengths/successes to recruitment in our service area include:	
Challenges/barriers to recruitment in our service area include:	

<b>Reasons a prospective family <u>did not</u> follow through with foster care licensure:</b> <i>Check all that apply</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Background check requirements
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spouse/partner is not in agreement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Training requirements
<input type="checkbox"/>	Family situation changed; marriage, divorce, death, birth of a baby, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	After further information, self-determined fostering/adoption is not something they are prepared to take on
<input type="checkbox"/>	Family schedule is too busy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:
For individuals/families who did get licensed.... Share one success story that sticks out about why they became licensed, adopted, what spoke to the individual/s, how did they take the leap, etc.	

## **Retention Activities**

Coalitions are asked to check all that apply to retention efforts from your service area. Detail areas needing more information and comment on overall strengths and challenges of recruitment.

<b>Targeted retention activities. Check all that apply</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Foster parent support groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adoptive parent support groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facebook LIVE support groups
<input type="checkbox"/>	Peer Mentoring
<input type="checkbox"/>	Grief and loss training and support
<input type="checkbox"/>	Training opportunities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Annual recognition/ appreciation banquet or picnic
<input type="checkbox"/>	Incentives for family engagement: pool passes, zoo passes, game tickets, movie tickets, bowling, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community discount cards
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appreciation letter or card
<input type="checkbox"/>	Birthday cards
<input type="checkbox"/>	Anniversary cards
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:
Strengths/successes to retention in our service area include:	
Challenges/barriers to retention in our service area include:	

As families terminate their licensure, an exit interview or survey is a desire of HHS to gain feedback and knowledge regarding retention of families. Coalitions are asked to check all that apply as it relates to what they hear regarding the termination of licensing.

<b>Reasons that families are no longer licensed for foster care. Check all that apply</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Moved out of state
<input type="checkbox"/>	Moved from the community and did not transfer the license
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adopted the foster child/ren
<input type="checkbox"/>	Working parent/s – foster parenting schedule is too cumbersome
<input type="checkbox"/>	Requesting personal time to focus on family needs
<input type="checkbox"/>	Burn out

<input type="checkbox"/>	Retiring after many years of service
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provider did not feel supported with training and agency resources to serve the child/ren
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provider was part of a personal or foster care CPS assessment and was discouraged
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provider revocation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

Is there a way to alleviate any of the above reasons?

Comments/feedback:

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



Interested? Call 833.378.4663

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!

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



Business Card



NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER OR ADOPT

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!

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 FOSTER OR ADOPT



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: 857-8458-5029 Or by phone: 252-210-8762	11:30-12:30 pm CST <b>23</b> Foster Parent Support Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to attend Meeting ID: 857-1221-2850 Or by phone: 346-246-7799	7:15-8:15pm CST <b>27</b> "Education Opportunity" Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to attend Meeting ID: 855-2384-4863 Or by phone: 346-246-7799
---	--	---

QUESTIONS CONTACT YOUR LICENSING WORKER

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

NORTH Dakota | Human Services

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!

NORTH Dakota | Human Services

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

NORTH Dakota | Human Services

Recruitment Example

NORTH DAKOTA  
FOSTER OR ADOPT

*thank you!*

NORTH Dakota | Human Services

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

NORTH Dakota | Human Services

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

NORTH Dakota | Human Services

Church Flyer

**THEY NEED YOU!**



CALL 833.378.4663

NORTH Dakota | Human Services

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**

**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.

**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 time availability of mentors.

NORTH Dakota | Human Services

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 (North Dakota State, State, or Division of Social Services). Foster care is considered when alternatives to out-of-home placement, including relative placement, have been explored and deemed to be in the best interest of the child.

**FOSTER PARENTS OFFER A CHILD:**

- Back care
- Safety and security
- Guidance and support
- Family support
- Routine and structure
- Participation in the child's care plan goals and tasks, including transportation to medical treatment 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 transition of custody, the child becomes legally free for adoption and would be in need of a forever family. Foster parents may choose to be considered an adoption option for the child.

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER CARE FOR CHILDREN**  
CONSIDER BECOMING A FOSTER PARENT

Call 1.833.378.4663, 711 (TTY)

WWW.ND.HHS.GOV

**Foster Care Brochure**

**NORTH DAKOTA NEED UNLICENSED FOSTER HOMES?**

**DO FOSTER PARENTS GET PAID OR RECEIVE REIMBURSEMENTS?**

Foster parents do receive a monthly reimbursement to offset the cash out-of-pocket with caring for a foster child. In addition, specialized payments (child care, medical, dental, clothing, etc.) may also be approved depending on the needs of the child.

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

Unlicensed 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 licensed 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 a few to several weeks.

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

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

If you are patient, flexible, and available for a commitment during a 90-day trial period, please reach out to us.

**Learn more by calling 833.378.4663**

**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 foster in your own home.
- You must be at least 21 years old, otherwise no other age restrictions apply.
- You have support!

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**

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

North Dakota is seeking families willing to foster or adopt older children and teens, larger sibling groups, and children with behavioral concerns. If you are able to commit, please reach out.

**Now is the time! 833.378.4663**

**Recruitment Sticker**

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**THEY NEED YOU!**

Learn more by calling today! 833.378.4663

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



**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**FOSTER CARE PROVIDER TRAINING**

**TOPIC**

NOAA Leadership Board Panel Presentation: Come listen to the voices 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: 512.626.6799 | Passcode: 987255

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

**1 HOUR CREDIT**

**Questions?** 701.777.5915 | [adoption\\_recruitment@nd.gov](mailto:adoption_recruitment@nd.gov)

**Open Chat Flyer**

**NORTH DAKOTA FOSTER OR ADOPT**

**Foster Care Provider Open Chat Sessions**

The LIND Children and Family Services Training Center is excited to offer virtual Foster Care Provider Open Chat sessions as part of the recruitment and retention campaign with the North Dakota Department of Health & Human Services.

**Are you feeling...**

- Stressed?
- 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 discuss ideas of much interest. Open chats are offered bi-weekly through Zoom. Links provided below.

**March 2023 OPEN CHAT Schedule**

<b>22</b>	<b>28</b>
Meeting ID: 958 2925 6671 By Phone: 512.626.6799 Passcode: 987255	Meeting ID: 978 987 9079 By Phone: 512.626.6799 Passcode: 987255

**Questions?** 701.777.5915 | [adoption\\_recruitment@nd.gov](mailto:adoption_recruitment@nd.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**

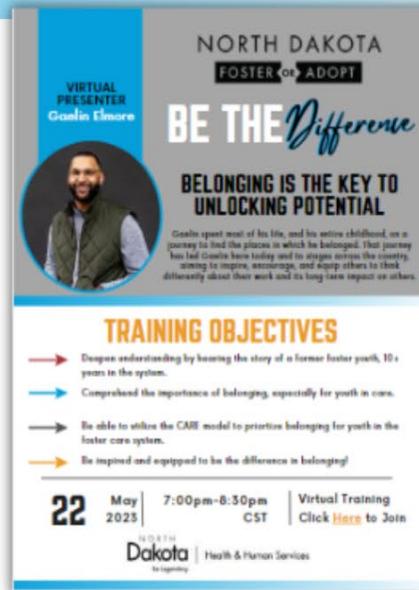
**833.378.4663**

**North Dakota Health & Human Services**

**Additional Posters**  
(for A Frame Stands)



**Training Flyer**



**Stickers**



**Teen Recruitment Materials**



**Community Event Flyer**



**Video Shoot Day**



**Placemats**



**Social Media Posts**



**Coffee Sleeves**



**Pens**



**Band Aid Dispensers**



**Can Koozies**



**T-Shirts**