

## Spirit Lake Tribal Social Services

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Spirit Lake Tribal Social Service's objective is to provide support, training and advocacy to meet the special needs of foster, adoptive and kinship families, who provide safe, stable and nurturing homes for children in foster care. We hope that you will find this information to be both interesting and informative.

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Foster Parents,

April is upon us and it is nationally recognized as Prevent Child Abuse Awareness Month. There are many activities coming up in the surrounding area as well as our program. Please note the side indentation for events to maintain the 12 hours of mandatory training throughout the year of licensure. UNITY Training as you all know is currently on hold until we figure out the scheduling conflicts. I will send out information as updated on this Training. Keep in mind that Spirit Lake Nation/Tribal Social Services requires all Affidavit homes to complete: First Aid, CPR, Fire Safety, UNITY Training, and maintain/complete the required 12 hours of training that relates to children. All trains need to show proof of hours and presence or they will not be accounted for. It is the responsibly of the Foster Parent to provide documentation and keep current on all required training in order to maintain as an Affidavit Home for Spirit Lake Nation/Tribal Social Services. If you are unsure how many hours you currently have to date please feel free to give myself, Ashley a call and I can provide the information.

- **Note: Please listen to KABU the weeks of the events: If any changes take place they will be announced on KABU along with the future date if postponed.**

Spirit Lake Tribal Social Services would also like to welcome two new Affidavit homes to our program warm welcome to: Heather Lawrence & Rodney Skadsem, Elisha & Mitchell Poulsen. We would also like to welcome Darcey Smith as the Tiwahe Program Developer.

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"Let us put our minds together to see what we can build for our children"

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## Upcoming Events

### April 12

960 Informative Training: Ina Olson: Blue Building Conf. Rm. 9-11:30am.

### April 15

Four Winds Parent Fair: SLTSS Booth: 10-3:00pm

### April 18

Dakota Parent Education: Darla Thelie: SLTSS: 5-6p

### April 21

ADHD, ODD, RAD, Autism Spectrum, Youth Depression & Suicide: Blue Building Conf. Rm.: 9-4pm

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# Fostering Communications

## More Important News

## Fire Safety

Fire Safety Training is now available online on the CFSTC website. Both the two-hour initial training along with the one-hour refresher are provided. We encourage you to take a look at the Fire Safety as well as peek at the training calendar for other training opportunities.

<http://und.edu/centers/children-and-family-services-training-center/online-training/fire-safety-training.cfm>

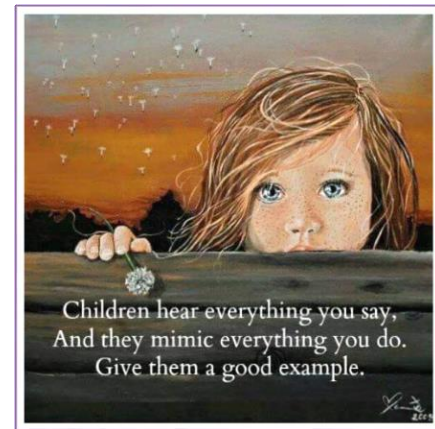
^^^ Please complete the Fire Safety Training and bring your certificate in to be put on file.

In May I would like to note that every Tuesday there will be an 8 week class on Cooking 101: located at SLTSS from 3:30-4:30p. Cooking 101, is open to the kids however, foster parents need to attend with the children. It will cover a variety of topics and offer door prizes.

We also moved the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Informative Training to May 11, 2016 @ 9-11:30am.

I would like to discuss the Support Groups further to see who would all be interested in attending if I was to put them back on the calendar. Also if you are interested what times and dates work best and how frequent would you all like them to be? Spirit Lake Tribal Social Services believes that the support groups are important to the Foster Parents as it gives them a chance to bounce ideas, problems or just to be able to open up into a discussion of interest for all Foster Parents.

Summer is ahead of us and with that school will be letting out, we are looking for kid friendly ideas for the summer. Let us know if you happen to have any ideas on hand that would like to try for the summer.



## In the Community

**Dakota Culture Night:** Location: CCCC Library: Date: 4/13/16: 4:30-6:30p: Every Wednesday

**SL Community Workshop:** Location: SL Casino: Alcohol Awareness: 4/14/16: 9-4:30p

**Four Winds Parent Fair** Location: FWHS, Date: 4/15/2016: 10-3p.

**Adult Support Group:** Location: Dakota Baptist Church: Date: every Tuesday, Time: 7-8:30p.

**30 Min. Meal Workshop:** Location: CCCC: Natural Resource Rm. 4/21/16: 5-7p.

**Children's Safety & Learning Fair:** Location: Devils Lake Burdick Arena: 4/23/16: 9-3p



# NEWS FROM OUR



## The Facts of Foster Care

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

Foster care is a state-run child welfare system that provides alternative living situations to children whose parent or parents are unable to provide adequate care.



The idea behind foster care is that a child is better off in a household than an orphanage, even if the child is only living there temporarily.



Goals for children in foster care include reunification, adoption, and guardianship.<sup>3</sup>

This graphic helps to visualize the realities of the system and the outcomes for foster youth around the country.

### FOSTER CARE: THE NUMBERS<sup>2</sup>

74.2 million children live in the U.S., according to the 2010 census.

**402,378**  
Number of children living in the foster care system



**101,840**  
Number of foster children up for adoption



This means about **1 in 184** children in the U.S. are in the foster care system.

**34 months**  
The average wait time for adoption



**20 months**  
The average length of stay in foster care

### A PROFILE OF FOSTER YOUTH<sup>3</sup>

**53%**  
Case Goal to reunify with parent(s) or principal caretaker(s)



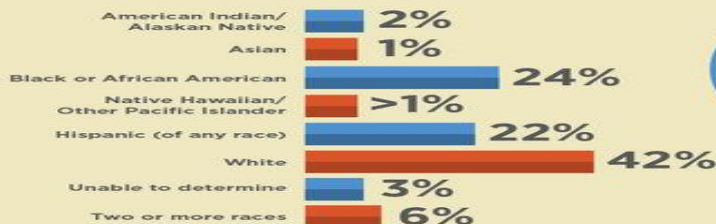
SEX

Male **52%**  
Female **48%**

AGE

Mean age **8.9 years**  
Median age **8.2 years**

RACE



If one child were to represent all others in the foster care system, he would be 9 years old, white, more likely to be disabled than a child outside of the system, and trying to reunify with his family.

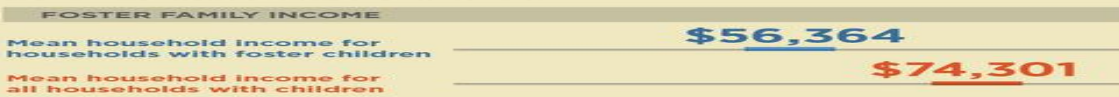
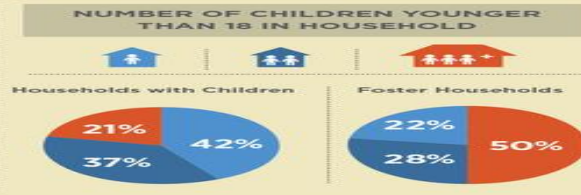


# NEWS FROM OUR

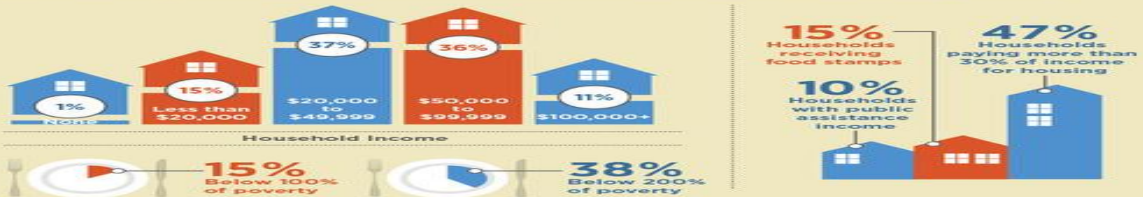


## PROFILE OF FOSTER FAMILIES\*

Households interested in becoming foster families must apply through the state and go through a process to ensure that the family is qualified and ready to support a foster child. The process is thorough and includes a social services investigation. While the foster family does receive money from the state to support foster children, foster families are generally motivated by the opportunity to change a child's life. The following section illustrates what these families look like, by the numbers.†

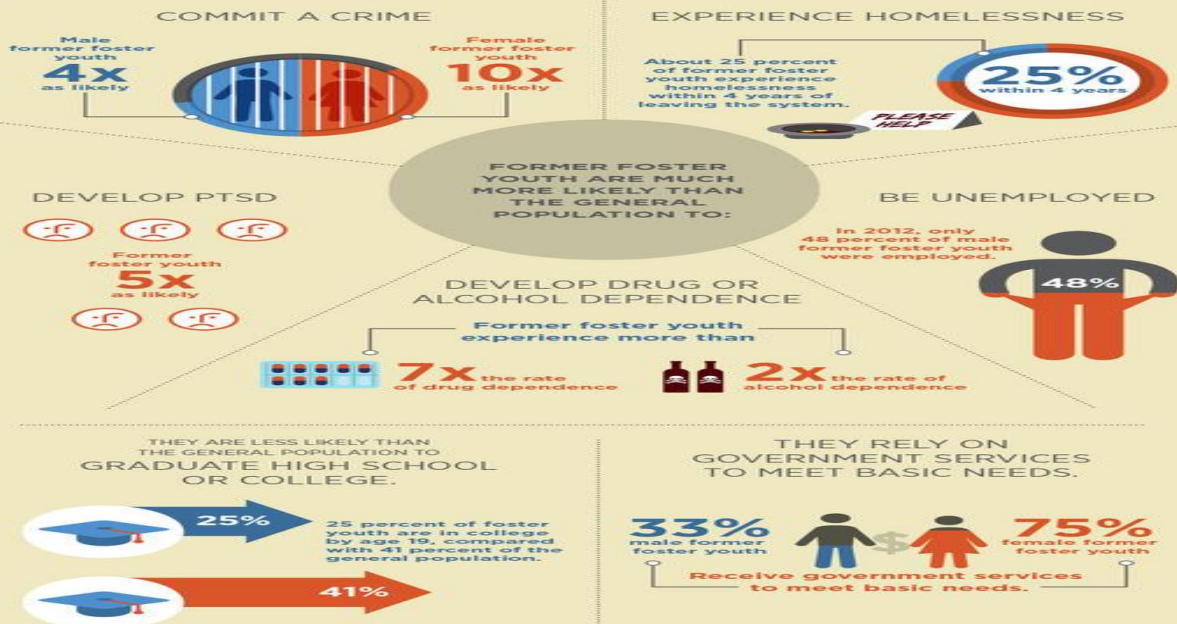


The following is for households with 1 or more unrelated foster children younger than 18.



## POOR OUTCOMES FOR FOSTER YOUTH\*

Unfortunately, former foster youth are much more likely than the general population to fall into adverse circumstances.



# NEWS FROM OUR



MARCH 01, 2016

## FOSTER PARENT SHORTAGES IN THE UNITED STATES

BY LLOYD NELSON, DIGITAL MEDIA MANAGER

**Throughout the United States foster, adoptive and kinship parents take in children who aren't their own in order to shelter and protect them from abuse and neglect. These parents are there for the nearly 400,000 children in the foster care system. But what happens when they're not? Some states are experiencing foster parent shortages right now.**



After several years of decline, the number of children in foster care nationwide has started to rise again.

Beginning in 2013, the number of children in foster care rose to 402,378, or nearly 1 percent, from 397,000 the year prior. That figure increased by 3.5 percent in 2014 to more than 415,000, according to the New York Times.

This increase of children in the foster care system is revealing a shortage of foster parents in some pockets throughout the country. Parts of Massachusetts, Minnesota and California are under a severe strain as they look to find ways to address the issue.

In Massachusetts, the need for foster parent is reflective of a growing population in care.

A 2015 [Milford Daily News](#) article titled “Foster family shortage stretches existing homes thin” outlines how the number of children in care has outpaced the number of foster homes available to take in placements.

“According to Department of Children and Families officials, there are 8,258 children in foster care. At last count on Dec. 31, 2014, there were 5,504 foster homes in the state. Between 2013 and 2014, the number of foster children increased 19 percent, according to DCF quarterly reports. From 2013 until now, the number of ongoing cases has increased 30 percent.”

In California, the shortage of foster families effects several counties and is a result of a myriad of issues, including difficulty recruiting and training potential families. In Los Angeles, the number of beds in homes of foster parents who are unrelated to foster youth has fallen. According to [ProPublica](#), “The [Los Angeles Times](#) has reported that in 2000, there were 22,000 beds – now there are 9,000.”

Unfortunately, there is not one simple reason to explain why some areas of the country are experiencing foster parent shortages while other areas are not. Some places are more directly affected by the influx of children into the foster care system. For example, substance abuse by parents, particularly heroin, is a major reason more children are being placed into the foster care system in states like California and Ohio.

Other regions struggle with recruitment and retention.

Some areas, like Minnesota, are reporting that they are having difficulty recruiting the younger generation to become foster parents, while the older, more veteran foster parents of 25 or 30 years are retiring and closing their homes.

New Jersey also suffered from foster parent shortages before a 1999 lawsuit filed by Children's Rights. The Manhattan-based group accused the state of endangering its foster children with inadequate and substandard care.

Instead of fighting the lawsuit, NJ settled and agreed to sweeping changes that included having enough frontline intake staff to thoroughly investigate allegations of abuse, providing preventative services to be offered to families with the hope of keeping children in their biological homes and requiring a license for foster and adoptive homes.

Since then, NJ's child welfare system has made huge improvements, including in the area of recruiting and retaining foster parents. Now, NJ has approximately 7,500 licensed foster, adoptive and kinship parents compared to the 6,900 children in out-of-home placement.

Child welfare experts stress the importance of strategic recruitment for foster and adoptive parents. While states and private foster care agencies cannot control many of the variables that result in foster parent shortages, they can control how they approach recruitment and retention of local foster and adoptive parents.

According to the "Practitioner's Guide" from AdoptUsKids, it's an imperative agencies approach recruitment with patience, understanding and kindness.

"Foster and adoptive parents are the most important resource we have to give the children we serve," the guide states. "How you treat them will determine whether they stay in the process and, ultimately, become part of your team."

If you live elsewhere in the U.S. and are interested in becoming a foster parent, please search or contact your local foster care agency.