

# Foster Parent Monthly

January 2020

## Greetings from George

We are on the threshold of a brand new year. With all that occurred in 2019, January 1, 2020 will provide us with opportunities to learn from our successes and challenges of the past year while moving forward and accepting whatever the new year will bring.

I do not know about you but I am EXCITED about the chance to touch the lives of others in a way that brings families together, heals traumatic experiences, and work alongside some of the greatest people to include foster/adoptive, kinship parents and community stakeholders. While others are focused on what divides us, here at Rowan County we are focused on what makes us “lovable, capable, and worthwhile. “

We are anticipating a year packed with learning and growing together, expanding the number of our foster/adoptive and kinship families, helping birth families to reunite with their children, providing coping skills to children, families and adult professionals that will help reduce the impact of trauma and secondary stress that we all encounter.

If you know someone who is serious about making a difference in the lives of children, youth and families and wants to be a part of a wonderful team, please refer them to Rowan County Department of Social Services.

We cannot accomplish our goals without YOU! You are the heartbeat that provides us with our life rhythms. Parents, you are the light that brings hope to the dark places of our children’s hearts. You are the breath and driving force that comforts children and families and lets them know things can get better. So what can you do in 2020? You can keep loving, keep nurturing, keep advocating, keep caring, and KEEP FOSTERING.

We thank you for what we collectively accomplished in 2019, but buckle up, “You Haven’t Seen Nothing Yet!”

## Suggestion Box

- Submit ideas for this newsletter & in-service trainings to George. This will also allow us to better serve your family’s needs.
- Want to toot your own horn, another foster parent’s horn, maybe a social worker’s horn? Email George and don’t forget a photo!





## Board Payment Schedule

- December's payment will be mailed on January 24, 2020.
- January's payment will be mailed on February 24, 2020.

## Foster Parent In-Service Training

January 27, 2020- We will have our Foster Parent Planning Meeting to discuss our goals, successes, challenges, tools needed to assist with challenges, trainings, and ideas to accomplish our goals. The meeting will be held at Rowan County DSS from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Please jot down your thoughts and ideas and bring them to the meeting. For child care please email Social Worker Montgomery the age and gender of each child for which care is needed.

**20 hours of continuing foster parent educational training are required every two years for re-licensure.**

## Foster & Adoptive Parent Support Group

January 13, 2020, from 5:30 PM until 8:00 PM, Dinner is served at 5:30 PM. The meeting is held at the Mount Tabor UMC, located at 4520 Old Mocksville Road in Salisbury, and will begin at 6:00 PM. This group is open to only foster and adoptive parents. It is designed for these parents to share ideas and offer support to one another. RSVP if attending. Child care is provided upon request with RSVP. For more information & to RSVP, contact Alyse Breger, the parent facilitator, at 561-289-9952 or email Alyse at [info@fosterloveadoptrepeat.com](mailto:info@fosterloveadoptrepeat.com).

## Foster Parent Recruitment Informational Meeting

- On February 4, 2020, at 5:30 PM, RCDSS will host the Informational Meeting for those in the community interested in becoming licensed foster parents. Please refer interested individuals and families to this meeting.
- We are always in need of quality families interested in making a positive, lifetime impact through fostering. Inform us if you know of a local organization or group that is willing to give us time for a brief presentation.
- **Do you have ideas for Recruitment?** Share your thoughts with: [George.Montgomery@rowancountync.gov](mailto:George.Montgomery@rowancountync.gov), [Nadean.Quarterman@rowancountync.gov](mailto:Nadean.Quarterman@rowancountync.gov), or [Micah.Ennis@rowancountync.gov](mailto:Micah.Ennis@rowancountync.gov).

## LINKS Meeting

- January 15, 2020, from 4:00pm until 5:30pm. The topic will be "You Are The Choices You Make." Please encourage your teenage foster children to attend.

## Happenings at Rowan County DSS

- Rowan County Social Services celebrated the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Adoption Commemoration on November 20, 2019 at the Rowan Museum. Children whose adoptions were finalized from 11-18 to 10-19 were celebrated with their families.

## Thank You!

- To each Adoptive Family for your partnership and *commitment to ensuring permanence for children.*
- To our County and Community Partners for your role in each child's journey.



- To the Rowan Museum for donating the beautiful Messinger Room.
- To Ryan B. Addison, attorney at law, for donating the celebratory cake.
- Davis Law Firm for donating their parking lot for this event.

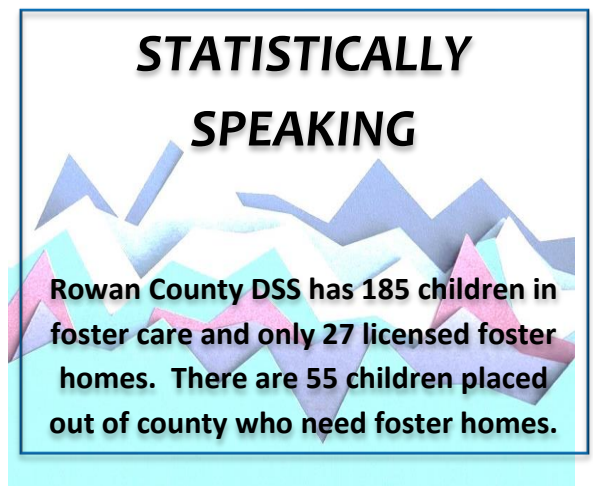


Rowan County also had the annual Foster Family Christmas Party on December 7, 2019. Santa was there giving gifts to every child present and Rowan County DSS Board was there serving lunch. Everyone had a wonderful time. We thank all of our foster families, kinship families and community partners for making it a success.



No more than five children shall reside in any family foster home at any time. These five children include the foster parent's own children and children placed for family foster care.

*Policy Brief*



**STATISTICALLY SPEAKING**

Rowan County DSS has 185 children in foster care and only 27 licensed foster homes. There are 55 children placed out of county who need foster homes.

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### Life Changing New Year Resolutions Every Foster Parent Should Make

by Crystal Killion

Foster parenting is both a worthwhile endeavor and a tough job. Make some resolutions that will make it even more rewarding and life changing in the new year. This is the time of year that many people begin to think about what they want to accomplish in the next year. Lose weight, stop smoking, and spend more frugally. As important as these things are, foster parents have an amazing opportunity to influence others and to make a difference into the next generation and beyond. This year, make some resolutions for the new year that will change lives. In the coming year resolve to ....

**Make a Lasting Bond** with your foster children. Bonding with these kids can be tough. The longer they have been in the system, the harder it will be to bond with them. It may be impossible. However, everyone benefits when you try. Spend time one-on-one, work together on their Lifebook, make it a point to compliment them about something each day, never criticize their birth family, write a short note of encouragement to them or draw a simple picture for a young child. Small things add up to a lot for these children.

**Advocate** for them. As a foster parent, you are with them more than any other person in their life right now. Be their voice with their social workers, therapists, school personnel. Write a letter to the judge who oversees their case and give him or her progress report.

**Take Care of Yourself** Take time for you, your marriage, and your birth/adoptive children. Foster parenting is stressful and often thankless. Taking care of yourself and your family will help to prevent burn-out and, in the long run, help the foster children who come into your home, too.

**Self-Improvement** Make time for self-improvement. Take a college class, learn how to do something you have always wanted to do but didn't, read a novel, join a gym. Children learn by example and your enthusiasm for learning will be contagious.

**Recruit New Foster Families** Recruit another family to become foster parents. According to Family to Family of Orange County California, in an article titled, Background: The Current Challenges of Public Child Welfare, they estimate that over 550,000 children are currently in the foster care system; however, at the same time, they say that only 50% of those children will be placed in foster families due to the low number of foster homes available. When you recruit other loving families for these children, you touch countless lives. Every child deserves a family.

**Be a Mentor** Mentor a new foster parent. You were there once. You know that foster parenting can be a lonely road to travel. Make an effort to connect with another foster family to mentor and to listen.

**Don't Quit** Be committed as long as it takes. Foster children need somebody who won't give up. Resolve to be that person for them.



A graphic with the words "Happy Anniversary" in a large, blue, 3D-style font with a slight shadow underneath.

David & Elizabeth Bowles

2 Years 12/13/17

Michael & Jennifer Coles

4 Years 1/21/16

Destiny Garrard & Whitney Sherrill

2 Years 01/26/18

*Thank you for your commitment to the children of Rowan County!*