



NEWSLETTER

September 2025

Important Announcement Regarding WFAPA's Conference

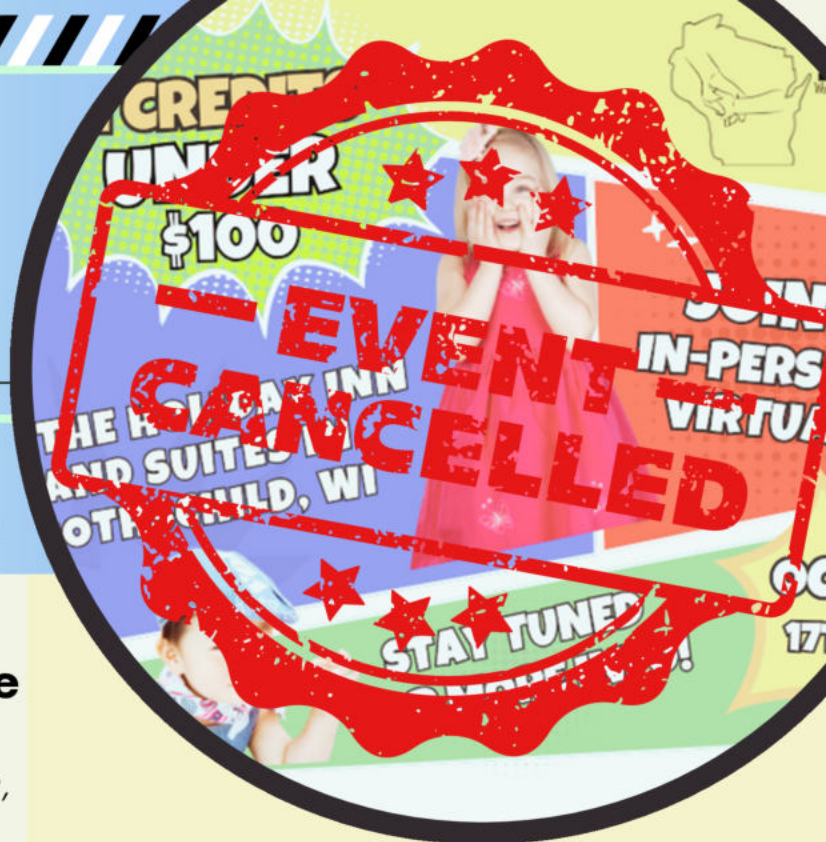
With deep regret, we announce the cancellation of WFAPA's Conference, originally set for October 17-19, 2025. Despite our best efforts and hopeful expectations, unforeseen circumstances have made it unfeasible to proceed with the event. This decision was not taken lightly by WFAPA's Board.

We understand how eager you were to engage with the latest industry trends and network with fellow adoptive, foster, and kinship families and professionals. We sincerely apologize for any disappointment this may cause.

Future Plans and Updates:

- The WFAPA Board is convening regularly and is dedicated to developing new initiatives, including a comprehensive rebranding strategy for the organization.
- Upcoming Events: The WFAPA conference is scheduled to return next fall. Planning efforts are underway to enhance future events, and we look forward to welcoming your participation. We trust this announcement will serve as a point of anticipation.
- Our website is currently undergoing construction, featuring a complete overhaul and fresh new look.
- We ask for your patience as we work on these exciting developments.
- Questions or concerns: Please don't hesitate to reach out to Sherry Benson at misssherry2@yahoo.com. We are committed to addressing any concerns you may have.

Stay tuned for updates and new announcements from us!



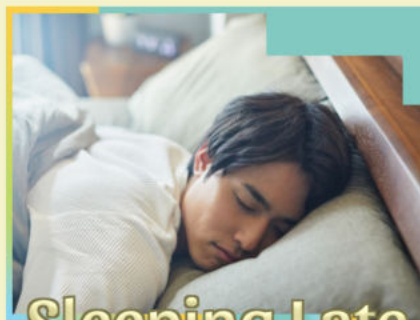
Indigenous Motherhood: Strength, Resilience, and Legacy

Readers, have you ever considered the profound impact of Indigenous motherhood on generations? It's not just about nurturing children; it's about carrying the torch of culture, tradition, and resilience through time. Indigenous mothers are the heart and soul of their communities, embodying strength, wisdom, and an unwavering connection to their ancestral lands. Their journey is one of profound beauty, sacrifice, and an unyielding spirit that has shaped the very fabric of Indigenous societies for centuries.

The Tapestry of Indigenous Motherhood

Indigenous motherhood encompasses more than the biological act of giving birth; it's a sacred responsibility woven into the very essence of their cultures. It's about preserving traditions, teaching language, and instilling a deep sense of belonging.

Continued on page 6



Did You Know?

Sleeping Late Is Normal!

Getting 9-10 hours of sleep per night during adolescence is crucial to promote patience, stable moods and impulse control.

Oh, Jerry, Dear Jerry...



We will sincerely miss your generous nature, contagious laughter, and playful spirit. Our gratitude for your years of dedication and hard work at WFAPA is immeasurable. May your new adventures be filled with joy and excitement!

THANK YOU

How To Support Teens Impacted By A Loved One's Substance Use Disorder

1. LISTEN

- Impacted teens often feel like their emotions are a burden or fear getting in trouble for speaking up.
- Offer time and a safe, confidential space to share.
- Remind them their feelings matter and are not too much.
- Use nonjudgmental language — e.g.: say "a person struggling" instead of "addict".



2. EDUCATE

Teens are smart and may sense a lot, but they may not fully understand substance use disorder or how recovery works.

- Let them know they are not alone — many families go through this.
- Reassure them it is not their fault and they cannot fix it.
- Share that this is a disease, not a moral failure.
- Normalize talking about feelings with safe people.
- Remind them recovery is possible and help is real.
- Teach what healthy boundaries look like.
- Validate that it is okay to love someone and still be angry.
- Inspire them to choose their own future — their story can be different.

3. SUPPORT

Teens need more than awareness — they need tools to stay safe and emotionally grounded.

- Help them name and express feelings without shame.
- Work with them to identify safe people and places.
- Encourage activities that bring joy and self-care, even in hard times.
- Empower teens to focus on what they can control and let go of the rest.
- Keep hope alive — remind them that healing and stability are possible.

Created by: The National Alliance For Drug Endangered Children and in partnership with: Lindsey Chadwick, LPC Chadwick Family Therapy & Consulting

https://www.nationaldec.org/_files/ugd/3896cf_aeb907504f0f410e901989f092b4c524.pdf

How Teens May Be Impacted By A Loved One's Substance Abuse Disorder



INCREASED AWARENESS

Heightened awareness of the signs of intoxication. They can see and sense more of the family dynamics.



SECRET KEEPING

Teens may be forced to keep a loved one's substance use disorder a secret, either from other family members or their community



PARENTIFICATION

Often forced to care for parents or younger siblings beyond a reasonable amount. This leads to them neglecting their own needs.



LOW SELF-ESTEEM

Familial dysfunction and substance use at home can damage a teen's self-esteem drastically, making them feel a lack of control, and different than peers.



INCREASED EXPOSURE

Teens are at a bigger risk of developing a substance use disorder themselves when a family member has struggled. This is due to genetic components but also the exposure and accessibility of drugs and alcohol in the home.



OTHER SUD IMPACT

Substance use disorder can often cause a loved one's incarceration, financial concerns, and safety concerns. Minorities are disproportionately affected in terms of socio-economic status, incarceration and caring duties.

Created by: The National Alliance For Drug Endangered Children and in partnership with: Lindsey Chadwick, LPC Chadwick Family Therapy & Consulting

https://www.nationaldec.org/_files/ugd/3896cf_aeb907504f0f410e901989f092b4c524.pdf

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Rock County Foster Care Conference

This training is FREE for licensed foster parents!

Registration opens September 2nd!

Look below for information on booking a hotel room!

Date & Time
November 15, 2025
 Starts at 08.30am
 Ends at 4.00pm

Location
1717 Center Ave. Janesville, WI 53546

Hotel Information:
 For our out of county attendees Rock County has two hotel blocks booked. Information on how to reserve is below. To receive the rates below you must reserve your room before **October 14th 2025.**

AmericInn by Wyndham of Janesville WI
 \$93.50 per night plus taxes and fees.
 Book @ AmericInn By Wyndham of Janesville, WI
 or call the hotel directly at (608) 756-4511.
 using the group code RCFC.

Tru by Hilton Janesville
 \$110 per night plus taxes and fees.
 Book @ Tru by Hilton Janesville

Keynote Speaker
Emi Nietfeld
 THE AUTHOR OF
 "ACCEPTANCE"

Get 8 hours of on-going training!

There will be breakout sessions with varying topics you'll get to choose from, some topics include:

- Parenting Strategies
- Online Safety for Children
- Stress Management
- Connections

Registration opens on September 2nd 2025 and closes on October 17th 2025

Presented by Rock County HSD Foster Care Team

The Third Annual Rock County Foster Parent conference promises to be both informative and engaging for all attendees.

Our day will kick off at 8:30 a.m. with check-in and morning refreshments. The Welcome and Opening Remarks will be given by Shelby Shelton, CPS Lead Supervisor. There will be a conference icebreaker for all attendees. We are pleased to welcome Emi Nietfeld as our morning keynote speaker. Emi is a Harvard graduate, software engineer, journalist, public speaker, and award-winning author! Her memoir, *Acceptance*, tells her personal journey of her time in foster care and periods of homelessness. She will speak on the true meaning of Resilience.

There will be opportunities for small breakout sessions during the day; covering topics such as internet safety, first aid/cpr, managing risky behaviors, LGBTQIA+, and stress management. Attendees will be able to rank their preferred breakout sessions. Lunch will be catered by Hacienda Real of Janesville!

Our closing keynote will be given by Patricia Carroll, UW Extension, Associate Professor in the Department of Family Development. She specializes in Human Development and Relationships. Professor Carroll will speak on The Importance of Parental Confidence.

The conference is a great opportunity to obtain 8 hours of training credit, network with other foster parents, and gain insights from experts in the field. For a complete listing of Regional Events and Support Groups, please visit [the Wisconsin Family Connections Center Eventbrite Page](#).

Healing Centered Families 2025

A free annual conference for guardians, adoptive parents, foster parents, reunified parents, and any family on the path to permanency.

Saturday, November 15, 2025
8:15 AM– 4:45PM

Chula Vista Resort, Wisconsin Dells
 Dynamic speakers & presenters Connection with other caregivers
 Resource Room 6.0 Credits

Registration opens October 1, 2025

<https://hcf2025.eventbrite.com>



Woo-hoo!

We are thrilled to announce that our website is undergoing a significant transformation! We are working diligently to enhance our platform to better serve you with several significant upgrades, including:

- A refreshed design
- Enhanced functionality
- New features added



As WFAPA's Board continues to meet, we are anticipating continually adding new elements. With ongoing research and development, we are hoping for our site to be fully functioning within a year.

Be on the lookout as we continually add new elements!

Exciting Website Revamp Ahead!

During this construction phase, some elements may be a little off.

We appreciate your understanding and patience as we make these improvements.



2025-2027 State Budget: Our Final Take

by Kids Forward | August 13, 2025

On July 3, 2025, Governor Evers signed the 2025-2027 State Budget. Ultimately this budget doesn't go nearly far enough to address the everyday struggles of Wisconsin families, especially families of color and those furthest from opportunity. But there were a few bright spots.

Bipartisan negotiations—a rare occurrence in today's political climate—helped to shore up Wisconsin's Medicaid budget for the near future and temporarily stabilize the child care industry. The Governor's line item veto boldly caps the amount counties need to pay to place their kids in state facilities. This continues to push legislators toward closing Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake schools—Wisconsin's largest youth prisons—which advocates and families have been calling for for years.

Below we compare the Governor's originally proposed budget to the final version.

Few Wins for Early Care and Education

Child care remains unaffordable and unavailable for too many working families. Child care staff continue to be severely underpaid and this critical industry sits on the verge of collapse. While this year's state budget delays this crisis somewhat, it certainly doesn't solve it. Despite the Governor designating 2025 as the "Year of the Kid", the budget resulted in a very mixed result for child care in our state.

The Governor's most significant ask was \$440 million in state funds for Child Care Counts (the successful program that supports our state's child care workforce and increases available and affordable child care for Wisconsin families). This would have been a permanent line item in the budget. That didn't happen. The final amount was one quarter of that, at \$110 million. Called the "Child Care Bridge

Payments Program," it will only continue through the first year of the biennium, ending in June 2026. And no state revenue was allocated. All of the \$110 million comes from interest earned from federal COVID response funds. The legislature choosing to allocate one-time funding that will be spent by the end of the first fiscal year may demonstrate a lack of commitment to long-term support for child care in Wisconsin.

What did we get instead?

Item in Governor's Proposed Budget

- Provide \$440M in **state funds for Child Care Counts**.

Included in the final budget?

- Only \$110M from **federal sources** 😞

Item in Governor's Proposed Budget

Raise Wisconsin Shares reimbursement rates—our child care subsidy program for low income working families—to the 75th percentile. Wisconsin has dropped to 48th out of 50 states because of our inadequate reimbursement rates. This will help reduce the burden of parent co-pays and make it more affordable and accessible.

Included in the final budget?

- \$123 million in **federal funds** 😊

Item in Governor's Proposed Budget

- Launch the "Get Kids Ready" initiative, a public Pre-K program for 4-year-olds in child care (starting in 2026). It will make history as our first fully state-funded child care program.

Included in the final budget?

- \$66 million in **state funds** 😊

Item in Governor's Proposed Budget

- Fund a new employer grant program to **offer on-site childcare** and other family supporting services to employees.

Included in the final budget?

- Not included 😞

Item in Governor's Proposed Budget

- **Increase toddler group sizes and ratios for Wisconsin Shares providers by offering \$200 per infant per month and \$100 per toddler per month on subsidy** if the provider agrees to increase ratios. This change would theoretically add more openings for families with infants and toddlers.

Included in the final budget?

- \$28.5 million in **federal funds** 😊

Increasing Teacher/Child Care Ratios Helps No One

Research shows that expecting teachers to care for more children increases teacher stress, burnout, turnover and negatively impacts child safety. This can also lead to higher insurance costs for providers, which paradoxically raises prices for parents. And increasing ratios also means reduced responsiveness from caregivers, greater safety and supervision risks, and worse developmental outcomes for children. The solution is investing in our youngest Wisconsinites, as quality early childhood education is essential to healthy development and leads to lifelong benefits.

*\$110 million of federal funding was included for the "Child Care Bridge Payments Program". This will only continue through the first year of the biennium, ending in June, 2026.

State Budget Deal Delays Impending Child Care Crisis, But Won't Solve It

by Kids Forward | July 1, 2025

With just a few short weeks until critical child care funds dry up, Kids Forward is cautiously optimistic about the Republican Leadership and Governor Evers' bipartisan budget deal that continues some public support for child care in the 2025-27 state budget.

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Sponsors
Welcome

Join Us As A Sponsor Today

Empowering Foster and Adoptive Families: Join Our Mission as a WFAPA Sponsor!

WFAPA is committed to supporting, advocating, and providing resources for foster and adoptive families across the country. We are proud of the progress we have made so far, but we know that our work is far from over. With the help of supporters like you, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of these families.

As we continue our journey, we invite you to consider becoming a sponsor of WFAPA. With a one-time yearly donation of \$300.00 or a monthly donation of \$25.00 for one year, you can help us achieve our goals. Plus, since we are a 501(3)(C), your donation is tax deductible.

By becoming a sponsor, your company can benefit from the

positive publicity of supporting our mission and organization. We also help promote your business on various platforms such as:

- Our website, www.wfapa.org.
- Our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/wfapa.
- Social media.
- Our quarterly newsletters.
- Our Spring and Fall Conferences.

If your company is interested in joining our cause, please reach out to us. For more information, visit our website at www.wfapa.org, select 'Support Our Work', and then click on 'Sponsors'.



Live Webinar—Inherited Wounds:

The Legacy of Trauma and Adoption Across Generations

Tuesday, October 28, 2025 | 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

How does trauma pass from one generation to the next, and what does that mean for caregivers? In this compassionate webinar, licensed clinical social worker and adoptee Amy Wilkerson explores the impact of generational trauma within families. Join us to learn how personal and family histories shape our caregiving, how to stay curious about your family's story, and ways to care for each person in the family while the family heals and grows. Walk away with practical tools to break cycles, build connections, and honor the experiences of the children in your care.

Presented by: Amy Wilkerson, transracial and international adoptee, licensed independent clinical social worker in private practice

Free | Registration is limited to 500 participants

Register for the live webinar by clicking [here](#)!

Licensed foster parents will receive 2.0 training credits for participation in this webinar. Each individual participant must register separately in order to receive credit.

Questions? Call us at 1-800-762-8063 or email info@wifamilyconnectionscenter.org



Save the Dates!

You spoke. We listened.



Families Like Mine has a whole new look this year!



Join us at one of three regional events across Wisconsin—bringing resources and connections to relative and like-kin caregivers like you!

- **December 6, 2025**, at the Coalition for Children, Youth & Families in Milwaukee
- **May 16, 2026**, in Rhinelander (location to be determined)
- **June 6, 2026**, at the Henry Vilas Zoo in Madison

Each event will:

- Feature regional and state-wide vendors that support relative and like-kin caregiving families
- Provide opportunities to connect with experienced relative and like-kin caregivers to build support and connection
- Offer a family activity for relative and like-kin caregivers to bond with the children in their care



More details about each event will be coming soon!

Thank You To Our Sponsors!

Your generous sponsorship has not only supported our project, but it has also shown your belief in our mission. Thank you for being an integral part of our success.

KERRY

Kerry-Owen We are from food, for food. We are Kerry

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 **Family Works Programs, Inc.**

Continued from front page - Indigenous Motherhood: Strength, Resilience, and Legacy

Motherhood is a vital thread that binds Indigenous communities together, ensuring the continuation of their cultural heritage and spiritual connection to the earth.

The Power of Intergenerational Bonds

Indigenous mothers are the keepers of knowledge, passing down wisdom from their ancestors to their children and grandchildren. These intergenerational bonds are vital for preserving traditional practices, languages, and stories that have sustained Indigenous communities for generations. Storytelling, song, and dance are powerful tools used to connect past, present, and future, fostering a sense of continuity and identity.

Navigating Challenges with Resilience

The journey of Indigenous motherhood is not without its challenges. Generations of Indigenous mothers have faced colonization, assimilation, and discrimination, yet they have persevered with remarkable resilience. They have fought to protect their children and their cultures, often in the face of immense adversity. Their strength and determination are a testament to their unwavering commitment to their families and communities.

The Legacy of Indigenous Motherhood

The legacy of Indigenous motherhood is one of enduring strength, resilience, and the unwavering spirit that has shaped Indigenous communities. Their voices are powerful reminders of the importance of cultural preservation, environmental stewardship, and the interconnectedness of all living things. By celebrating their stories, we honor their contributions and learn from their wisdom, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Indigenous cultures.

Understanding the Significance of Indigenous Motherhood

The Importance of Cultural Preservation

Indigenous mothers play a vital role in preserving their cultures, languages, and traditions. They are the keepers of ancient knowledge passed down through generations, ensuring the continuity of their heritage. Through storytelling, ceremonies, and traditional practices, Indigenous mothers instill a deep sense of cultural identity in their children, fostering a connection to their ancestors and their ancestral lands.

The Connection to Land and Spirit
Indigenous motherhood is intricately intertwined with the land. For Indigenous communities, the land is not just a resource; it's a sacred entity that sustains their existence. Indigenous mothers teach their children to respect the land, honoring its natural rhythms and the interconnectedness of all living things. This connection to the land is essential for their physical and spiritual well-being.

The Power of Community

Indigenous mothers are the heart of their communities, providing support and guidance to each other. They share knowledge, resources, and childcare responsibilities, creating a strong sense of unity and collective resilience. The concept of "it takes a village" is deeply ingrained in Indigenous cultures, highlighting the importance of community support in raising children.

The Impact of Colonization on Indigenous Motherhood

Colonization has had a devastating impact on Indigenous communities and has significantly affected Indigenous motherhood. Policies designed to assimilate Indigenous peoples, such as residential schools, have severed intergenerational bonds, disrupted traditional practices, and inflicted trauma on generations. This has led to a loss of cultural identity, language, and connection to the land, impacting Indigenous mothers and their ability to raise their children in their traditional ways.

The Resilience of Indigenous Mothers

Despite the challenges they have faced, Indigenous mothers have demonstrated remarkable resilience. They have fought to protect their children, their cultures, and their rights. They have overcome immense adversity, advocating for self-determination and the right to raise their children according to their own traditions. Their stories of resilience inspire hope and provide a powerful example of the strength of the human spirit.

The Importance of Healing and Reconciliation

Healing from the legacy of colonization is crucial for Indigenous communities and for Indigenous mothers. It's essential to address the intergenerational trauma caused by colonization by fostering cultural revitalization, supporting Indigenous languages, and promoting self-determination. This healing process is essential for Indigenous mothers to fully embrace their roles as cultural carriers and to create a brighter future for their children.

Celebrating Indigenous Motherhood
Celebrating Indigenous motherhood is vital for honoring the strength, resilience, and legacy of Indigenous women. It involves recognizing their contributions to their communities and their cultures, and appreciating the unique challenges and triumphs they have faced. It also means:

- Supporting organizations and initiatives that promote Indigenous cultural revitalization.
- Learning about Indigenous cultures and perspectives.
- Amplifying the voices of Indigenous mothers and their stories.
- Creating a world where Indigenous mothers and their children can thrive.

FAQ about Indigenous Motherhood What are some of the unique challenges Indigenous mothers face?

Indigenous mothers face various unique challenges due to colonization and ongoing systemic inequities. They may struggle with accessing culturally relevant healthcare, education, and resources. They may also experience discrimination and racism, making it difficult to navigate societal systems and advocate for their rights. Moreover, many Indigenous mothers face a loss of cultural identity and language, making it challenging to pass on their traditions to their children.

How can I support Indigenous mothers and their communities?

Supporting Indigenous mothers and their communities involves taking action to dismantle ongoing structures of oppression and advocate for their rights. You can support Indigenous organizations working to address social inequities, learn about Indigenous cultures and perspectives, and amplify the voices of Indigenous mothers. By taking action, you can create a more just and equitable world for Indigenous mothers and their children.

What are some positive examples of Indigenous mothers advocating for change?

There are countless positive examples of Indigenous mothers advocating for change and promoting self-determination. They are leading movements for cultural revitalization, language preservation, and the protection of their ancestral lands. They are also advocating for access to culturally relevant healthcare, education, and resources. By shining a light on their efforts, we can learn from their resilience and contribute to their work.



Continued on page 13

TIPS & SCRIPTS

WHEN SUPPORTING YOUTH DURING A TRAUMATIC EVENT



Get on their Level

Kneel or sit to be at their eye level, helping youth to feel seen and understood.

- "I'm right here with you. Let's sit together."



Create a Safer Space

Ensure physical and emotional safety by being a calm, reassuring presence, and connecting the child with trusted adults.

- "You're safe now. I'm here, and I won't let anything happen to you."



Encourage Expression

Offer creative outlets like drawing, writing, playdough, building blocks, or playing to help process emotions.

- Sometimes it helps to let our feelings out in different ways. We can draw a picture, write about it, talk, or play. What would you like to try?"



Keep a Neutral Position

Maintain a neutral position when speaking of individuals who may have caused the traumatic event and avoid stigmatizing language, such as "addict".

- "_____ has been struggling with substance misuse. Drugs and alcohol change the way our brains & body work, so it can be harder to make good choices."



Limit Distressing Information

Distract youth from upsetting media, overly detailed information, or adult conversations about the event.

- "We don't need to worry about all the details right now. Let's focus on some things that we can use to calm our senses." (Offer water, snack, mint, something sensory, or focus on calming observations)



Listen & Validate

Invite youth to share feelings and acknowledge their emotions without judgment.

- "It's okay to feel scared or sad. I'm here to listen if you want to talk about it."
- "I believe you and I'm here to support you."



Remember:

- Reassure youth it is not their fault.
- Welcome questions LISTEN!
- LISTEN! LISTEN!



Provide Honest Reassurance

Use simple, age-appropriate language to explain what's happening and avoid making promises.

- "Sometimes things happen that feel confusing or scary. We are safe now and I'm going to sit with you until _____ arrives."

This is a collaborative resource developed by National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children (DEC) and the Eluna Resource Center



eluna
RESOURCE CENTER

https://www.nationaldec.org/_files/ugd/3896cf_d435a2f0f8f04277b65b7d5e49218bf3.pdf

Money Geek has created a finance guide intended to provide information for a range of situations, such as transitioning into adulthood, deciding whether to refinance a home loan, or choosing between paying down student loans or credit cards.

The guide aims to support informed decision-making by offering in-depth explanations on financial topics, step-by-step instructions, checklists, and calculators designed to clarify numerical information in understandable terms.

Check out www.moneygeek.com/resources/



FIND YOUR FINANCIAL HAPPY PLACE

WFAPA's Board of Directors

President

Tina Christopherson
Tel: 715-938-6667
E: twfapa@new.rr.com

Vice President

Sherry Benson
Tel: 715-923-1124
E: misssherry2@yahoo.com

Secretary

Michelle Ward
Tel: 920-922-3824
E: twowards@charter.net

Treasurer

Sherry Benson
Tel: 715-923-1124
E: misssherry2@yahoo.com

Activity Chair

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Tel: 715-816-4152
E: lthorssen@gmail.com

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Tel: 608- 238-3710
E: carbino@wisc.edu

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E: tagun64@gmail.com

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Tel: (920) 922-9627

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Larry Ward
Tel: 920-922-3824
E: twowards@charter.net

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Caitlyn Huls
E: hulsca@medford.k12.wi.us

Grant Writer Chair

Caitlyn Huls
E: hulsca@medford.k12.wi.us

Hospitality Chair

Melinda Kasch
Tel: 262-707-5527
E: mkasch@wi.rr.com

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Membership Chair

Michelle Ward
Tel: 920-922-3824
E: twowards@charter.net

Newsletter Chair

Tammy Boettcher
Tel: 715-330-2291
E: boettcher_tammy@yahoo.com

Partnership Chair

Vacant

Social Worker Liason

Sherry Benson
Tel: 715-923-1124
E: misssherry2@yahoo.com

Technical Advisor

Larry Ward
Tel: 920-922-3824
E: twowards@charter.net

Website Manager

Tammy Boettcher
Tel: 715-330-2291
E: boettcher_tammy@yahoo.com

Website Designer

Brittany Stuart



How to Develop Critical Thinking Skills in Young Children: A Comprehensive Guide



Critical thinking is a vital skill for success in the 21st century. It helps children analyze information, solve problems, and make informed decisions. According to a 2024 study by the American Psychological Association, children who develop critical thinking skills early perform better academically and socially.

However, fostering these skills in young children requires intentional effort. This blog post will explore practical strategies to help your child think critically. From encouraging curiosity to teaching problem-solving, we'll cover everything you need to know.

Why Critical Thinking Matters for Young Children

Critical thinking is more than just a buzzword. It's a foundational skill that impacts every aspect of a child's life. Research from Harvard University shows that children with strong critical thinking skills are 30% more likely to excel in STEM subjects.

Additionally, these children are better at handling conflicts and adapting to new situations. By nurturing critical thinking early, you're setting your child up for lifelong success.

How to Encourage Curiosity in Young Children

Curiosity is the cornerstone of critical thinking. When children ask questions, they're actively engaging with the world around them. Here's how you can foster curiosity:

1. **Ask Open-Ended Questions:** Instead of yes/no questions, ask "What do you think will happen if...?"
2. **Explore Nature:** Take your child on nature walks and encourage them to observe and ask questions.
3. **Provide Hands-On Activities:** Use experiments or building blocks to spark their interest.

According to a 2023 study by the University of Chicago, children who engage in hands-on learning are 40% more likely to develop critical thinking skills.

Teaching Problem-Solving Skills

Problem-solving is a key component of critical thinking. Here's how you can teach it effectively:

- **Break Problems into Smaller Steps:** Help your child tackle challenges one step at a time.
- **Encourage Trial and Error:** Let them experiment and learn from mistakes.
- **Use Real-Life Scenarios:** Discuss everyday problems and brainstorm solutions together.

A 2024 report by the National Association for the Education of Young Children highlights that problem-solving activities improve cognitive flexibility in children.

The Role of Play in Developing Critical Thinking

Play is not just fun; it's a powerful learning tool. According to a 2023 study by the LEGO Foundation, children who engage in imaginative play show a 25% increase in critical thinking abilities.

Here are some play-based activities to try:

- **Puzzle Games:** These enhance logical reasoning and patience.
- **Role-Playing:** Encourage your child to act out different scenarios.
- **Building Blocks:** These promote spatial awareness and creativity.

How to Foster Independent Thinking

Independent thinking is crucial for critical thinking.

Here's how to nurture it:

1. **Encourage Decision-Making:** Let your child make small decisions, like choosing their clothes.
2. **Avoid Over-Directing:** Allow them to explore solutions on their own.
3. **Praise Effort, Not Just Results:** Focus on their thought process rather than the outcome.

A 2024 study by Stanford University found that children who practice

independent thinking are more confident and resilient.

Using Stories to Develop Critical Thinking

Stories are a great way to engage young minds. They help children understand different perspectives and think critically about characters' actions.

- **Discuss Moral Dilemmas:** Ask questions like, "What would you do in this situation?"
- **Analyze Characters:** Encourage your child to think about why characters behave a certain way.
- **Predict Outcomes:** Have them guess what might happen next in the story.

According to a 2023 study by the University of Cambridge, storytelling improves children's analytical skills by 20%.

The Importance of Modeling Critical Thinking

Children learn by observing adults. When you demonstrate critical thinking, they're more likely to adopt it.

- **Think Aloud:** Share your thought process when solving problems

1. **Admit Mistakes:** Show that it's okay to be wrong and learn from errors.
2. **Ask for Their Opinion:** Involve them in family decisions to practice critical thinking.

Conclusion

Developing critical thinking skills in young children is a rewarding journey. By encouraging curiosity, teaching problem-solving, and using play and stories, you can set your child up for success. Remember, it's never too early to start.

Article written by: Loretta Smith and published on March 20, 2025 in Early Education on Dldxedu.com. Dldxedu.com stands at the forefront of this educational revolution, offering a diverse range of resources, insights, and tools to empower minds and foster lifelong learning. <https://dldxedu.com/early-education/how-to-develop-critical-thinking-skills-in-young-children/>

This Wisconsin summer camp reunites foster kids with their biological siblings

For the past two years during a week in the summer, a Wisconsin high school student drives to meet someone she doesn't get to see often: her sister.

Like many foster children, this young girl was separated from her biological sibling.

But in the rolling hills of eastern Wisconsin at a summer camp called Belong Wisconsin, a reunification week happens for dozens of Wisconsin foster youth and their biological siblings.

"We have the bunk beds. But she doesn't sleep on the top bunk where she's supposed

to. She sleeps in my bed," the high schooler told WPR's "[Wisconsin Today](#)." "I enjoy it because I know she loves me. It's just all out of love."

About 7,000 children are in foster care in Wisconsin at any given time. National organizations estimate between 50 and 80 percent of siblings who enter the system are separated from each other.

Belong Wisconsin started 10 years ago. Each summer, foster youth and their biological siblings from all around the state meet at Camp Anokijig, a 450-acre, century-old camp set on Little Elkhart Lake.



"Wisconsin Today" visited the camp in August and is not using the children's names for their privacy.

"They run to each other. They jump out of the car. Some of them will refuse to get out of their vehicle until they see their sibling's vehicle pull up," said Eshalon Mayer, Belong Wisconsin's executive director.

Each day brings a set of activities like horseback riding, tie-dyeing and, of course, roasting marshmallows around a giant campfire.

Continued on page 10

How to Help Kids Learn to Fail

What You'll Learn

- Why is it important for kids to fail?
- How can you teach your kids to bounce back from failure?
- What should you do if your child is anxious about failing?

Parents tend to see their mission as helping their kids succeed. But there's a growing realization among teachers and other professionals who work with children that kids increasingly need help learning how to fail.

Not learning to tolerate failure leaves kids vulnerable to anxiety. It leads to meltdowns when the inevitable failure does occur, whether it happens in preschool or college. And perhaps even more important, it can make kids give up trying — or trying new things.

That's why Michael Jordan, one of the world's greatest athletes, has spent years preaching the importance of losing. Jordan has spoken extensively about how perseverance and resilience in the face of challenges on and off the court are what have made him a winner.

Unfortunately, as the world puts increased pressure on kids to be winners, and parents feel compelled to enable them in every way possible, we're seeing more and more kids who become distraught over even the smallest misstep.

Take Sara's son John, who started taking piano lessons at 6. "Every time he played a wrong note he would pick up the music booklet and hit himself on the head with it!" she says. "His piano teacher said she'd never seen a kid who was so hard on himself. I told him when he made a mistake to treat himself the way he'd treat his younger cousin, that no one can learn if someone's being mean to them, and that he wasn't allowed to be mean to himself."

When Alicia's daughter Sara was 14, she became so distraught over not getting into a selective high school, while friends did, she began to self-harm. "It was so terrible: the pressure, the disappointment," says Alicia.

Clearly, distress or frustration tolerance is an important life skill to master. When it comes to school, "the ability to tolerate imperfection — that something is not going exactly your way — is oftentimes

more important to learn than whatever the content subject is," says Amanda Mintzer, PsyD, a clinical psychologist. "Building that skill set is necessary for kids to be able to become more independent and succeed in future endeavors, whether it's personal goals, academic goals, or just learning how to effectively deal with other people."

So how do parents teach kids to fail? Dr. Mintzer offers a multistep process:

First, show empathy

Empathize with your child; see that they're in distress. "Don't just say, 'It's okay, you'll do better next time,'" Dr. Mintzer says. "It's invalidating to brush off a child's feelings of frustration and disappointment." Instead, parents need to change their language: "I see you're really disappointed, I know you really wanted to do better."

Make yourself a model

You can explain that failure is a part of life and happens to everyone, even you. You could share examples of "failures" you've had. "Parents can model how to handle their own disappointment," such as losing out on a promotion at work, Dr. Mintzer says. "Kids aren't necessarily exposed to the reality that life includes mistakes, missteps, and even failures. As much as everyone likes things to go according to plan, it's important to teach our children that it is also okay when they don't."

Make it a teachable moment

A child's failure is a chance for parents to teach acceptance and problem-solving skills. You and your child can try to come up with what they could do the next time for a better chance at success. For instance, could they study differently or talk to the teacher about any problems they're having before a test?

"It's a balance of acceptance and change," Dr. Mintzer says. "It's about accepting that the situation is what it is and building frustration tolerance while also asking, 'Can we change something in the future. Can we learn from this?'"

The minefield of social media

At the same time, kids need to know that sometimes when we fail or face disappointment, there's not a lot we can do about it in that moment; we have to accept it as a part of life and move on. Dr. Mintzer notes as an example the minefield that is social media.

Only through trial and error can children become resilient adults

Say your child's friends say they can't hang out and then your kid sees them all together in a social post.

"That really hurts,"

Dr. Mintzer says.

"There are lots of emotions: frustration, disappointment, sadness, anger. How do they deal with that? Calling friends and screaming at them only makes things worse. They could ignore it and pretend they never saw, but that's not going to make them feel better or change what happens in the future."



So how can a parent help them accept what happened? The child might be able to get more information to make themselves feel better. Perhaps they can talk to these kids in a calm way, telling them that they saw the photos and their feelings were hurt. Maybe they'll discover a reason behind it. But they may not get an answer they like, or get one at all.

That leads to another life lesson: Sometimes we get left out, sometimes we aren't liked, and we have to learn to cope with that truth without making the situation worse. Dr. Mintzer notes, "A lot of these skills are needed for interpersonal relationships."

Step back and allow kids to fail

It can be very tough to watch your child fall down but they can only learn how to handle disappointment through trial and error. As books like The Blessings of a Skinned Knee and Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed emphasize, parents must stop hovering. Otherwise, they rob children of the very experiences that require problem-solving and set them on the path to resilience and the confidence to take on new challenges.

Therapy can help

If a child can't function because of a fear of failure, therapy may be called for. Even if a child doesn't have an anxiety diagnosis, they may be frozen with anxiety. When that happens, Dr. Mintzer says, with what's called exposure therapy, "we slowly expose them to things that aren't perfect."

For instance, parents will complain that homework takes forever because a child will repeatedly rip it up and start over.

Continued on page 11



Showcase WFAPA's Foster Care Quilt

This project is dedicated to all the children who have suffered from abuse and neglect. The last block is left blank to remember these children who have suffered and died; those not protected by the system.

One thing led to another, and we felt there needed to be an awareness to the multitude of children brought into the system, some background of how they came into the system and their experiences while in the system. Each county in the State of Wisconsin was asked if there was a child in care that would be willing to create a drawing and write a small story about

their life in foster care.

As you read their stories, you will find that some are compelling, some of success, some of heartbreak, some are on-going, but all are children wanting a good home, to be loved, and to know there is someone who cares just for them. All of the stories share the turmoil, the uncertainty, and obstacles the children, birth families and some foster/adoptive families encounter. This made the "Tumbling Block", the quilt block of choice for this project.

We owe them as a society, as human beings, to care for these children-sooner than later. The system statistics of successes seem to be inconsistent with the stories told here. Please contact your State Senator, Representatives, the Governor and local government to seek needed reforms and guidelines to make true

success stories.

There are over a half million children every day in foster care in the United States finding shelter from abuse. There are many, many children waiting for a loving, safe family to call their own. Please consider opening your heart and home.

If you or your organization would like to borrow the quilt and the stories that go along with it for a display, please contact: WFAPA Public Relation's Chair, Melinda Kasch, 8912 Sadler Dr., Wind Lake, WI 53185. Phone: (262) 895-2652 Email: mkasch@wi.rr.com. The quilt will be sent to you free of charge with return postage included.



Continued from page- 08 This Wisconsin summer camp reunites foster kids with their biological siblings

The siblings sleep in their wooden bunk beds inside cabins. They even make pillows for each other with personal messages to read throughout the year to come.

One middle school boy who attended camp learned this year that his brother loves to dance.



"He never really dances in public. He knows here no one's going to make fun of him," the boy said. "No one's going to be, like, mad or laugh at him. So, it's really cool seeing him go out of his shell."

Next year, another one of his siblings he doesn't get to see often is potentially attending the camp. The boy said he looks forward to this camp all year long and only wishes it would go on for the entire summer. He doesn't even mind sleeping in the rustic cabins with no running water.

Campers and counselors described the week as therapeutic, fun and memorable as they were serenaded by cicadas.

The high schooler, who someday wants to be a politician to change laws for foster youth, said being without her sister is like living without a kidney.

"Like you have two kidneys and you can live with one," she said. "But it just feels odd. It feels strange. It hurts, like physically and emotionally. It hurts."

The camp, however, faces funding uncertainty.

We have no idea how we're funding next year'

This summer, 42 campers attended Belong Wisconsin's sibling camp.

The cost is about \$2,000 per camper. The camp charges \$500 if families can afford it. If not, campers can come for free.

Mayer said Belong Wisconsin will not turn away a child because of cost. The camp gathers donations, and counselors work for free.

Research shows keeping biological siblings together in foster care is beneficial. And in Wisconsin, the law requires state agencies to make reasonable efforts to place siblings together.

But it's not always possible due to a shortage of foster families and in cases where there are larger sibling groups.

The Belong Wisconsin organization was previously associated with an international group called Camp To Belong. That organization went through an acquisition last year, so Mayer and her fellow camp leaders thought it was the right time to break away and become an independent nonprofit. Mayer sought out researchers to help assess the positive impact of this camp on the kids' well-being. She said the camp "absolutely improves the resiliency and connection for these siblings."

Belong Wisconsin partnered with the state Department of Children and Families to ensure the siblings camp would happen in 2025. But funding for 2026 remains uncertain.

"We do not have secure funding at this point at all," Mayer said. "We have no idea how we're funding next year."

Campers often return as counselors
Holding back tears, Mayer described her first time attending the camp.

described her first time attending the camp.

"I hated it. It was so hard," she said. "The whole week I was like, 'Oh, I'm glad I'm here. But I can't wait to go home to my bed and my house and my cat and my family.'"

"As I was running through the list of all the things I was excited to go home to, I realized that this (camp) is that home for these kids," she added.

Mayer eventually learned she wanted to participate in the camp forever. Some of the campers feel that way, as well. They often go on as adults to become counselors, like siblings Chelsea and Anthony Gilbert.

Before they started at camp, they weren't particularly close. But their relationship grew over time. Now, they look forward to each year where they can eat meals side by side and connect throughout the day.

Counselors at Belong Wisconsin have nicknames. Chelsea goes by Hershey, and Anthony goes by Pickles.

"I get to have Pickles here with me. That makes it a lot easier. It's rough sometimes, but to know at the end that we are doing this for the children and to see their smiles on their faces, just is that warming heart sensation. I wouldn't change a thing," Chelsea said.

The Gilberts return each year. Counselors are required to go through trauma-informed training.

Continued on page 11



Why do bees stay in the hive in the winter?



Swarm



Continued from front page 9 **How to Help Kids Learn to Fail**

"We're teaching kids that it's okay to misspell a word and keep going," she says. "In a session we might have them write a paragraph or two and make as many mistakes as they can, including sloppy handwriting, to get them used to the idea that it's not the end of the world."

"We're saying," she adds, "We're going to practice making mistakes. We know, it's uncomfortable for you, and we also know that with practice, you can learn how to tolerate it."

Parents have more ways to help their kids move beyond failure.

When Alicia discovered Sara's self-harming,

she tried to set her up for success by enrolling her in a small, private school. She also got Sara into therapy and tried to give her the time and support to "figure things out," allowing her the chance to feel proud of herself when she did.

Alicia says Sara, now about to start her junior year, "just told me she's so glad she went there instead of one of the selective enrollments. At the time, it seemed to her like a huge failure to be rejected by those schools. But she's much happier now,



no self-harming and displaying resiliency." Learning to fail can be painful. But kids will only succeed if they can acquire the skill to handle whatever life throws their way.

This article was last reviewed or updated on May 6, 2025. Written by Beth Arky who is a freelance writer and editor who writes extensively about children's developmental, mental health, and learning issues along with parenting and relationships. Article taken from website Child Mind Institute. <https://childmind.org/article/how-to-help-kids-learn-to-fail/>

Can You Smell What Mama Kasch Is Cooking?

One Pot Pizza Casserole

Prep Time: 10 minutes Cook Time: 40 minutes Total Time: 50 minutes

One Pot Pizza Casserole combines pasta, marinara, pepperoni, and cheese into a one-dish meal perfect for busy weeknights.

Ingredients:

1 box (16 ounces) elbow macaroni, dry, 1 jar (24 ounces) marinara sauce, 3 cups water, ½ teaspoon Italian seasoning, 1 bag (6 ounces) pepperoni slices, reserving ¼ cup for topping, 2 cups mozzarella cheese shredded, Fresh basil chopped, for garnish

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 400°F. Lightly spray a 9×13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In the prepared baking dish, combine the dry elbow macaroni, marinara sauce, water, Italian seasoning, and most of the pepperoni slices, reserving ¼ cup for topping. Stir thoroughly to ensure the macaroni is evenly coated with the sauce and seasoning. Cover the baking dish tightly with aluminum foil.
3. Bake the casserole, covered, for 25 minutes.
4. Carefully remove the aluminum foil. Sprinkle the top evenly with mozzarella cheese and the reserved pepperoni slices. Return the dish to the oven and bake uncovered for an additional 10-15 minutes, or until the cheese is hot and bubbly.
5. Remove the dish from the oven and let it rest for 5 minutes. Garnish with chopped basil before serving.



Our WFAPA Adoption Quilt Project!

We're excited to announce that we're creating another WFAPA Quilt and we want to hear from you. If you're an adoptive parent or were adopted yourself, we would love to share your story. Every adoption experience is unique and we want to celebrate the diversity of these stories. Adopting a child is an emotional and powerful experience, and just like pregnancy and birth, no two stories are alike.

WFAPA'S ADOPTION QUILT

Creating a Beautiful Quilt with the Power of Storytelling

Our quilt will be made up of many stunning creations, each woven together with other quilt squares to form a larger and stronger whole. As we add more pieces, our quilt grows and becomes even more remarkable. Once finished, the quilt will not only be a masterpiece of art, but it will also hold countless stories that make it truly one-of-a-kind.



Receiving a Blank Cloth Square and Fabric Marker

Would you like to participate in our adoption quilt project? Reach out to Sherry Benson, WFAPA Treasurer and Social Worker Liaison, and she will send you a blank cloth square and fabric markers along with return postage. To complete your submission, please write a brief article about what your adoption means to you (without revealing any identifying information) and mail it along with your quilt square and markers. You can contact Sherry by calling or texting her at (715) 923-1124 or by sending an email to misssherry2@yahoo.com.

Hmong Autism Neurodiverse Disability Support

Lending a helping hand to the Hmong and Wisconsin community!

Who We Are

We are Hmong women who have lived in Green Bay for decades, involved in our community on many levels. In September 2024, we founded Hmong Autism Neurodiverse Disability Support (HANDS), a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and celebrated our grand opening in February 2025. We hope to serve the Hmong and wider Green Bay community in the best capacity that we can.

Our Mission

Support Wisconsin Hmong youth with special needs reach their full potential in an inclusive community that celebrates their culture.

Our organization hopes to spread awareness about Autism, disabilities, and mental health issues within the Hmong and Wisconsin communities by offering a safe space for these families to support each other. We support the entire family and not just the individual.

We are currently the only organization that targets Hmong families regarding disabilities in the state of Wisconsin. We do not discriminate against others and everyone is welcome to attend, but reach out Hmong families because we have found that they tend to not access organizations that offer the same services due to cultural or language barriers. In extending our hand, we hope the entire community will grow stronger and build deeper ties with each other, other nonprofits, and businesses.

Our Story

My sisters, Linda and Betsy, and I are passionate about spreading awareness about Autism and those with disabilities because we have children who require extra care and

would like to effect change for other children and adults like them in the area. My son was diagnosed with Autism at 3 years old and that changed the rest of the course of our family's lives.

We cried at losing the imagined life we had dreamt of for ourselves as our son had a very uncertain future, where we didn't know if he would ever be self-sufficient. Embarking on our new journey, we found the avenues to access help were complicated and hard to even find info about. There were services to help my son out there, but it took everything out of me to navigate the applications, hour-wait phone calls, home inspections, and more. As a college graduate, it was already a hard process, so I couldn't imagine how it would go for someone who didn't speak English and or had only recently arrived in America.

My sister, Linda, had a very similar experience as her son was diagnosed with Amniotic Band Syndrome in womb, where fibrous bands cut off his fingers and one leg. She spent many weeks on bedrest as the doctors told her there was a slim chance he would even make it. She gave birth to him prematurely and her son had to be flight-vac'd to the Milwaukee Children's Hospital to save his life; and that is where he spent the first few months of his life. After this harrowing experience, she dealt with the disability office and navigated how to get services for her son, while trying to recover at the same time. She has spent countless hours dealing with red tape, doctors, and testing and understands how lonely the process can be.

We are hoping this organization can help bridge the gap between



diagnosis and treatment, as we can offer first-hand experience of the arduous process while providing community through shared experiences. We are stronger together than we are separate and would like to provide a better future for our children than what we had.

Programs We Offer

- **Mom Time** - Mom Time allows for ALL caregivers of children with autism or disabilities to be able to come together and engage with each other. There will be art projects, discussions, and food to be served.
- **Dance Program** - Our Dance Program will help to alleviate costs associated with traditional, Hmong dances, while teaching participants about the culture.
- **Diagnoses Help** - Do you need someone to talk to regarding your child's diagnoses? Need help with navigating the system or therapy and help? Need help applying for Medicaid or healthcare? Need help with your child's IEP or simply to advocate or help translate? Give us a call or email us for more info!
- **Community Closet and Pantry** - The Community Closet is open to all regardless of income. Feel free to donate and look for new items! The Pantry will have culturally-specific items for communities of color that are not available at many other pantries.



For more information please visit their website: www.hmonghands.org

Continued from page- 10 This Wisconsin summer camp reunites foster kids with their biological siblings

They learn de-escalation and redirection techniques to ensure campers have all the support they need. "We started out this camp together as campers, so we've been in that spot. We know what that's like," Anthony said.

Anthony was decked out in brightly colored bandanas from head to toe, representing his camp spirit. He said the bandanas hold all his memories from years past. While he has been coming to the camp for years, he's one bandana short.

"I had 11 because 11 years is how long I've been here. But one of the years I had a kid ask me at the very end of camp when they went home, they're like, 'I want something to remember you by. Can I have this bandana?'" Anthony said, getting emotional. "And they chose the specific one that they (wanted), and I just started tearing up. I'm like, 'Of course, I'm going to give you that. I



want you to have that."

Camp closes with tears and a bonfire

On the last day before foster families come to pick up the children, there is a closing bonfire. Surrounded by a canopy of trees, each camper gets to pass around a handmade totem pole and talk about their favorite part of the week.

"I know how important this camp is to see your siblings and be with them because they are something really, really special," a camper said. "Even though sometimes you would, like, fight ... deep down you really know that you absolutely love and adore them and they mean the world to you."

There are tears, so many that Belong Wisconsin has to supply dozens of mini packages of tissue so each kid can have their own.

"This is the time that they get to be with their siblings in a place where it's not school. It's

not a courtroom. It's not a visit with supervision. They just get to be kids together, and so it's a really magical place for them,"

Mayer said. "But we do have to acknowledge that it's kind of like Disney. It's not real."

At the end of the week, the siblings have to leave and prepare for their reality.

But to lessen the sadness and anxiety some campers feel, leaders had children pick a sibling constellation. So when they leave and go back to their foster families, they can look up at the sky and know they are staring at the same stars.



Article written by [Mackenzie Krumme](#) on September 15, 2025 and Updated on September 17, 2025. Article taken from www.wpr.org/news/wisconsin-summer-camp-reunites-foster-kids-siblings

JOIN NOW

Join WFAPA's Leadership in Advocating for Foster and Adoptive Families!

WFAPA's leadership has been instrumental in educating policymakers and involving foster and adoptive parents in discussions surrounding issues that impact the foster and adoptive system.

We would love for you to join us in this journey! Our members are the backbone of our organization, enabling us to continue to advocate and influence public policy on behalf of foster and adoptive children and parents across Wisconsin.

Creating a community of foster, adoptive, and kinship families is one of the most effective ways to amplify our collective voice.

As a member, you'll gain access to numerous benefits and information, including:

- Four yearly newsletters.
- Up-to-date details on State-level news.
- Peer support and guidance for allegations.
- Information on scholarships.
- Reduced conference rates.
- Opportunities to get involved in foster care projects.

WFAPA is a 501(3)(C) non-profit organization comprised of a volunteer Board of Directors.

You can visit wfapa.org and click on the Membership tab, or mail membership form to:

Michelle Ward
W7018 Discovery Drive
Fond du Lac, WI 54937

 **JOIN NOW**

WFAPA Membership Form

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

County _____

I am a Foster/Adoptive Parent. (circle one) I have fostered for _____ years.

I am with _____ agency.

Would you be willing to help out with WFAPA? ____ Yes ____ No

____ \$35.00 Household Membership
____ Donation of \$5 or \$_____
____ One-Time Amount Donation
____ Billed monthly for 12 months.

Continued from page 6 - Indigenous Motherhood: Strength, Resilience, and Legacy

Conclusion

The journey of Indigenous motherhood is a testament to the enduring spirit, resilience, and wisdom of generations of Indigenous women. Their stories are a powerful reminder of the importance of cultural preservation, environmental stewardship, and the interconnectedness of all living things. By celebrating their voices, learning from their experiences, and supporting their efforts to create a better future for their communities, we can honor their strength, wisdom, and the profound impact they have had on the world.

As we conclude this exploration of Indigenous motherhood, it's essential to remember that the strength and resilience woven into the fabric of this experience are not simply abstract concepts. They are tangible, lived realities passed down through generations. From the ancient wisdom of grandmothers to the unwavering spirit of mothers navigating modern challenges, Indigenous motherhood is a testament to the enduring power of community, tradition, and love. It is a vibrant tapestry of

cultural practices, ancestral knowledge, and unwavering dedication to the next generation, shaping the future of Indigenous peoples and contributing to the richness of our shared human story.

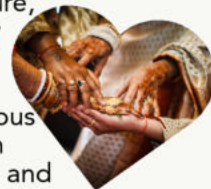
In the face of colonization and its enduring legacies, Indigenous mothers have demonstrated extraordinary resilience. They have preserved languages, traditions, and beliefs, ensuring the continuity of their cultures. They have fought for the recognition of their rights and the well-being of their children. They have nurtured their families and communities, providing unwavering support and guiding them through periods of immense hardship. Their strength lies not only in their individual resolve but also in their collective power, working together to ensure a brighter future for their children and grandchildren. This collective strength is evident in the vibrant communities and cultural practices that continue to thrive despite centuries of adversity.

The legacy of Indigenous motherhood is one that transcends generations. It is a

legacy of strength, perseverance, and unwavering love. It is a legacy of connection to land, culture, and history. It is a legacy that inspires us all to recognize the profound contributions of Indigenous women and to champion their rights, their stories, and their important role in shaping a more just and equitable world. By embracing the wisdom and resilience of Indigenous mothers, we can all learn from their enduring spirit and contribute to a future where their voices are heard, their stories are celebrated, and their legacy continues to flourish.

Discover the unwavering strength, resilience, and legacy of Indigenous mothers. Learn how they shape future generations and inspire us all.
#IndigenousMotherhood
#StrengthInHerStory

Article published By Justo, posted on March 4, 2025, and taken from www.nativetribes.info/indigenous-motherhood-strength-resilience-and-legacy/





FASPP Foster & Adoptive Support & Preservation Program

SAAN Surviving Allegations of Abuse & Neglect



FASPP's Objective: Supporting Foster and Adoptive Parents Statewide

FASPP's primary aim is to assist foster and adoptive parents throughout the state with a peer-driven network of support and information. Our goal is to maintain foster and adoptive families by providing the necessary resources. If you're feeling disoriented, in need of information, or under an investigation, our highly trained FASPP and SAAN volunteers can help. They can guide you through a range of challenges and provide you with the relevant information or resources you need. FASPP and SAAN comprises of fellow foster or adoptive parents, making it easier for you to connect and share your experiences.

Introducing SAAN, a Peer-Driven Support Network for Foster and Adoptive Families

SAAN is a support network created by peers, with the aim of reducing the trauma experienced by foster and adoptive families during an allegation, without compromising the integrity of the investigation.

Foster parents open their homes to children, aware that they also bring with them their histories and issues.

Foster and adoptive parents face a higher risk of being accused of wrongdoing. Being investigated is a stressful and unsettling experience for anyone, but SAAN is here to help you navigate the process by providing information and support.

If you have any questions in the following areas, please reach out to the designated individuals via email or phone:

- **Norma, Chairperson (Advice on general & allegations)**
Phone: (920) 922-9627
- **Melissa (Focuses on fostering younger children)**
Phone: (608) 333-6650
Email: lovedalemelissa@gmail.com
- **Lauri (Advice on general/adoption)**
Phone: (715) 816-4152
Email: lthorssen@gmail.com

[OC] from my 5 year old foster kid tonight:

Why did the Chicken cross the road?



To get to the oven slide.



Continued from page 4 - State Budget Deal Delays Impending Child Care Crisis, But Won't Solve It

"Affordable and accessible child care is supported by Wisconsinites across party lines," said Daithi Wolfe, Senior Policy Analyst at Kids Forward, "State investment in care infrastructure is the right thing to do, even in a divided government."

Today's agreement includes significant, but not sufficient, wins for Wisconsin's working families:

- **\$110M** in monthly, per-child payments to child care providers to help them avoid closure and/or increasing tuition, but only in Year 1 of the biennial budget.
- **\$123M** to increase Wisconsin Shares reimbursement rates, making child care more affordable for working families.
- **\$28.6M** for a pilot program to help support expanding capacity across Wisconsin's child care industry to ensure more families with infants and toddlers can access quality, affordable child care.

Child care is unaffordable and unavailable for too many working families across the state. Child care staff are severely underpaid, and this critical industry is on the verge of collapse unless there is continued economic support. A quarter of child care programs are likely to close if the legislature fails to make significant and sustained investments in child care.

While this agreement does delay the impending crisis, it won't solve it.

"This deal doesn't address the long term needs of families and providers, but we look forward to working with legislators and the Governor to ensure sustained investment," shared Wolfe.

The proposal raises child-to-staff ratios, putting both children and providers at risk. It also drops provider age minimums (allowing 16 year-olds to work in licensed programs), threatening the quality of care.

We know that the people of Wisconsin need access to early care and education. A just released survey shows that 89% of respondents—across political lines and family types—support public investment in child care, including 79% of those without children.

In fact, just a few weeks ago, more than 60 dads and their allies came to the State Capitol to demand bold investment in child care.

"Dads Care for Child Care proved what we already knew: dads, families, and communities across Wisconsin care about giving their kids a great start in life, and that begins with quality child care," said Wolfe.

Articles published on 08/13/2025 and 07/01/2025 and taken from Kids Forward website, kidsforward.org/2025-2027-state-budget-our-final-take/ and <https://kidsforward.org/state-budget-deal-delays-impending-child-care-crisis-but-wont-solve-it/>

