

# Foster CONNECT

Foster, Adoptive, Kinship Recruitment & Resource Family Newsletter  
Shenandoah Valley Social Services

April 2021



## Pre-Service Training

**\*\*UPDATED DATES\*\*** Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education (PRIDE) pre-service training gives the information you need to make an informed decision about whether fostering/adopting is the right choice for you and your families and provides the skills needed to begin your journey working with children and families in the Foster Care system.

Join us for our next series!

1. **Thursday, April 8, 2021 (6-9pm - Virtual)** – Introduction to Modern Foster Care
2. **Thursday, April 15, 2021 (6-9pm - Virtual)** – Protecting and Nurturing Children and Youth
3. **Thursday, April 22, 2021 (6-9pm - Virtual)** – Loss, Trauma & Resilience
4. **Thursday, April 29, 2021 (6-9pm - Virtual)** – Self-Esteem and Identity
5. **Thursday, May 6, 2021 (6-9pm - Virtual)** – Supporting Family Relationships
6. **Thursday, May 13, 2021 (6-9pm - Virtual)** – Panel Night/Process, Requirements and Handbook
7. **Thursday, May 20, 2021 (6-9pm - Virtual)** – Permanency and Adoption

**All Sessions are Required (for both parents if a two parent household).** Light meals will be provided. Please note that the information presented is not appropriate for children and we regret that we are unable to provide child care. **Registration is Required.** To register, contact Lauren Wimer at 540-245-5917 or [lauren.wimer@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:lauren.wimer@dss.virginia.gov).

## Foster Parent Information Sessions

Information Sessions are a “no commitment” way to get more information about Foster Care, the approval process and what it takes to become a Resource Parent. If you are interest in becoming a

*Due to COVID-19, all sessions will be held virtually, via Zoom*

April 1, 2021 @ 6pm  
April 16, 2021 @ 3pm  
April 28, 2021 @ 6pm  
May 4, 2021 @ 6pm  
May 14, 2021 @ 3pm  
May 26, 2021 @ 6pm

To sign up for an information session and receive the zoom link for access,  
Email Lauren Wimer at [lauren.wimer@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:lauren.wimer@dss.virginia.gov)

In this issue >>>

*Pre-Service Training*

*Foster Parent Information Sessions*

*HEART Gallery*

*We're here for you!*

*Facebook LIVE!*

**Current Resource Parent NEWS!**

*In Service Training Hours*

*Foster Parent Support Group*

*Resource Library*

*Foster Parent College*

*Social Media Policy*

## Waiting Children

*Adopting one child won't change the world, but for that child, the world will change.*

There are over 515,000 children in foster care in the US and over 155,000 of those children are waiting to be adopted. Over 20,000 children age out of foster care every year without a family to call their own.

Waiting for a family is an experience no child should have to endure. Our goal is to connect these children with families that are going to love, support and encourage them in all of the successes and challenges of life. To learn more about the children in our area that are waiting for families, contact us at 540-245-5917 or on our website at [www.resourcefamily.org](http://www.resourcefamily.org).

## What is the HEART Gallery?

The **HEART Gallery** is a traveling photographic and audio exhibit created to find families for children in Foster Care. The Heart Gallery of America is a collaborative project over 80 Heart Galleries across the United States designed to increase the number of adoptive families for children needing homes in our community. Shenandoah Valley Social Services has created a gallery of our local waiting youth that can be featured throughout our local community. If your church or organization would be interested in hosting the SVSS Heart Gallery, please email Lauren Wimer at [lauren.wimer@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:lauren.wimer@dss.virginia.gov).

## Join us: Facebook LIVE!

Tune in to our Facebook page for our Facebook Live events!

[SVSSAdoptionResource](#)

April 16, 2021 @ 1pm – We will be discussing other ways to get involved in the Foster Care Community!

**Send your questions to us on our Facebook page and we will answer them when we go live!**

## We're here for YOU!

The agency mission is “the promotion of self-reliance and protection of citizens through community-based services”.

The mission of the Shenandoah Valley Resource Unit is “to provide children with lifelong connections to families by raising community awareness, advocating or permanency and connecting with services and supports to meet each child’s individual needs.”

The Adoption/Resource Unit at Shenandoah Valley Social Services is here to help you prior to, during and after your adoption. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have a question or need. Our goal is not only to connect children to families, but to ensure that the connection lasts a lifetime. Please be sure to check our website and Facebook page for updates, forms and resources to help you in your journey!

# Current Resource Parent NEWS!

## Important Reminder: In Service Training Hours

It is important for Resource Parents to track their in service training hours. These hours should be reported to the family's Resource Worker or the Foster Parent Trainer & Recruiter *at least quarterly*.

Please remember to complete the required 10 hours (5 classroom and 5 online) of training each year. **Your completion of the training hours each year is a determining factor in your Resource Home approval. If you do not complete the required training hours, the Department will be unable to reapprove your home for placement.**

## Did you know? - Resource Library

Shenandoah Valley Social Services Resource Unit has a resource library for both Resource Parents and Foster Children and Youth. A list of books and materials that are in our library can be found on our website [www.resourcefamily.org](http://www.resourcefamily.org) or can be emailed to you. Please contact Heather Hudnall at [heather.hudnall@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:heather.hudnall@dss.virginia.gov), if you would like to sign out one of our resources. *Books can be checked out for 3 weeks at a time.*

## Shenandoah Valley Social Services

68 Dick Huff Lane, PO Box 7

Verona, VA 24482

Phone | 540-245-5800

Fax | 540-213-3662

## Foster Parent Support Group!

Our virtual Resource Parent Support Group meets every other week via zoom!

April 13, 2021 @ 6pm – Self Care for Resource Parents

April 14, 2021 LUNCH AND LEARN @ 12pm – What is CASA?

April 27, 2021 @ 6pm – Birth Parent Addiction

May 11, 2021 @ 6pm – Court Process and Timeline

May 25, 2021 @ 2pm – Separation and Loss

Email Lauren Wimer at

[lauren.wimer@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:lauren.wimer@dss.virginia.gov) for the link!

## Foster Parent College Online

Foster/Adoptive Parents have easy access to training or policy documents/forms. There are many resources available on **Foster Parent College**. Foster Parent College is available at no cost to you! Foster parents are able to take online classes and earn credit toward their in-service training hours. If you have any questions, please contact Lauren Wimer at [lauren.wimer@dss.virginia.gov](mailto:lauren.wimer@dss.virginia.gov)

## Social Media/Facebook Policy

While Social Media and Facebook have changed the way we interact and communicate with each other, it also creates privacy and safety concerns. There are great ways to use social media as a resource for learning opportunities and sharing information and support for other foster parents.

However, Shenandoah Valley Social Services **does not** permit Foster/Adoptive parents to post pictures or identifying information of children in foster care. Case information should also never be discussed on social media. If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, please contact Lauren Wimer or Heather Hudnall.

Check us out on our Website and Facebook page!

For the latest information on our Recruitment Events, waiting children and news, check out our Facebook Page [SVSSAdoptionResource](https://www.facebook.com/SVSSAdoptionResource).

Currently approved Resource Families, Post-Adoption Families and community members can access resources and information via our website [www.resourcefamily.org](http://www.resourcefamily.org).