Identity theft among foster youth has become a serious issue over the past 5 years. Nation-wide, someone is a victim of identity theft every 3 seconds.

**Why are foster youth at great risk?**
- Personal information such as their social security number and date of birth are easily accessible by multiple agencies and staff.
- Foster youth are at greater risk to have this personal information accessed by relatives, friends, or other adults and caregivers.

**TIPS TO PROTECT YOUTH FROM IDENTITY THEFT**
- Protect your Social Security number.
- Clean your room. Protect your personal information like you protect your cash.
- Be smart online. Do not open attachments from someone you don’t know. Be aware that free WIFI hotspots may not be secure.
- Get a free annual credit report. (Everyone is entitled to a free credit report annually.)
- For a complete list of tips visit: [www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/children/foster/](http://www.dcf.wisconsin.gov/children/foster/)

**Policy Changes for Foster Youth**
On January 19, 2012, the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) issued a bulletin addressing this issue. This bulletin stated that each youth age 16 and older will receive a copy of their consumer credit report, at no cost, each year until they discharge from child foster care. It also stated that youth will be given assistance in understanding and resolving any issues in that report. To view the entire #12-68-01 bulletin go to: [http://mn.gov/dhs/](http://mn.gov/dhs/)

**Why is a clean credit report so important?**
A clean consumer credit report is important for foster youth to be able to rent an apartment, buy a car, or apply for student loans. To run a free credit report visit: [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com)
NEW LEGISLATIVE CHANGES:  
DATA PRIVACY 
PUBLIC, PRIVATE, OR CONFIDENTIAL

Washington County follows the Minnesota Data Practices law and the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regarding how we treat information in providers’ foster care licensing files. There are three general classes of information: public information, private or nonpublic, and confidential. **Public** data can be released to anyone that makes a request for the information without notice to or consent from the provider. This information includes the provider’s name, address, phone number, license number, capacity, and license expiration dates. Also considered public information are correction orders, variances granted, information about any final negative actions such as revocation or fines, the substance of any substantiated complaints, and the general findings of the complaint investigation. The Department of Human Services posts public information about providers on their Licensing Lookup website. The website also publishes Vulnerable Adult investigation reports and negative licensing order (fines, conditional licenses, and revocations).

Background study information, homestudies, social security numbers, and any medical or mental health information is considered **private (nonpublic) data** and cannot be released unless there is a signed consent from the provider specifically authorizing the release of the information. Information collected during an in process complaint investigation is considered **confidential**. The substance of the complaint investigation findings may become public once the investigation is completed. The name of the reporter of the complaint is confidential.

Every year licensed providers are given a License Applicant Privacy Rights notice. Please review this form carefully before signing it. If you have any questions about the information in your file, please contact your licensor.

BACKGROUND STUDY CLARIFICATION

The State of Minnesota has clarified “who needs a background study”. Here is some information we would like to pass on to our child and adult foster care providers:

- All household members 13 or older need a background study.
- Anyone who is caring for a foster care client needs a background study submitted prior to working with foster care clients.
- If a regular household member is away at college they will need a background study.
- If you have a regular visitor in your home that would have access to foster care clients, contact your licensor to discuss the need for a background study.

Effective 8/1/12 the law changed. If someone who previously completed a background study hasn’t been in the residence for 90 days and returns, they need to complete a NEW background study. Please keep that in mind as people come and go from your home. Make sure you keep your licensor informed of who is in your home and call your licensor if you have any questions. *Failure to comply with background study requirements may result in a correction order.

GRILLS, DECKS, & HAZARDS...OH MY!

If you are using a gas grill on a deck you need to have stairs off the deck. Gas grills cannot be placed on enclosed decks because the LP tank would have to be carried through the home which increases the risk of hazardous gases leaking into your home.

Please make sure your grill is stored properly during non-use periods. Gas grills cannot be stored in the house or garage. Leaving your grill outside or in a detached shed is the preferred option. For more information on gas grills check your city codes and ordinances.
REQUIRED TRAINING
FOR SUBSTITUTE CAREGIVERS

Everyone needs a break from time to time. You call on your family, friends, neighbors, and others to be your substitute. They are wonderful people you rely on. They even submitted to a background study just so they could be there for your residents. Be sure to give them the tools they need to succeed.

The required training when caring for ADULTS includes: Vulnerable Adult Training, your Internal Reporting Procedures, your Program Abuse Prevention Plan, and the residents' Individual Abuse Prevention Plans. You need to review your policies such as Alcohol and Drug Use and Grievances. Be sure to review any specific resident related information such as the resident’s medications schedule. Your emergency procedures should be posted in your home in case something happens while you are away. There may be other information you need to pass along. Your substitute needs to be ready and able to care for your residents under any circumstance.

The required information when caring for CHILDREN include: reviewing the child’s placement plan, discussing data privacy, discussing emergency procedures and contact information, completing SIDS/Shaken Baby Training (if caring for children 5 and under), completing Child Passenger Restraint Training (if caring for kids 8 and under), and reviewing Alcohol and Drug Use/Grievance and Discipline Policies. It is important to go over the child’s medication schedule and adverse affects of the medication. Also review any other information or behaviors that may be important to know about the child with the substitute.

WHEN DO I COMPLETE AN INCIDENT REPORT

We receive many questions about when to complete an incident report. Here are the facts. Incident reports must be completed when the following occurs involving a client:

1. **Emergency Care** – a resident needed emergency care, an ambulance had to be called, or the client was taken to the hospital, urgent care, or a same day medical appointment.
2. **Police Report** – a report was made involving a resident.
3. **Vulnerable Adult/Child Protection Report** was filed.

Incident reports can be used to document other changes or issues as well. Providers can use the county form or develop their own form. Incident reports should be mailed or faxed to the licensor, case managers, and guardians. Adult foster care incident reports need to be completed no longer than 8 hours after the incident and reported to the agency within 24 hours. Child foster care incident reports should be completed as soon as possible and reported to the agency within 24 hours. The original should be kept in the resident’s/ kid’s file. *Document to whom and when sent report.*

ADULT FOSTER CARE PROVIDERS SUPPORT GROUP & ORIENTATION

Support group meets the 4th Tuesday of every other month. The upcoming meeting date is:

**Vulnerable Adult Law**

*Date:* September 25 • 6:00-8:30 p.m.

**Adult Foster Care Orientation**

This training is required for new providers but is also great for those who want a refresher.

*Dates:* October 19/October 26/November 1 • 9:00 a.m.-Noon

*Flyers will be sent out with more information regarding Support Group and Orientation.*

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**Welcome New Adult Providers:**

**DECEMBER 2011**
- Faye Bedaso & Moti Felema, Woodbury

**FEBRUARY 2012**
- Eloisa & Don Osborne, Oak Park Heights

**MARCH 2012**
- Mary Jean & Allan Paray, Cottage Grove

**DID YOU KNOW?**

As of 7/1/12 the GRH rate increased from $846 to $867. If you have not received the increase, please contact your resident’s financial worker.

**Please Keep In Touch**

When things out of the ordinary happen, we sometimes forget who we need to contact. As a licensed provider, you have an additional obligation to notify your licensor of events that impact your life and household. These can include having out of town guests, going on a vacation, having surgery, or emergency care for yourself or a family member. We also need to be notified if your cell/home phone number or email address changes.

Have a fun summer! Keep in touch!
**Welcome New Child/Kin Providers:**

**DECEMBER 2011**
- Stephanie Bernatchez & Dennis Davidson, Woodbury (Child)
- Diane & David Wright, Woodbury (Kinship)

**MARCH 2012**
- Janel Kuester, Oakdale (Kinship)

**APRIL 2012**
- Vanessa & Daniel Bourgoin, Mahtomedi (Kinship)
- Gayle & Steve Erickson, Lake Elmo (Kinship)
- Kelly & James Tima, Woodbury (Kinship)

**MAY 2012**
- Mynda Lewis, Woodbury (Kinship)
- Delores & James Schlagel, Stillwater (Kinship)

**JUNE 2012**
- Karen & Pete Danilaitis, Lakeland (Kinship)

**JULY 2012**
- Denise Edge, Woodbury (Kinship)
- Teresa Warolin, Oakdale (Child)

**DID YOU KNOW?**
The MN Adoption Resource Network (MARN) will no longer manage the list serve for the state adoption exchange. MN ADOPT will now be handling the list serve.

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**CLARIFICATION ON 18-21 YEAR OLD PAPERWORK/TRAINING (MN STAT. 245A.65)**

Fostering connections was enacted by the U.S. Government in 2008. As a result of this act, foster youth can remain in foster care until age 21. As these youth become adults there are additional requirements for child foster care providers to ensure their safety while in care:

- Attend vulnerable adult training annually (see bottom of pg. 3–Adult VA Training 9/25/12)
- Complete an individual abuse prevention plan with the case worker/licensor
- Complete a program abuse prevention plan with your licensor
- Create vulnerable adult maltreatment reporting policies

If you currently take someone who is 18-21 your licensor will contact you to assist in meeting this requirement.

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**NEW WASHINGTON COUNTY STAFF**

**ANN MAUDAL, Senior Worker Resource Unit**
I am a graduate of University of Wisconsin, River Falls, with a degree in social work. My master’s degree in social work was earned at the University of Minnesota. A licensed independent clinical social worker, LICSW, my initial work experience was in the field of restorative justice. Prior to joining the Resource Unit, I did ongoing child protection case management in Washington County for twelve years. I am excited for this new opportunity and look forward to working with everyone.

**HEIDI BISCHOFF, Child Foster Care Licensor**
I started in the Resource Unit at Washington County on January 3rd, 2012. Prior to that, I worked at an adoption agency for about 5 years. I received my bachelor degree in social work from The College of St. Scholastica and my master’s degree at the University of Minnesota. It has been great getting to know Washington County's foster care providers and seeing the great work you do with children and adults in our community!

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**INITIAL CLOTHING ALLOWANCE**

Children in foster care may receive a clothing allowance when they initially enter care. This money is to be used for clothing items for the children. The clothing allowance cannot be used for diapers or formula.

**How to request a clothing allowance?**
- As soon as possible when a child is placed with you, use the clothing inventory form to take an inventory of the child’s belongings.
- If the child needs additional clothing, talk to the child’s case worker about the child’s needs and they can talk to the parents to see if there is additional clothing at the child’s home.
- If there is no additional clothing at the child’s home, talk to the child’s case worker about a clothing allowance.
- If the clothing allowance is approved, buy clothing appropriate for the current season.
  *Plan Ahead: Do not spend the entire clothing allowance at once because the child only receives one clothing allowance for their entire stay in foster care.* As we all know, the seasons change frequently in Minnesota.
- Make sure you send a copy of the receipts to the child’s case worker so you can get reimbursement for your purchases. (Keep the originals in the child’s file.) Keep in mind that parents are billed for the clothing allowance so we need to be accountable for our purchases.
- If you have money left from the clothing allowance and the child moves, that money must be returned to the child’s case worker.
- Remember, when the youth leaves, their clothing goes with them.

If you have any questions about clothing allowance please contact the child’s case worker or your licensor.
WASHINGTON COUNTY
All trainings will be held at the Washington County Government Center in Stillwater unless otherwise noted. To register for trainings contact your licensor. All trainings are free to Washington County Foster Care Providers unless otherwise noted. *Reminder: Foster parents can seek up to $100 training reimbursement per calendar year.

Dinner and a Training: Autism
Date: Tuesday, August 14 • 6:00-8:30 p.m.
Trainer: Tami Childs
Potluck! We will provide the main dish.

Child Foster Care Support Group
Meet with other providers to support and share your experiences in foster care.
Date: Tuesday, September 4 • 10:00 a.m.-Noon

Resource Family Training/
Cultural Issues in Placement: Module 3
Providers will explore their own cultural values while learning how to develop and nurture a foster child’s identity.
Date: Thursday, September 13 • 6:00-9:00 p.m.
Trainer: Department of Human Services

Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome / Shaken Baby Syndrome
This training is required when caring for kids 5 and younger.
Date: Tuesday, September 18 • 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Trainer: Washington County Community Services

Child Passenger Restraint
This training is required when caring for kids 8 and younger.
Date: Thursday, September 27 • 6:00-9:00 p.m.
Trainer: Washington County Public Health

Child Foster Care Support Group
Meet with other providers to support and share your experiences in foster care.
Date: Tuesday, October 2 • 10:00 a.m.-Noon

Dinner and a Training: Topic To Be Announced
Date: Tuesday, October 9 • 6:00-8:30 p.m.
Potluck! We will provide the main dish.

Resource Family Training/
Family Systems and Abuse and Neglect: Module 4
Providers will identify characteristics of families where maltreatment occurs. Providers will learn how children who experienced maltreatment are at continued risk of abuse and neglect even after placement.
Date: Thursday, October 11 • 6:00-9:00 p.m.
Trainer: Department of Human Services

METRO TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Intentional Pathways to Self-Regulation: Relationship Based Mindfulness for Children
This session will offer an in-depth examination of how mind-body awareness and a mindful therapeutic relationship can reduce the stress response and activate the soothing effects of parasympathetic nervous system.
Date: August 22 • 12:30-3:30 p.m.
Location: Maplewood Community Center
2100 White Bear Ave., Maplewood
Registration: www.macmh.org
Cost: $79

Nurturing Feeding: Promoting Recovery from Eating Issues in Traumatized Children
Children who have come from foster care or orphanages often have very serious issues around food. This might take on the form of stealing or hoarding food, refusing to eat certain foods, or developing a clinical eating disorder. The trainer will provide participants with a deeper look into food issues from infancy to adolescence.
Date: September 20 • 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Location: Lutheran Social Services, 2400 Park Ave., Mpls.
Registration: www.mnadopt.org
Cost: $15 per person / $20 per couple

1st Annual Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (MOFAS) Conference
Building Brighter Futures: Working Together to Create Change in Minnesota
This conference offers a unique opportunity for professionals, families, and caregivers throughout Minnesota to learn more about the prevention and treatment of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).
- Gain knowledge of best practices and the latest research in the field of FASD
- Learn practical tools and tips to implement within your family, agency, or system
Date: November 1-2
Location: DoubleTree by Hilton
7800 Normandale Blvd., Bloomington
Registration: www.mofas.org (click on events)
Cost: $100/person
What prompted you to become licensed?
The love of children. I have always wanted to be a stay at home mom, with my children or any others that needed me. We had a disabled child placed with us that could not go home. We were pleased that when she became an adult we did not have to choose between having a child license or an adult license. We could be licensed for both.

What keeps you going every day with foster care?
The love for the children/adults and the love we receive back. There have been placements over the years that have stayed in touch.

What is something you have learned that will be helpful to others?
When we would go on outings with the kids, I would dress them in matching outfits so I could easily find them. We would get together with friends who were also foster parents so there were a lot of kids! I could easily pick mine out of the crowd. At some point during their placement, I would have the kids picture taken professionally and buy the photo package. I would give the parents a framed 8x10 and some wallets. It really meant a lot to the parents that I would go out of my way for them. It was a simple but meaningful thing to do.

What advice would you give someone who is newly licensed?
It helps to have lots of patience, love of children, and a whole lot of humor! I liked to take them on fun outings like a picnic in a park. If it was raining, we would move the table and have a picnic on the floor in the dining room! It is good to have a connection with the biological parents. It makes the transitions between homes easier for the kids. We have allowed the parents to call and ask for advice after the child has gone home as well.

What have been the most helpful resources for you?
Other foster parents because you have the shared experience of foster care. Years ago, it was a much smaller foster care group. I have found there is so much support in Washington County. If I am looking to learn about something, I ask and someone will guide me to the place that I can learn about it.

What is your best memory of providing foster care?
A foster child told a doctor, “You can say anything in front of Nancy. She knows everything about me and she still loves me.” Other touching moments include special gifts from parents in appreciation of our caring for their children.

CHILD FOSTER CARE ORIENTATION

Required for all new providers. Feel free to complete these again even if you attended them in the past. It’s a great refresher!

**Session I · County Orientation & Overview**
**Date:** August 20 · 6:00-9:00 p.m.

**Session II · The Provider as a Team Player**
**Date:** August 28 · 6:00-9:00 p.m.

**Session III · House Rules, Expectations, Transitions, Visitation, & Supports to Providers**
**Date:** September 6 · 6:00-9:00 p.m.

**Location:** Washington County Government Center, Lower Level 13, Stillwater

**Registration:** Please RSVP by contacting your licensor.