Alliance CaRES

QUARTERLY REPORT 2022
FIRST QUARTER

A MESSAGE FROM OUR TEAM

The CaRES program team is proud to have completed the first quarter (March through May 2022) of our second year of running a program that makes a difference to caregivers across the state. By offering genuine and robust support opportunities, we impact caregiver satisfaction and retention, and improve outcomes for children in care. We see our small steps leading to big changes and we are grateful to all the partners, stakeholders, and team members who are helping guide and inform our work. We are building this program to be responsive to the needs of Washington's caregivers and are always ready to adjust our program to better serve our stakeholders. We look forward to our next quarter and we hope you do too!

Vision Statement

We believe caregivers thrive when **connected** to each other, practical resources, and the broader community.

SUMMARY

The Alliance CaRES team walks alongside caregivers at all points of their journey, from inquiring about licensure, to achieving it, from the first time a child is placed in their home, and beyond. Even a seasoned caregiver needs help with a new situation. CaRES offers a variety of individual and group supports as well as connections to the high-quality, skill-building training that the Alliance is known for and connections among caregivers.

This report is our chance to share updates on the CaRES program's scope and the impact of the program including successes, challenges, recommendations, and details of our support to caregivers during Quarter 1 2022.

The CaRES program's support is based on the engagement strategy developed with DCYF to provide individual outreach to caregivers and prospective caregivers at specific points. In addition, we offer topic-based support group offerings including 21 facilitated discussion topics across a wide variety of subjects. We also host innovative special events, often with community partners, and continue to develop our community-based support groups, trying a few iterations with some remote and some-in person options.

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The CaRES Program is made up of six elements:

1) Support through the licensure process:

Prospective caregivers can find the licensure process confusing and intimidating. CaRES staff call all prospective kinship caregivers for individual support. CaRES staff also call all those who inquire about foster care who live within the top 25 highest removal ZIP codes. We also offer weekly virtual lunchtime sessions to answer frequent questions around paperwork and the licensing process, as well as "While You Wait" support groups for those who are preparing to welcome their first placed child.

2) Support at key points:

CaRES Mentors reach out to all caregivers at those moments when we know support is most needed, including at the time of licensure, at the time of first placement of a child into a home, kinship placements, and six months after licensure. These calls provide community resources, advice, and emotional support to build an ongoing connection.

3) Support during investigations:

Through the FIRST program, CaRES offers neutral, confidential support for caregivers with an allegation or licensing violation. We offer information about what to expect during the investigation process, and a listening ear during a challenging time.

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Program Elements Continued:

4) Different kinds of support groups:
CaRES offers online topic-based support groups for facilitated discussion, problem solving with other caregivers, and training credit. Community-based mentorship groups offer the opportunity for local supportive connections with other caregivers. Drop-In groups are online informal weekly ongoing groups that give caregivers the chance to connect as the need arises. We also offer special events, which vary.

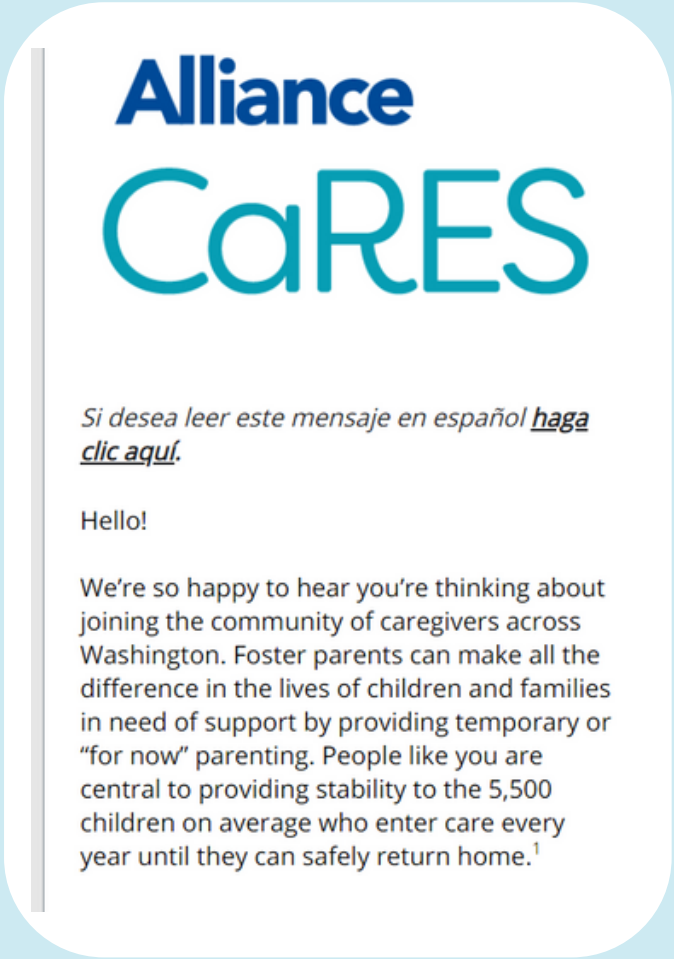
5) Supportive resources and training:
We offer a wealth of resources through Facebook, Instagram, and the CaRES website. We also connect caregivers to free and extensive training and coaching opportunities through the Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence.

6) Anytime support:
While caregivers are doing the important work of supporting children and families, we are here to support the caregivers. CaRES is working to build even more availability to provide empathetic, experienced support. We measure this success in the calls that come from caregivers reaching out directly to Mentors for ongoing support, to get additional questions answered, and for advice. We are seeing these calls increase!

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Across the state, over **949** licensed caregivers, kinship caregivers, and caregivers with their first placement received individualized contacts this quarter from CaRES program staff as part of our engagement strategy. In addition, **487** more supportive **c**ontacts (individual emails and calls) were made in the quarter. As part of our prospective caregiver engagement strategy, over **187** prospective caregivers in high-removal zip codes and with kinship care inquiries received contacts this quarter, with an additional **129** prospective foster parent support contacts made.

954 welcome emails were sent this quarter by the CaRES team to prospective caregivers providing guidance and offering resources.



Alliance CaRES

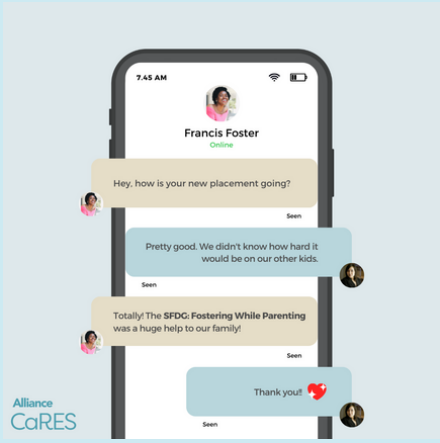
*Si desea leer este mensaje en español **haga clic aquí**.*

Hello!

We're so happy to hear you're thinking about joining the community of caregivers across Washington. Foster parents can make all the difference in the lives of children and families in need of support by providing temporary or "for now" parenting. People like you are central to providing stability to the 5,500 children on average who enter care every year until they can safely return home.[1]

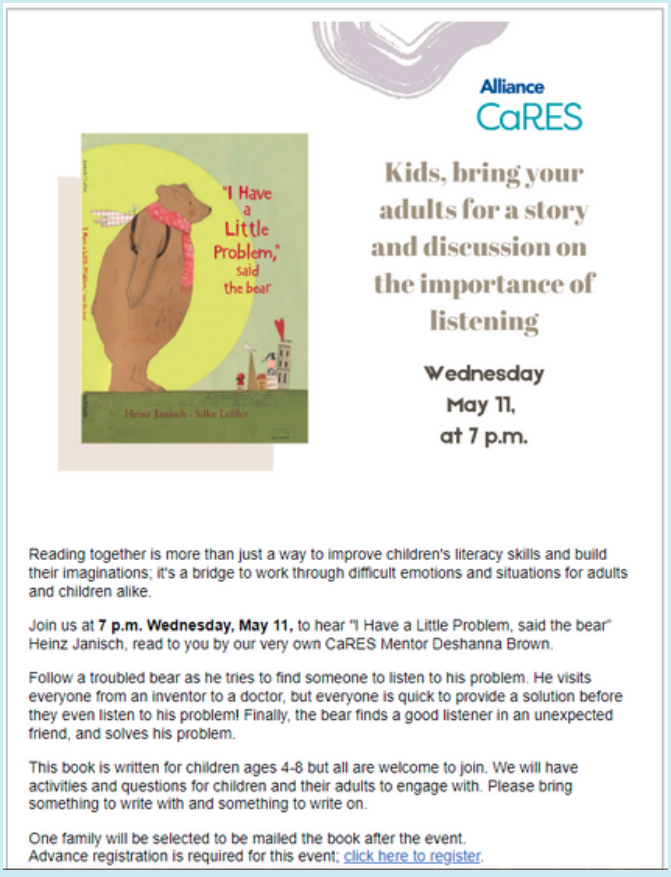
NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS
CONTINUED

466 caregivers have participated in CaRES' topic-based support groups this quarter. CaRES now offers **21** different supportive facilitated discussion groups on a range of topics. These include book clubs, and focused topics to meet specific caregiver needs. Some examples are shown below. A complete list with descriptions is included later in the report.



NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS
CONTINUED

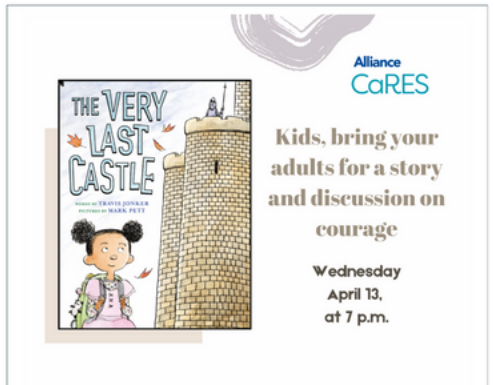
In addition, **249** caregivers have participated in CaRES' other support groups (which are not for training credit) this quarter. These include community events (both in-person and remote), special events, and drop-in groups.



NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS
CONTINUED

Book Clubs

The Book Club portion of the program continues to grow, now with four books: "Dancing With a Porcupine," "The Connected Child", "The Connected Parent", and "Trying Differently Rather Than Harder". These groups are consistently well attended and are now considered a flagship of our program.



Story Time

CaRES launched one of our favorite special events, Story Time, in the 3rd quarter of 2021. It was successful enough that we have continued to offered it monthly. This quarter we had **79** participants in total, including 30 adults and 49 children. This live event features activities around a book read by a CaRES Mentor who facilitates conversation between children and their caregivers. The books chosen offer social-emotional learnings, and stories that hold additional benefits for children in care. The program is a great opportunity for caregivers to see in real-time the benefits of reading together to build attachment and help guide challenging conversations.

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS CONTINUED

Book Corner and Book Giveaway

CaRES continued to build on its programs supporting literacy and healing trauma while deepening connections through reading together. Engagement with the Book Corner has grown, with caregivers now fully embracing the call to action, including liking, commenting and tagging friends. The Book Corner also includes reviews of children's books on relevant topics for children in the dependency system so that caregivers can find books on various topics to share with the children in their care. We have begun offering the opportunity to "win" a book that's the focus of a Book Club at in-person events such as We Are Family Day and the Hope for the Journey Conference. The giveaways are a draw for caregivers and provide engagement at multiple levels — caregivers as parents, caregivers interested in community and learning, and caregivers wanting additional support.

Expanding our program

This quarter we hired a second Community Engagement Coordinator, who will focus on Regions 1 and 2. We are eager to expand our community-based connections for caregivers and wanted to be sure we had the bandwidth to build local engagement throughout the state.

NOTEWORTHY CHALLENGES

Caregiver Dissatisfaction with DCYF

Across the state, we continue to see low caregiver morale and hear many reports of challenging communication between workers and caregivers. We have been reporting trends and specific incidents that need DCYF intervention to DCYF directly in order to facilitate resolutions and build awareness of trends.

In-person connection

Another challenge is that while we continue to receive requests for in-person connection opportunities for caregivers, those we have offered have often not been attended — even by the very people who requested them. We continue to experiment with various options for in-person support while functioning in a COVID-limited landscape. We do now have two in-person support groups that are active but the other locations where we have attempted in-person options have not been successful. Given the limitations for safety during COVID, we have continued to focus on outdoor options, which were on hold for the winter, and remote options, accessible to all across the state.

In anticipation of the warmer weather, the new Eastern and Western Washington Community Engagement Coordinators have developed a strategic plan with the Mentor team to host park playdates or caregiver coffees at local parks throughout the summer. The goal is to build momentum with local caregivers and identify volunteer hosts for the fall and beyond.

NOTEWORTHY CHALLENGES CONTINUED

Social Media Engagement

Despite a well-developed social media presence, we are not finding much engagement among caregivers with our social media posts. Veteran caregivers report wanting access to unmoderated forums that existed under the previous contract but CaRES is unable to provide such opportunities responsibly without jeopardizing confidentiality requirements. This continues to generate disappointment from some veteran caregivers.

The FIRST Line

The CaRES team received 6 individual FIRST program calls this quarter, which led to 6 additional follow up calls to support caregivers undergoing an investigation this quarter. The FIRST Program has not been a well-utilized element of the program. While the caregivers who call do sometimes appreciate clarity on the investigation process, that need could be met through information provided at the time of an investigation by the department. Some callers are looking for advocacy help for disputing with DCYF. CaRES does not provide this service. We are beginning to question whether this element of the program should be reexamined, given the amount of resources going toward staffing it.

TRENDS

Prospective caregivers have reported high levels of satisfaction and relief in finding that CaRES can offer assistance in navigating the licensing process, which they report is confusing and daunting.

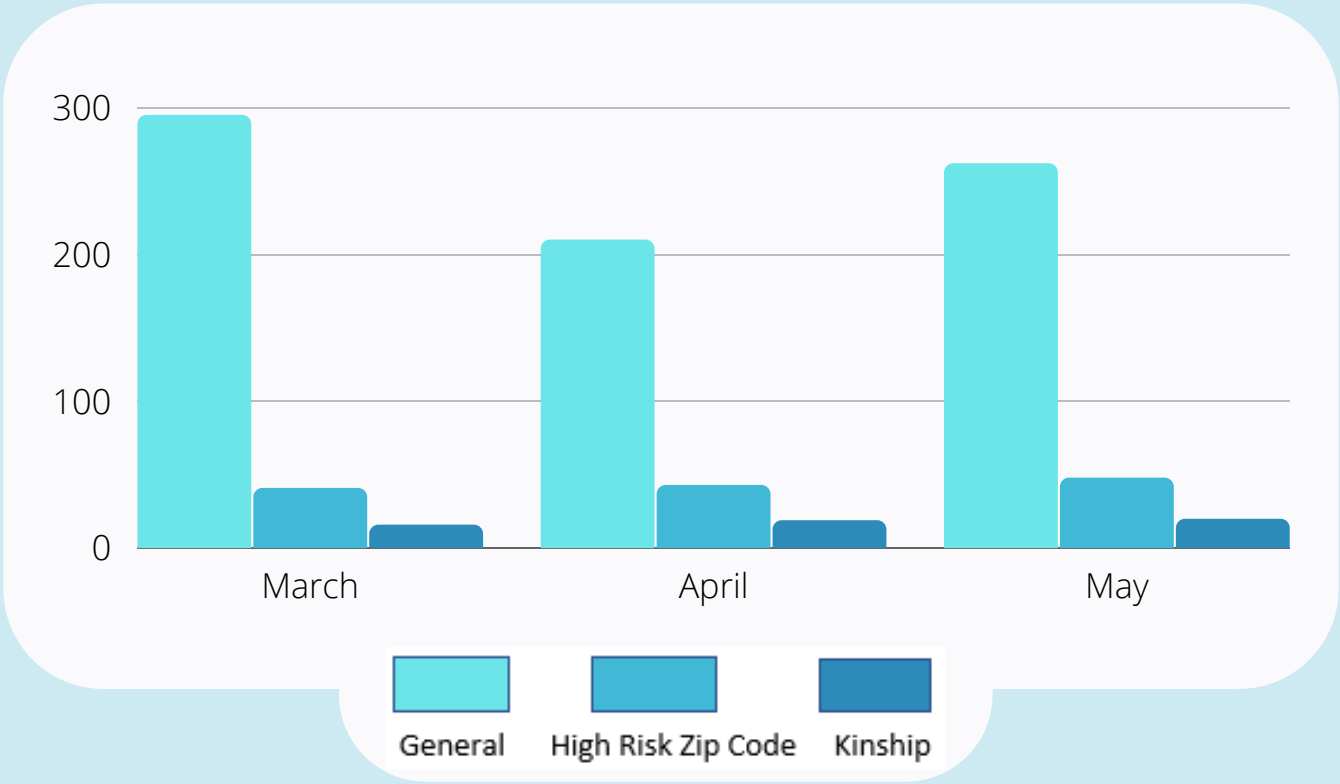
New caregivers are enthusiastic about the challenges and rewards of caregiving. They are eager to participate in topic-based support groups and have been providing very positive feedback about the program. We are seeing ever-increasing engagement with the Mentors as new caregivers build trusting relationships with their local Mentors.

Veteran caregivers are the most challenging for CaRES staff to reach. Those who do connect are reporting high levels of frustration with DCYF. Their distress is concerningly high and CaRES staff are having frequent conversations with caregivers who report planning to quit. The majority of complaints can be traced back to lack of effective communication between workers and caregivers. We are working to gain trust and provide useful support.

Kinship caregivers have been very responsive to outreach. They are expressing gratitude at the connection to resources and local support, and especially relief at learning about non-needy TANF and information about how to navigate the system.

PROSPECTIVE CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

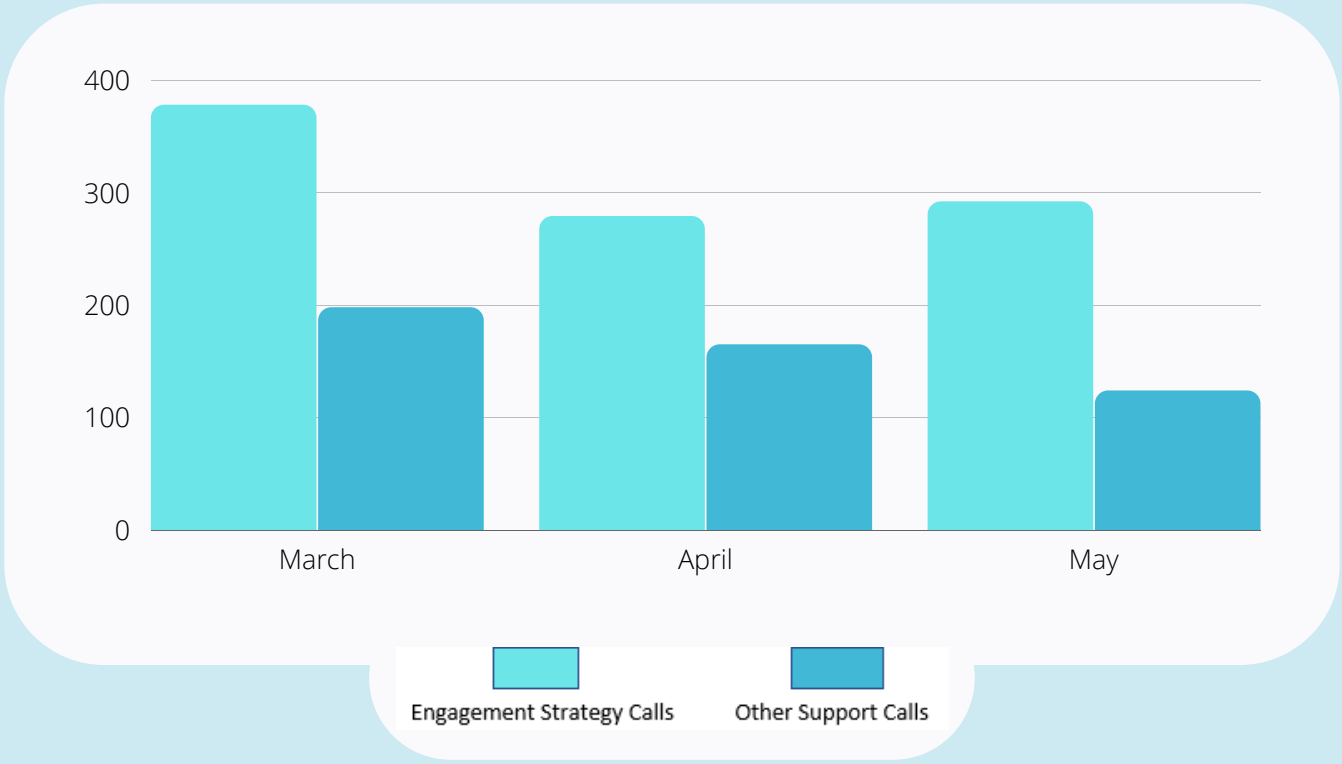
During the first quarter, a total of 954 prospective foster parents received a welcome email detailing next steps. Of those, 767 received a general welcome email, while 187 (132 from high removal ZIP code areas and 55 who identified as prospective kinship caregivers) received emails as well as a personal phone call in the first quarter. There were an additional 129 supportive contacts to prospective caregivers in the first quarter.



CURRENT CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

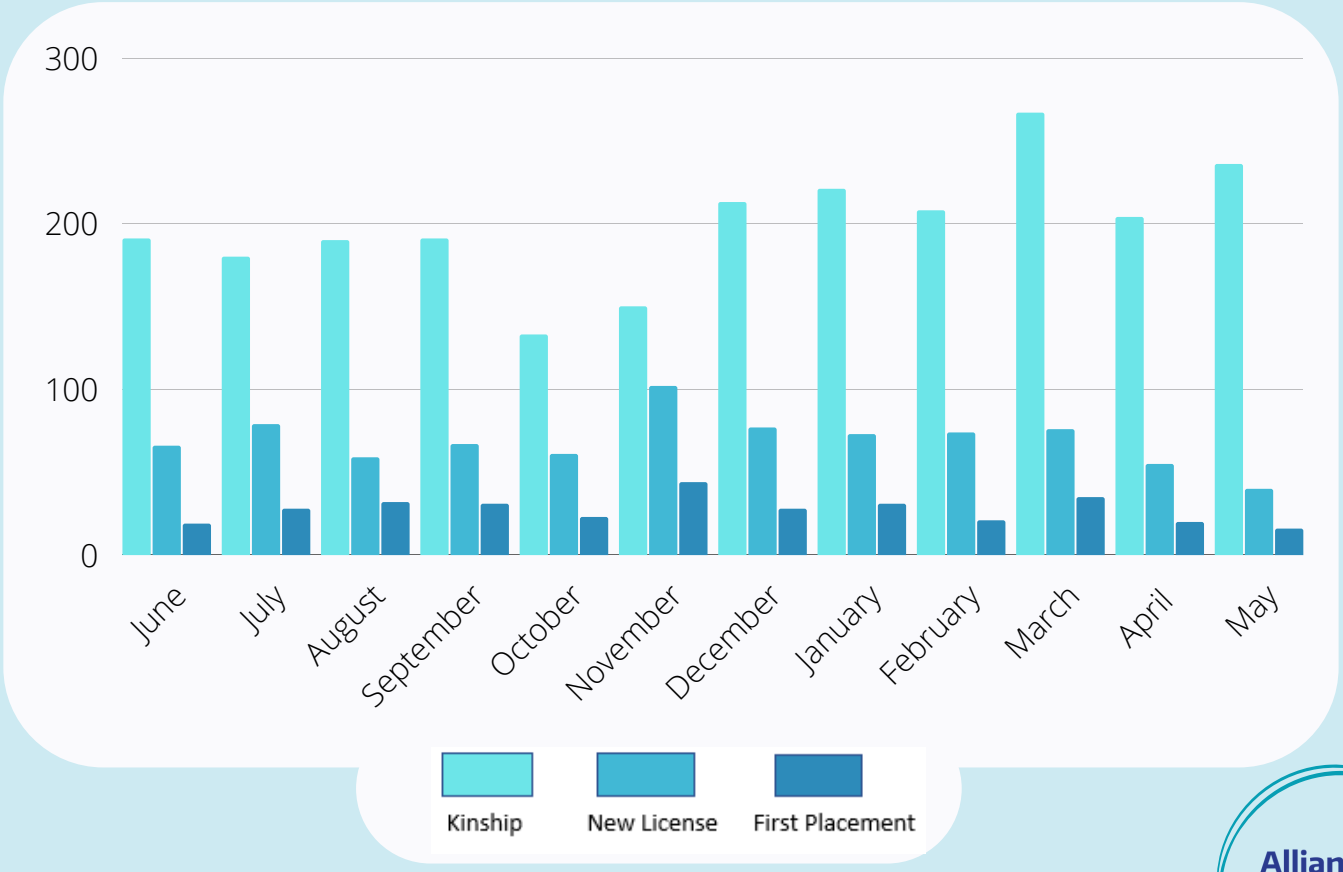
Over the last quarter, a total of 949 calls based on our caregiver engagement strategy occurred (to newly licensed caregivers, caregivers with their first placement, and kinship caregivers).

We think it is important to highlight that there have also been 487 additional contacts (individual emails, calls, and texts) to support current caregivers in the last quarter (including calls to caregivers at 6 months post licensure). These contacts show that we are successfully building ongoing relationships with caregivers so that they call back for more support when issues arise. These contacts are one way we measure our program's success.



CURRENT CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT
CONTINUED

Over the last quarter, a total of 949 individuals received calls as they had a kinship placement, were newly licensed, or had a first placement. Of those calls, 74% were to kinship caregivers, 18% were to newly licensed caregivers, and 7% were to caregivers with their first placement. Contacts with kinship caregivers remain slightly higher this quarter than in previous quarters. Contacts with both newly licensed caregivers and caregivers with a first placement have gone down slightly this quarter. This is likely due to the decision made by DCYF to have the CaRES team focus the engagement strategy on state foster home placements only. Per DCYF, the CaRES team is no longer contacting caregivers labeled as private agency foster care homes.



CURRENT CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

SUCCESS STORIES

Every month we report on examples of caregiver support by sharing comments, testimonials, notes from Mentor calls, or examples. Here are a few from this quarter to illustrate the impact of our Mentors' support.

- Kinship caregivers shared:
  - *"They got licensed to foster adopt a relative who is currently placed with her parents. They will likely not move the child until they change the permanency plan in about 2months. H. spends a lot of time with the child. We discussed the foster to adopt journey and I recommended she check out the SFDG on this topic. We also discussed how the social worker keeps changing and how to navigate that, the child's crying and behavior before visits, OAAs, case timelines and I answered all of her questions and invited her to keep in touch. I followed up with the newly licensed email and highlighted the Foster to Adopt SFDG."*

  - *"K. and I talked for a half hour. She is struggling with their 15 year old suitable-other placement. Most of the conflict revolves around the cell phone and chores. I encouraged her to revisit the guidelines they set when he first moved in 6months ago as a check in and find out what he thinks they can do for him and talk again about being a part of their home and the areas he needs to pitch in more. She will send me her email address so I can send her a copy of a contract I had with a teen in my home once."*

CURRENT CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

SUCCESS STORIES, CONTINUED

- The following are pulled from Mentors' notes describing successful calls:
  - *"Called 5/20/22, talked with S. She had actually texted me on 5/13/22 to let me know they received their first placement and we texted back and forth for a few minutes. When I called her today, she said the child had only stayed for a few days, and then 'needed to go to a family with more experience.' She seemed pretty sad about it and I know she was very excited on May 13 about receiving this child...I encouraged her to keep in touch with me and keep reaching out, and to consider our support groups...I think we will be keeping in touch."*

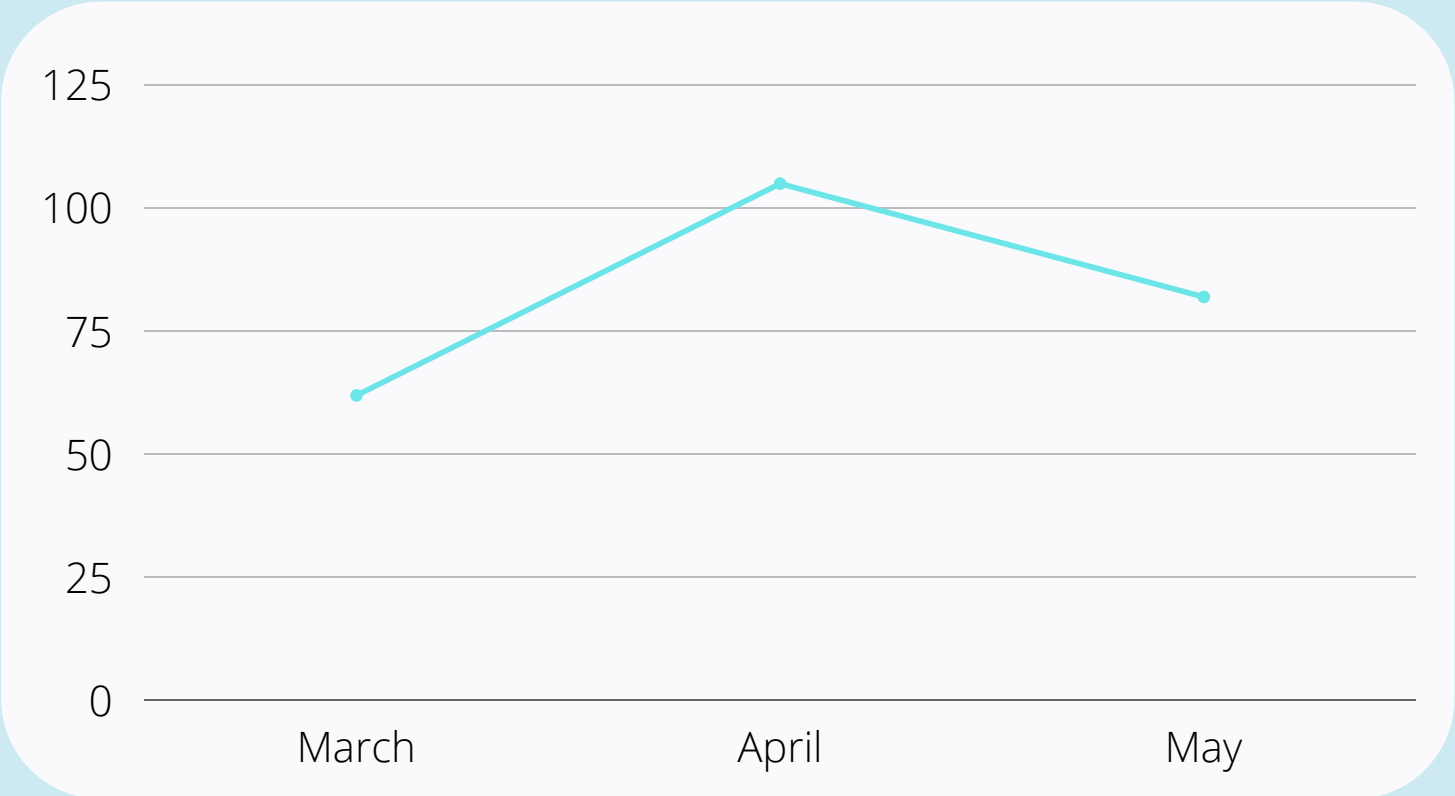
  - *"M. is still grieving the loss of a child she had for 4 years that went back to the father when the state told him that he had to take all of his 4 children back or none. He had wanted M. to adopt his 2 girls, but... [ended up] taking all 4 back even though he said that was not what he felt he could do. There is a lot of loss in this foster parent's journey... She said it meant a lot to her to be able to talk to someone today that was willing to listen and that she knew was OK to talk to."*

  - *"Spoke to B. again. Answered questions about the different supervision levels for visitation and who to ask about what care items she should be providing for visitation. Answered questions about dependency process and timeline general timelines and how DCYF views each new sibling as an independent case and timeline. Answered general questions about termination of parental rights."*

CURRENT CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY MENTORSHIP GROUPS

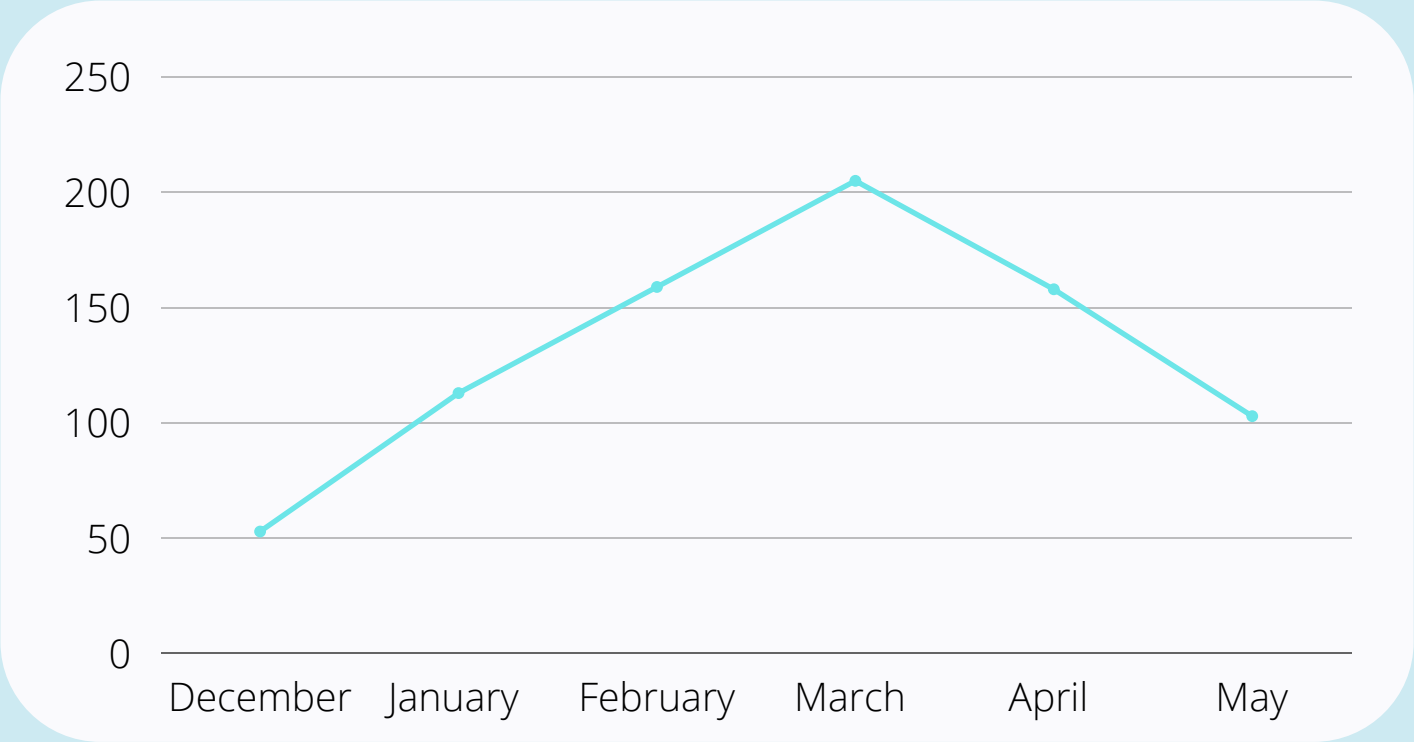
Over the last quarter CaRES has offered on average 18 Community Mentorship Groups per month, including Drop-In Discussion Groups, In-person Support Groups, Online Support Groups, and the Story Time. This quarter, Community Groups were attended by a total of 249 people, which is almost identical to last quarter's attendance. Our two in-person groups had slightly higher attendance in April, which likely explains the April bump. We continue to experiment with options in this category of support to see what caregivers will respond to.



CURRENT CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

SUPPORTIVE FACILITATED DISCUSSION GROUPS

Over the last quarter CaRES has, on average, offered 36 Supportive Facilitated Discussion Groups (SFDGs) per month, covering a range of topics. In the last quarter support groups were attended by a total of 466 people. (As a reminder, these are not necessarily 466 unique participants as caregivers may take multiple sessions of a group or engage with multiple groups.) There has been a steady decrease in attendance from March to May, though the overall total attendance is up this quarter (466) compared to last quarter (325). We believe this may be attributable to the fact that there was a significant increase in attendance during the prior quarter which, in comparison, seems to indicate a decrease this quarter.



SUPPORTIVE FACILITATED DISCUSSION GROUP OFFERINGS

SELF-CARE

Who Is Taking Care of the Caregiver?: This group will engage in conversations around how to make sure you see how valuable your contribution is, as well as also how demanding it can be. You can talk about challenges you're facing when thinking about self-care, because real life does sometimes make it hard to prioritize. You'll work toward developing an action plan that takes into account your unique circumstances and proactively addresses things that might derail your self-supporting activities.

Boundaries As Self-Care: This group is an extension of the supportive facilitated discussion group "Who Is Taking Care of the Caregiver?" In this group, you will engage in conversations around how to make sure you see how setting and keeping healthy boundaries allows you to continue doing the valuable work you do while protecting your important relationships. You can talk about challenges you're facing when thinking about boundaries, because real life sometimes makes it hard to say no or hold to your priorities. You'll work toward developing an action plan that proactively addresses things that might make it hard to maintain your identified healthy boundaries.

Grief and Loss in Your Foster Care Journey: As a caregiver for a child in the foster care system, grief and loss are an inherent part of your journey. You may be grieving a placement that isn't going as expected or hoped. Even as you celebrate a child's return home or to an adoptive placement, your family may be experiencing the loss of the child. We will talk about the realities of grief and loss, and share strategies for walking through the grieving process. You will engage in discussions about how to experience loss and yet continue to provide a loving environment for children placed with you in the future.

CONSIDERING ADOPTION

Foster-to-Adopt Journey: As a prospective adoptive foster parent, your journey from placement to adoptions is different from other adoption experiences. The goal of concurrent planning leads to unique challenges and beautiful opportunities. During the three sessions, you will consider some of the challenges of the foster-to-adopt process and develop strategies to help you fulfil your role in the adoption triad.

SUPPORTIVE FACILITATED DISCUSSION GROUP OFFERINGS
CONTINUED

BOOK CLUBS

The Connected Child: The CaRES team will be leading a group through reading and discussion of “The Connected Child,” by Karyn Purvis. “The Connected Child” lays out the foundational principles for Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI), a therapeutic model that trains caregivers to provide effective support and treatment for at-risk children. Discussion at the five weekly book club meetings will dive into what TBRI is, and discussion will include a look at new strategies for building connection and managing behaviors.

The Connected Parent: “The Connected Parent” by Karyn Purvis and Lisa Qualls is the focus of this book club. Discussion will review TBRI principles and dive into practical parenting applications and real life strategies for understanding attachment, teaching respect, understanding sensory needs, adapting strategies for teens, and taking care of yourself.

Dancing with a Porcupine: The CaRES team leads you through a reading and discussion of “Dancing with a Porcupine” by Jennie Owens. This book shares the compelling story of the author’s struggle to save her own life while caring for three children she and her husband adopted from foster care. In three sessions across six weeks, you will discuss themes including: self-care; trauma-informed care; expectations and hurt feelings; compassion fatigue; and balancing real life with the outside pressure to look like you are doing it all well.

Trying Differently Rather Than Harder: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: The CaRES team leads you through a reading and discussion of “Trying Differently Rather Than Harder: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders” by Diane Malbin. This book is a readable, narrative discussion of the neurobehavioral approach to working with children and youth with FASD. The book focuses on understanding behaviors differently through case studies and examples of how FASD impacts everyday life. During four sessions, you will be discussing themes including: adaptions, common challenges, cognitive changes and strategies to address them, working with memory disruptions, and talking about FASD in a supportive informative manner.

SUPPORTIVE FACILITATED DISCUSSION GROUP OFFERINGS
CONTINUED

PARENTING

Littlest Lives and Their Big Needs – Parenting 0 to 2: The earliest years are among the most critical to a child's long-term development. Children under 2 who are in foster care often require supports and approaches that are not so typical for their peers. You will talk through their needs, develop strategies to address those needs, and identify the resources available to help you support the littlest lives in care. You will also be able to build community with other caregivers of kids under 2 to share resources, experiences and problem-solving strategies.

Parenting Teens: This facilitated discussion group is a continuation of the seven-part "Parenting Teens" webinar. This group will continue to explore strategies for parenting teens with a history of trauma, developing healthy and supportive relationships with your teen, nurturing their identity, and understanding their challenging behaviors. You'll work with other parents of teens to develop an action plan that takes into account your and your teen's unique circumstances and proactively addresses the challenges you face.

Parenting in the Digital Age: Ready access to smart phones, tables, and computers has created a whole new world of challenges for caregivers. Youth do not need to leave their bedrooms be introduced to risky situations. During this supportive discussion group, you will talk with fellow caregivers about the challenges of parenting in the digital age, learn some warning signs of when a child's internet usage has become unsafe, and practice having a conversation about internet safety with your pre-teen or teen. We will also discuss basic internet programs, apps, geo tracking data, dangers in sharing pictures, videos, and personal information online.

SUPPORTIVE FACILITATED DISCUSSION GROUP OFFERINGS
CONTINUED

PARENTING, Continued

Caring for Drug Impacted Infants and Children: In this group, we will share experiences, resources, and best practices for caring for infants and children who have been exposed to chemicals in utero. We will discuss signs of withdrawal; what works best in caring for an impacted infant including therapeutic handling techniques and share parenting experiences. We will also discuss issues, behaviors, interventions, effective parenting techniques, and resources for the children in your care.

Practical Parenting Skills for Caregivers: It isn't always easy to meet the complex needs of a child while navigating a new parental role. Foster parenting calls for a trauma-informed, mindful, and positive response to a wide variety of behaviors. You will work with fellow caregivers to develop practical parenting strategies that are trauma-informed, appropriate for the child, and suited to your home.

Fostering While Parenting, Supporting Our Biological and Adopted Children: When you have children who live at home with you, becoming a foster parent also means becoming a foster family. Growing up with foster siblings comes with unique challenges but there are strategies you can use to help your bio and adopted kids adapt and thrive!
During both sessions of this supportive facilitated discussion, you will collaborate with fellow caregivers to identify some of the unique challenges bio and adopted kids face, consider the impact fostering may have on your children, and share strategies you can use to nurture strength and resilience as a family unit.

Using Storytime for Connection and Support: Reading with your children can do much more than support their academic growth! During this supportive facilitated discussion caregivers will discuss strategies they can use before, during, and after reading to build social-emotional learning with the children in their care. Caregivers will also collaborate to identify techniques they can use to increase attachment with their child through reading and story time. Whether it is picture books, a chapter book or a series, reading with the children in your home can lead to deeper attachment and improved social-emotional skills!

Alliance CaRES

SUPPORTIVE FACILITATED DISCUSSION GROUP OFFERINGS
CONTINUED

NAVIGATING THE SYSTEM

Wellness Resource Wednesday: Dive into health topics with local experts to best support children in care. We're excited to announce an amazing new group focused on building your awareness of wellness resources that can support you and the children in your care. Wellness Resource Wednesdays is a free drop-in group meeting 6:30-8 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month. In partnership with UW Harborview and Coordinated Care, these sessions will offer opportunities to learn directly from expert doctors and connect with caregivers sharing your experiences. The meetings start with a 45-minute presentation by Harborview doctors and conclude with 45 minutes of Q&A around services of CaRES, Coordinated Care and Harborview. The medical topics were selected based on common areas foster parents would like more support around, and training credit will be available. On alternating months, sessions will be a chance to simply share perspectives and resources around navigating health systems as a caregiver.

While You Wait, Fostering Considerations: You've thought long and hard about what it means for you to be a foster parent. While you wait for your license or first placement to arrive, this facilitated discussion will help you consider some of the needs in the fostering community and how you are suited to meet them. You'll work toward developing parameters for accepting your first placements to promote a good fit for both you and child(ren) in your care.

Fostering as Part of a Team: As a caregiver for a child in the foster care system, you are part of a parenting team. The courts, the social worker, CASA, GAL, medical team, therapists and the child's biological family all have a role to play. Knowing what your role is and how to partner with the other members of the child's team improves the child's care, your experience as a foster parent, and the long-term outcomes of the placement. During this group, we will talk about who the members of the team are and their roles, and identify ways to promote positive relationships with them. This will include a look at how to support family time and partnership with the biological/first family, and understanding the role of DCYF staff and how to positively partner for success.

SUPPORTIVE FACILITATED DISCUSSION GROUP OFFERINGS CONTINUED

NAVIGATING THE SYSTEM, Continued

Navigating Fostering as an LGBTQIA+ Caregiver: As an LGBTQIA+ caregiver have you felt that your Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) impacts your fostering journey? In this supportive facilitated discussion group, you will get a chance to talk with other LGBTQIA+ kinship and foster caregivers about their experiences and share your own. As a group, you will talk about useful tools and techniques for navigating common issues and use these to develop strategies specifically for your family. This single session facilitated discussion is specifically for kinship and foster caregivers who identify as LGBTQIA+ caring for children with any SOGIE.

SUPPORTING YOUTH & CHILDREN'S IDENTITIES

Supporting LGBTQIA+ Youth in Foster Care: Understanding your child's identity is critical to providing them the care and support they need to navigate the development years. Children with an LGBTQIA+ identity may need additional support as they navigate social and cultural factors. In this supportive facilitated discussion group, you will have an opportunity to talk through LGBTQIA+ terminology and identify concrete tools you can use to support a child's LGBTQIA+ identity. During the sessions, you can ask questions about support resources, share ways you have supported a child in your care, and hear how other caregivers have navigated situations related to a child's LGBTQIA+ identity.

Fostering Across Race, Ethnicity and Culture: Welcoming a child into your home, even temporarily, means accepting and affirming their whole selves. When a child has a different racial, ethnic, or cultural background than yours, it can be challenging to know the best ways to properly care for their unique physical, spiritual, and cultural needs. During this facilitated discussion, caregivers will share their racial, ethnic, or cultural perspective and develop strategies for meeting the needs of a child who has a different background or perspective. Facilitated by caregivers with lived experience in transracial and multi-cultural caregiving, this group aims to discuss the full scope of multi-racial, ethnic, and cultural foster families.

CURRENT CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

TESTIMONIALS FROM SUPPORTIVE FACILITATED DISCUSSION GROUPS

The response from attendees has been extremely positive.

Attendees were asked, "What aspects of the support group were the most useful for you?" Comments included:

- There were so many people in this one and they actually spoke. It's important.
- Letting participants ask and answer questions related to what they're experiencing with their families.
- Meeting another family to connect with outside the group, the mix of new and tenured families.
- Going over the book and hearing others experiences and thoughts
- Interaction, through chat or voice
- Having the handout
- Personal sharing
- Advice and discussion
- Learning from other foster parents
- The collaborative sharing atmosphere
- Hearing the perspective and examples from others
- Everything about it was very useful. Thoroughly enjoyed the time spent. I could relate on a number of different levels.
- Zoom log in, friendly facilitators, relevant topic to my life
- Leaders were very engaging
- Hearing about useful tools and others having same issues as me
- Everyone else has so many amazing questions and such great advice!

CURRENT CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

TESTIMONIALS FROM SUPPORTIVE FACILITATED DISCUSSION GROUPS, CONTINUED

Attendees this quarter were also asked what feedback they have about the delivery of the support group, and comments included:

- Like zoom because we get to meet others from all over the state. The ease of being able to be anywhere or not have to drive somewhere was good too because it allowed for my husband and mom to join as well. Though in-person would have benefits as well.
- Thank you for attempting this topic! My bio kids have been asking what resources and tips are available for them to prepare.
- Expanding on the book clubs and or an overall support group for anyone who has gone through at least two TBRI trainings where we can meet monthly to go over and support each other with the same basis of parent style would be helpful. Several of us have been in the same classes and discussion groups feel like a monthly meet-up would be a great way to expand what we have learned but also to assist going forth. Thank you for adding this style of trauma-informed based care.
- Online class is very convenient. Very nice that there is no cost.
- I loved the virtual option - so much more convenient (4)
- Keep up the discussions. Sharing is so important.
- It was all good. Interaction between facilitators and class participants was excellent.
- Finally, folks who truly understand and are so helpful
- It was wonderful!
- Thank you so much for a great training with great trainers!!! (2)
- Thanks, appreciate all the help and support.

LOOKING AHEAD

In our second quarter of our second year, the CaRES program will continue to expand and grow. Elements we look forward to introducing in the next quarter include:

- Launching Park Playdates for the second summer for in-person caregiver connection across the state
- Increasing representation of diverse voices and cultures among our offerings in order to provide more effective support for all caregivers
- Continuing to publicize CaRES so that all caregivers and DCYF staff are aware of the program
- Building and expanding upon the successes of the program, including adding more Mentors.