

SERVING 52 COUNTIES
IN NORTHEAST AND
NORTH CENTRAL
NEBRASKA
~ SINCE 1998 ~



September is National Foster Parent Month

Building Blocks would like to take this opportunity to thank our foster parents and respite providers for their hard work and dedication to children throughout the year.

We are truly blessed to have you as part of our team. As a sign of our appreciation, we will be holding weekly drawings throughout the month. The winners will be announced on our Facebook Page.

2020 Fall Festivals

Building Blocks invites you to our Fall Festivals

Poppy's Pumpkin Patch
55275 837th Road - Norfolk
Checkout Poppy's out at:
www.poppypumpkinpatch.com

Harvest Moon Farm
1098 County Rd N - Oakland
Check Harvest Moon out at:
www.harvestmoonoakland.com

Helgoth's Pumpkin Patch
121 Eagle Road - St. Libory
Check out Helgoth's out at:
www.helgothspumpkinpatch.com

Please notify Building Blocks if you will be arriving after 1:00p.m.



Saturday

26

September

RSVP to Rachael Kallhoff by:
Monday, September 21, 2020
at: 402-336-4841 or
Rachael@buildingblocksforkids.org

Hope to see you there!

NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

2020

Did you know that last year alone, 4,000 adoptions were finalized on National Adoption Day? Events are held all over the country to celebrate this holiday—during which communities and courts join efforts to find the right families for children in the foster care system. On November 21st, we celebrate National Adoption Day as thousands of foster children are welcomed into their forever homes.



THE 3RD ANNUAL "INSPIRED TO IMPROVE"
CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR
OCTOBER 17TH HAS BEEN CANCELLED.

Building Blocks Holiday Party

Due to COVID-19 it is with deep sadness and heavy hearts that we announce the cancellation of this year's Holiday Party that was scheduled for Saturday December 5, 2020 at Northeast Community College.

We know that this will come as a disappointment. This is not a decision we have taken lightly but we need to prioritize the health and safety of all individuals.

Thanks for your patience and understanding!



Social Media, Facebook, Confidentiality: Things You Need to Know. . .

As technology advances and becomes more accessible, so does the desire to share your joys and concerns on social media like Twitter and Facebook. Building Blocks would like to remind you that you cannot do so. It is a violation of confidentiality policies that you agreed to uphold as a foster parent for your licensure. For your convenience, we have listed the policy for you to review as we are again getting closer to the holidays.

1-007 RELEASE OF PHOTOGRAPHS AND IDENTIFYING INFORMATION REGARDING WARDS.

No photographs or slides, electronic video, or other identifying information regarding a Department ward may be released for use on posters, in news stories, presentations, press releases, newsletters without the written consent of the child's worker and agreement of the parent, if parental rights are intact.

In deciding whether to give consent, the worker will consider:

- Legal status of parental rights;*
- The child's opinion and wishes;*
- Purpose and use of material;*
- Effect of use on child and family*

If a situation is questionable, consent shouldn't be given

If you have any questions on this policy, please contact your Resource & Licensing Specialist!

Response to Shane: Children Who Lie and Steal

by Katharine Leslie

Dirty underwear hidden in closets, food stolen in the night and hidden under pillows, toys that just appear from nowhere, big brown eyes that swear "it wasn't me" or a child voice saying "So what, I don't care!"

Sound familiar? We live with these children. They lie, manipulate with sweet kisses and charming words, and perplex us with mood swings and angry fits. Parenting these children is tricky business, in part because we love them so, in part because these behaviors can make them so unlovable.



We know they are suffering but don't always know how to help them. One thing we are sure of, though—providing “a loving home” is not enough to change these behaviors.

I know about this because I am a psychologist who specializes in child development, parenting behavior, and parent/child relationships. But I also have hands on experience; I am a foster parent, and I have two adopted children of my own.

Why do our children act this way, and why isn't a loving home enough? In part because they may have had to lie and cheat to survive. Once they become integral parts of their lives, these adaptive skills are highly resistant to change.

Another reason is that many of our children suffer from attachment problems. Whether your child had a bonded relationship with a birth parent that was then severed, or your child was never bonded to anyone, they share a similar wound, and therefore similar responses. They lie, sneak, cheat, hate, charm, trick, manipulate, hurt before being hurt, trust no one at any cost, and try to control every situation. Love no one.

As I talk about possible interventions for these behaviors, keep in mind these four things:

1. Every child is different, what works for one child may not work for another. Furthermore, what works at one time for a particular child may not work at another time with the same child.

2. You may have to vary the suggested interventions depending upon whether your child is in your home for the short term or the long term, whether you intend on adopting or not, and the age or stage of the child.
3. Notice that I use the word intervention, not “solution.” A child cannot experience what our children have suffered and walk away unscathed. We have to face facts; we are not miracle workers, we cannot save every child. Sometimes we just have to accept “good enough.”
4. I am in this with you, struggling day by day, reassessing, analyzing, regrouping, trying new strategies, feeling sure on most days and insecure on others. The truth of the matter is there are no sure-to-work interventions and there is only one solution—prevention.

My recommendation for dealing with lying and sneaky behaviors is threefold:

- 1) preventive strategies,
- 2) punishment in the form of restitution, and
- 3) the teaching of caring.

Prevention

Prevention, in this case, means monitoring your child as much as possible just as you would a toddler. We never leave toddlers unsupervised because they can make bad choices. The same could be said for our children. As they attempt to figure out their new world they act out on their anger, fear, and frustration. They may want to cause others pain just to observe their reactions, or to play the role of “taker” instead of the “taken.” Being there to supervise, monitor, and correct your child’s behavior can help him or her refigure the world for what it is now—safe and predictable. Of course that means you must be consistent and reliable. You must model honesty and truth at all times. If you tell white lies or act furtively your foster child will be the first to recognize and mimic your behavior.

Restitution

When lying takes place, don’t confront your child with whether he did it, just assume that he did. If you ask whether the child has stolen you only set him or her up for more lies. Accept that it is true; a child who lies has not earned the benefit of the doubt.

For example, if your child comes home with an unknown toy, take the child with the toy back to the friend’s house. Make him give back the toy and apologize. Yes, this may humiliate and embarrass him, and hopefully he will feel shame and guilt; appropriate shame and guilt are the cornerstones of a civilized, humane, moral society. He needs to understand that because he hurts he does not have the right to hurt others. You need to understand that one of the reasons our children steal is to fill up the emptiness they feel—“If I have what that child has then I will be happy.”

If your child continues to steal or behave badly towards others then he must pay restitution—he has to do something nice for the person he hurt, including a parent. Let the restitution fit the crime, if possible. If he breaks a toy have him give up one of his toys (I know you bought it with your money—he can pay you back by doing extra chores). Doing another person’s chores or nurturing the other person (e.g., giving a back rub, *making breakfast) are good paybacks. Restitution is an especially effective technique because not

only does it demonstrate consequences for behavior, but the act of doing something nice for others can begin to replace the need to hurt others or to act selfishly.

Teaching Caring

This of course leads us to part three of the plan—teaching caring. What prevents most of us from lying, stealing, and cheating? We care about others. Caring about others starts in infancy; we learn to care about others because we were cared for. As we mature, this caring leads to recognizing the rights of others and having empathy for their experiences, all of which act as major deterrents to antisocial behaviors.

Many foster children, however, missed out on this early nurturing and as a result do not demonstrate moral behavior. Therefore, a good long-term plan for decreasing lying, stealing, and cheating behaviors is increasing caring behaviors. But how do you teach someone to care who perhaps was not cared for, or who may not want to care or know how to care?

To model caring this late in the game is not enough. Many of our children use us without giving in return; they will not care about us simply because we care about them. Therefore we must teach caring by explicitly pointing it out. Caring behavior is typically everything you do that is taken for granted (e.g., cooking for the family, doing laundry, shopping, working, playing games). Instead of talking about acting good or bad, talk about acting caring or not caring.

Notice I'm not talking about love. Expecting love should be reserved for a permanent family. However, regardless of whether your child remains with you or not, he or she needs to care about others. Behaviors of each family member should be acknowledged as caring or not caring, especially the foster child's behavior. Additionally, he or she should know that acting caring or not caring is each family member's choice. After all, you may not want to do the laundry, but you choose to do it because that is the caring thing to do.

There are other interventions that may work as well, but because of limited space I couldn't mention them all. Also, it is very possible that the suggested plan will not work for children with more extreme attachment problems. You will recognize these children. They deliberately disobey explicit and consistent family rules because they know how important they are to you. Punishments are meaningless and the effects of rewards do not last or generalize to other situations. The more you expect these children to love and care the worse they act. These are extremely disturbed children who may benefit from intense reattachment therapies.

Katherine Leslie, Ph.D., is co-owner and senior consultant for Brand New Day Consultants, a team of experts offering education, and counseling on child development, parenting, family life, and communication to homes, schools, organizations, and businesses. [E-mail: kpleslie@journeys.net](mailto:kpleslie@journeys.net).

“Lend a Hand” George F. Holm Memorial Fund



**Congratulations to
The 2020 “Lend a Hand”
Scholarship Winner**

Olivia Lindgren

“Lend a Hand” was created in 2018 by the Holm family to honor the legacy of George Frank Holm. Funds are available yearly to graduating foster youth in Nebraska’s Legislative District 40 (Boyd, Cedar, Dixon, Holt, Knox and Rock counties) and Wayne County as well as youth served by Building Blocks.

This memorial fund will bestow up to two awards of \$1,000.00 each year with the intention to aid in continuing the recipient’s education, whether through vocational schooling, college, or, as George often referred to regarding his own learning path, “the school of life.”

Olivia Lindgren daughter of Jim and Becky Lindgren is a 2020 graduate of Elgin High School. Olivia plans to attend Wayne State college this fall majoring in Early Childhood Education.

Now Accepting Applications for 2021

To be eligible, applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Be a high school graduate or possess a GED under the age of 25 **OR** be on track to graduate high school or complete a GED program by the spring of current academic year.
2. Currently be in foster care or formerly have been in foster care in any of the above listed counties.
3. Provide a letter of recommendation from **at least** one teacher, mentor, or employer.
4. Provide most recent high school transcript at time of application or G.E.D. certificate.
5. Provide a typed response to **each** of the following prompts: **(in total no less than 2 pages, no more than 6 pages, in Times New Roman 12-point font, double spaced, one-inch margins):**
 - A) Describe a time you **took initiative** or acted through self-motivation to improve a situation as an individual or as part of a group and summarize what you learned from the experience.
 - B) Define what **success** looks like for you.
 - C) Outline your **academic, work, or life goals** and explain how funds from this scholarship will help you accomplish them.

Questions regarding application process may be directed to Rachael Kallhoff @ Building Blocks (402-336-4841) or e-mailed to Karen Holm (kgcleaners@yahoo.com). For a copy of the application, visit www.buuildngblocksforkids.org

**George F. Holm Memorial Fund
c/o Building Blocks
118 North 5th Street
O’Neill, NE 68763**



Schumacher Family—4/30/2020



Morgan Family—4/9/20



Henderson Family—3/19/20



Baumgart Family—8/11/2020



Almgren Family—3/19/20



Wunderlich Family—8-11-2020



Don't forget to check out our website, www.buildingblocksforkids.org for updated information on events, resources, in-services and pre-service training.

Provide your e-mail addresses to Tonya Bauman at: tonya@buildingblocksforkids.org or 402-851-1097 for enrollment in our online training services.

A Friendly Reminder . . .

DHHS Regulations require that each foster parent get at least 12 clock hours of Department Approved In-service training annually within the effective dates of his/her license. (DHHS Compliance Review Form).

Each Building Blocks location has a lending library as well as various self-directed study materials for your assistance. Our website also maintains a current and upcoming training schedule. For your convenience, your Resource & Licensing Specialist will be sending you a quarterly update of the number of hours remaining for the year.



Building Blocks is looking for additional foster homes to provide care for high needs children including teens, sibling groups, kids with severe behaviors and those exiting higher levels of care. Building Blocks will be offering a reward to anyone that recruits a new foster home willing to take placements of this population that completes the licensing process.

For information contact the office at 402-920-1614.

Support Groups

IN-PERSON SUPPORT GROUP

Columbus Support Group: Meets the second Tuesday of the month, call for details due to COVID-19. Childcare available. Contact Tammy Welker at: 402-989-2197. Peace Lutheran Church, 2720 28th St. 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Norfolk Support Group: Meets quarterly. Childcare available. Contact Terry Robinson at 402-460-7296 Northern Heights Baptist Church, 3000 Harvest View Drive 6:30-8:00 p.m.

ONLINE SUPPORT GROUP

FACES: Online Support Group: Every Tuesday 9:00-10:00 p.m. CT Contact Felicia at Felicia@nfapa.org to become a member of this closed group. Meets weekly to discuss issues foster parents are facing. Support only.

TRANSRACIAL SUPPORT GROUP

Parenting Across Color Lines: This group supports and strengthens racial identity in transracial families. Support only. Meets the fourth Monday of the month. Children welcome to attend with parents. Newman United Methodist Church, 2242 R Street, Lincoln. 6:15-8:00 pm Contact the NFAPA office to register for Family Events or any questions. 402-476-2273 For more information or to RSVP, contact Laurie Miller at Laurie@nfapa.org

GENERAL INFORMATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT
RICHARD FITCH

VICE PRESIDENT
DARCY POESE

SECRETARY/TREASURER
TRACI OBER, CFO

DIRECTORS
COREY FISHER
SARAH HENDERSON
RUTH MATTHEWS-MOTT
CODY HAVARNEK
ANN WOOD-HOLLEY

OFFICES

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402-336-4841
FAX-402-336-4640

101 EAST WILSON AVENUE, NORFOLK
FAX-402-379-1056

1300 SOUTH LOCUST STE F, GRAND ISLAND
FAX-308-675-6966

CEO: JACQUELYN MEYER
PROGRAM DIRECTOR: RACHAEL KALLHOFF

1-800-689-0945 ~ ON-CALL 402-394-5736
WWW.BUILDINGBLOCKSFORKIDS.ORG

Upcoming Events & Activities

September

September is National Foster Parent Month

- 7 – Labor Day
- 8 – Columbus Support Group
- 22 – Autumn Begins
- 26 – Helgoth's Fall Festival – St. Paul – 1:00p.m. – 3:00p.m.
Poppy's Fall Festival – Norfolk – 1:00p.m. – 3:00p.m.
Harvest Moon Farm Fall Festival – Oakland – 1:00p.m. – 3:00p.m.
- 28 – Board of Directors Meeting – 5:00p.m.

October

- 3 – Harvest of Harmony Parade (CANCELLED)
- 13 – Columbus Support Group
- 17 – “Inspired to Improve” Conference (CANCELLED)
- 31 – Happy Halloween

November

November is National Adoption Month

- 1 – Daylight Saving Time ends
- 3 – Election Day
- 10 – Columbus Support Group
- 11 – Veteran's Day
- 21 – Adoption Day Celebrations (TBA)
- 23 – Board of Directors Meeting – 5:00p.m.
- 26 – Happy Thanksgiving!
- 27 – Building Blocks offices will be closed

December

- 5 – 2020 Annual Holiday Party (CANCELLED)
- 8 – Columbus Support Group
- 24 – Building Blocks offices will be closed
- 25 – Merry Christmas!
- 31 – Building Blocks offices will be closed

RESOURCES

Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network: Respite care, planned or emergency, is the provision of short-term, temporary relief to those who are caring for family members with special needs. <https://nrrs.ne.gov/respitesearch/>

Friends of Foster Children: Foster parents and providers have the opportunity to apply for special grants for foster children. www.ne-friends.org

Project Everlast: Foster youth council; www.projecteverlast.org

Susan Buffet Scholarship: Scholarships for graduating youth. www.buffetscholarships.org

Right Turn: Good support site for Foster Parents. www.RightTurnNE.org

NFAPA Newsletter: The NFAPA Newsletter is a good resource for articles about foster care news, legislature, behaviors, and ideas for foster parents. www.NFAPA.org

EMK Press: Publishes a variety of books and helpful resources as your families evolve on the journey of parenting. www.emkpress.com

Foster Parent Insurance Information: Information on the process and contacts for Foster Parent Insurance and how to make a claim. www.das.ne.gov/risk/foster-parent.html

WIC: Women, Infants and Children subsidy program. ALL foster children are eligible for WIC because they are on Medicaid. http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/wic_index.aspx

Through the Eyes of the Child: Is a good website to find information about Court and Documents. www.throughtheeyes.org

ATTACH: Providing training to foster parents and professionals to promote healthy attachment and heal trauma. www.ATTACH.org



**Visit us on Facebook at: Building
Blocks for Community Enrichment.**

Building Blocks for Community Enrichment
118 North 5th Street
O'Neill, NE 68763

Return Service Requested

