



Foster
Parent
Support
Services
Society

foster parents foster hope

Foster Parent Orientation Guide

MISSION STATEMENT

The FPSS Foster Parent Support Services Society is a Grass Roots organization committed to providing meaningful and accessible support, education and networking services which will continually enhance the skills and abilities of foster parents to deliver the best care possible to the children in their homes.

TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

We would like to recognize, acknowledge and thank the Coast Salish, Nuuchahnulth, and Kwakwaka'wakw ancestors and families on whose traditional lands we live.

We honour our relationships with our Indigenous neighbours.

Vancouver Island Map of First Nations:

<https://viea.ca/business-living-on-vancouver-island/first-nations/>

British Columbia First Nations A-Z Listing:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/consulting-with-first-nations/first-nations-negotiations/first-nations-a-z-listing>

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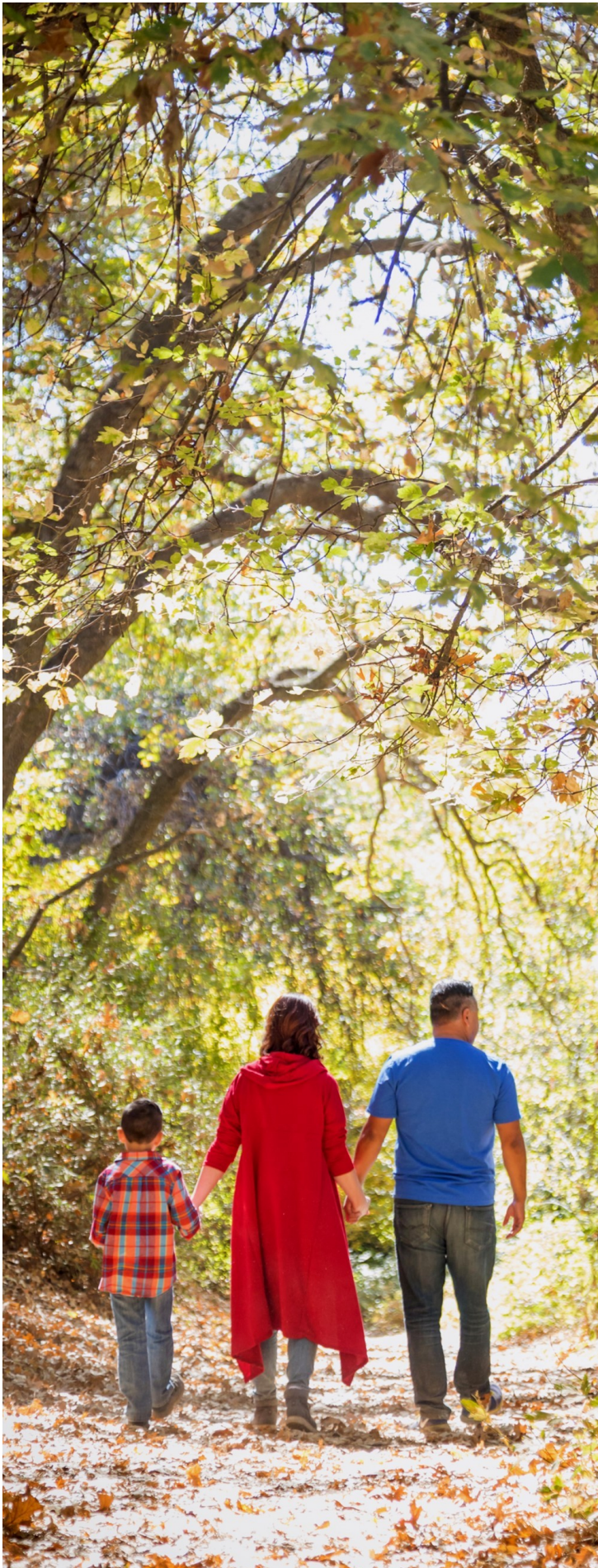
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Dear Foster Parent,

Welcome!

FPSS Foster Parent Support Services Society is a non-profit organization contracted by the Ministry of Children and Family Development to provide support, networking, communication, and on-going training services for the Foster Caregivers of the Vancouver Island Region. We liaise with the Ministry of Children and Family Development to keep you apprised of new and changing Ministry policies, guidelines, expectations, and initiatives.

As you have been approved to provide foster care by the Ministry, your Resource Worker has submitted your name, address and phone number to our office. We have entered the information into our database and you will be receiving our newsletter—*The Island Connection*.

Our newsletter is published five times a year and contains important information re: After Hours Support Line info, After Hours Emergency Numbers, Peer Support Groups, Mentoring Program, Regional and Local Workshops, Ministry Policy changes, Meetings, Special Events, Coffee Parties, Regional and Local Contact Numbers, etc.

We encourage you to use the FPSS Society Parenting Resource Library. We have books and DVDs covering most parenting topics. Items are available for loan—free of charge. We can also have books relevant to fostering shipped directly to your door.

You are welcome and encouraged to participate in our events, support groups and meetings. It is an excellent opportunity for you to meet and network with other Foster Caregivers. Please contact your Local Area Coordinator with any questions, issues or concerns.

Please feel free to contact our office anytime and find out more. We sincerely hope your fostering experience will be a positive and rewarding one.

Best Wishes for your continued success in fostering.

Sincerely,

Dan Malone
Executive Director
FPSS Foster Parent Support Services Society



FPSS FOSTER PARENT SUPPORT

WHAT IS FPSS FOSTER PARENT SUPPORT SERVICE SOCIETY?

The FPSS Society is a Grass Roots organization committed to providing meaningful and accessible support, education and networking services which will continually enhance the skills and abilities of foster parents to deliver the best care possible to the children in their homes.

Working cooperatively with the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development and the foster caregivers of Vancouver Island, the FPSS Society shares the responsibility for providing meaningful Education, Support and Networking opportunities to caregivers in our fostering community. We work to establish a nurturing environment for caregivers—

“A Supportive Culture”

—that empowers the foster caregivers of the region to become involved, enriches their understanding of Ministry expectations, and increases their caregiver competency, awareness, and accountability.

COORDINATOR SERVICES

Coordinators provide support services to foster caregivers through the organization, scheduling and facilitation of Peer Support Groups; offering foster caregivers an avenue for personal, individual support by making referral, recommendations and suggestions; providing foster caregivers with necessary Ministry publications to assist them in their role as caregivers; to introduce them to experienced foster caregivers as mentors; to assist them in locating relevant resource material; and to ensure they are aware of Ministry, council and community support services available to them.

Through caregiver contact at meetings, social events and workshop evaluations, the Coordinator identifies areas of concern, topics foster caregivers want more training on, and policies or procedures which are unclear. In consultation with the other FPSS staff members and the Strategic Planning Committee, the Coordinator organizes and facilitates workshops and forums to address the needs of foster caregivers in each area.



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CONTACT YOUR LOCAL COORDINATOR

South Island Area Coordinator

Tel: [778-430-5459](tel:778-430-5459) | Fax: [778-430-5463](tel:778-430-5463)
Email: sicoord@fpsss.com

Cowichan Valley Local Coordinator

Tel: [250-618-8327](tel:250-618-8327) |
Email: dacoord@fpsss.com

Central Island Area Coordinator

Tel: [250-618-8327](tel:250-618-8327)
Email: cicoord@fpsss.com

Port Alberni Local Coordinator

Tel: [250-735-1124](tel:250-735-1124)
Email: pacoord@fpsss.com

Comox Valley Local Coordinator

Tel: 250-986-7929
Email: cvcoord@fpsss.com

Upper Island Area Coordinator

Tel: [250-204-1566](tel:250-204-1566)
Email: uicoord@fpsss.com

North Island Coordinator

Tel: [1-888-922-8437](tel:1-888-922-8437)
Email: nicoordinator@fpsss.com

WHAT SERVICES DOES FPSS SOCIETY PROVIDE?

PEER SUPPORT GROUPS:

Opportunities for foster caregivers to network through the development, organization and scheduling of Peer Support Groups, which are meaningful and effective, and best meet the needs of foster caregivers in the VI Region.

PEER MENTORING PROGRAM:

A Mentor is an experienced foster caregiver who will act as a trusted advisor, friend or support person and reduce the isolation foster caregiver may experience. The goals of mentoring are to increase the retention rate of foster homes, provide foster caregivers with a support network and information, and to help prevent placement breakdown.

REGION-WIDE COMMUNICATION:

The Island Connection: comprehensive newsletter, published five times per year and distributed to all foster caregivers free of charge. *Website*: <http://fpsss.com>. *Area Offices*: located in Victoria and Nanaimo.

AREA COORDINATORS:

There are Area Coordinators available to assist foster parents in obtaining current and accurate information; support services to caregivers including training and development; and peer support in Victoria, Cowichan Valley, Nanaimo, Port Alberni, Comox Valley, and Campbell River.

MCFD TEAM BUILDING MEETINGS:

Identification, presentation and management of common issues for caregivers.

ONGOING TRAINING:

Opportunities for foster caregivers to further their skills and knowledge development.

INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTION SUPPORT TEAM:

Formerly the Protocol Support Team, the Investigation and Resolution Support Team provides support to caregivers involved in investigation processes, including the organization, training and supervision of volunteer support workers.



“Peer support is founded upon the principle that people who have lived experiences in common have something to offer each other which cannot be provided by others.”

- Canadian Mental Health Association



PEER MENTORING PROGRAM

FPSS Foster Parent Support Services Society has a mentoring program for foster caregivers. Mentors are experienced foster caregivers who represent a cross section of the fostering community and levels of care.

Mentors have received specialized training on how to mentor other foster caregivers.

Mentors have experience dealing with the complex needs of children and youth in care, and wish to share their fostering experience with other caregivers.

Free, Confidential, Non-judgmental
For new and existing foster caregivers on South Vancouver Island.

THINGS A MENTOR CAN HELP WITH

1. Mentors are familiar with Ministry Practice Standards and can help other foster caregivers understand their role.
2. Mentors can help new caregivers connect with fostering events and workshops.
3. Mentors are familiar with resources in the community and know how to readily access them.
4. Mentors are trained to provide clear, practical, common sense information to new foster caregivers.
5. Mentors are confidential and available to listen when you are having a challenging day.

ABOUT OUR MENTORS

- Mentors are volunteers who hold a current fostering contract.
- Mentors have a minimum of three years fostering experience.
- Mentors have completed the mandatory Foster Parent Training Program.
- Mentors have a positive attitude towards the Ministry, Indigenous Children and Family Services Agencies, FPSS Society and caregiving community.
- Mentors are empathetic, understanding, supportive and caring.

MATCHES ARE MADE BASED ON MENTOR SUITABILITY.

ON-GOING TRAINING

The FPSS Society provides support to foster caregivers through the development and implementation of on-going training opportunities to enable them to further their skills and knowledge development, network with colleagues and peers. They will learn to recognize the stresses and pressures they face as caregivers and acquire effective methods of dealing with them.

WORKSHOPS

As well as providing foster caregivers with parenting information and training, the FPSS Society offers opportunities for on-going training based on their specific needs, the needs of the children and youth they serve, and the needs of the Ministry. The FPSS Society will determine the on-going training needs of caregivers, through feedback from caregivers, partnership meetings, and Ministry staff.

WORKSHOP TOPICS INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO

- Trauma Informed Care
- Neurodiversity
- Self-Care for Caregivers
- Understanding Grief and Separation
- Attachment
- Foster Parent Standards and Foster Family Handbook
- Separation and Loss Experienced by Children in Care
- Working with the Biological Family
- Substance Use and Misuse
- Managing Difficult/Disruptive Behaviours in Children and Youth
- Developmental Milestones for Children and Youth In Care
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome /Partial FAS and /Fetal Alcohol Effect
- Transitions within and out of Care
- Changes in MCFD Policies, Practices, and Standards

Caregivers are encouraged to access these important learning opportunities. These workshops are usually offered free of charge to foster caregivers. If there is room in the registration, FPSS will often invite members from other community partners to attend (contingent upon topic and confidentiality issues). The FPSS Society will arrange workshops jointly with community partners to ensure foster caregivers are receiving

the most meaningful and useful information on the most current parenting issues and concerns. Workshops are an excellent communication tool for foster caregivers that enable them to network with their peers, and learn more about their community and the services available.

Qualified, knowledgeable individuals present all workshops.

The FPSS Society provides foster caregivers with an effective feedback form for identifying useful, relevant training suggestions, and ideas. FPSS Society encourages foster caregivers and Ministry staff to contact the FPSS Society local Area Coordinator or the FPSS Society Regional office to express their training needs.

All suggestions will be given serious consideration by the organization and arrangements will be made to organize, schedule, facilitate, and deliver these relevant workshops whenever appropriate. FPSS Society maintains wait lists for workshops that reach maximum registration and additional training session are offered when feasible.

FPSS provides participants with a Certificate of Attendance detailing workshop topic, presenter, and duration. These certificates are for their records, and that of their Resource Social worker to confirm they are keeping current with their training.





LIFE BOOKS

WHAT IS A LIFE BOOK?

A Life Book is an informal record of the people and events in the child's life while they are in care. Life Books give children a sense of personal history and continuity.

WHO IS REQUIRED TO HAVE A LIFE BOOK?

Every child who is likely to remain in care for more than six months has a Life Book. It is jointly maintained by the child's social worker, the child, and the caregiver/s. The foster caregiver will usually look after the book. When a child leaves care, the Life Book is given to him/her.

Consider keeping a photo album or scrapbook for mementos and activities for children in respite care or in your home briefly to commemorate their time with you. If children stay in care longer than expected, you will have a good start on their Life Book and their story will have continuity.

WHAT GOES INTO A LIFE BOOK?

These are some items that might be included in a child or youth's Life Book:

- Pictures of the child, including dates
- Pictures and mementos from/with biological family
- Pictures and names of foster family, friends, and pets
- Report cards, school products or projects
- Certificates of achievement, awards, badges, and ribbons
- Letters from friends and relatives
- Souvenirs from trips, concerts, and sporting events
- Stories, letters, and drawings by the child

WHAT NEXT?

FPSS Society provides Life Book workshops in many areas and has templates available. To find out about this training, or to get some suggestions, examples, or hands on help, contact your local coordinator.

If you have a completed Life Book, FPSS Society can help you create a digital copy to have on hand in case the original is damaged or lost.

P.R.I.D.E: Parenting Resources for Information, Development, Education

FOSTER PARENT MANDATORY TRAINING

WHAT IS PRIDE IN-SERVICE?

PRIDE In-Service is required training for all BC Caregivers. PRIDE In-Service is approximately 50-55 hours of online training, facilitated by a group of specialized virtual facilitators, and is completed over a 40 week period.

HOW MANY MODULES ARE IN PRIDE IN-SERVICE?

There are nine core modules and 2 supplemental modules

ARE ALL CAREGIVERS REQUIRED TO TAKE THE PRIDE IN-SERVICE?

Yes, all Caregivers are required to complete PRIDE In-Service. Best practice is for Caregivers to take In-Service within their first year of Caregiving.

CHAPTER 8: RESOURCE WORK POLICIES

Policy 8.7: Caregiver Continuing Learning and Education

Post-Approval Training

Inform all caregivers who sign a family care home agreement or contract that they must complete the mandatory ministry approved caregiver training within the required time frame.

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/foster-parenting/resource_work_policies.pdf

All caregivers who sign a Family Care Home Agreement or Contract with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) must complete a mandatory training program. As of December 2019, MCFD has replaced the previous program, the British Columbia Foster Care Education Program, with Parenting Resources for Information Development and Education In-Service training (PRIDE).

PRIDE Pre-Service is a 33-35 hour online program that is completed as part of your foster caregiver application process. After becoming a foster caregiver, you will be required to registered for PRIDE In-Service.

PRIDE is delivered online and is managed and facilitated by MCFD. To register for PRIDE In-Service training, contact your Resource Worker.



FPSS PUBLICATIONS



ISLAND CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

Our newsletter is published five times a year and contains valuable information for foster parents including area events, information from our Local Area Coordinators, Ministry of Children and Family updates and more!

<https://fpss.com/newsletter/>

TUITION GUIDE

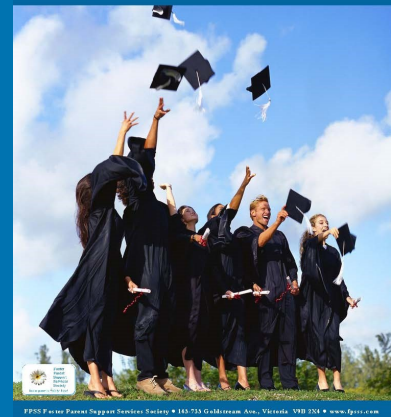
A Guide to: Scholarships, Bursaries, Tuition Waivers & Awards Available to Children in and from Government Care in British Columbia

Foster Parent Support Services Society has compiled information on tuition waivers, scholarships, bursaries and awards available to children in and from government care in British Columbia into one handy document.

If you know of a youth in care or previously in care, please send them this link or get them a copy of this tuition guide. They may be eligible for supports to attend training or post secondary education.

<https://fpss.com/resources/tuition-guide/>

A Guide to:
Scholarships, Bursaries, Tuition Waivers and Awards
Available to Children in and from Government Care in British Columbia



Opening Doors to Education for
Children and Youth in Care



EDUCATION GUIDE

Opening Doors to Education for Children and Youth in Care

This Guide will help caregivers recognize, understand, and address the unique challenges faced by children and youth in and from care as they move through the education system. Much of the material here will apply equally to children and youth being cared for under Kinship Agreements.

<https://fpss.com/resources/education-guide/>



SAFE BABIES PROGRAM

HISTORY

The Safe Babies Program was developed in Victoria (1998) by Dr. Lenora Marcellus, in partnership with Capital Regional Health and the Ministry for Children and Families. The program was introduced in response to the increasing need for highly-skilled caregivers who could be trained specifically in meeting the special needs of substance-exposed infants.

The Safe Babies Program was introduced in the Central and Upper Island Regions in 2000. In the Vancouver Island Region, the Safe Babies Program, administered by the FPSS Foster Parent Support Services Society, continues to provide education and support to Foster Caregivers, Social Workers and Community Partners who work with infants prenatally exposed to alcohol and other drugs and their caregivers.

THE PROGRAM

The Safe Babies Training Program consists of four intensive modules addressing the following topics:

- Understanding the impact of substance misuse during pregnancy
- The effects of alcohol and other drugs on the body
- Acute withdrawal in the newborn
- Neuro-developmental support of the substance exposed infant
- Health issues for the substance exposed infant
- Partnership with natural families
- Care for the Caregiver

The Safe Babies Program is committed to providing relevant support, training and consultation to Caregivers, Social Workers and Community Partners in the South, Central and Upper Vancouver Island Areas.

SUPPORT

The Safe Babies Program Coordinator is available to provide ongoing telephone consultation to existing Safe Babies caregivers.

Caregivers interested in being Safe Babies caregivers should contact their Resource Worker approval to take this training. Safe Babies caregivers regularly receive current information and training opportunities pertaining to infants prenatally exposed to alcohol and other drugs and their families.

TRAINING

The Safe Babies Program will continue to offer the intensive Safe Babies Training in each area as indicated by the level of need and interest and available funding.

Ongoing educational opportunities will be provided to Safe Babies Caregivers and Social Workers. The Safe Babies Program Coordinator will maintain current information regarding prenatal substance exposure and related issues.

CONSULTATION

The Safe Babies Program Coordinator will provide pre-placement consultation to new Safe Babies caregivers as required and provide ongoing telephone consultation to existing Safe Babies caregivers. Safe Babies caregivers will be contacted regarding current information and Regional training opportunities pertaining to substance-exposed infants and their families.



CONTACT YOUR LOCAL SAFE BABIES COORDINATOR

**South Island
Safe Babies Coordinator**

Dianne Thompson
778-430-5459
sicoord@fpsss.com

**Central Island
Safe Babies Coordinator**

1-888-922-8437
cisbcoord@fpsss.com

**Upper Island
Safe Babies Coordinator**

1-888-922-8437
uisbcoord@fpsss.com

RECRUITMENT

The FPSS Society works cooperatively with Ministry staff and community members to develop and innovate strategies in which to attract and recruit prospective family caregivers and/or adoptive families.

Fostering can be an incredibly rewarding experience. It can also be very challenging and frustrating at times, and it is important to take the time to consider if it is right for you and your family at this time.

People choose to become foster parents for many reasons, but all share a love for children and the desire to help those in need without an expectation of receiving something in return.

Our foster caregivers will tell you, it's the small things that make it all worthwhile. A smile. A hug. Knowing you have genuinely made a difference in the life of a child or youth.

Some children in care may be behaviourally challenged or developmentally delayed. But all children need and deserve the support of a nurturing and loving family.

If you are interested in getting involved, ask yourself:

- Do I have a strong support system of friends and family?
- Am I patient and accepting?
- Am I able to take things professionally, not personally?
- Can I say goodbye?

For more fostering information visit our website: fosterhope.ca



FOSTER CARE TEAM MEMBERS ON VANCOUVER ISLAND



MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT (MCFD)

Serves Provincially Child protection (Child Protection Workers); Guardians of Children and Youth in Care (Guardianship Social Workers); Provide Resources to Foster Homes (Resource Social Workers); Study and Approve Foster Homes; Adoptions (Adoption Social Workers); Children with Special Needs (Child and Youth Special Needs (CYSN)); Social Workers and Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) Clinicians; Policy Development (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/fostering>)



INDIGENOUS CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCIES

Serve Provincially Act on behalf of the Director (MCFD); wide range of responsibilities and authorities Currently, there are 24 Indigenous Children and Family Services Agencies [in BC] with various levels of delegation: three can provide voluntary services and recruit and approve foster homes; seven have the additional delegation necessary to provide guardianship services for children in continuing care; and 14 have the delegation required to provide, in addition to the above, full child protection, including the authority to investigate reports and remove children (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/data-monitoring-quality-assurance/reporting-monitoring/accountability/delegated-aboriginal-agencies>)



BC FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATIONS (BCFPA)

Serves Provincially Administration of Foster Parent Insurance Program; *FosterlineBC* (newsletter; published three times a year); Administration of 1-800-663-9999 Fosterline; Work with MCFD to update mandatory foster parent training and Pre-Service training; Advocacy (<https://bcfosterparents.ca/>)



FOSTER PARENT SUPPORT SERVICES SOCIETY (FPSS)

Serves Vancouver Island Region Investigation and Resolution Support Program; Safe Babies Caregiver support and training; Peer Support; Networking; On-going Training; Mentor Program; Websites (fpsss.com and fosterhope.ca); Facebook groups; Retention; Team Building with MCFD, Local Communities, Delegated Agencies, and Local Foster Parent Associations; Local Area Co-ordinators (7); Resources (*Tuition Waiver Guide*, *Opening Doors to Education for Children and Youth in Care*; *Transition Guide*, brochures and fact sheets); *The Island Connection* (newsletter; published five times year) (<https://fpsss.com/>)



SOUTH ISLAND FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION (SIFPA)

Serves South Vancouver Island. Peer support; Foster Family Events; Fostering 101; Team building with MCFD and FPSS



COWICHAN VALLEY FOSTER PARENTS' LOCAL (CVFP)

Serves Cowichan Valley. Peer support; Foster Family Events, Social Worker Appreciations

CAMPBELL RIVER FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION (CRFPA)

Serves Campbell River and area (Black Creek to Oyster River Bridge, Gold River, Sayward, Quadra and Cortez Islands) Co-chair Partnership meetings, Reps on Education Planning Committee, Peer Mentorship, MCFD Appreciation as part of BC Social Worker Week, Peer Support, Family Events



FOSTER PARENT INSURANCE

As a foster Caregiver, it is important that you understand your rights and responsibilities regarding insurance. FPSS Society is distributing information that will help you understand these rights and responsibilities. Please note that the BC Foster Parent Association (BCFPA) manages the Insurance Rider.

If you have any questions about Insurance for Foster Caregivers please contact BCFPA 1-800-663-9999 and for additional information please visit: <https://bit.ly/39XG3HS>

Reminder: To always contact your Resource Social Worker regarding insurance damage on any situation in your home.

All Family Care Homes must have household insurance; it is a requirement of their agreement with the ministry.



RIDER INSURANCE PROGRAM

- BCFPA administers the Rider Insurance Program which, in many situations, covers the damages done to the property and belongings of all MCFD and DAA contracted foster caregivers in BC. The Ministry of Children and Family Development has arranged for Extended Property Damage (Rider) Insurance to supplement a residential caregiver's homeowner or tenant insurance policy. The Rider follows the underlying homeowner or tenant property policy to provide up to the same limits and coverages. The rider mirrors the caregiver's own primary policy. For example, if the policy covers \$10,000 for jewelry, then the Rider will cover \$10,000 for jewelry that is damaged by the child or youth in care.



UNDER-DEDUCTIBLE LOSSES (UDL) PROGRAM

- Effective April 1, 2022, foster caregivers will now have access to a low barrier process to manage damages and losses valued below \$10,000 (under the Rider Insurance Program deductible), caused by the child/youth in their care. This program will be an alternative to submitting eligible repairs and losses to MCFD or Indigenous Child and Family Services Agencies for compensation. The UDL claims will be administered through Coast Claims Insurance Services.



Please visit BCFosterParents.ca for more information on insurance for caregivers.

DON'T FORGET TO ASK!

Foster Parents often wish they had asked more questions before accepting a child into their home. The list below is designed to assist you in your discussion with the ministry.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Name and age of child. | Are there any school problems? |
| 2. Why is the child being placed? | 19. Who do I call after hours? |
| 3. What is the child's understanding of the reason for placement? | 20. What do you (social worker) expect of me (foster caregiver)? |
| 4. Has the child been in care before? If so, who were they placed with? | 21. If placement is accepted who will be bringing the child and when? |
| 5. Is the child in care by agreement or is it a removal order? | 22. Will the person who is bringing the child have the following information? |
| 6. Is it likely to be a short or long term placement? | 23. What is the child's Medical Number? |
| 7. Who are the parents and will they have access to the child? Are there siblings? Are the siblings in care? | 24. Has the pink medical form for doctor (to be completed within 72 hours) been provided? |
| 8. Is contact with parent (phone and visits) to be monitored or supervised? | 25. What is the name of child's doctor and dentist? |
| 9. Any other significant people in the child's life? | 26. Has the Health care passport been provided? |
| 10. Is there anyone the child is not allowed to see or be in contact with? | 27. What is the Safety Plan? |
| 11. Does the child have any challenging behavioural problems? Has the child been sexually/physically abused? | 28. Are Referrals or other professionals involved? |
| 12. Discuss with the social worker the child's sleeping arrangements to ensure needs for supervision, safety etc. are met. | 29. Is there Information on school or daycare? |
| 13. What will help the child feel at home? Favourite food, comforting toy? | 30. Does Indigenous status or band membership apply? |
| 14. Are there any health issues? Allergies? Medication? | 31. Is there a copy of confidential information for Foster Parents Regarding Child -- Placement or copies of relevant reports? |
| 15. What is the child's legal status? | 32. Is the child's clothing adequate or will there be a clothing grant? |
| 16. What is the child's cultural heritage? | 33. Are there directions of expectations for foster parents regarding visits, documentation and appointments? |
| 17. Is religion important to the child? | 34. Following the placement, when will the social worker call or visit? |
| 18. Does the child attend school? Where? | |

**Don't Forget to Ask Page 14 of the Children and Youth in Transition:
A Toolkit for Effective Transitions Navigating Some of the Bumps in the Road.**

RIGHTS OF FOSTER PARENTS

To help ensure that children and youth in care receive the best possible care, foster parents have the following rights:

1. The right to continuing professional development opportunities with respect to caring for children, and to participation in professional foster parent associations.
2. The right to be consulted and be able to have meaningful input into decisions affecting the foster parents home, family and other placements in the home.
3. The right to be involved in the development of the child's Plan of Care and informed of changes to the plan.
4. The right to limit access to private spaces within their own home, to special possessions, and to private or personal conversations, in the same way their own children are limited.
5. The right to refuse a placement if they feel they cannot meet the child's needs regardless of the home level.
6. The right to be able to continue to participate in cultural, social and religious activities of their choosing, while honouring rights, values and beliefs of the foster child.
7. The right to be considered as a permanent family for a child, along with all other suitable homes if the Director determines that a permanent plan is in the child's best interest.
8. If requested and permitted by legislation, the right to be provided with notification of the serious illness, injury, or death of a former long-term placement, when this information is known.
9. The right to receive available information for the care of the child, including, but not limited to, any history of violence or illegal activity, as well as medical, educational, behavioural, personal care and relevant family information in addition to guardianship, custody and access arrangements. In the case of an emergency placement, information is received as soon as possible.
10. The right to be provided as soon as possible with reasons when a child is removed from a foster parent's home.
11. The right to be informed of standards expected by ministry staff and consequences of not meeting the standards.
12. The right to access information contained in any and all documents related to themselves which are held in the Director's custody, subject to all relevant legislation.
13. The right to access support of their choosing, and the right to be assisted in contacting the British Columbia Foster Parent Association, the Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents, or any other support provider or agency on any issues concerning, but not limited to, Child in Care Standards and Conflict Resolution.
14. The right to be provided with reasons an agreement is terminated or suspended and the right to appeal the decision.
15. The right to be treated with consideration, trust, honesty, respect, acceptance, and fairness in all circumstances by ministry staff and community service providers and the right to request the ministry's assistance when situations arise that involve verbal or physical abuse of the foster parent by a child or youth in care or their family members.
16. The right to be informed of their Rights and the regional process or protocol for resolving differences or disagreements between the ministry and foster parents.
17. The right to receive services to support and stabilize a placement.
18. The right to be provided with access to support services when placements are terminated to minimize the foster parents' feelings of disruption and grief.

(From the Foster Family Handbook 5th Edition.)



RIGHTS OF CHILDREN IN CARE

SECTION 70 (1) Children in care have the following rights:

- (a) to be fed, clothed and nurtured according to community standards and to be given the same quality of care as other children in the placement;
- (b) to be informed about their plans of care;
- (c) to be consulted and to express their views, according to their abilities, about significant decisions affecting them;
- (d) to reasonable privacy and to possession of their personal belongings;
- (e) to be free from corporal punishment;
- (f) to be informed of the standard of behaviour expected by their caregivers or prospective adoptive parents and of the consequences of not meeting the expectations of their caregivers or prospective adoptive parents, as applicable;
- (g) to receive medical and dental care when required;
- (h) to participate in social and recreational activities if available and appropriate and according to their abilities and interests;
- (i) to receive the religious instruction and to participate in the religious activities of their choice;
- (j) to receive guidance and encouragement to maintain their cultural heritage;
- (k) to be provided with an interpreter if language or disability is a barrier to consulting with them on decisions affecting their custody or care;
- (l) to privacy during discussions with members of their families, subject to subsection (2);
- (m) to privacy during discussions with a lawyer, the representative or a person employed or retained by the representative under the **Representative for Children and Youth Act**, the Ombudsperson, a member of the Legislative Assembly or a member of Parliament;
- (n) to be informed about and to be assisted in contacting the representative under the **Representative for Children and Youth Act**, or the Ombudsperson;
- (o) to be informed of their rights, and the procedures available for enforcing their rights under
 - (i) this Act, or
 - (ii) the **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**.

(1.1) In addition to the rights set out in subsection (1), Indigenous children have the right to

- (a) receive guidance, encouragement and support to learn about and practise their Indigenous traditions, customs and languages, and
- (b) belong to their Indigenous communities.

(2) A child who is removed under Part 3 is entitled to exercise the right in subsection (1) (l), subject to any court order made after the court has had an opportunity to consider the question of access to the child.

(3) This section, except with respect to the Representative for Children and Youth as set out in subsection (1) (m) and (n), does not apply to a child who is in a place of confinement.

(From the Child, Family and Community Service Act)



Check out the latest edition of...

The Island Connection

May to August

Inside this Issue you will find information regarding Foster Parent Support Line, Investigation and Resolution Support Contact Information, Relief Care Contact Listing, Family Care Rates Guidelines, Wisdom from our Childhood, Coordinator updates, Island-wide training, Insurance Update, area news and events, Playground and Play Spaces, Snowball Fostering, BC Child and Youth in Care Week, new funding for youth, Satisfaction Survey Summary *more!*

<http://fpsss.com/newsletter/>

FPSSS.COM

Check out our website resources for a wealth of fostering information!

<https://fpsss.com/resources/>

Resources



FPSSS EMAIL DISTRIBUTION LIST

You are invited to add your email to our foster caregiver distribution list. This is a great way to ensure you receive notices about upcoming meetings, social events, and ongoing trainings that happen in your local fostering community. To ensure that you stay connected, forward your current email address to FPSS Society Administrative Assistant or 778-430-5459. Remember to add your local coordinator email address and admin@fpsss.com to your address book so our emails land in your inbox.

FPSS uses these distribution lists to keep foster caregivers up-to-date on:

- Workshops and on-going training;
- Support and networking opportunities;
- *The Island Connection* Newsletter;
- Social and networking opportunities;
- Changes to ministry policies and practices; and
- Important information of interest to foster caregivers on Vancouver Island

FPSS Society will never share your email address with other parties and you can unsubscribe from the list at any time. Just click on the “Unsubscribe” link at the bottom of any FPSS Society email or call the Regional Office (1-888-922-8437) and ask to have your name removed.

If you are looking for information, links and online resources, you can find many of them on our website at www.fpsss.com. You can access this site without subscribing to the FPSS Society distribution list. You will find current monthly calendars listing all the foster community events happening in our community and can download these directly to your smartphone.

Thank you for all you do for the children in your care!

FPSS SOCIETY EMAIL ADDRESSES

South Island Area Coordinator

Email: sicoord@fpsss.com

Cowichan Valley Local Coordinator

Email: dacoord@fpsss.com

Central Island Area Coordinator

Email: cicoord@fpsss.com

Port Alberni Local Coordinator

Email: pacoord@fpsss.com

Comox Valley Local Coordinator

Email: cvcoord@fpsss.com

Upper Island Area Coordinator

Email: uicoord@fpsss.com

North Island Coordinator

Email: nicoordinator@fpsss.com

Administrative Assistant

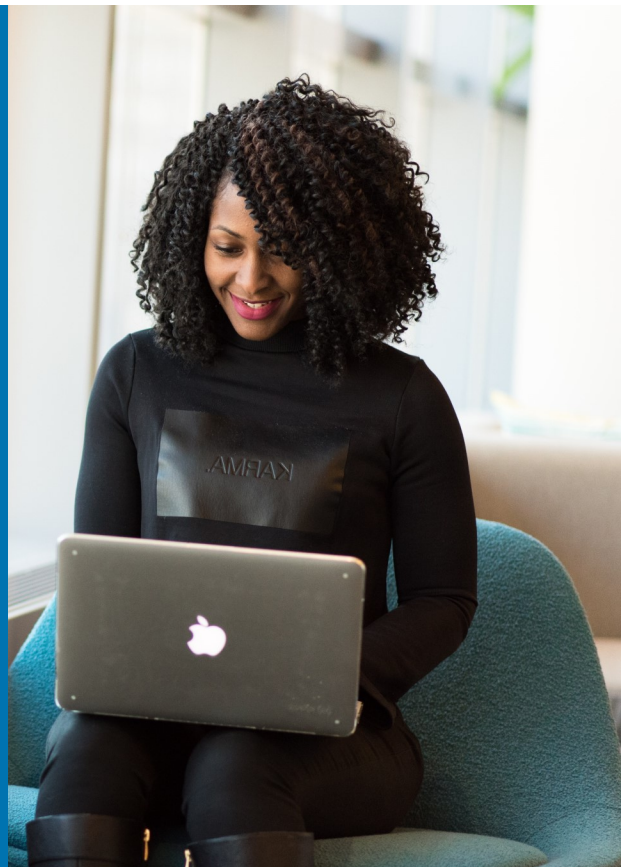
Email: admin@fpsss.com

Executive Director

Email: execdirect@fpsss.com

Recruitment

Email: fosterhope@fpsss.com



SUPPORTING EDUCATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Opening Doors to Education for Children and Youth in Care



FPSS Foster Parent Support Services Society • 145-735 Goldstream Ave., Victoria V9B 2X4 • www.fpss.com

OPENING DOORS TO EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARE

Compiled by Foster Parent Support Services Society

This Guide will help caregivers recognize, understand, and address the unique challenges faced by children and youth in and from care as they move through the education system. Much of the material here will apply equally to children and youth being cared for under Kinship Agreements.

The document can be viewed [online](#), obtained from one of our coordinators, or via Canada Post by contacting the Regional Office at 1-888-922-8437 or admin@fpss.com

<https://fpss.com/resources/education-guide/>

A GUIDE TO: SCHOLARSHIPS, BURSARIES, TUITION WAIVERS & AWARDS AVAILABLE TO CHILDREN IN AND FROM GOVERNMENT CARE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Compiled by Foster Parent Support Services Society

Foster Parent Support Services Society has compiled information on tuition waivers, scholarships, bursaries and awards available to children in and from government care in British Columbia into one handy document.

If you know of a youth in care or previously in care, please send them this link or get them a copy of this tuition guide. They may be eligible for supports to attend training or post secondary education.

The document can be viewed [online](#), obtained from one of our coordinators, or via Canada Post by contacting the Regional Office at 1-888-922-8437 or admin@fpss.com

A Guide to: Scholarships, Bursaries, Tuition Waivers and Awards Available to Children in and from Government Care in British Columbia



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Child, Family and Community Services Act

Standards for Foster Homes

Relating to Children and Their Families
Safeguarding Children
Planning
Caring for Children
Environment of Care
Foster Home Administration

Resource Work Policies

Caregiver Continuing Learning and Education
Caregiver Documentation
Sharing Placement Information with Caregiver
Planning and Supporting Changes in Placement
Collaborative Assessment and Planning
Supportive Practice
Reportable Incidents
Relief, Respite and Child Care
Ongoing Monitoring and Annual Review
Rights of Children and Youth in Care

Child and Youth in Care Policies

Supporting the Cultural Identity of Indigenous Children and Youth in Care
Assuming Responsibility for a Child or Youth in Care
Safety and Well-Being of a Child or Youth While in Care
Providing Caregivers with Information
Assessment and Planning for a Child or Youth in Care
Putting the Care Plan into Action
Supporting and Assisting a Child or Youth with a Change in Placement
Planning for Children and Youth Leaving Care
Preparing Youth to Live Successfully in the Community
When a Child or Youth is Missing
Restraint and Seclusion Regarding Children and Youth in Care
Rights of Children and Youth in Care

Foster Family Handbook

The Family Care Home Program
Teamwork and Planning
The Children in Your Home
Supports and Entitlements of Foster Parents
Rights of Children and Youth in Care
Foster Parent Rights

I Agree





EMERGENCY INFORMATION

DEALING WITH EMERGENCIES

Foster caregivers are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness and is not a poor reflection on your skills as a caregiver. Not only is it important to ask the relevant questions in developing and implementing the Plan of Care, concerns can be classified as “I’m worried” or “Help” calls.

“I’m worried” are concerns about your foster child that seem that it might develop into trouble. It is better to make early calls than wait until you are worn out from struggling with a problem or waiting until it reaches a point of no return. These calls should normally be directed to the child’s social worker or your resource worker.

“Help” calls or emergency/crisis calls can be directed in a number of ways. An emergency is any situation that occurs outside the normal responsibilities of a foster caregiver. An emergency demands immediate advice or assistance. Some examples might be:

- A medical emergency
- The child runs away
- You have an acute problem with the child (e.g. Serious acting out in school, home or the community)
- The child or youth has been arrested or is involved in criminal activity
- The child is abducted
- The child/youth attempts suicide

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

This list by no means covers all situations. There may be other times when you need immediate help. When you need immediate help, there are several options available to you:

Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

If an emergency happens during regular office hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30 to 4:30), call your child’s social worker or team leader. If you must leave a message, stress that it is URGENT with the receptionist. You might also call your resource worker for advice.

After Hours

Since many emergencies occur outside normal business hours, the Ministry maintains a “After Hours” duty worker line, contact number is 1-800-663-9122. Foster Caregivers are encouraged to call this number concerning any crisis or emergency.

Ministry helpline for children

If you are reporting abuse or neglect of a child after hours, you would dial the operator and ask for the Ministry Helpline for Children or dial 310-1234.

Foster Parent Support Line

In addition, the Foster Parents Support Line is available at 1-888-495-9122 for any immediate concern related to a child in care. This number will provide you with a fast response for urgent issues including professional support, information and consultation on managing a child in care.

Investigation and Resolution Support Worker

If you have received information that there will be an Investigation of your home, it is recommended that you contact the Regional Investigation and Resolution Support Team Leader at 1-888-922-8437. You will be assigned a support person in your Area who will guide you through the process, answer your questions and provide support as needed.

FPSS Society Area Coordinator

Your Foster Parent Area Coordinator is also available for support, consultation or referral – Toll Free at 1-888-922-8437 from anywhere in the Region. Please feel free to call this individual anytime; they are available to help you find a solution to your concern. They can be reached during office hours or you can leave a voice message and they will return your call as soon as possible.

Local Police:

Local Fire Department:

Local Hospital Emergency:

Local Crisis Emergency Line:

Child's Social Worker

Name:

Telephone:

Email:

Child's Doctor

Name:

Telephone:

Email:

Child's Social Worker

Name:

Telephone:

Email:

Poison Control Centre: 1-800-567-8911 <i>Anywhere in B.C.</i>	After Hours (Ministry): 1-800-663-9122	Foster Parents Support Line: 1-800-495-4440
Investigation and Resolution Support Team: 1-888-922-8437	Regional Investigation and Resolution Support Team Coordinator: 1-888-922-8437	FPSS Society Area Coordinator: 1-888-922-8437

EXCEPTIONAL PAYMENTS

TO RESTRICTED/REGULAR AND SPECIALIZED FOSTER FAMILY CARE HOMES

The foster family care rate is expected to cover the cost of meeting the day-to-day needs of a child/youth in care. Occasionally, a child/youth's care plan includes requirements for additional goods and services. Some service providers require additional funding beyond the family care home payment to meet the needs of the child/youth in their care.

There are two types of exceptional payments available to support foster homes that have completely expended all that is expected from the foster family care rate and service payment: one-time-only payments, and exceptional ongoing payments.

These payments may be provided to meet exceptional or unusual costs which the caregiver cannot reasonably be expected to manage over an extended period of time and where there are no unused funds to address the costs. The payments are extraordinary in nature.

One-time-only payments are not meant to fund known, ongoing exceptional costs. However, some caregivers require ongoing monthly payments, for example to pay for shelter, transportation, relief, day care or child and youth care workers directly related to a child/youth in their care.

If a caregiver requests an exceptional one-time-only or ongoing payment, the request is assessed and documented in consultation with the caregiver. The family care home payment is reviewed to ensure that it has either been expended or committed. If there is a need for a supplementary payment, the director determines whether it is an exceptional circumstance and whether it can be paid through a one-time-only payment. The director makes a recommendation to their supervisor with respect to all exceptional payments for approval by the appropriate manager.

If exceptional payment is needed on an ongoing basis to implement the child/youth's care plan, the relevant manager can approve an ongoing monthly payment. The payments are intended to be time-limited and linked to the needs of a specific child/youth. The amount is based on an appropriate range of cost and availability of funds in the regional budget.

The following are examples of situations where either one-time-only or exceptional ongoing payments may be considered.

EXCEPTIONAL TRANSPORTATION COSTS

The restricted/regular foster family care rate and service payment for leveled homes includes an amount for transportation. This amount is expected to cover the majority of transportation costs specific to each child/youth's care plan, including bus passes.

Exceptional transportation costs are those not covered by the foster family care rate. One-time-only or exceptional ongoing payments will not be considered until transportation costs exceed what can reasonably be expected to be covered by the foster family care rate. Examples are: long-distance travel for recreational, cultural, medical and visiting purposes, and care plan requirements for travel within each child/youth's own community.

Approved exceptional transportation costs:

- are paid at 51¢ per kilometer that exceeds the 325 kilometers of driving per month, included in the family care rate for each child, or
- are compensated for the actual costs of public transportation.

INSURANCE DEDUCTIBLE

This includes the deductible costs incurred in the case of:

- willful or malicious damage caused by a child/youth covered by the extended property damage policy
- accidental damage caused by a child/youth in care covered by the caregiver's homeowner tenant insurance policy, and
- liability insurance.

CAMP FEES

The difference between the per diem camp fee and the family care rate can be paid as a one-time-only payment.

CHILD AND YOUTH CARE WORKER SERVICES

Child and youth care worker services may be provided for a child/youth in family care homes when:

- the child/youth is in care for a short period of time, and the service is part of an ongoing service plan for the child/youth and/or their family
- the service is directed at preparing a youth in care for the transition to adulthood
- the child/youth's care plan requires a level of service beyond the designated capability of the caregiver.

The payment amount determined by the region should be used, and it should be no higher than the rate paid by existing regional child and youth care worker contracts.

DAY CARE SERVICES

If day care services are required to supplement the care provided by a caregiver, day care subsidies are available. If day care is part of the child/youth's care plan and there is a cost in excess of the subsidy for which the caregiver requests additional funds, the director assesses the request.

Day care services may be required while the caregiver is attending caregiver education and learning events. Wherever possible, the child/youth is placed in licensed day care facilities. If none are available and unlicensed family day care is to be used, the director and caregiver are responsible for screening and monitoring the placement.

EXCEPTIONAL CLOTHING NEEDS

Exceptional clothing needs are those required for a specific activity that is part of a child/youth's care plan, such as graduation ceremonies.

EXCEPTIONAL MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

Exceptional medical requirements refer to the cost of medical treatment or equipment that is not covered by the Medical Services Plan or Health Services Division. Examples are special diets, knee braces, and clothing required for special medical purposes.

INFANT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

As part of a child/youth's care plan, in-home infant development services may be used, when available, to assist family care home caregivers to stimulate the development of a child/youth who are developmentally delayed or handicapped, from birth to age three. In some regions, infant development services may include parent support groups.

SHELTER

This is to be used when the caregiver in a municipality with higher than average rent costs must find alternative accommodation in order to care for the child/youth, and the cost cannot reasonably be met within their budget. Shelter costs can be paid to caregivers in high-rent communities that have been identified on an annual basis through an analysis of CMHC data. Payment should be made only after a review of the caregiver's current payments to determine whether the amount can be accommodated within the existing monthly payment.

(From Resource Work Policies pages 121 to 123)

*Foster Parents
Foster Hope.*

*You're there for
the children.*

*We're here
for you.*



Foster
Parent
Support
Services
Society

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Together, we can make a difference.

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