Training Announcement

Live on the Internet:
Online Training Courses for Foster/Adoptive Parents
Winter/Spring 2018

With online training, participating foster/adoptive parents receive instruction when convenient, through their home or office computers. These online trainings provide many of the key benefits of traditional face-to-face instruction. In the virtual classroom of *iLinc*, participants can listen to and speak with a live trainer, electronically "raise their hands," and pose questions to the trainer or other participants. Text chat and other feedback tools are also available.

What do I need to participate?

To participate in online trainings, interested parties must have

- a PC with *Microsoft Windows 7, 8, 8.1,* or *Vista* or a Macintosh with *OS X 10.10, 10.9, 10.8,* or *10.7*

- high-speed Internet access

- a headset with microphone (or computer speakers and a microphone)

- *iLinc* software (provided free to registered participants)

What kinds of training are offered?

Because online courses have been so well received, 31 such courses are now offered. These include three foundation-level trainings; five on developmental disabilities; a nine-part training program for kinship foster parents; and a dozen other trainings. Most trainings are offered at least once during the day and once in the evening. The schedule of available times and dates for each training, along with course descriptions, is included in this catalog.

How do I register?

Registering online is quick and simple. For more information or additional resources or to register for training, visit:

<div align="center">

http://cdhs.buffalostate.edu/fosterparenttraining/

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It is important to note that when two or more people use the same computer to register for training online, *each must use a separate email address*. (Additional email addresses are available free from most Internet providers and through www.gmail.com, www.outlook.com, or www.yahoo.com.)

Once participants have registered for their first training, they will be provided with a New York State Office of Children and Family Services account and password and a free installation of *LearnLinc*, the *iLinc* client software package used for the training.

All participants should attend *Introduction to iLinc* online before beginning training. Those who do not have *iLinc* software on their computers can download it during this pretraining session. They also can familiarize themselves with the various functions of the software and ask questions about its use. Help is available if needed.

How will I know when I am registered?

Upon registering, participants will receive an email confirmation stating the title and date of their training.

How will I get my training materials?

Training materials are available for download at http://cdhs.buffalostate.edu/fosterparenttraining/ and will be sent to participants at home. Those who are foster/adoptive parents participating from home should be sure to supply us with their full street address during registration. Do not give a post office-box number. The carrier used for delivery is UPS and does not deliver to post office boxes. **UPS also does not leave packages where no one is available to sign for them and will make only three unsuccessful delivery attempts before returning materials to the sender**.

Is there a training cancellation policy?

Yes—and participants should keep in mind:

- If training is canceled, CDHS will notify affected participants via email through the primary contact persons named on their registration applications. Every effort is made to offer all trainings as they appear in our training calendar, but we reserve the right to cancel any training for which there is insufficient enrollment.

- If a prospective participant must withdraw from a training after registering, he or she should notify CDHS Registration Services by email as soon as possible, at registrationservices@bsc-cdhs.org, or cancel registration by phone, at 716-876-7600, ext. 600, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Except for in emergencies, cancellations should be made at least three business days before the scheduled training.

What if I have questions?

Participants can find answers and access technical support by contacting the OCFS *iLinc* technical-support staff, toll-free, at **1-800-810-1349**. Help is available any time before a training. Our technical-support staff will be happy to assist with the setup and testing of headsets, microphones, and speakers and to answer technical questions.

- *Please note: Macintosh users who require technical support should call 1-800-799-4510. When calling this line, please let technical-support staff know you are using the "installed version of iLinc 12 located at http://nysocfs.ilinc.com."* (Use this exact quote.)

To access the *iLinc* virtual-classroom training site, go to

http://nysocfs.ilinc.com.

If you have used the site before, you may notice it has been updated. All of the established *iLinc* functions remain basically the same, however.

What do I have to do to get credit for attending an online training?

Participants must access and enter the *iLinc* virtual classroom within the first 30 minutes of a training session. Those who do not will receive no credit for attending.

Will I get a certificate after I complete an online training?

Once participants have met all training requirements, they will receive, via email, a *Certificate of Completion*. Those who do not receive a *Certificate of Completion*, or who lose it, can contact CDHS Registration Services staff at registrationservices@bsc-cdhs.org to request a duplicate.

The person designated as a participant's agency or LCDSS primary contact will also receive a copy of that participant's *Certificate of Completion.* It is therefore important for a participant, during registration, to enter the contact person's email address. The contact person is usually the training cooordinator for a participant's agency. Participants who are unsure whose name to enter, should call their agencies and ask.

Introduction to iLinc

Introduction to iLinc virtual classroom should be completed by all new foster/adoptive parent *iLinc* users before they register for or attend any other online trainings. The *Introduction to iLinc* session lasts approximately one hour and provides participants with an opportunity to make sure their equipment is functioning properly before training. The demonstration of the student palette and tools is designed to enable participants to make the most of their online learning experience and provide them the technical vocabulary they will need to communicate with instructors and technical-support staff.

Instructor: Distance Learning Unit staff

Choose one session only:

Any Tuesday, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Any Thursday, 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Important!

Developmental Disabilities

This five-part series is intended for foster/adoptive parents who are raising children with developmental disabilities and who already have taken the *iLinc* course *Ages and Stages of Development* (or, alternatively, the *COMPASS Session 3: Promoting Child Development* module through in-person delivery) or who already are knowledgeable about child development. Because each part builds on the previous one, these trainings should be taken in sequence. Each training lasts two hours, and each is offered once during the day and once in the evening so that participants can choose a time that is convenient for them. Participant guides with handouts will be mailed to trainees after they attend a class. Additional handouts will be available for download at http://cdhs.buffalostate.edu/fosterparenttraining/.

DD1: Introduction to Developmental Disabilities

Instructor: Pura Gonzalez

This course focuses on the developmental disabilities and delays that may affect the children in a participant's care. The class looks at how developmental *delay* and developmental *disability* are defined, as there are important differences between the two. The class talks about how to use the *Child Development Guide* to recognize indicators and warning signs related to developmental delays and disabilities of children in care. Then the class explores the New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities' five categories of developmental disability.

DD2: Acquiring Services for Children with Developmental Disabilities

Instructor: Daniel Godwin

This course focuses on the various services and agencies that assist children who have developmental disabilities and their families. The class looks at how different programs establish eligibility for their services. Dealing effectively with service providers often requires assertiveness, so the class will discuss how to be assertive. Accompanying this course is a resource guide that provides extensive information and contact numbers for all the agencies and organizations servicing children with developmental disabilities and their families.

DD3: Foster/Adoptive Parents as Effective Advocates

Instructor: Daniel Godwin

This course reviews the federal law (IDEA) that set the standards for what we can expect from educational systems regarding children with disabilities. The class explores what advocates do and the elements of effective advocacy, including the role of assertiveness. The class also explores websites that can help us advocate for a child or family.

DD4: Raising Children with Developmental Disabilities: The Impact on Family Life

Instructor: Jennifer Otten

This course considers how caring for a child with a developmental disability impacts all aspects and members of a family, including parents and siblings, and explores resources and strategies for coping.

DD5: Parenting a Child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Instructor: Daniel Godwin

This course looks at the definition of ASD, explores the specific way ASD is diagnosed, introduces participants to some of the professionals they'll need to work with helping a child with ASD, and considers successful intervention strategies that can help a child with ASD manage his or her behaviors and feelings.

Kinship Foster Parents: Caring For Our Own

Caring For Our Own (CFOO) is a nine-session training for **kinship foster parents**. It is available only to those individuals providing foster care for children to whom they are related by blood, marriage, or adoption or with whom they have close family ties. How long a participant has been a kinship foster parent doesn't matter. To benefit most from this offering, participants are strongly recommended to register for and attend all nine trainings. Most agencies and districts will not award credit for this training to those who have not completed all nine classes.

Participants learn how to help the children in their care better manage their behaviors. They also receive parenting tips and are introduced to strategies that can help them develop effective relationships with birth parents and agency/county staff. They learn and receive support from other kinship foster parents. They see that they are not alone.

CFOO1: Introduction to Caring For Our Own

Instructor: Wendy Neilson

This training provides an opportunity for kinship caregivers and the trainer to get acquainted with one another and share a little about their personal kinship experiences.

CFOO2: Assessing the Impact of the Children Living in My Home

Instructor: Wendy Neilson

This training provides kinship foster parents an opportunity to assess the immediate impact of having in-care children in the home and helps them assess their ability to meet the needs of those children.

CFOO3: Looking at My Role in Achieving Permanency

Instructor: Wendy Neilson

This training provides kinship foster parents an overview of reunification and adoption and identifies ways in which they can support permanency planning—that is, children leaving foster care. It will also provide participants with an opportunity to assess the strengths and needs of the members of their immediate household and of their extended family.

CFOO4: Assessing the Strengths and Needs of the Children in My Care

Instructor: Wendy Neilson

This training helps kinship foster parents begin to focus on the needs of the children living in their homes and to identify the types of services they need to facilitate stability in the child's overall growth and development.

CFOO5: Building on the Strengths and Meeting the Needs of the Children in My Care

Instructor: Wendy Neilson

This training helps kinship foster parents examine the behaviors of the children living in their homes, to identify methods of managing the behaviors, and to identify and access needed services.

CFOO6: Preparing Children and Youth for the Future

Instructor: Wendy Neilson

This training helps kinship foster parents understand their roles and responsibilities in the education of the children in their care and preparing them for independent living.

CFOO7: Understanding the Issues of Birth Parents

Instructor: Wendy Neilson

This training provides an opportunity for kinship foster parents to examine the challenges birth parents face. Participants will gain a better understanding of birth-parent issues and how those issues interplay with the kinship foster parent's own. The nature of drug addiction in birth parents and how that addiction affects their ability to provide children with permanency—that is, help them leave foster care—will be explained and explored.

CFOO8: Working with Birth Parents to Achieve Permanency for Their Children

Instructor: Wendy Neilson

This training examines how kinship foster parents can redefine their relationship with birth parents to promote children's physical safety and emotional well-being and support birth parents' efforts to achieve permanency—that is, help their children leave foster care.

CFOO9: Networking and Moving Ahead

Instructor: Wendy Neilson

This training provides kinship foster parents the opportunity to complete an assessment of their ability to meet the long-term needs of the children in their care. Participants develop a family plan, which they later should share with their caseworkers in planning for the children.

Foster/Adoptive Parent Foundation Classes

Three online classes provide certified foster parents with the foundational information and skills required to work in partnership to achieve safety, well-being, and permanency for the children in their care. Each of these three foundation classes builds on the previous offering, so participants will find it helpful to take all three. Each course is offered twice so that participants can choose a time convenient for them.

FC1: Using the Helping Skills to Build Relationships

Instructor: Wendy Neilson

This class introduces foster parents to the building blocks of a helping relationship. It highlights the helping skills critical to effective interventions that promote the well-being of children, including the nonverbal and verbal skills needed to build positive relationships with children and their families.

By the end of this class, participants will be able to

- identify the building blocks of a helping relationship

- identify the nonverbal and verbal helping skills

- describe behaviors that demonstrate effective use of the nonverbal helping skills

FC2: The Ages and Stages of Development

Instructor: Wendy Neilson

This class provides foster parents with a key tool, the *Child Development Guide*, and the information necessary to identify the presence or absence of significant skills and abilities at each age and stage of child development; report important observations to the caseworker and other service providers; and select and use activities that support a child's optimal development.

By the end of this class, participants will be able to

- recognize the specific skills and abilities characteristic of each age and stage of child development

- recognize possible indicators of unmet developmental needs or delays that require further assessment

- use the *Child Development Guide* to support the healthy development of the children in their care

FC3: Supporting Attachment

Instructor: Wendy Neilson

This class uses the Cycle of Attachment model to help foster parents understand the foundation process of children's emotional development and health. The behavioral clues that identify healthy attachments are highlighted. Foster parents learn how to select and use parenting behaviors that support emotional security and attachment in children and how to identify behaviors that may signal unmet needs related to attachment.

By the end of this class, participants will be able to

- explain the meaning of the term "attachment"

- identify "red flag" behaviors that may signal unmet needs related to attachment

- choose to help a child build and maintain attachments to his or her birth family

- select and use parenting behaviors that will maintain and support a child's attachment to his or her birth family and foster family

Foster Fatherhood

Participants will embark on a training adventure—one that will visit the hearts, minds, and lives of men who want to nurture children who have experienced abuse or neglect or both. The adventure will span hopes and fears, laughter and tears, as well as memorable relationships and experiences. Those along for the journey will deepen their knowledge of meeting children's needs and safeguarding their well-being and their understanding of their own role in care planning. Along the way, participants may even deepen their knowledge of themselves.

As a result of this training, participants will be able to

- clarify the relationship between their fathers and their own style of fathering
- share their visions of the father they choose to be
- explore different cultural styles of fathering
- explore the unique roles of fathering daughters and fathering sons
- clarify the role of foster/adoptive fathers in case-planning
- practice the communication skills of active listening and reflecting

These trainings are designed for foster/adoptive fathers.

The Roots of Foster Fatherhood

Instructor: Jack Fuentes

Foster Fathers and Their Impact on Children's Well-Being

Instructor: Jack Fuentes

Foster Father's Role in Case Planning

Instructor: Jack Fuentes

Additional Classes

Fear and Control

Instructor: Wendy Neilson

Foster parents will gain a better understanding of the dynamics of fear and control issues and learn how these issues can become barriers to working in partnership with parents of children in foster care and agency staff. This training helps participants recognize not only their own fears, but also those experienced by the parents of children in foster care, the children themselves, and the caseworkers involved. Participants also will learn how to identify effective strategies for addressing issues of fear and control.

Mad Is Not Bad! Understanding Anger in Grieving Children

Instructor: Helen Shin

The expression of anger is part of a healthy grieving process. It is part of the journey from hurt to healing. Yet, because it is often misunderstood, anger may not be allowed its full expression. When children in care are able to express their anger in healthy ways, it can become a great source of energy and positive action. This course will help participants distinguish between constructive and destructive anger, compare chronic and grief-related anger, and identify which needs children are trying to meet through anger.

Creating Sibling Harmony

Instructor: Helen Shin

Based on the bestselling book *Siblings Without Rivalry: How to Help Your Children Live Together So You Can Live Too,* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish, this training will challenge the idea that constant, unpleasant conflict among siblings is natural and unavoidable. Participants will learn how to avoid such explosive situations as comparing, assigning roles, or taking sides and how to instead promote cooperation with practical and easy-to-use techniques.

When Children Move: The Foster Parents' Loss Experience

Instructor: Helen Shin

Having a child in foster care transition out of the home can trigger stages of grief and loss in foster parents and children remaining in the home. This workshop will enable foster parents to better anticipate, identify, and cope with their feelings and make a plan to take care of themselves and their family members.

Overview of Human Sexuality

Instructor: Jennifer Otten

Foster/adoptive parents need to find ways to be both comfortable and well-versed when discussing challenging topics with children and youth placed in their homes. These topics often include "the birds and the bees"—that is, sexuality, sexual behaviors, and sexual abuse. This two-part course provides an introduction to these dialogues that is knowledge-based and practice-oriented. Participants should have completed an introductory course in normal child development before registering for this course. Participants are encouraged to register for both this course and Discussing Sexuality with Children in Care.

Discussing Sexuality with Children in Care

Instructor: Jennifer Otten

This training highlights normal sexual development in children, identifying typical behaviors displayed at various developmental stages. The foster parent's role in encouraging the child's healthy sexual development is clarified. This training also provides the foster parent a positive model approach for responding to displays of sexual behavior by the child in care.

Keeping Your Family Safe

Instructor: Jennifer Otten

Foster parents who attend this two-hour training will be able to identify child abuse and maltreatment-allegation issues and recognize how they can be exposed to these allegations. Participants will be able to identify tools and skills that build and maintain a safe environment in their homes. Participants will assess their own defensive-parenting skills.

Managing My Anger

Instructor: Jennifer Otten

As a result of attending this two-hour *iLinc* training, foster parents will be able to identify behaviors in others that make them angry. Participants will be able to identify underlying conditions that can result in angry behaviors and list appropriate ways to express anger. Foster parent participants will practice using appropriate methods to express their own angry feelings.

Proactive Responses to Lying

Instructor: Pura Gonzalez

As a result of attending this two-hour training, foster parents will be able to clarify their values on lying and identify some of the reasons that children may lie. Through practice simulations, participants will learn how to develop strategies for addressing the causes of a child's need to lie and how to respond appropriately when lying occurs.

Proactive Responses to Stealing

Instructor: Pura Gonzalez

Foster parents who attend this two-hour training will be able to clarify their values regarding stealing and identify some of the reasons that children may steal. Through practice simulations, participants will learn how to develop strategies for addressing the causes of a child's compulsion to steal and how to respond appropriately when stealing occurs.

Positive Communication Skills for Foster Parents

Instructor: Helen Shin

Many patient and loving foster parents find that they yell, nag, or criticize more often than they want to when dealing with the challenging behaviors of children in their care. Based on the bestselling book *"How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk,"* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish, this workshop will help foster parents avoid common communication pitfalls and make small but powerful changes in the words they use every day to

- help the child who is experiencing negative feelings
- express their own anger or frustration without being hurtful
- set firm limits and still maintain the child's positive self-concept

More Positive Communication Skills for Foster Parents

Instructor: Helen Shin

By popular demand, foster parents can explore more techniques from the bestselling book *"How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk,"* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish. This workshop will focus on how foster parents can

- encourage autonomy
- use praise effectively
- free children from getting stuck in "roles"

This workshop will provide foster/adoptive parents guidelines for talking about loss and specific things they can say and do to help children of various ages understand their placement rationale.