

# Advisor

Families

Helping

Families

## Care Needs Assessment

Pride Levels of Pay – Phase Two

### How Foster & Birth Parents can Co-Parent

When a foster parent shares the nurturing of a foster child alongside the birth parents and caseworker, reunification tends to happen at a quicker and more successful rate.

### Fostering Teens

Tips shared by youth who have lived in foster care.

### Water safety

Water safety always starts with the caregiver as the first and most important component.

#### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

AGM Announcement

Foster Parent Courses

What to do after a Tick Bite

About Advocacy

Campfire Bannock Recipe



[www.saskfosterfamilies.ca](http://www.saskfosterfamilies.ca)

# Advisor

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## OUR MISSION

The Saskatchewan Foster Families Association exists to support and encourage Foster families through education and advocacy, helping create healthy homes, positive environments, and brighter futures for children and youth across the province.

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# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOTICE

# AGM

The Saskatchewan Foster Families Association (SFFA)  
Annual General Meeting will be on

**Saturday June 14th, 2025**  
**10:30am (CST)**

The meeting will be hosted virtually  
through Microsoft Teams.



If you are interested in attending  
the Annual General Meeting, please  
send your request to [rsvp@sffa.sk.ca](mailto:rsvp@sffa.sk.ca)



## Let's stay connected...

We regularly send out e-mails to our foster parents. To be added to our contact list and receive the latest news, please send your e-mail address to [keanna@sffa.sk.ca](mailto:keanna@sffa.sk.ca)



# 10 Tips for Fostering Teens

(shared by youth who have lived in foster care)

1. **Be authentic and care.** We can tell if you don't care about us or if you are just in it for the money.
2. **Get to know us for who we are.** Who I was before I got taken into foster care is who I am. Take the time to find out our interests.
3. **Don't stereotype us for being in foster care.** We are not the stereotypes that exist. Do not assume that we are going to steal, be promiscuous, or bad because we came to live with you. Having expectations of us before we come into your home doesn't work out well for anyone.
4. **Be open minded and work with us.** The behaviors or emotions I exhibit are not a reflection of you. They are not personal. Don't give up on us.
5. **Find a balance between being overbearing and being hands off.** I need independence and connection.
6. **Understand that it might be hard for us to receive love.** Sometimes growth and pushing us to be better people feels like hatred towards us. We might not like learning life skills, but we will come to see the importance of them as we get older.
7. **Stand up for us when people treat us like an object.** You are not our savior, and we are not the same as foster animals. Help others understand the difference and the ways we bring joy to your life.
8. **Find ways to help us feel special.** It is hard living in a new home with new people. The small things you do to make us feel like we have a special bond make a difference.
9. **Let us help you grow.** We're in this together.
10. **See the potential in us, and support us in becoming the best version of ourselves.**

“

*My parents are probably the perfect example of good foster parents. They were able to see me where I was and where I could be.”*

– youth in foster care

Source: <https://fgi4kids.org/10-tips-for-fostering-teens/>

# Foster Parent College Sessions

Please watch your emails to register for the below courses being offered to caregivers. For more information, contact Tessa at 306-975-1528.

## Positive Parenting 1

June

This course explores three types of positive parenting techniques:

- Encouragement
- Cooperation
- Tracking Behaviour

## Trauma Competent Caregiver

Saturday, June 21, 2025

Becoming a Trauma Competent Caregiver is a training session to increase competency and sensitivity in caring for children with a traumatic history. *Free for SFFA Members; Registration fee may apply for non-members.*

## Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Wednesday, July 09, 2025

The Saskatchewan Foster Families Association provides assistance to the Ministry of Social Services to ensure all foster parents across Saskatchewan have completed their provincially mandated training. *Free for SFFA Members; Registration fee may apply for non-members.*

## LIVE STREAMED ((📺))

JUNE 12TH, 7PM-830PM      MICROSOFT TEAMS

### How Attachment Relationships Impact Childhood Development and What We can Do

*Presented by: Saskatchewan Prevention Institute*

This session will explore how attachment and child development are closely linked, and how healthy relationships nurture the capacity to manage stress and build resiliency. During the presentation, Jackie and Connie will talk about strategies to help children and caregivers to strengthen the attachment bond.

# Matching a foster child to a foster family

When a child needs a foster home placement, all efforts are made to match the needs of the foster child with the training and preferences of the foster family. By classifying foster homes, the level of training, skill and experience of the foster family can assist with the matching process. There are four types of foster care:

## Emergency

Provides immediate care to children on short notice at any time of day or night, often with little information. Children may be in poor health or physical condition, and may require care for up to two weeks.

## Short term

Provides care and prepares children for transition to their families, to extended family, or to another permanent home.

## Long term

Provides care to children who are unable to return to their natural families. In some cases, this may be until the children move to independent living.





# Care Needs Assessment

## PRIDE Levels of Pay - Phase Two

### Care Needs Assessments must be completed within 30 days of the identified need.

If a child's needs are complex, a panel assessment may help to:

- review special needs supports;
- ensure appropriate matching; and,
- better equip families through mandatory training and case specific support.

The caseworker should be prepared to present specific details of the child's needs, examples for each issue and all available assessments.

### Care Needs Assessment Panel Process

1. The caseworker, Child and Caregiver Support Worker and the foster family should work together to ensure the information is fully captured in the Out of Home Care Child Placement and Extended Family Care Request.
2. Seek approval from the service delivery supervisor and manager, then send to SS CFS Provincial Levels of Pay Assessment Team at [cfsprovinciallevelsofpaypanel@gov.sk.ca](mailto:cfsprovinciallevelsofpaypanel@gov.sk.ca).
3. The foster family should receive a copy of the information being presented to the panel.
4. The caseworker, Child and Caregiver Support Worker and supervisor will attend the panel and present the child's care needs.
5. The panel will complete the assessment by designating the appropriate level of care.
6. The Provincial Levels of Pay Assessment Panel will notify the caseworker of the decision by email within three business days, and send a decision letter to the foster family within five business days.
7. The Child and Caregiver Support Worker will then work with the foster family on next steps and training.

**Assessments initiated by a foster parent are a priority.**

# Information to Include in the Out of Home Care Referral



## Health

- formal diagnosis, including prognosis of the condition
- recent hospital visits or hospitalizations
- medical professionals (e.g.: home care, nursing, physicians, etc.)
- medical devices used for vital bodily functions (e.g.: ventilator, dialysis)
- clear information outlining needs, including level of intervention required



## Mental Health and Addictions

- formal diagnosis, including prognosis of the condition
- recent hospital visits or hospitalizations
- suicidal ideations or suicide attempts
- treatment recommendations from professionals
- participation in formal programming (e.g.: treatment centre, detox, support groups)



## Sexual Behaviour

- risks to self or others (e.g.: police involvement)
- required supervision and monitoring (e.g.: aggression, intrusiveness)



## Behavioural Challenges

- which environments behaviours are seen (e.g.: home, school, community)
- concerns with school attendance, including the number of suspensions/expulsions
- existing safety plans
- level of aggression (e.g.: SORs or incident reports, including impact level)
- young offender involvement
- absences from approved placements



## Other

- sexual orientation and gender identity supports
- intensive supports to recover from trauma
- victim of sexual exploitation or human trafficking

**Tip:**  
**Include frequency, duration, severity and impact of behaviour on daily life.**

# About Advocacy

Being a foster parent is not easy, but it is rewarding. It is important to know that you have support when you are struggling. If you have questions about policy, case planning, or need support with investigations, appeals/conflict resolution or quality of care, know that you are not alone. An Advocate from the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association (SFFA) is available to offer information and support.

As a foster parent, it is important that you know and understand your role in the lives of the child(ren) in your care. Timely case planning must occur and includes parents, children, extended family and caregivers in meeting the child's needs and moves towards a permanency plan, which recognizes the critical years of growth and development for a child. The child(ren), parents and provider should know as soon as possible how often and when family contact will occur (phone calls, letters, supervised or unsupervised visitation). Case plans for children in out-of-home care are made in consultation with all those involved in the case, but must include at least the family, child and caregiver to be effective.

Throughout your role as a foster parent, conflict may arise with Ministry employees, and every effort shall be made to resolve the issue in a mutually satisfactory manner, in accordance with the procedures. When there are disagreements between the foster parents and the Ministry, foster parents are entitled to "due process" which means that they must be given a clear statement of the Ministry's decisions, an opportunity to respond, an assurance that their response will be given objective and fair consideration, and a clear statement of the final decision. This can be an overwhelming time for foster parents, and the Advocates at the SFFA are here to support you and to clarify policies or information that may come into question.

If you ever become a subject of an investigation, it is imperative that you feel supported and heard during the process. Foster parents must be afforded fairness and due process at all stages of an investigation. This includes a clear statement of any concerns by the Ministry, an opportunity to respond to the concerns, objective consideration of their responses, and access to appeal/conflict resolution. At this time, due to the potential conflict of interest for Ministry workers, an Advocate from the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association is available to offer information and support throughout the investigation process, unless you choose not to have their involvement.

If you should disagree with the Ministry's decision to close your foster home, you may appeal the decision by accessing the Ministry's formal appeal process. When a foster home is closed as a result of a Ministry decision (following a foster home investigation or formal review), you must be advised of your right to formally appeal the closure decision and the process for doing so. The SFFA understands that the appeal process can be a difficult time for foster families and can be a resource of information while offering support throughout the process.

When it comes to damage to your home or items within your home by a child in your care and in the event that the damage is not covered by personal home insurance or the SFFA liability insurance rider, foster families may seek compensation from the Ministry of Social Services. The foster parent(s) should notify the SFFA of any damage or loss caused by a foster child or children in their care. The SFFA will arrange for an Independent Damage Assessor to carry out an assessment of the loss or damage.

To contact one of our Advocates, simply pick up the phone and dial our main office at 1 (888) 276-2880.

In our **"FOSTER CORNER"** we would like to highlight anything from foster inspired stories to artwork submitted by foster parents on behalf of children in their homes. If you have a foster story, poem, artwork or some other foster related experience or information to share with our readers, please send it in! All communication or submissions for "Foster Corner" can be sent by email to [keanna@sffa.sk.ca](mailto:keanna@sffa.sk.ca)







## POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION FUNDING

In Saskatchewan, foster families receive ongoing financial support from the Ministry of Social Services to cover the costs of caring for a child, including their basic needs. This support can be supplemented by additional funding for activities like sports, music lessons, or cultural activities, and is based on the individual child's needs as outlined in their case plan. Post-secondary education funding for children in care is primarily managed through the Government of Saskatchewan and may include bursaries and scholarships specifically for youth from care.

### Provincial Programs:

The Government of Saskatchewan offers bursaries and scholarships for youth in care to access post-secondary education.

### University-Specific Bursaries:

Universities like the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina offer specific bursaries for youth from care. For example, the University of Saskatchewan's Saskatchewan Youth From Care Bursary can cover tuition, fees, books, accommodation, and a stipend.

### Tuition Waivers:

Some provinces, including Saskatchewan, offer tuition waivers for youth who grew up in care, making it easier for them to access post-secondary education.

### Other Funding Sources:

Organizations like the Belonging Network and Youth in Care Canada also offer bursaries and scholarships for youth from care.

### How to Access Funding:

Contact the Ministry of Social Services:

Foster parents should consult with the Ministry of Social Services for information on available funding and how to apply.

### Check University Websites:

Universities that offer bursaries or scholarships for youth from care will have specific application processes outlined on their websites.

# KIDS BICYCLE SAFETY STEPS



1

### Find a helmet that fits

A helmet should sit square on a child's head, about two fingers' width above their eyes. Buckles should be centered under their chin, and when buckled, the helmet should be tight enough to stay securely on their head.



2

### Stick to the Sidewalk

Riders who keep their bikes on the sidewalk are a lot less likely to have a mix-up with motorists.



3

### Stay Visible

Wear brightly coloured clothing to catch drivers' eye, and use lights at night as required by law. Shorter bicyclists can benefit from a flag that places them at driver's eye level.



4

### Teach the Rules of the Road

Teach your children about the importance of obeying traffic signals as if they were a car, including observing stop signs. Always travel with the direction of traffic, and use proper hand signals.



5

### Stay in Control

Keep at least one hand on the handlebars at all times. Cargo such as books, groceries and toys should be carried in a backpack or a basket on the bike so as not to interfere with operation of the bike.



6

### Maintenance

Periodically check your child's bike to ensure tires are inflated properly, lights are operational and brakes still work.

**I**t can be quite difficult having a foster child in your home. He or she may have been placed in your home because of abuse or neglect from his family. Perhaps he was in danger from parents who were abusing themselves. Whatever the reason for his placement into the child welfare's custody, your foster child has most likely come to you with some emotional problems and is struggling with the loss of his family.

As a foster parent, it is part of your job to help your foster child deal with these issues, and help him adjust to his new environment, as well as develop a positive and loving relationship with him.

However, there is another part of your role as a foster parent that can be extremely difficult: co-parenting. When a foster parent shares the nurturing of a foster child alongside the birth parents and caseworker, reunification tends to happen at a quicker and more successful rate. Co-parenting sees you, as a foster parent, working alongside

# How can foster parents & birth parents successfully co-parent?

There are a number of strategies that will reduce the stress that you, as a foster parent, can use when working with birth parents.

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## DO be a role model

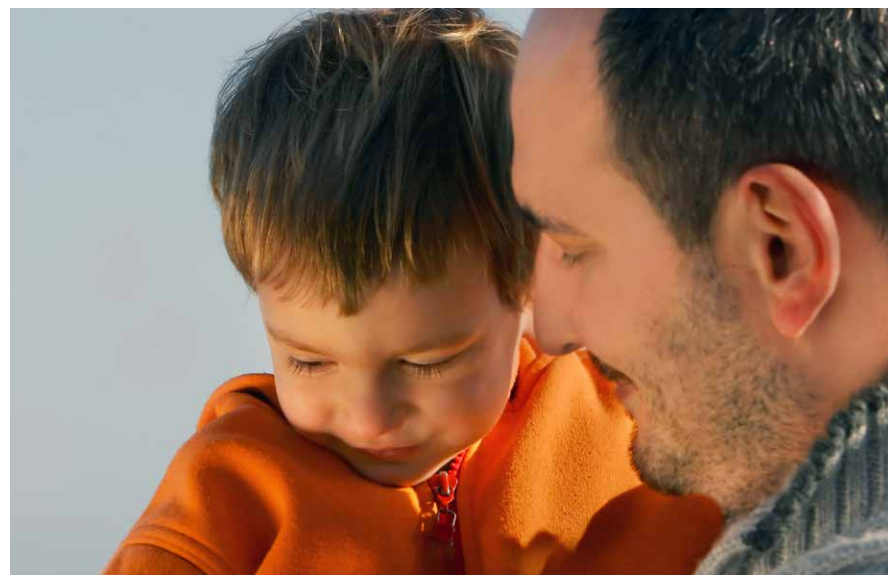
As a foster parent, you will be a role model for countless people, as many eyes will be upon you. Not only will you be a role model for your foster children, but for the public as a whole. Foster parenting will be on display for all to see as you undertake your role as a

should act, as well as how to treat their own children. When your foster child meets with his birth parents for visitations, he should be well dressed, clean, healthy and looking his best. His hair should be combed with nails cut. After all, you are sending a message that he is worthy of your best attention and care.

## DO answer questions honestly

Upon meeting the birth parents for the first time, there are bound to be questions from both you and the birth parents. Your foster child's family members will want to know what kind of family their child is living with, what his home life will be like, if he is being taken care of and many other concerns. After all, their child has been taken away from them, against their wishes, and placed in a strange home. They will have many concerns and may not be as courteous as you might like.

Be prepared for them to be hostile, rude, angry or even distant. Remember that they are hurting and have been through a traumatic experience with the removal of their child. Respectfully encourage them to ask you as many questions as they would like. It is important



the biological parents of the child living under your roof and with your family. This may be the more difficult part of your job. Not only will the foster child benefit from this improved relationship, but hopefully, the biological parents will also benefit as they learn positive parenting skills from the foster parents.

foster parent. Perhaps others will be impressed by your role and will wish to become a foster parent, or in the very least, help out. For birth parents and family members, you might be the best example of a good parent. Everything you do as a foster parent will send signals to the biological parents on how a parent



that you answer their questions as honestly and openly as possible, treating them with the utmost integrity, kindness and politeness. Remember that you are modeling good adult behavior to them, as well as to your foster child.

### **DO ask about their child**

Your foster child's biological parents and family members will know him better than anyone. And your meeting with them will offer you the opportunity to learn a great deal about him, as well as acquire important information you might need. A list of prepared questions will help you gather the information you need.

When you ask questions about their child, you are showing the birth parents that you are interested in him and his well being. By indicating with your questions that his parents are the experts, you will begin to form a relationship, one that will benefit all involved.

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### **DON'T pass judgement**

Maybe you disagree with their parenting style. Maybe their morals and values differ completely from yours. Maybe they have said mean things to you. But it is vital that you

do not prejudge them before you meet them.

Consider that many biological parents of foster children were abused themselves, and they know no other way when raising children. Also disturbing is that some birth parents were foster children and are just repeating the cycle they went through as a child. Certainly, there are reasons why their children are in care that we may never understand. Not only can we stay positive and keep a good attitude, we can also treat our foster child's birth parents with the same dignity, respect and kindness that we would want displayed towards the children, or towards us.

### **DON'T ignore them**

Your foster child's family will likely be very curious about you. If they have not already asked questions about you and your family, take time to share with them some information. Let them know that you are excited to have their child in your home for the time being. Tell them about some of the traditions in your home. Reassure them that their child will not only be safe in your home, but will be cared for and given plenty of positive attention. The more assurance birth parents have that

their child is in a good home, the better the relationship will be between the two of you.

### **DON'T be unprepared for visitations**

For foster children, visitations have many positive attributes. To begin with, your foster child's visit with his biological family members will likely reduce his sense of abandonment by them. Hopefully, his sense of self-worth and importance will be bolstered, as he feels reassured that his parents will continue to love him, something he may very well doubt and struggle with internally.

By expressing his feelings to them, he may continue to heal emotionally. His birth parents may also reassure him that he is in a good home with you, and that he needs to listen to you and follow your rules, thus strengthening his own relationship with you. In fact, the children who visit with their birth parents on a regular basis are less likely to exhibit behavioral problems in your home and in school. As their level of anxiety decreases, they will become better adjusted to placement within your family.

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### **Summary**

As a foster parent, it is crucial to remember that your foster child's biological parents are people in need. There are reasons why their child is in foster care and under your supervision. These parents may lash out at you and the caseworker. They may have treated their own child in cruel and horrible ways. Yet, they still deserve your kindness and sympathy, not your anger. By working with them and showing them kindness and compassion, you will not only help them, but you will also teach your foster child an important lesson in love and humanity.

Source: <https://expertbeacon.com/how-can-foster-parents-and-birth-parents-successfully-co-parent/#.V8OQ8Tp32-I>



# Summer Camps

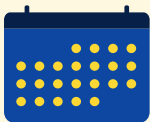
*Things to remember when sending children who are in foster care to camp:*

- ▶ Families must receive prior approval before registering a child for organized activities.
- ▶ Families must ensure that the camp is safe and provides supervision and programming appropriate to the needs of the child.
- ▶ Summer camps must be accredited by the Saskatchewan Camping Association.
- ▶ Foster families will continue to be paid maintenance while the child attends camp however, are required to pay \$25 for each child in attendance towards the camp.
- ▶ Given the unique needs of children in care the following must be in place:
  - The camp's discipline policy is consistent with the Ministry's discipline policy
  - The camp has a policy for responding to children's complaints regarding harassment and abuse
  - The children are aware of this policy and how to make a complaint



## FACTS *About* SUNSCREEN

### EXPIRATION



Sunscreen typically has a shelf life of 3 years. Check the expiration date.

### INFANTS

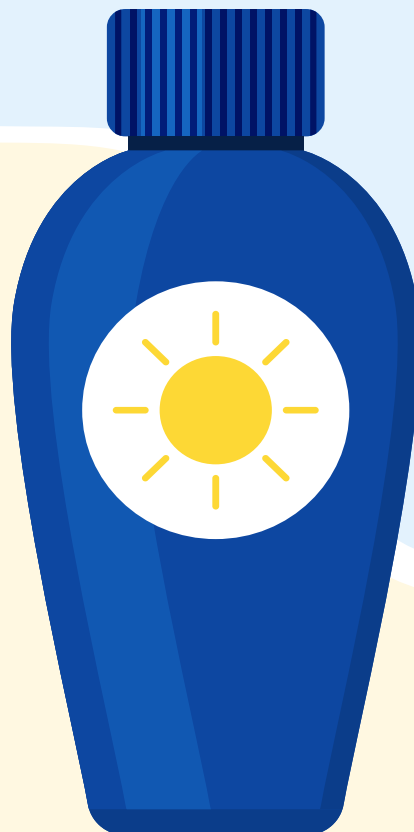


Don't use sunscreen on children under 6 months of age.

### UVB LIGHT



UVB cannot penetrate skin with applied sunscreen.



### SPF 30



It's recommended using at least SPF 30, as it protects you from 97% of UVB rays.

### 40 MIN



Water & sweat resistant sunscreen will last 40 to 80 minutes, even when it gets wet.

### 2 HOURS



After 2 hours, reapply sunscreen if you're still in the sun.



# Water Safety

for Caregivers of  
Children and Youth

**S**pending time in and around water is a great activity for families, children and youth. However, DROWNING is the SECOND leading cause of injury-related DEATH for children ages 14 and under. The majority of drownings and non-fatal drownings for infants occur in bath tubs. For toddlers, the majority occur in residential swimming pools, while older children and youth are more likely to drown in lakes, rivers and oceans. Drowning can occur in as little as TEN SECONDS and can occur in just INCHES of water. Research on water safety shows that implementing a layered approach to water safety is the best way to prevent drownings. Water safety always starts with the caregiver as the first and most important component.

## Water Safety Tips:

- Constant and active supervision should be maintained when any child is in or around water.
- Children should not be permitted to play in areas where there is any body/container of water, including swimming pools, ponds, dug outs, wading pools, tubs, pails, sinks or toilets without supervision.
- Make sure you give 100% of your attention when supervising. Put cell phones, magazines and BBQ duties aside. Find another adult to take over if you need to turn away for any reason.
- Watch the face – especially the eyes. Many victims don't call, wave or signal for help because they can't keep their head or arms above water.
- Caregivers should be familiar with the child/youth's swimming abilities and provide the appropriate level of supervision. For infants, 1:1 adult to child supervision should be provided. For toddlers and preschoolers arm's length/touch supervision should be provided.
- At the pool, the lake or the beach, young children and children who can't swim should wear a PFD.
- Never rely on inflatable cushions, air mattresses, water toys, etc., for the support of non-swimmers.
- Restrict access to the pool or other bodies of water when not in use. Use multiple barriers or strategies to restrict access
- Empty and turn over wading pools and other containers of water when not in use.
- Keep hot tubs covered and locked when not in use.
- Away from home, swim in designated swimming areas, where possible.
- Water conditions in locations such as lakes and rivers can change rapidly. Be familiar with water conditions and be satisfied the area is safe.
- Provide children and youth with a water safety plan that includes water safety instructions (boundaries, depth of water, condition of the water bottom, the appropriate use of PFDS, etc.).
- Any child under the age of five should not be left alone at bath time. The caregiver should supervise the child at all times and ensure everything that is needed for bathing is gathered prior to the bath. Bath tubs should be emptied while not in use.





## What to do after a tick bite

by Johns Hopkins Lyme Disease Center

**T**ick attachment time is important. Removing ticks as soon as possible reduces the risk of infection. If you or a loved one is bitten, remove the tick promptly. Here's how:

- Grasp the tick's mouthparts against the skin, using pointed tweezers.
- Be patient; the long mouthpart is covered with barbs, so removing it can be difficult and time consuming.
- Pull steadily without twisting until you can ease the tick head straight out of the skin.
- DO NOT pull back sharply; this may tear the mouthparts from the body of the tick and leave them embedded in the skin.
- If this happens, don't panic! Embedded mouthparts do not transmit Lyme disease.
- DO NOT squeeze or crush the body of the tick; this may force infected body fluids from the tick into the skin.
- DO NOT apply substances such as petroleum jelly, nail polish, or a lighted match to the tick while it is attached. They may agitate the tick and force more infected fluid into the skin.
- Once you have removed the tick, wash the wound site and your hands with soap and water, and apply rubbing alcohol or antiseptic to the site.
- If you have found a tick on you, it's a sign there may be others. Do a careful tick check.
- Observe the bite site over the next two weeks for any signs of an expanding red rash or flu-like symptoms.

Source: <https://www.hopkinslyme.org/lyme-education/what-to-do-after-a-tick-bite/>

## National Indigenous History Month

June has been designated as "National Indigenous History Month" in Canada. It's an opportunity to learn about the unique cultures, traditions and experiences of First Nations, Inuit and Métis. It's a time to honour the stories, achievements and resilience of Indigenous Peoples, who have lived on this land since time immemorial and whose presence continues to impact the evolving Canada.

The House of Commons designated June as National Aboriginal History Month in 2009. The name was changed to National Indigenous History Month in 2017.

Source: <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca>





# Don't Forget to Ask

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

*Please note that all questions do not apply to all placements.*

1. Why is this child being placed?
2. What is the child's understanding of the reason for placement/separation from his family?
3. What is the plan for the child? Is the length of placement known at this time?
4. What are the child's previous placement experiences?
5. What is the family situation?
6. Where are the parents?
7. Will the parents visit? If so, where? How often?
8. Are there siblings? Where are they?
9. Will there be pre-placement visits?
10. What is the child's legal status?
11. Who is the child's doctor?
12. When was the child's last physical?
13. What is the child's health status? Do they have any allergies?  
Are they on any medications? When was the last dental check-up?
14. Does the child have any behavioral problems or habits?
15. If this child has been sexually abused, is he/she at risk to themselves or others?
16. Are the child's clothes adequate and appropriate?
17. What will help the child feel at home? What is their favorite food? Do they have a comforting toy?
18. Is religion important to the child?
19. What school and what grad does the child attend?
20. Are there any problems in school?
21. When will the social worker visit and/or call?
22. Who do I call after hours?
23. What do you (the social worker) expect of me (foster parent)?



Source: <https://saskfosterfamilies.ca/resources-for-foster-parents/tool-kit-resources>



**Have you ever considered being a foster parent and don't know how to get started?**

SEARCH FOR...

"Six Steps to Fostering In Saskatchewan" on YouTube.

# Local author shares mental health journey in new book

by Daniel Bushman

**B**attling through life fuelled by addiction, negative self-image, depression and anxiety, an author with local roots has written about his journey. After experiencing divine intervention that helped save his life, Allan Kehler not only began to pick up the pieces but along the way, found hope and resilience.

Detailing his personal walk with mental illness, addiction and redemption, Kehler's book: *Transforming Pain Into Purpose*, which was just released, chronicles his life's story. Raised in Drake and now residing in Saskatoon with his wife and four boys, the international keynote speaker for mental health and wellness explained how he grew up in small town Saskatchewan with a persona that nothing was wrong.

Through years of navigating dark thoughts, loneliness and self-destruction, Kehler's world eventually came crashing down. "Growing up in a small town it was something we never talked about and I swore I was the only one having these thoughts. No part of me knew what to do with those thoughts and feelings and I kept it inside," shared Kehler.

Turning to alcohol and gambling as a way to mask the issues, through numerous near-death experiences and plodding along through dark valleys, Kehler eventually hit a fork in the road and ultimately made the decision to turn his life around. "The moment I was able to start getting help and walk into groups where other people had similar challenges, I started to hear my story through their story. That is when there was that redemption, that liberation knowing that I am not the only person.

"Life is interesting," said Kehler about his journey and deciding to share his story. "I know it sounds very dramatic when I say I shouldn't be alive after the life I have led, other than I feel like I have been spared to carry a message, but that is true. The process writing the book was much more challenging than I thought. It reinforced the fact that I am here for something much bigger. My ask is always use me . . . when you know you know, and it felt like everything aligned."

While Kehler knew the book had to be written, when he began, "I thought that I had come to terms with a



*Allan Kehler not only picked up the pieces following years of addiction, negative self-image, depression and anxiety but in doing so, is sharing his story.*

lot of things but I found out quickly that was not the case. When you are writing your story, you are not just reliving it but you are conveying it to the reader so it is almost like another level. I needed to return to counselling and I started working with some spiritual coaches. My greatest support was my rock, my wife Tanya. I had a lot of help writing it and I am so glad it is done for my own mental health. It took me to places that we all have but I had to live in them for a lot longer than I cared to do so."

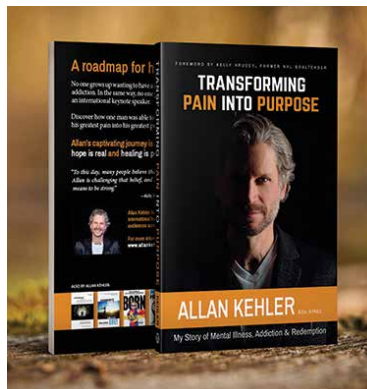
Despite having to relive his past through the pages of his book, Kehler's strength and redemption has been evident. A firm believer that if a person finds their voice, they will find their power, the author said it is then when hope can arrive. "Hope also requires some type of action and in my case there were clearly a few situations where there was divine intervention but it does not have to get to that point. Our greatest risks have a tendency to lead to our greatest rewards. What I have found not only in my journey but speaking with

others, is that when they are able to take that risk, when they are being vulnerable and able to let someone in, they are rewarded by being free from those emotions."

Through that redemption, hope and resilience, after he first began to share his story, Kehler found others who have walked similar paths. The author hopes that by putting himself out there through his book, it will resonate with others. "I think it just speaks to the fact that no matter who we are, where we are, mental health affects us all. I have been given a bit of a platform and it is so humbling being able to hopefully help others out from that darkness and help them try and find their voice."

With *Transforming Pain Into Purpose* available through his website ([www.allankehler.com](http://www.allankehler.com)), on Amazon and eventually sold at Indigo, McNally Robinson, and the Lanigan Advisor office in Watrous, Kehler admitted he is not sure how it will be received. However,

the author said, "I feel like the power of the story can never be estimated. We all have one. If all of us stayed quiet with our struggles, then we all suffer in silence. I think we have to recover out loud so other people don't have to suffer in silence. That is my biggest hope, that we as a society can move to that place where we can celebrate the resilience of someone."

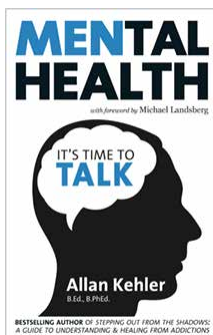


*Finding hope and resilience along his life's journey, Allan Kehler is sharing his story. Through his new book, **Transforming Pain Into Purpose**, which was just released, Kehler provides readers with hope that can come out of dark and lonely situations.*

*Article reprinted with permission from the Lanigan Advisor.*

## MENtal Health: It's Time to Talk

When it comes to mental health, too many men are suffering in silence. *MENtal Health: It's Time to Talk* tells the true stories of prairie men – including Chris Beaudry, former assistant coach of the Humboldt Broncos – who have persevered through various mental health challenges. Together, they put a voice to topics including masculinity, mental illness, addiction, sexual abuse, and suicide. These men speak out in raw honesty because they understand that the conversation doesn't start until someone starts talking.



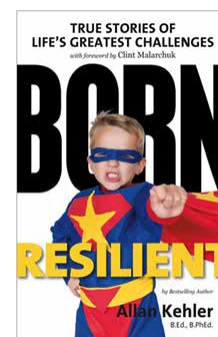
## Goodbye Stress. Hello Life!

We live in a fast-paced society with a seemingly endless list of demands. Life naturally brings its share of challenges and stress. The key is to move forward so that it doesn't impact other areas of your life. It has been said that the greatest challenge in life is discovering who we are. The next test is being happy with what we find. Drawing from personal and professional experiences, Allan inspires you to persevere through your personal challenges rather than avoid them. You will be inspired to stop existing and start living for you. You will be empowered to take back control and create a life of peace and happiness no matter what surrounds you.



## Born Resilient: True Stories of Life's Greatest Challenges

Why is it that some individuals give up in the face of a challenge while others are able to rise above? While it is easier to give up, it is through your challenges that you can grow. These courageous, real-life stories are true examples of loss, pain, and devastation. It will become evident that we are not created to give up in the face of adversity, we are born resilient.



## Stepping Out From the Shadows: A Guide to Understanding & Healing From Addictions

Do you currently know a loved one who is struggling with addictions, self-injurious behaviours, or thoughts of suicide? Are you experiencing a loss of control around your own substance use? Do you find yourself feeling lost or helpless about the situation? Education is the greatest tool for assisting you in your time of need. Whether you are dealing with addictions personally or are observing a loved one struggle with them, this book will guide you. You will learn the tools that will allow you to take your power back and regain control over your own life.





# Be Ready in an Emergency

**E**mergency can strike at any time. Having a plan in place can be a difference-maker in ensuring you and your family are able to get out safely. Are you prepared?

Fire can start in the blink of an eye, so preparation is essential. Everyone should know how to get out of their house at a moment's notice — because in some cases, a moment's notice is all you will get.

Home fires, of course, can spread rapidly. They can occur for a wide variety of reasons, including faulty appliances and wiring, flammable materials that are left too close to a heat source, open flames left unguarded and carelessness when handling lit objects like cigarettes.

A good home fire escape plan is crucial and everyone in the household should be involved in its creation. Walk through the home, taking note

of all potential escape routes. If your household has younger children or includes people who are more visual learners, consider drawing a physical map of the house with at least two exits out of each room clearly identified.

Here are a few other tips to help you along as you're considering your fire escape plan:

- Plan ahead of time with regards to any seniors, infants, and mobility-impaired individuals. Identify someone in the home whose responsibility it is to assist them in the event of an emergency.
- Plan a meeting location once outside. This is the spot by which everyone in the household should gather once the house has been evacuated. It should be a safe distance from the home and easily identifiable.
- Practice your fire escape plan twice a year, making sure to be

as realistic as possible with it. Practice for safe speed — time may be of the essence.

- At the same time, keep in mind that practice doesn't have to induce fear. It's okay to warn the household ahead of time that there will be a fire drill.
- Once you're out, stay out. Even if someone is missing, firefighters are much better equipped to be able to rescue them safely than you will be in a moment of panic and high adrenaline.

Be cautious, be proactive, be safe. A fire can be a devastating and traumatizing experience but, by putting your safety and the safety of your family first, you'll be best positioned to escape with the most irreplaceable thing you have: your lives.



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[www.canadasafetycouncil.org](http://www.canadasafetycouncil.org)

## If you're planning a vacation...

**D**id you know that the Ministry may pay exceptional travel costs up to \$500 to enable a child or youth in care to take a special holiday with their caregiver. Requests for Special Holidays may be considered once per child per calendar year. Upon returning from the trip, the caregiver will submit all receipts to the caseworker within 60 days.

Caregivers must provide a written request two months prior to the departure date of the planned special holiday in order to allow sufficient time for the Ministry to complete the approval process.

The request should include:

- Destination
- Mode of Transportation
- Length of Holiday
- Number of Individuals Travelling
- Type of Lodging
- Planned Activities





# Campfire Bannock on a stick

**Native Americans have had Bannock cooking over a campfire for many many years. It's now becoming popular with campers.**

**B**annock, a type of bread, has a complex history interwoven with both European settlers and Indigenous cultures in North America. While its origins lie in Scottish flatbreads made from barley or oatmeal, Indigenous communities, particularly the Métis in Canada, adapted and incorporated bannock into their own culinary traditions. They used locally available ingredients like cornmeal, and some even incorporated wild plant bulbs. Bannock became a staple food, particularly during times of food scarcity or when communities were relocated to reserves. The introduction of wheat flour by European settlers in the 19th century led to a more widespread use of flour-based bannock among Indigenous communities. Bannock became a symbol of resilience and adaptation for Indigenous peoples, representing their ability to thrive in the face of hardship. It remains a significant food in Indigenous culture, often shared at gatherings, ceremonies, and community events.



## CAMPFIRE BANNOCK on a Stick

### Ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 4 tsp baking powder
- 4 tbsp butter cold
- 2 tsp white sugar
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 ziplock bag

### Directions

1. In ziplock bag combine flour, baking powder, butter, sugar and salt. Seal and squishy the bag until butter is crumbly. Write on bag "Add 1/2 cup water". Put in refrigerator or cooler.
2. At your campsite, prepare yourself a roasting stick. Set aside.
3. When ready to make bannock, add water to bag, seal and squishy until mixture starts to form a dough ball. Remove from bag and on cutting board, form into 4-6 balls.
4. Roll each ball into a long log and wrap around ends of roasting stick. Roast over hot fire, but not to close as to burn the outside. This part takes time since you want to cook the inside without burning the outside. Turn slowly, it will take anywhere from 10-20 minutes.
5. When the bread is brown on the outside, has puffed up a little and feels cooked on the inside it is ready.

Source: <https://www.bakersbeans.ca/bannock-stick-brewers-campground-gull-lake/>





## GOODS & SERVICES VOUCHERS

The Ministry of Social Services issues Requisitions for Goods and Services vouchers to citizens to help with the purchase of goods and services. Foster families may receive requisition forms

(vouchers) for immediate purchases children or youth may need when coming into or while in their care. Required items may include clothing, diapers, formula, car seats or other special needs requests that are approved by the child's Caseworker.

Things to remember when using a Requisition (voucher):

- Must have photo identification to match the name on the requisition otherwise it will not be accepted
- The amount purchased (including tax) must not exceed the amount indicated on the requisition
- Purchases are not subject to the Goods and Services Tax (GST)
- The requisition is not valid for payment after six months from date of issue
- Refunds covering the cost of a returned item must be made to the Ministry of Social Services

For a list of community retailers accepting vouchers, visit the following online link:

<https://www.saskfosterfamilies.ca/resources-for-foster-parents/member-benefits>



## FOSTER FAMILY TOOLKIT

**Education, advocacy, and a place to turn for advice...**

It is the goal of the SFFA to help provide a safe and comforting environment for every child in foster care. The right support can make all the difference.

SFFA members have access to:

- a comprehensive library of information;
- educational materials;
- training programs;
- advice and advocacy and
- much, much more.

All the tools available are to help foster families build and sustain the best possible home for the children in their care. Visit the following online link:

<https://www.saskfosterfamilies.ca/resources-for-foster-parents/tool-kit-resources>

### **PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 41271051**

RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:  
SASKATCHEWAN FOSTER FAMILIES ASSOCIATION  
231 Robin Crescent  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7L 6M8