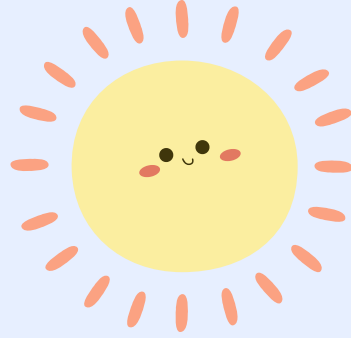


# 2026

# APRIL NEWSLETTER



## FOSTER PARENT SHOUT OUT!

We are proud to recognize **Alisa Sorensen** for her exceptional dedication as a foster parent. With over 25 years of experience, she has made a lasting impact on many children and families.

Since becoming licensed with The Baby Fold in 2010, Alisa has cared for 11 children through the agency, in addition to those she supported earlier in her journey. She has also adopted three children and continues to provide long-term care for her current foster daughter, whom she considers part of her family.

With a background in nursing, Alisa brings valuable expertise to caring for children with complex medical needs. She goes above and beyond by coordinating care, attending specialist appointments, and traveling regularly to a children's hospital in St. Louis.

Alisa is also a dependable support to others, often providing respite care and stepping in whenever needed. Her compassion, resilience, and selflessness truly exemplify the role of a foster parent. We are deeply grateful for her ongoing dedication and the exceptional care she provides through The Baby Fold.



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



309.452.1770



1500 Fort Jesse, Normal



THE BABY FOLD'S

# FOSTER CARE

## FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION EVENT

We're excited to celebrate and honor our incredible foster parents! Please join us for an evening of appreciation, fun, food, connection, and gratitude. Dinner will be provided!

Date: Thursday, May 7, 2026

Time: 5:00 – 7:30 PM

Location: The Baby Fold Training Center



## YOUTH ENRICHMENT & SUPPORT ("YES") FUNDS

*yes!*

The purpose of "YES" funds is to enhance access to enrichment activities, and other goods and services for the support and stabilization of youth in DCFS care. Please talk to your caseworker directly how to access these funds. Please do not purchase any of these activities/items first because we will not be able to reimburse. **All purchases must be made by the caseworker.**

\* *Youth in Care who are specialized are not eligible for Yes Funds*

Some examples of items that can be purchased using YES funds include:

- Camp expenses (when not covered by the DCFS Day Care Eligibility and Reimbursement Program)
- Lessons in recreation or artistic endeavors (i.e., music lessons, dancing lessons, athletic instructions)
- Music instrument purchase or rental
- Membership fees and equipment for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H, YMCA, YWCA, etc.
- School supplies
- Gym shoes and equipment
- Graduating expenses
- Local School trips (no overnight stay)
- Tutoring
- Summer school fees
- Travel unrelated to placement (will require approval as extraordinary travel)
- Medical expenses not covered by the YouthCare Program



# THE BABY FOLD'S FOSTER CARE

## FOSTER PARENT LAW IMPLEMENTATION PLAN MEETING

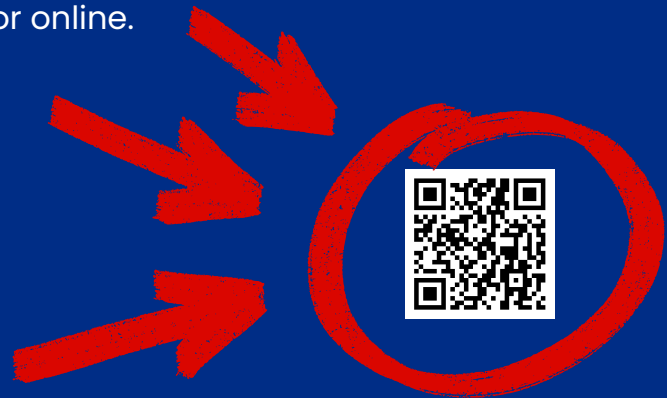
Foster parents play an essential role in providing input into The Baby Fold's Foster Parent Law Implementation Plan, and we would be honored to have your input as we review and discuss The Baby Fold's 2027 Implementation Plan. Your feedback and perspective are incredibly valuable, and your participation helps ensure our services truly meet the needs of the children and families we serve.

Please join us for a hybrid meeting on Monday, April 27, 2026, from 12:00pm–1:30pm. You're welcome to attend either in person or online.

In-Person Location:  
1500 Ft. Jesse Rd  
Normal, IL 61761

Join via Zoom:  
<https://tinyurl.com/yc8mbnze>

Meeting ID: 862 5474 7152  
Passcode: 708910



We truly hope you'll take part in this important conversation. Your voice matters, and we look forward to learning from you! **Prior to the meeting, please provide feedback even if you cannot attend:** <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/ykHL7eHgP0>

## FOSTER PARENT RIGHT #4 & #5 AND RESPONSIBILITIES #5



### Foster Parents' Rights:

#4. The right to receive timely financial reimbursement commensurate with the care needs of the child as specified in the service plan.

#5. The right to be provided a clear, written understanding of a placement agency's plan concerning the placement of a child in their home. Inherent in this policy is the responsibility to support activities that will promote the child's right to relationships with his or her own family and cultural heritage.

### Foster Parents' Responsibilities:

#5. The responsibility to recognize their own individual and familial strengths and limitations when deciding whether to accept a child into care; and the responsibility to recognize the foster parent's own support needs and utilize appropriate supports in providing care for foster children.



THE BABY FOLD'S

# FOSTER CARE

## ROYAL FAMILY KIDS CAMP

We wanted to share an opportunity for the children in your care to attend Royal Family KIDS Camp, a week-long overnight camp designed specifically for children involved in the local foster care system. This camp provides a supportive environment where kids can take a break from everyday challenges and simply enjoy being children.

Campers will participate in a variety of fun and engaging activities throughout the week, including a birthday party for all campers, a Hawaiian-themed pool party, a Princess Tea Party, a water gun fight with s'mores, as well as more adventurous options like ziplining and a rock-climbing wall.

There is no cost for foster children to attend, as the camp is fully funded through donations from individuals and local businesses.

If you have a child who may be interested in attending, please complete the registration form using the link below:

<https://form.jotform.com/260725266494161>



## VIRTUAL AUTISM TRAINING



April is Autism Awareness Month

Join us for a virtual Autism Training on April 18th from 9:00–11:00 AM. This session is a great opportunity to deepen your understanding, build practical skills, and strengthen your ability to support individuals on the autism spectrum.

Whether you're a caregiver, professional, or community member, this training will provide valuable insight and tools you can use every day.

Date: April 18, 2026

Time: 9:00–11:00 AM

Location: Microsoft Teams meeting

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/23191774413689?p=YJwhxQE2NQfQIVDIrR>

Meeting ID: 231 917 744 136 89

Passcode: 6Gc2ER3x

Let's come together to learn, grow, and promote greater awareness and inclusion.



# CPR & FIRST AID TRAINING



## A SHINING STAR LEARNING CENTER

Join us for CPR & First Aid training at A Shining Star Learning Center. This session meets foster care licensing requirements and covers adult, child, and infant CPR, as well as first aid.

Date: Saturday, April 11, | 8:30–11:00 AM

Location: 17 Traders Circle, Normal, IL

Cost: \$50 per person

Ideal for new or renewing foster parents, this training will help you stay certified and prepared.

RSVP: Text or email (309) 261-4434 | [jstanek78@yahoo.com](mailto:jstanek78@yahoo.com)

*Please note if you are a Baby Fold foster family when registering.*

## HEARTLAND

Learn essential CPR and first aid skills, including CPR, AED use, rescue breathing, and choking response. Participants who complete the hands-on training will receive a CPR/AED/First Aid. This course is approved by DCFS for daycare providers and is not intended for healthcare professionals.

Date: Saturday, April 18, 2026 | 8:30–11:45 AM

Location: Normal Readiness Center (Illinois National Guard Building), Normal, IL

Cost: \$65 (includes certification and textbook)

Grant funding may cover up to 50% of the cost. Contact Mary Jo Murphy at (309) 268-8824 or [maryjo.murphy@heartland.edu](mailto:maryjo.murphy@heartland.edu) for details.





# THE BABY FOLD'S FOSTER CARE

## FLU SHOT REMINDER!

Friendly reminder, all Youth in Care are required to get an **annual flu shot for all children 6 months and older**. Now is the perfect time to make sure you and your family are protected by getting your annual flu shot.

Find your local clinic here: [vaccines.gov/find-vaccines](https://www.vaccines.gov/find-vaccines).

Stay healthy and take good care this season!



**DON'T  
FORGET**

## PLEASE JOIN THE BABY FOLD'S FOSTER CARE FACEBOOK PAGE

A private group created exclusively for our foster parents to stay updated on upcoming events and trainings. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out. Join using the link below or by scanning the QR code:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/17kGBfFaA>



## REFERRAL PROGRAM

Don't forget—if you refer a family who becomes fully licensed and has a child placed in their home, you'll receive a \$150 reward! The referred family must identify you as the referral within the **first three days** of beginning the licensing process. If you have any questions, please contact your licensing worker.



# TRAININGS & SUPPORT



## START 24/7 TRAINING

Free professional training for parents, caregivers, and providers supporting children who have experienced trauma. Learn practical, trauma-informed strategies to begin using right away to better support children and families.

Date: April 10, 2026

Time: 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Location: McLean County Health Department, Bloomington, IL

4 CEUs available (\$40 processing fee)

Register at: <https://thebabyfold.redpodium.com/start-24-7>

## DADS SHARPEN DADS

A safe place for dads to share their unique challenges, as well as education and support for each other to be their very best. Meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month at 7:15pm. For more info, email Ken at [KSummers@thebabyfold.org](mailto:KSummers@thebabyfold.org) for more information.

## WEDNESDAY NOON GROUP

Provides education and support related to parenting, trauma, and self-care within the context of adoption and foster care. Meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month. Email Melissa at [MLegendre@thebabyfold.org](mailto:MLegendre@thebabyfold.org) for more information.

## GRANDPARENT CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Fostering a grandchild? This group is for you! Meets once a month at Community Care, located at 3601 General Electric Rd. Suite #2, Bloomington, IL 61704. Caregivers and children are able to meet together to do activities, crafts, share a meal, and get acquainted. If you would like more information, please call Angie Raymer at 309.661.6400.

## SIDE BY SIDE MINISTRIES

This ministry exists to engage the church & local community in consistent loving support of families involved in foster care by providing access to physical, relational, and spiritual resources. For more information, send an email to: [sidebyside1712@gmail.com](mailto:sidebyside1712@gmail.com).

### Cindy Musick

Family Development Specialist  
[cmusick@thebabyfold.org](mailto:cmusick@thebabyfold.org)  
309.557.1004

### Brittany Tweedt

Family Development Specialist  
[btweedt@thebabyfold.org](mailto:btweedt@thebabyfold.org)  
309.557.1108

### Stephanie Tanner

Family Development Supervisor  
[stanner@thebabyfold.org](mailto:stanner@thebabyfold.org)  
309.310.9867