



# The Baby Fold

1500 Ft. Jesse Road  
Wing A  
Normal, IL, 60761

**SERVING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SINCE 1902**

## **JULY 2024** **NEWSLETTER**



**JULY 2024**

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# AGENCY EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## TRAINING WITH OUR NURSE: KIM SEWELL

Our Foster Care Nurse, Kim Sewell, will be providing the following trainings (Please RSVP):

### CPR/First Aid in person @ our office

- July 11th 5pm-9pm
- July 20th 8am-12pm

## FOSTERING STRONG

Our core training program, ***Fostering Strong***, will be taking a short hiatus this summer, and will begin again in the fall.

## 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 2 times a month. Check out the flyer on page 14, and Ken Summers 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 2 times a month. Check out the flyer on page 13, and email Melissa at [MLEGENDRE@thebabyfold.org](mailto:MLEGENDRE@thebabyfold.org) for more information.

## SIDE BY SIDE MINISTRIES

This ministry exists to engage the church and local community in consistent loving support of families involved in foster care by providing access to physical, relational, and spiritual resources. Please take a look at the flyer on page 15 for more information about this resource.

Please reach out to your licensing worker to RSVP:

Amy Howe:  
[ahowe@thebabyfold.org](mailto:ahowe@thebabyfold.org)  
(309)-557-1037

Brittany Tweedt:  
[btweedt@thebabyfold.org](mailto:btweedt@thebabyfold.org)  
(309)-557-1108

Cindy Musick:  
[cmusick@thebabyfold.org](mailto:cmusick@thebabyfold.org)  
(309)-557-1004

# A NOTE FROM OUR PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Dear Foster Parents,

I hope this letter finds you well. It is with mixed emotions that I write to inform you that I will be leaving The Baby Fold, where I have served as the Director of the Foster Care and Intact programs. My last day at the agency will be 7/12/24.

During my time here, I have had the privilege of witnessing the dedication and compassion each of you demonstrates as foster parents. Your commitment to providing loving homes and support to children in need is truly commendable and has left a lasting impression on me.

While I regret not having had the opportunity to personally connect with each of you as much as I would have liked, please know that I deeply appreciate the invaluable role you play within our agency. You all provide a safe and loving home for children in crisis and in need of stabilization.

Although I will no longer be directly involved in the day-to-day operations, I am confident in the agency's continued commitment to providing exceptional care and services. You have excellent leadership in Rachel (Manager), Alissa (Supervisor) and Taylor (Supervisor). If you need additional assistance, Rhonda Howard has recently been promoted to Vice President of Programs. Her email is [rhoward@thebabyfold.org](mailto:rhoward@thebabyfold.org) or she can be reached by calling the main number at The Baby Fold.

It has been an honor to work alongside such dedicated individuals, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have been part of this team.

Thank you once again for your commitment to making a difference in the lives of children and families. Your generosity does not go unnoticed and is deeply appreciated.

Warmest regards,  
Tony Wilson  
Program Director of Intervention Services

# **FOSTER PARENT SHOUT OUT!**



*The Baby Fold Foster Care Team would like to recognize Mike and Nikki DeReu for their commitment to children in care. The DeReu's began their foster care journey in 2015 and have provided substitute care for over a dozen children since! Mike and Nikki took placement of newborn JB and provided care for almost three years, before he was returned home. When JB and his siblings reentered to foster care, Mike and Nikki reopened their home and hearts to him and four of his siblings. Mike and Nikki have ensured these siblings remain together and work relentlessly towards implementing supports and maintaining stabilization. Mike and Nikki also love and support JB's fifth sibling, ensuring regular and consistent contact is maintained, despite him living hours away! They collaborate well with external agency and school supports, and are the children's biggest advocates!*

*These five children and the DeReu's two biological children are given every ounce of Mike's and Nikki's focus and energies. The needs and interests of all seven children are prioritized, all while working full-time, and maintaining Nikki's business. Mike is a Senior Master Sergeant for the Air National Guard. He also serves his Country as full-time, active duty for the United States Air Force. Often, his time is spent at Scott Air Force Base, requiring the family to be creative with supports for Nikki when he is away. They never falter in their commitment to the children, as they have selflessly modified their life trajectories to accommodate the permanency needs of JB and his sisters.*

*Case management and licensing staff have plenty to say about their work with Mike and Nikki!*

*"They are great team members."*

*"They are great supports to birth families."*

*"They go above and beyond."*

*"They advocate for all of the kids' needs and ensure they are getting proper help from school and services."*

*"Mike and Nikki "have the sweetest souls and are great with helping the children understand and handle their emotions about their futures as a DeReu ♥."*

*Mike and Nikki, we appreciate you! We thank you for being Foster Heroes!*



# REMINDERS

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Please do not forget to submit the following documents, updates, verifications, or certifications to your licensing worker:

- CPR/First Aid
- Auto Insurance
- Pet Records
- Quarterly Evacuation Practices

Also, Please see the attached flyer regarding pool safety\* (Page 9)

# RESPIRE REMINDER

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We appreciate when families identify their own respite resources, and to help make that possible, the licensing team wants you to be aware of some steps that need to be taken first, if paid respite is needed.

- You must inform your youth in care's caseworker prior to utilizing any licensed foster family for respite.
- Licensing staff need to ensure the licensed respite provider has appropriate capacity to accommodate the children they will be caring for.
- If you have identified a respite resource who is licensed through another agency, The Baby Fold needs to be aware that this home is being used.
- If you offer to do respite for a family licensed by another agency, The Baby Fold needs to be informed.
- If you have any further questions, please talk to your licensing worker or caseworker or refer to the Foster Parent manual.
- Remember it is important to let your caseworker know your plans for childcare.



# JULY CELEBRATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## INDEPENDENCE DAY- JULY 4TH

The Baby Fold's offices will be closed July 4th in celebration of Independence Day. Check out the next page for more information on this holiday's local celebrations.

## DISABILITY PRIDE MONTH



Celebrate with us as we recognize Disability Pride Month this July, in honor of the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in July of 1990. Disability Pride is not simply about fair treatment, it is about removing the stigma surrounding disability. For more information on how to support our <https://www.neh.gov/news/virtual-bookshelf-disability-pride-month>

Information gathered from National Endowment for the Humanities.

## NATIONAL MINORITY MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

This annual observance builds awareness about the health disparities that persist among racial and ethnic minority and American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations and encourages us to take action to end these inequities. Each year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [Office of Minority Health \(OMH\)](#) designates a theme for National Minority Health Month. The theme for 2024, *Be the Source for Better Health: Improving Health Outcomes Through Our Cultures, Communities, and Connections*, is about understanding how the unique environments, cultures, histories, and circumstances (known as social determinants of health, or SDOH) of racial and ethnic minority and AI/AN populations impact their overall health. Non-medical factors like poverty, limited access to health care, lack of education, and racism are all examples of SDOH that contribute to health disparities and inequities. SDOH impact nearly everyone in one way or another, and simply promoting healthy choices won't eliminate health disparities. Considering the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age is fundamental to improving health and reducing longstanding disparities affecting racial and ethnic minority and AI/AN populations. Visit the [National Minority Health Month 2024 website](#) to find resources, social media messages, graphics, and information on how to Be the Source for Better Health.

Information gathered from Office of Minority Health- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

# LOCAL EVENTS

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To learn more about local events, go to [visitbn.org/events/](http://visitbn.org/events/)

## **FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION!**

**Thursday, July 4, 2024 9:00 am - 10:00 pm**

Celebrate the Fourth of July with a special early bird swim at Fairview Family Aquatic Center from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m.! Rocket popsicles are handed out to children (while supplies last!). Don't miss out on the fun! The pool and facility will be cleared at 10:30 a.m. and reopen at 11 a.m. (regular pool admission prices).

Fee: Individuals 3+: \$2

Children 2 and under: Free

Season Pass Holders: Free

Bring your blanket, radio and the family for the annual Sky Concert at Fairview Park. Fireworks begin at approximately 9:15 p.m. Fireworks are set to music on WJBC AM 1230. Food trucks, family-friendly activities including inflatables and face painting begins at 5:30 p.m. Join us for a pre-firework concert at 6 p.m.

Overflow parking is available at ISU Parking & Transportation lot.

## **July First Friday**

**Friday July 5th 5:00 pm- 8:00pm - Downtown Bloomington**

Join your favorite shops, galleries, and restaurants in #downtown for another fun-filled First Friday! Stop downtown from 5-8 pm for a night of shopping, dining, and unwinding in Downtown!

## **Theatre for Young Audiences: Campfire Macbeth**

**Date: July 6th, 11th, 13th, 18th, 20th, 25th, and the 27th**

**Time: 9:00am-10:00am**

Cost: \$5-10 per ticket; free for children under 5

By Nancy Steele Brokaw

Directed by Lori Adams

Illinois Shakespeare Festival's 40-minute TYA show is perfect for the whole family. Everyone is welcome, and admission is free! TYA performances are free of charge and do not require tickets or registration. If you plan on bringing a group of 20 or more, please email at [shake@IllinoisState.edu](mailto:shake@IllinoisState.edu) so front-of-house staff can best anticipate your arrival. A reminder that separate parties will be socially distanced from both one another and the performers.

**The Baby Fold's  
offices will be closed  
July 4th in celebration  
of Independence Day.**

**Reminder: If you are  
ever in need of help on  
a holiday, please give  
us a call on our  
On-Call Phone:**

**Foster Care #:  
309-530-1737**

## LOCAL EVENTS CONTINUED...

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### Music Under the Stars

**What: Concert of Opera and Music Theatre**

**When: July 11th & 13th, 7:30pm to 9:00pm**

**Where: Westbrook Auditorium at IWU (July 11) and Connie Link Amphitheatre (July 13)**

**Cost: Free**

We're pleased to offer a taste of opera for everyone! And this year, we're throwing in a few musical theater numbers just for good measure. No need to don a tux or dress to enjoy this fabulous concert – come in your “comfy” clothes! This concert will be performed at two different venues – one indoor and one outdoor. Whether you attend the indoor or the outdoor concert, the stars will shine brightly, so join us for an evening of opera and music theater favorites featuring outstanding singers from all over Central Illinois. Note: Be sure to bring your own chair for concert at Connie Link Amphitheatre. Donations will be accepted at the July 11th concert at IWU's Westbrook Auditorium.

### GLORIOUS GARDEN FESTIVAL

Join us July 12-13 for the 28th Annual GLORIOUS GARDEN FESTIVAL, with all events starting at the David Davis Mansion in Bloomington.

A paid ticket for the **Garden Walk** gives gardeners and garden lovers two days to visit several beautiful, inspired private gardens in the community from 1-7 pm on Friday, July 12th and 9am-3pm on Saturday, July 13th. Several **Free Events** are included in the 2024 Glorious Garden Festival and are available during the same hours. Shop the **Garden Fair** on the mansion lawn featuring local artists, craftspeople and businesses selling garden-inspired art, plants, and treasures. Community partners will offer visitors garden-themed activities and art projects on Saturday only. Refreshments will be available throughout both days. Bring the **Children** to experience the Bloomington Public Library Story Walk in Sarah's Garden. The Garden Walk also features an interactive Scavenger Hunt.

For more information, including how to get tickets, visit:

<https://www.visitbn.org/events/glorious-garden-festival/>

### Pack the Park

**When: Saturday, July 13, 2024 9:00 am - 11:30 am**

**Where: Underwood Park 200 Jersey Ave, Normal**

**Cost: Free**

Join us for a morning of fun and excitement at our annual Pack the Park event at Underwood Park in Normal! This family-friendly event is all about bringing our community together for a day of outdoor adventure and entertainment. Come check out our kid's zone filled with fun activities such as face painting, balloon twisting and arts and crafts. Don't forget to visit Zoo to You with Miller Park Zoo where you can get up close and personal with friendly animals.



## **FOSTER PARENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

At the beginning of each fiscal year foster parents receive a schedule of dates of when monthly foster care board payments for foster parents will be sent. Checks are sent no later than the fifteenth of the month following the month when service was provided. Each foster parent is reimbursed according to the level of care DCFS has approved for the child, Specialized or Traditional. Placement/Payment Authorization forms will be completed within 24 hours of the child's placement. When relative care providers become licensed, the Placement/Payment form will be completed within 24 hours of The Baby Fold receiving confirmation of the issuance of the license. The worker completing the 906 utilizes codes for the type of care a child is receiving and the payment that a foster parent should be given. The Baby Fold's business office issues reimbursement checks based on information on the 906 on a monthly basis. The Baby Fold's schedule for when checks are issued is mailed to foster parents on an annual basis at the beginning of the fiscal year. Unlicensed relatives receive their reimbursements from DCFS. Caseworkers and licensing workers assist unlicensed relative caregivers by providing phone numbers if there is a payment issue.

Foster parents receive a list of approved reimbursable travel expenses in The Baby Fold's Foster Parent Manual. Foster parents submit travel expenses at the end of each month and receive reimbursement by the fifteenth of the following month. Foster parents are encouraged to complete Illinois Department of Public Aid forms in order to receive reimbursement for transporting their foster children to medical and counseling appointments. At the time of placement, foster parents are informed by Child Welfare Specialists of items that are considered non-recurring expenses. Foster parents may request non-recurring expense payment for children in their care. Foster parents must obtain approval from the Child Welfare Services Manager prior to incurring the expense. Most often the payment for these expenses is usually made directly from The Baby Fold to the provider. When prior approval has been obtained, reimbursement will be made to the foster parent within fourteen days of submission of receipts.

Foster parents may request up to seven days of paid respite per year for each child in traditional and relative (including unlicensed relative homes) foster care. Foster parents are eligible for a minimum of fifteen hours of paid respite per month for each child in specialized foster care. Written respite plans are developed for specialized foster care children.

Upon confirmation that respite has been provided, within 24 hours the case worker will complete the respite payment form and submit it to their supervisor. The Baby Fold pays approved respite providers directly within fourteen days of confirmation that respite has been provided.

Foster parents may contact The Baby Fold's business office to resolve any payment problems.

## **FOSTER PARENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES CONTINUED**

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### **Responsibility 4: The responsibility to treat children in their care and their families with dignity, respect and consideration..**

PRIDE Pre-licensure/Pre-placement training, licensing standards, and the foster home placement agreement all emphasize the responsibility of foster parents to treat children in their care and their families with dignity, respect and consideration. Sensitivity to children and birth families is an integral part of the orientation training provided to new foster parents at The Baby Fold.

The Baby Fold's Foster Parent Manual includes the agency's Christian values. The manual includes a copy of the Client Rights form, outlining the rights to which children and clients are entitled. Information is included regarding relationships between foster parents and biological parents. Through the Foster Parent Manual and discussion with foster care personnel, foster parents are informed of the role of the caseworker in assessing the safety and well being of each foster child, and are made aware that private face to face contact will be made with the foster child at least one time per month.

Foster Parents are expected to participate in the initial family meetings as a way to initiate contact and communication with birth parents. These meetings provide an opportunity for foster parents to begin building bridges with the birth families for the benefit of the children. Foster parents are also expected to participate in child and family teams. Their participation provides an opportunity for all involved persons to share information and develop strategies that will assist birth families in meeting their goals. Foster parent participation in child and family teams also assists children in care to observe all involved parties working together. Participation in child and family team meetings provides foster parents with opportunities to build relationships with birth parents and to share information about the child and to work together on common goals. Foster parents also are encouraged, when deemed appropriate, to involve birth parents in as many medical appointments and educational meetings and activities as possible. Child welfare specialists and other staff help facilitate a family's involvement by keeping birth parents informed of dates and times that appointments and activities are being held.

Training is available on trans-cultural parenting for foster parents to further enhance their abilities to understand and work with children and families of other races and cultures. The Baby Fold values getting feedback from families on what training topics they would find helpful. Foster parent input drives what trainings staff holds in person or virtually.

Agency staff reinforce this responsibility with foster parents in their regular contacts with foster families. This includes weekly or monthly case management contacts by the caseworker and semi-annual monitoring visits by the licensing worker. During these contacts staff will model dignity, respect and consideration through their discussion of the family and the foster child with the foster parent. As needed, staff will reiterate licensing standards emphasizing appropriate treatment of the foster children and their families.

Violations of licensing standards will be reported via The Baby Fold's Licensing Complaint Report and will be signed by the staff member making the report and their supervisor.



Report unsafe products:  
[SaferProducts.gov](http://SaferProducts.gov)  
(800) 638-2772  
or (301) 595-7054  
(for deaf or hard of hearing individuals and/or individuals with speech and language disorders)



*Is Your Pool Reopening?*

# Be Sure to Pool Safely!

## Safety Tips to Prevent Drownings:



Always watch kids in and around the water – and designate a water watcher.



Teach children to swim, or sign them up for swim classes



Properly fence all pools at least 4-feet in height around the perimeter of the pool/spa. Use a self-closing and self-latching gate.



Stay away from drains and other pool openings.



Know life-saving skills, including CPR for adults and kids.



## Upcoming Virtual Trainings/Meetings

Contact your therapist or Ken Summers at [Ksummers@thebabyfold.org](mailto:Ksummers@thebabyfold.org) for more information about....

### Parent Support Groups:

- Wednesday Noon group:** Provides education and support related to parenting, trauma, and self-care within the context of adoption and foster care. Meets 2x a month.
- 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 2x a month.

### Coming soon!:

- While we are currently in the middle of our daytime summer **Virtual TBRI Series**, we are beginning to plan for another evening series in the fall!

## TBRI Tip of the Month

“For our kiddos who often teeter on the edge of balanced neurochemistry, dehydration can greatly impact their ability to regulate.”

-Amanda Purvis

**Nutrition and Hydration** play a key factor in children’s ability to regulate. Here are some tips to help make sure your child is eating and drinking enough:

- Take a special trip to the store to buy healthy snacks that are then accessible to your child when they are needed.
- Build snack times into the day- these times could also serve as transitions from one activity to the next, and/or connecting time.
- Allow your child to have their own water bottle or cup (bonus if they get to pick it out themselves).
- Add flavor to their water to make it more appealing, such as edible essential oils or slices of fruit.
- Help them set a goal and keep track of their water intake.
- Always lead by example- it’s important for adults to eat enough and drink enough water, too!

### Additional resources on nutrition and hydration:

(Click the article titles to explore)

- [Starting Small: Nutrition and Hydration \(information above is from this helpful article!\)](#)
- [How Much Water You Need to Drink](#)
- [Healthy Hydration Water Tracking Chart](#)

Stay tuned for some exciting new changes to this newsletter!



THE BABY FOLD'S  
**VIRTUAL PARENT  
SUPPORT GROUP**

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**1<sup>st</sup> AND 3<sup>rd</sup> WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH**  
**12:00-1:00PM**

SUPPORT AND EDUCATION FOR FAMILIES FORMED  
THROUGH ADOPTION AND GUARDIANSHIP

EMAIL MELISSA AT [MLEGENDRE@THEBABYFOLD.ORG](mailto:MLEGENDRE@THEBABYFOLD.ORG) FOR  
MORE INFORMATION & LINK TO MEETINGS

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“You cannot lead a child to a place of healing  
if you do not know the way yourself.”  
– Dr. Karyn Purvis

# Dads Sharpen Dads

“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”

The Baby Fold

## **Dad’s Support Group**

**1st & 3rd Monday evenings**

**7:15 pm–8:15 pm**

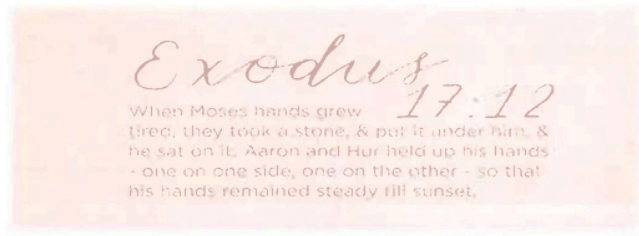
Email Ken Summers at [ksummers@thebabyfold.org](mailto:ksummers@thebabyfold.org)

to sign up!

“ If we can communicate to our children,  
**It’s you and me against your history,**

We have a strong place to begin.”

Dr. Karyn Purvis



Side by Side Ministries exists to engage the church and local community in consistent, loving support of families involved in foster care by providing access to physical, relational, and spiritual resources.

### TEAMS

#### Foster Community Resource Team:

All foster parents and support members share educational, spiritual resources/encouragement, and also respite care needs through the Groupme app.

#### The Nourish Team:

Support members uplift foster parents by giving a meal, gift cards, notes, etc.

#### The Go! Team:

Support members provide support through donations or sharing materials with foster families who receive a new placement by using a checklist. This is on an as-needed basis.

Example...clothes, diapers, formula, strollers, gift cards, etc.

#### Nurture Nights

Hosting gatherings three times a year for foster care and adoptive parents with the intent to provide community, connection, and educational training.

We are thankful for your willingness to be involved in foster care ministry and would like to learn more about your needs and your family.

Please email us at [sidebyside1712@gmail.com](mailto:sidebyside1712@gmail.com) so we can better assist you!

Daton & Kathy Kupferschmid and Ryan & Hope Stoller