

National Foster Care Month 2021 Outreach Toolkit

Communication Tools to Spread the Word
#NFCM2021 #FosterCareMonth



National Foster Care Month 2021

Foster Care as a Support to Families,
Not a Substitute for Parents

childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth

 Child Welfare
Information Gateway

 Children's
Bureau

National Foster Care Month 2021 Outreach Toolkit

Contents

- Introduction..... 2
- Social Media Posts 3
- Key Facts and Statistics 5
- Graphics..... 6
 - Facebook Cover Photo 6
 - Twitter Cover Photo 6
 - Facebook Profile Frame 7
 - Shareable Graphics 8
- Sample Email Messages 10
- Email Signature Blocks 12

Introduction

The success of National Foster Care Month (NFCM) depends on your efforts to engage your community and raise awareness about the need to invest in the lives of children and youth in foster care. Thank you for helping to disseminate resources that aim to strengthen the capabilities of the thousands of caregivers opening their hearts and homes to provide stability for children and youth.

This year's campaign focuses on how the foster care system should be actively centered on strengthening families, how child welfare and legal professionals can work collaboratively to engage youth and their families in court hearings and permanency planning, and the benefits of helping young people establish and maintain meaningful connections during this process.

Stay connected to the campaign by [subscribing](#) to email updates and seeing what communities are doing to [take action](#) in honor of NFCM 2021.

If you have any questions, please contact us at NFCM@childwelfare.gov.

Social Media Posts

Tell your followers and friends about NFCM!

Social media can help you inspire your colleagues, friends, and followers to promote NFCM. Encourage your contacts to learn more about all the resources, tools, and real-life stories offered on the website. Ask them to share the posts and resources with their own networks to help make a difference in your community.

Stay connected with the hashtag #FosterCareMonth and follow Child Welfare Information Gateway and the Children's Bureau on social media.

Twitter

@ChildWelfareGov

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/childwelfare>

<https://www.facebook.com/thechildrensbureau>

You can use the following sample posts to help spread the word:

May is National Foster Care Month! Share these inspiring stories and help communities come together to build meaningful connections for youth in foster care.

#FosterCareMonth #NFCM2021

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/stories/>

With over 423,000 children and youth in foster care, it's time to focus on how child welfare systems—especially in partnership with the legal and judicial community—can support and strengthen families, prevent disruption, and promote reunification.

#FosterCareMonth #NFCM2021 <https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>

Foster care can and should be a way to strengthen families. Learn how courts, resource parents, caseworkers, and service providers can work together to support children and youth. #FosterCareMonth <https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>

When meeting in person isn't an option, virtual engagement tools can strengthen the connections between youth, parents, and foster parents. #FosterCareMonth

#NFCM2021 <https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/resources/>

Developing meaningful connections is a critical way to support youth in foster care. Learn how communities can work together to strengthen families. #FosterCareMonth

#NFCM2021 <https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>

Learn more about the importance of ensuring youth and their families have access to high-quality legal representation. #FosterCareMonth #NFCM2021

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>

Hear from youth and families who have experience in foster care and consider how your community can step up to help them establish meaningful connections and critical support. #FosterCareMonth #NFCM2021

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>

May is National Foster Care Month! Follow Child Welfare Information Gateway and the Children's Bureau to help spread the word on ways to strengthen families and their support systems. #FosterCareMonth #NFCM2021

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>

Foster care should be a support system for families in need, not a substitute for parents. Child welfare agencies, courts, and related professionals can help keep families together with the right mix of support services and partnerships. Find out more on the #FosterCareMonth website. #NFCM2021

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>

There are over 423,000 children and youth in foster care. Over half have a case plan goal of reunification with their parents or primary caregiver. The courts and legal community can be critical in this process. #FosterCareMonth #NFCM2021

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>

Key Facts and Statistics

Include these key points in your messaging to demonstrate how child welfare and legal professionals can prioritize foster care as a service to families by engaging young people in all aspects of permanency planning and helping them maintain meaningful connections with family and other support systems while in out-of-home care.

1. There are over [423,000](#) children and youth in foster care. Over half have a case plan goal of reunification with their parents or primary caregiver.
2. Juvenile and family court systems can [influence](#) whether children are reunified with their families or reenter care.
3. Meaningful and appropriate [involvement of youth in their court hearings](#) and case planning greatly benefits all participants and leads to more favorable outcomes for families.
4. [Competent legal representation](#) for parents is associated with the achievement of timely reunification.
5. A strong support system of professionals and family can help young people address the challenges they face during their transition to adulthood. Virtual engagement tools can be used to establish and maintain that support system by [enhancing connectedness](#) for all involved.
6. In addition to supporting brain development, [encouraging young people to be active participants](#) in planning their own lives supports the development of leadership skills, improves self-esteem, and helps form critical social connections.

Graphics

Grab the attention of website visitors with these free, easy-to-use graphics. The following graphics can be saved and added to your websites, blogs, newsletters, emails, social media pages, and other digital communications. Each graphic uses the NFCM 2021 branding and style approved by the Children's Bureau. To use these graphics, visit the [website](#) and right-click on the preferred image to save it.

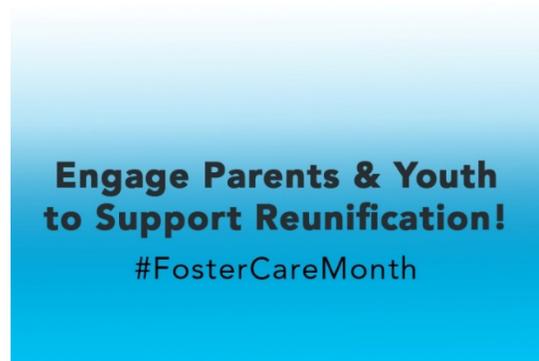
Facebook Cover Photo



Twitter Cover Photo



Facebook Profile Frame



EXAMPLE



EXAMPLE

To add a frame to your Page's profile picture:

- Go to www.facebook.com/profilepicframes
- Click your profile picture in the bottom left and select your Page
- Search for a frame by entering the frame's name, the creator's name or related words
- Choose the frame you want to use from the results
- Click **Use as Profile Picture**



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National
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 Child Welfare
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**Shift foster care
to a system that
truly supports
families.**

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**Everyone's
story is unique.**

Know the youth you work with.
Listen. Learn. Advocate.

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**Empower youth in foster care.
At every stage,
their voice matters.**

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How to Partner With Youth in Foster Care

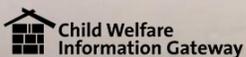
1. Help youth understand their rights
2. Respect the parent-child relationship
3. Take an individualized approach

National Foster Care Month
childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/



Support the Child—and the Family.

National Foster Care Month
childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth



Sample Email Messages

Help [spread the word](#) that authentically engaging youth in court hearings and permanency planning is a key factor in promoting a child welfare system that truly strengthens families. The following sample emails can be used within your news releases, newsletters, websites, talking points, or other products. Use them to communicate with colleagues, media contacts, policymakers, families, and anyone with a connection to foster care.

Sample 1

Subject: May Is National Foster Care Month!

There are over [423,000](#) children and youth in foster care across the country, and many have been facing increased isolation over the past year.

It is more critical than ever for communities to work together in identifying the right mix of supports to establish meaningful connections for children and youth in care.

This year, [National Foster Care Month](#) focuses on how to strengthen these connections and the role of family and youth engagement at every stage. We should ensure all families and youth have meaningful involvement in court hearings and case planning and make it possible for youth to stay connected to their parents and extended support systems while in foster care. When it isn't possible to meet in person, virtual engagement tools can be critical to preserving meaningful connections and engaging youth. Authentically engaging youth and families can lead to increased family stabilization and expedite reunification and permanency.

Take some time this month to consider how all of us working to support youth can help them find their voice, develop leadership skills, improve their self-esteem, and shift foster care to a system that truly supports families.

Sample 2

Subject: Support National Foster Care Month in Your Community

May is National Foster Care Month! Here are some ways you can support children and families in your community.

Share these [inspiring stories](#) to teach communities the importance of coming together to build meaningful connections for youth in foster care.

Discover emerging best practices and evidence-based tools that help all professionals involved with child welfare strengthen the role of family and youth voice, collaborate with the courts, prevent or minimize disruption, and promote reunification.

Visit the National Foster Care Month [website](#) to find out how you can do the following:

- Help educate the public by sharing information and resources. Use the hashtag #FosterCareMonth to help [spread the word](#)!
- [Learn how](#) child welfare agencies from across the country are working to change their culture and practice to ensure foster care is a support to families.
- Find [graphics](#) and [inspiring personal stories](#) to help raise awareness throughout the month of May.

Stay connected to the conversation by using the hashtag #FosterCareMonth and follow Child Welfare Information Gateway on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to see regular updates!

Email Signature Blocks

Updating your email signature is a quick and easy way to remind everyone about the importance of NFCM.

Each email you send will help spread the word, and it's simple to do. Select from the sample signature texts and graphics below and insert them into your email signature:

- Raise Awareness for National Foster Care Month!
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>
- May is National Foster Care Month! #NFCM2021
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>
- Supporting Youth, Connecting Families
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/fostercaremonth/>

To use the graphics with your email signature, visit the [website](#) and select the preferred image.



Let us know what you think of this year's campaign. [Take the survey!](#)