



FOSTER PARENTS SOCIETY OF ONTARIO

Charitable Status # 0873919-09

The Dedicated voice of foster families in Ontario

HILITES

Spring Conference Package

May 23,24,25.2025

Fostering Meaningful Connections

Chief Executive Officer's Greeting

Hello from FPSO

So excited to be looking forward to our third in person conference since we gained our freedom from lockdown.

Funny how now COVID lockdown is just a shared element of the past that we all come through; and here we are moving on in our "new normal".

I am happy our new normal includes an in-person conference option. Two years ago, as we connected, we celebrated at long-last being together, and many hugged and even shed a tear or two in recognition of the absence of each other.

Last year we again celebrated being together, embracing the networking and sharing of experiences.

We heard repeatedly from the attendees of May 2024's conference that they received as much encouragement and information around the meal table with each other, as they received during the workshops.

This year we have scheduled on the Sunday morning our annual AGM – 1 hour, then what we are calling a leader's session, for all leaders and members. This session will have information sharing from the board, as well as interactive opportunities to support networking and the building up of the community of foster parents.

We hope you will join us in person in May. If you are not there, we will miss your voice at our table,

With respect and highest regard.

Vanessa Milley

FPSO Chief Executive Officer

Chief Operations Officer's Greeting

Hello everyone! We're excited to invite you to our upcoming spring conference for foster parents! Our goal is to create a warm and welcoming environment where you can make meaningful connections with other participants. Meeting in person with fellow foster parents from across the province is such a wonderful opportunity. You'll get to connect with people who truly understand the challenges you face and can relate to your experiences. These connections can bring hope and empowerment, especially during tough times, and they play a vital role in supporting our amazing, seasoned caregivers.

We know that many foster parents encounter challenges that require specialized knowledge, especially when caring for high-needs children. Unfortunately, this expertise isn't always easy to find within individual organizations. By joining in on discussions and workshops with caregivers from different backgrounds, you'll have the chance to share insights and learn from one another's experiences. Our conference is all about peer support, where you can freely share your stories without worrying about judgment or stigma. It's a safe space for personal growth, helping you build confidence and resilience.

The connections you make at this conference will also help you strengthen your coping strategies, providing you with the tools to navigate the rewarding yet demanding world of caregiving in today's child welfare system. Plus, our collaborative atmosphere means you'll gain valuable information and tailored resources that address your specific needs, ensuring you leave with practical knowledge to support both yourself and the wonderful children in your care.

We can't wait to see you there!

Warm regards,

Elaine Pratt

FPSO Chief Operations Officer

NOTE*** Once the in-person registrations surpass the minimum number for financial stability of the conference virtual options will be made available for select workshops

Fostering Meaningful Connections Reports

Corporate Update

Someone once said a corporation runs from one meeting to another filling in the gaps between meetings with the work generated in the meetings, to be ready for the next meeting. This seems to be very true for FPSO.

We have consistently throughout the year worked on behalf of our members, and by default all foster parents in the province, and by extension all the children in the care of those families

We have participated in a number of provincial Child Welfare leader tables including the Quality Standards framework (QSF) discussions and the Residential Services table (RST). We have also supported the sharing of information generated by the QSF, and helped gather answers to questions from members regarding the QSF.

In addition to the participation in these formal Child Welfare Tables we have regular meetings with designates directly from MCCSS (Ministry of Community Children and Social Services), and the Ombudsman's Office.

In addition to all of the Provincial meetings we also meet with trainers and presenters in preparation for our monthly training program (September through June) and both of our conferences (October virtual, May in-person).

We also invest in our members through participation at the local level (as invited), virtual meetings, phone calls and extensive email threads. We endeavour to be available to our members as individuals and through the local level leaders. Our commitment is to be there to support in ways of information sharing, advocacy, or even peer support when life has gone sideways.

We believe strongly in mentorship, partnership, relationship and the building of the community of foster families and caregivers. It is the connection to our members, and the value we believe they have within the system, plus the value they have to the children in their care; that drives us in our support role, our advocacy work, and our training package.

As leaders we each care for the young ones in our homes, as we support and help each of you, we are by extension also caring for the young ones in your homes. Together we can make a difference.

With respect and the highest regard

Vanessa Milley

Vanessa Milley

Foster Parents Society of Ontario, Chief Executive Officer, Chief Communications Officer,
Governance and Policy Chairperson

Fostering Meaningful Connections Reports

Training Coordinators Report

If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change." - Wayne Dyer Over the years, I've had the pleasure of participating in many training sessions, and I've really come to appreciate the truth in Wayne Dyer's words. When we take a moment to look at the challenges that children face from a fresh perspective, we often find some really effective solutions to our everyday challenges. Here at FPSO, we, as foster parents, truly believe that investing time in training is such a rewarding experience. It not only helps us learn and grow but also gives us the skills and techniques we need to make a meaningful difference in our daily lives with the kids.

In the past year, we have facilitated a total of 24 training sessions, encompassing both online and in-person formats, including 17 that were presented during the October virtual conference. Owing to a PDD government grant, we were able to offer training that would otherwise be financially unattainable, relying solely on membership dues. We were also able to pass on significant savings to conference participants thanks to the grant. Among the most notable sessions was a two-day workshop that covered comprehensive aspects of caring for children with autism, a full day devoted to the circle of courage with Dr. Brendtro, and our training addressing the topic of dishonesty. The session focused on dishonesty achieved record attendance, with 194 participants.

The array of training we provide is extensive and designed to cater to the diverse needs of our members, as we acknowledge the various challenges children in care face at different developmental stages. As we draw participants from across the province we are able to offer much needed training that smaller agencies would not have enough participants to justify the expense .An example of this was our Scoop on Poop training by a specialist from HSC , every agency may have 1 or 2 foster homes dealing with issues such as encopresis but provincially we had 40 participants. The upcoming weekend of in-person training will afford participants the opportunity to engage with several pertinent issues, including stealing, social anxiety, strategies for utilizing play to foster dialogue and teaching children how to advocate for themselves. There will also be an opportunity to discuss supporting FFA/FPA's and how local agency foster parents can become involved .

Sincerely

Elaine Pratt

FPSO Training Coordinator

Fostering Meaningful Connections Annual General Meeting Notice



FOSTER PARENTS SOCIETY OF ONTARIO

Charitable Status # 0873919-09

NOTICE

Foster Parents Society of Ontario
Annual General Meeting
Sunday May 25, 2025
9:00am – 10:15am

Agenda

- Call To Order
- Confirmation of voting delegates
- Confirmation of Quorum
- CEO Greeting
- Motion to approve 2024 AGM Minutes
- Motion to ratify 2024 year end financials
- Motion to ratify Membership Classes
- Corporate report
- Motion to ratify Slate of Nominees to Officer Positions
- New Business

Fostering Meaningful Connections Location

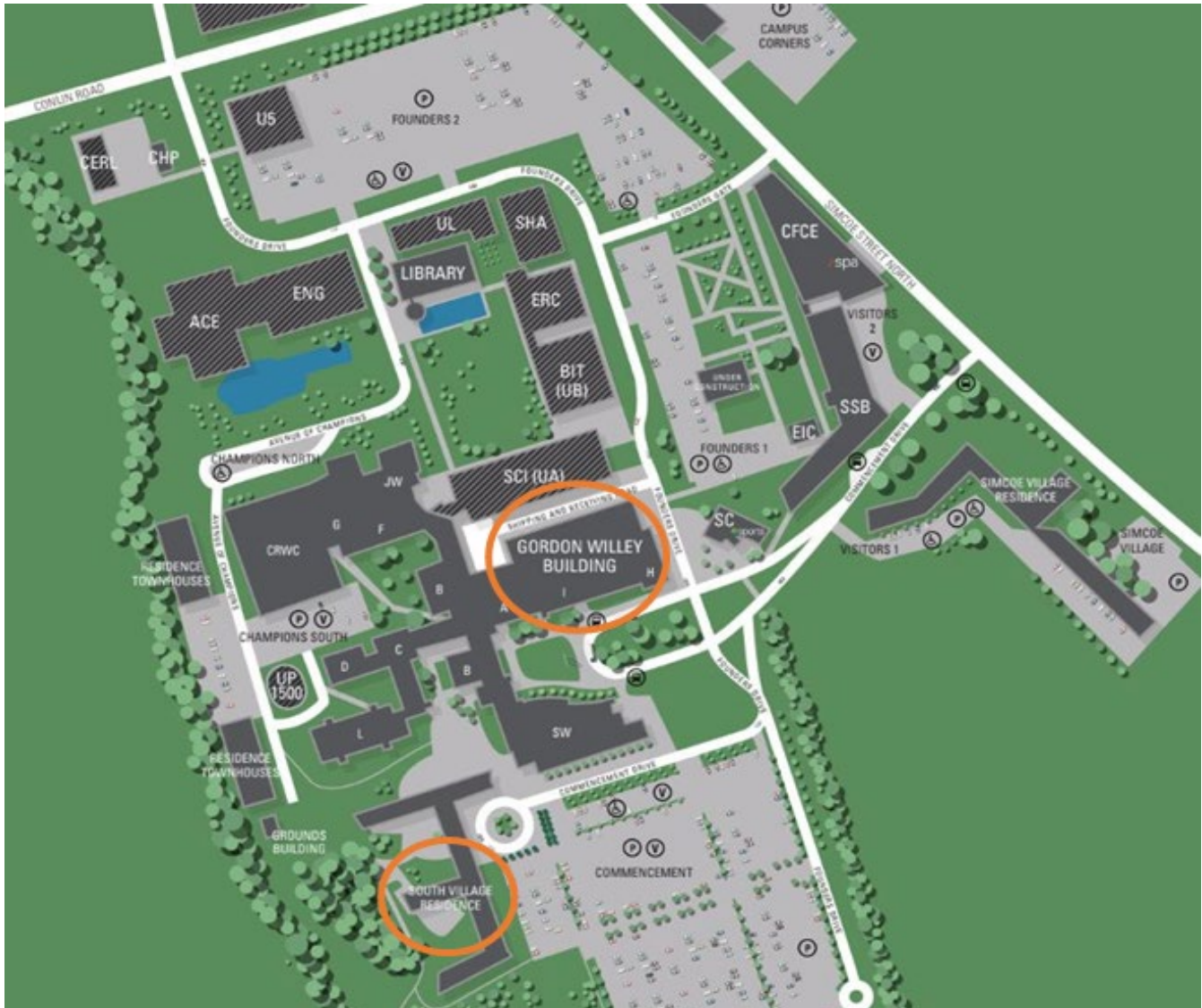
Durham College – Ontario Tech University: 2000 Simcoe St N. Oshawa ON, L1G 0C5 South Village
Residence: 32 Commencement Drive, Oshawa, ON, L1G 8G3

Directions to the College campus

From the East: Head west on the 407, Durham Road 2, Simcoe Street Exit, right on Founders gate, left on Founders drive.

Or; Head west on the 401, take Durham Regional Road 2, Simcoe Street Exit, proceed to 2000 Simcoe Street

From the West: Head East on the 407, take Durham Road 2, Simcoe Street Exit, right on Founders gate, left n Founders drive. Or; get on the 401 heading East, take Durham RR 2, Simcoe Street Exit, proceed north to 2000 Simcoe St.



Fostering Meaningful Connections Accommodation

Each suite is suitable for:
a single person A couple
Two individuals
Or four close friends to share.

The South Village Residence Suites each consists of the following:

Two (2) Private/Separate Bedrooms One shared private bathroom
32" flat screen T.V. Wireless internet Local calling

Each Bathroom Contains

3 piece washroom
Stand up shower

Each bedroom contains

One (1) Double bed One Desk

Each Kitchenette contains

Mini-Fridge
Sink Microwave



Fostering Meaningful Connections Conference Packages and Details

Training Package Options	
Package One (A), (B), (C)	Day packages, these can be either Friday, Saturday or Sunday, multiple day packages can also be selected when no overnight accommodations are required. Day packages include mid-workshop snack breaks and lunches.
Package Two	Individual workshop selections, workshops can be selected "al a carte" each workshop selected includes the mid-workshop snack break.
Package Three	Friday and Saturday Only (Two-day package) includes overnight stay on Friday night, Friday lunch and dinner, Saturday Breakfast and lunch, plus all snack breaks for both days.
Package Four	Saturday and Sunday Only (Two-day package) includes overnight stay on Saturday night, Saturday lunch and dinner, Sunday Breakfast, lunch and grab and go dinner, plus all snack breaks for both days.
Package Five	Friday, Saturday and Sunday (Three-day package) includes overnight stay on Saturday and Sunday night, Friday lunch and dinner, Saturday Breakfast, lunch and dinner, Sunday Breakfast, lunch and grab and go dinner, plus all snack breaks for all three days.
"grab and go dinner" this is a meal prepared by the facility catering that is designed for you to pick up and eat on your way as you drive home. Relieving you of the burden of stopping and finding dinner on your way home.	

General Conference Details

Check in times for the dorms begins at 3:00 pm on the day of your arrival. You can easily check in to your rooms on the afternoon break, or after the end of the afternoon workshop.

Conference Registration will be held at the workshop location in the South Wing (diagonally across from the South Village Residence) in room - SW 201. Your conference registration will take place at the beginning of your first scheduled workshop.

All "snack breaks" will be set up in the back of the workshop room.

All meals will be in the South Village Dining Hall (directly across from the South Village Residence).

Hospitality Suite will be in the South Village Dining Hall in the athletic lounge (just to the right inside the main doors). It will run both Friday and Saturday evening from 7:00-10:00. This is a great place to connect, network, visit, snacks and soft drinks will be provided.

This is a no smoking facility, and smoking must be done off campus.

The parking lot directly in front of the South Village Residence is the ideal place to park, and the parking is free for conference attendees. If you arrive early on Thursday night – there may be a \$10.00 fee to park as the conference has not yet started.

*"We rise by lifting others."
- Robert Ingersoll*

Fostering Meaningful Connections Schedule

Registration Form Link - <https://forms.gle/KZhgbeH1uMxTUP5p7>

	Event	Time	Location
Friday May 23	Workshop #1 with Eva DeGosztanyi	9:00-10:15 & 10:30-12:00	South Wing SW201
	AM Snack Break	10:15-10:30	South Wing SW201
	Lunch	12:00-1:00	South Village Dining Hall
	Workshop #2 Presentations Panel	1:00-2:45 & 3:00-5:00	South Wing SW201
	PM Snack break	2:45-3:00	South Wing SW201
	Dinner	5:00	South Village Dining Hall
	Hospitality Suite	7:00-10:00	Athletic lounge
Saturday May 24	Breakfast	7:00-8:30	South Village Dining Hall
	Workshop #3 with Kathleen Hilchey	9:00-10:15 & 10:30-12:00	South Wing SW 201
	Workshop #4 with Shelly Deane	9:00-10:15 & 10:30-12:00	South Wing SW 202
	AM Snack Break	10:15-10:30	South Wing SW201
	Lunch	12:00-1:00	South Village Dining Hall
	Workshop #5 with Dr. Rula Sabbagh	1:00-2:15 & 2:30-4:00	South Wing SW 201
	PM Snack Break	2:15-2:30	South Wing SW201
	Dinner	5:00	South Village Dining Hall
	Hospitality Suite	7:00-10:00	Athletic lounge
Sunday May 25	Workshop #6 Annual AGM	9:00-10:15	South Wing SW201
	AM Break	10:15-10:30	South Wing SW201
	Workshop #7 Building our Community	10:30-12:00	South Wing SW201
	Lunch	12:00-1:00	South Village Dining Hall
	Workshop #8 with Hanna Sun Reid	1:00-2:15 & 2:30-4:00	South Wing SW201
	PM Break	2:15-2:30	South Wing SW201
	Grab and Go Dinner Pick Up	4:00	South Village Dining Hall

*If you change the way you look at
things, the things you look at
change. Wayne Dyer*

Fostering Meaningful Connections Workshops


Workshop #1

Understanding Shyness, Shame, and Social Anxiety

and How Best to Support our Children

With

Eva De Gosztanyi

When	Friday May 23, 9:00-12:00
Where	South Wing – SW201
Who	<p>Presenter Biography Eva de Gosztanyi, MA, is a psychologist who has worked for over 45 years in schools across Canada. For 22 years she was the Coordinator of the Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Management, a support to the ten English School Boards of Quebec, helping adults in the school setting provide effective interventions for students with behavioural challenges. Since retiring she has continued to share her expertise with schools in Canada, including First Nations schools and communities, the US, New Zealand, and Singapore. The interventions that she suggests are guided by neuroscience, are trauma-informed and trauma-responsive, and they are attachment-based and developmentally friendly. Eva is on Faculty at the Neufeld Institute and is an authorized presenter of the Neufeld paradigm</p> 
What	<p>Workshop Description It is impossible to make sense of ourselves, never mind our children, without a clear understanding of these three important constructs: shyness, shame and social anxiety. Yet increasingly, these dynamics are becoming confused with each other, with both shyness and shame losing their distinctiveness and drifting into the dark shadow of social anxiety. The impact on children can be devastating, never mind on parenting, teaching and even treatment. Teasing these dynamics apart, and reclaiming the right language to support them, has never been more important. This presentation will then explore ways to our support children.</p>

Fostering Meaningful Connections Workshops

Workshop #2

Presentation Panel Discussion

White Rabbit Adoption Counsel of Ontario Youth Unlimited – Light Patrol MCCSS

When	Friday May 23, 1:00-5:00
Where	South Wing SW201
1:00-2:00	White Ribbon - Protecting our youth from online sexual exploitation and sextortion

Adjei Scott (He/They)

Adjei is a Community Engagement Manager at White Ribbon. They are an Afro-Taino-Caribbean person, a sibling, a community worker, and a yoga teacher who likes to spend time in nature, along with reading and writing short stories. His work centers healing through transformation and growth, advocating for healthy ways of expressing the diverse embodiments of masculinity(ies), and a commitment to ending gender-based violence (GBV).

Adjei holds a bachelor’s in History with a minor in Latin America and Caribbean Studies from York University, and a Masters in Women and Gender Studies from the University of Toronto. They are currently pursuing a Master of Social Work at the Factor-Inwentash, Faculty of Social Work, at the University of Toronto.

Adjei’s experiences are based in creating programs and curriculums for youths and young adults. Some of his work includes, working with young black men to explore and express black masculinities in its diverse forms, working with the City of Toronto and Stella’s Place to create workshops that responded to mental health and gun violence in communities across Toronto and reaching programs that center the inclusivity of Afro-Caribbean cultures and queer identities. Prior to their work at White Ribbon, Adjei was the Male Allies Educator for the Sexual Assault Support Center of Waterloo Region, where his work focused on creating spaces that supported men and boys to increase their awareness and understanding of gender-based violence (GBV) and facilitated programs on how men can become allies to end Gender-Based Violence.



2:00-2:45 Adoption Council of Ontario

Amy Donovan is a mom of ten—two by birth and eight through adoption—who is passionate about supporting families. With a background in nursing and teaching, she brings both professional knowledge and personal experience to her work. As a Parent Liaison with the Adoption Council of Ontario, Amy helps families navigate the adoption journey by offering support, resources, and encouragement. Married and raising a busy household, she understands the challenges and joys of adoption firsthand and is dedicated to helping others along the way.



Dawn Tracz is the Manager of the Pathways and ACT programs at the Adoption Council of Ontario, dedicated to supporting permanency families through education, advocacy, and community building. As an adoptee and social worker, she brings a unique perspective to her work, ensuring that adoptee voices and experiences remain central to adoption conversations. Dawn's focus is on equipping families with the tools to navigate challenges, foster strong parent-child connections, and promote healing. Dawn is passionate about bridging gaps in adoption support through collaboration and advocating for systems that honor the lifelong impact of adoption on individuals and families.

Youth Unlimited – Light Patrol – 2:45-3:15

Our Organization - Youth Unlimited

Bianca and Matt have both worked at Youth Unlimited for over 10 years. Youth Unlimited is a faith-based, youth-serving organization and its vision is to see transformed youth transforming our city. For 80 years, YU has evolved to meet the needs of the different generations of youth in the Greater Toronto Area. Check out yugta.ca or circles.yugta.ca to learn more about our Circles program for young people in foster care.

Description of presentation:

Young people in foster care often face instability and isolation, making it difficult to build lasting, supportive relationships. Research shows that the presence of trustworthy, caring adults significantly improves their well-being and future outcomes. Connection isn't just beneficial—it's essential. When young people have a strong network of support, they gain a greater sense of belonging, resilience, and hope for the future. Drawing on research and our experience working with vulnerable youth, we will explore why intentional, long-term relationships matter, and how they can help young people thrive now and beyond their time in care.

Bianca Armstrong is the program leader of Light Patrol, a program of Youth Unlimited, that supports young people experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness. Since 2016, she has been a frontline outreach worker, walking alongside youth experiencing homelessness and being a hopeful and trustworthy presence in their lives as they fight to survive and find stability. It is through this work that she has seen firsthand how significant it is for youth to have intentional, long-term relationships with healthy, stable adults who are 'for' them no matter what, and how connection can be a powerful, transformational force throughout their lives.



Matt Escott is the program coordinator of Circles, a new initiative of Youth Unlimited. Through team based mentorship, Circles aims to see youth in the foster care system thrive by experiencing the care and support of a long-term community who is unconditionally "for" them now and beyond their time in care. Matt has worked in the social service field for 15+ years, walking alongside young people experiencing homelessness and addiction. He is passionate about how intentional relationships, in partnership with families and professionals, can help young people thrive now *and* as they become adults.

3:15-3:30

Mid-Afternoon Break

3:30-5:30

Ministry of Community, Children, and Social Services (MCCSS)

FPSO is very pleased to have been given the opportunity to meet with and information share with delegates from MCCSS. The delegates we have met with, have welcomed us to share the foster parent survey from 2022, and the follow up survey on support. They have also supported FPSO in making connections with those who participate with decision makers.

We value our working relationship and have once again invited delegates to join us for conference.

This will give them an opportunity to share updates directly with foster families and local level foster parent leaders; as well as participate in a Q & A.


We hope you will join us for this conversation; It is beneficial to the work FPSO does in the province on behalf of foster families for those we connect with to also meet you our members who we represent.

Fostering Meaningful Connections Workshops

Workshop #3

Responding to Friendship Drama with Trauma-Informed Conflict Management:

**With
Kathleen Hilchey**

When	Saturday May 24, 9:00-12:00
Where	South Wing SW201
Who	<div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;">  <div> <p>Kathleen Hilchey is a conflict specialist from Ontario, Canada. She works with families, schools, and workplaces to manage difficult conflicts, including bullying. Kathleen works directly with clients and trains professionals on her conflict management strategies and methods. After 10 summers working in the camping sphere, Kathleen spent over 10 years teaching in the secondary public system. She has an M.Ed. in Peacebuilding Techniques from Brock University and is a Qualified Mediator.</p> </div> </div>
What	<p>For our kiddos and teens, friendships can be a messy zone of complete and utter joy and deep despair. As a parent or caregiver, standing on the outside looking in can be a dizzying affair.</p> <p>This session will explore these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What IS the role of the parent or caregiver in our kids' friendships? - What is the best way to support our kids through the ups and downs of their school or community relationships? <p>You will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A simple conflict management model that will help your kids find a voice that is both strong & kind. - A method of problem solving that will get your child exploring different ways they can resolve their friend challenges and fights. - Why taking a "coaching" role in our kids' conflicts and teaching conflict management tools will bully-proof them. - How these methods can be applied to kids and teens with extra needs (Kathleen has 2 of her own!)

Fostering Meaningful Connections Workshops

Workshop # 4	
The Cradle To The Crib	
With Shelly Deane	
When	Saturday May 24, 9:00-12:00
Where	South Wing SW202
Who	<p>Shelly Deane</p> <p>Shelly has been an open foster home since 1981, with a focus on babies and toddlers; she has fostered for many medically fragile babies and physically challenged children.</p> <p>In addition to caring for a lifetime of little ones Shelly has also served her foster parent community in leadership roles She has served as FPA President, is currently FPA Vice-President and has also served as an FPSO Director.</p> <p>Shelly along with her Foster Sister Susan have actively participated in FPSO conferences, often filling the role of managing registrations and greeting attendees as ambassadors of FPSO. This year will be their 42nd year in attendance to FPSO Conference.</p> <p>Shelly has also actively shared her experience and lessons learned over these decades of fostering with other foster parent peers, Embracing the role of mentor as firmly as she took on the role of specialized baby home.</p>
What	<p>In this workshop Shelly will lead a panel of foster parents who all care primarily for babies and young children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Together they will share lessons learned from past experiences. ➤ Discuss how to advocate for vulnerable little ones. ➤ Make suggestions on how to manage access, appointments and day to day life with wee ones, especially those who are medically fragile. ➤ Give highlights of a wide variety of processes, procedures and even equipment that may be familiar in a medically fragile baby home



"If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." - African Proverb

Fostering Meaningful Connections Workshops

Workshop #5

Why Do Children Steal and What Can Foster Parents Do About It?

Dr. Ruwa Sabbagh

When	Saturday May 24, 1:00-4:00
Where	South Wing SW201
Who	Dr. Ruwa Sabbagh is a psychologist who has over 25 years experience working with children, adolescents, and parents. Dr Sabbagh has a soft spot for foster parents and the hard and important work they do. She has worked with many adoptive families and has experience with families whose children have been in the care of Children's Aid Societies. Dr. Sabbagh obtained her Ph.D. from the University of Toronto and her Post-Doctoral Fellowship from the Hincks-Dellcrest Centre. Following this, Dr. Sabbagh obtained further training at the Toronto Child Psychoanalytic Program. She has written the Parent Q&A column for Today's Parent (2008-2011). She is currently in private practice seeing clients virtually.
What	Why do children steal and what can foster parents do about it? How can foster parents respond optimally when children steal? In this workshop we will be taking a look at the possible meaning of stealing and what foster parents can say and do, both to help the child learn from these experiences and to strengthen the bond between parent and child. We will consider how to respond therapeutically to children's stealing behavior, keeping in mind the child's individual history of trauma which often impairs their emotion regulation and their relationships with others. Together we will apply a holistic framework for thinking about the child that includes: What went wrong for this child? What struggles and challenges are they bringing? How can a foster parent best respond in a helpful way? We will also look at what feelings the child's behavior provokes in the parent because this is an important part of determining how (and when) to respond.

"The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team." - Phil Jackson

Fostering Meaningful Connections Workshops

Workshop #6	
FPSO Annual General Meeting	
When	Sunday May 25, 9:00-10:15
Where	South Wing SW201
Who	All members and Leaders. We will need all voting delegates for elections and motions
What	Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Call To Order ➤ Confirmation of voting delegates ➤ Confirmation of Quorum ➤ CEO Greeting ➤ Motion to approve 2024 AGM Minutes ➤ Motion to ratify 2024 year end financials ➤ Corporate report ➤ Confirmation of Slate of Nominees to Officer Positions
Slate of Nominees including biographies	
Chief Executive Officer – Nominee – Vanessa Milley	
<p>Vanessa Milley is the incumbent FPSO Chief Executive Officer (4 years), Chief Communications Officer Since 2015 & Governance and Policy Chairperson since 2010; Serving on the FPSO Board for 15 years. Vanessa has done many presentations on behalf of FPSO), and has participated with OACAS the Ombudsman’s Office, and MCCSS. Aside from FPSO Vanessa has nearly 43 years of board experience. Vanessa began fostering with a local areas CAS for 20 years, during which time she fostered 150 children alongside of raising her own 5 children 3 biological and two adopted. While fostering for the CAS Vanessa volunteered on her local FPA for 17 years 13 of those years as President, and 8 as regional FPSO Director. Vanessa has fostered in the Private Sector since 2018. Vanessa is an experienced advocate with 24 years’ experience providing advocacy support to foster parents, and is privileged to have been able to train the FPSO Advocacy One for the past eight years.</p>	
Chief Operations Officer – Nominee – Elaine Pratt	
<p>My husband and I began fostering 25 years ago most of that time as a treatment home. We have cared for all ages and have had numerous children with health issues and neurodivergence. Maurice and I have 4 adult children and 8 grand children. We are a farming family . Prior to fostering I worked in various areas of child care running family resource centres and nursery schools in rural areas in 3 different countries and two provinces . I have been the FPA President for Toronto CAS for 14 years, Representing CAST on the FPSO board where I am the current Chief Operations Officer (4 years) and training coordinator. I am also the Ontario director and Vice-president for the Canadian Foster Families Association.</p>	
Chief Communications Officer – Nominee – Vanessa Milley	
<p>Having been elected to the Office of “FPSO Corporate Secretary” (2015) under Bylaw #5. I began managing the communication, minutes and all key communications for FPSO. In 2017 when I was additionally appointed to the role of Executive Director of FPSO, the Head Office was officially registered to reside within my home. All of FPSO’s archives and active documents are stored and managed at Head</p>	

Office. As FPSO transitioned to Bylaw #6 (2020) the role of Corporate Secretary “grandfathered” over to “Chief Communications Officer”. I have faithfully fulfilled both of these roles along with also serving as Governance and Policy Chairperson.

Chief Financial Officer – Nominee – Cindy Labrecque

My husband & I have been fostering this coming May for 43 years. We first started as the founders & live-in group home parents, focusing on young adults with developmental delays. We transitioned to traditional foster care when we started our own family in 1984. We have fostered in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Northern Ontario and we have been with WECAS for 34 years. I am on our local FPA as 1st Vice President where I have been serving for the past several years. We have extensive experience in supporting children with complex medical & behavioural diagnosis and consider it a privilege to be in the fostering community. For the past 15 years we have been a Therapeutic Foster home within our agency. I am also privileged to be the Head Coach for Rhythmic Gymnastics as well as Track & Field for our local chapter of Special Olympics Ontario. I have been Coaching with Special Olympics since I was 17 years old and have a true passion for Coaching and cheering on my athletes.

Chief Public Relations Officer – Nominee – Delia Kennedy

Delia Kennedy is a foster parent with the Toronto Children’s Aid Society. A member of the FPA team for Toronto. Also a director on the FPSO board.

She and her family have fostered over 60+ children and youth in the 24 years journey with CAS. She has 3 biological children who grew up being foster siblings to many and while fostering adopted a baby that is now a grown 20 year old. This is a busy household with 4 teenage girls. She also offers support to young women who have aged out of the system and still return for support and many special occasions. At times getting phone calls or video calls from other provinces or other countries just to touch base with someone who will listen to their woes or to share news of a baby or a wedding that will be taking place. Delia is also a support to many foster parents who may have a questions or need some advice on how to handle a situation.

Chief Indigenous Relationship Officer – Nominee – Kim Serre

Hi, my name is Kim Serre. My husband Keith and I started our fostering journey 23 years ago with Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions when it seemed like having a child together was not in the cards for us. We started at first with respites and from there received our first placement, a 12yr old girl. Shortly after that first placement I became pregnant. Our daughter was born with a genetic condition called Williams Syndrome. All her medical appointments and therapies made it unrealistic for me to return to work but fostering was perfect, allowing me to be at home for the appointments and give back to the community. During our 18yrs with SMFC we cared for countless infants and teen girls. I participated on several committees such revising Annual Review Documents, the Foster Parent Recruitment Committee and was the Coordinator for the Mentoring Program. I also served 2nd Vice President for the Foster Family Association.

Our world changed again when one night we received a call to take in 3 indigenous siblings. We were told it would be a short term placement. 7 years later we still have those children and the number grew to 6 siblings. We wanted to ensure the siblings could be raised as a family unit if possible and decided the best fit for our family would be to switch to Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child and Family Services (DBCFS). It made the most sense for us as we were now Customary Care Parents for a large sibling group and like them, my husband is half indigenous. We wanted them to have the opportunity know and explore that side of their culture. As part of DBCFS


I co-facilitate the monthly Care Provider Support meetings, hold the position of Regional Liaison Officer and serve as a director on the FPSO. I look forward to taking on the role as Chief Indigenous Relationship Officer.

Fostering Meaningful Connections Workshops

Workshop #7	
Building Our Community	
When	Sunday May 25, 10:30-12:00
Where	South Wing SW201
Who	Vanessa Milley, FPSO Chief Executive Officer
What	<p>Building Our Community will be an interactive session. There will be some information sharing and an invitation to our members and leaders to participate in conversations about Child Welfare today.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ How are we doing in our homes. ✦ How things are going are our local agency. ✦ What do things look like to us in the province. ✦ What things do you feel are important for us to include when we speak with Child Welfare Partners ✦ How do we reimagine the community of foster parents within the reality of a small foster parent population in the local area. <p>FPSO functions on input and feedback from our members, and our member leadership. We would like as many members and leaders as possible will join us for this session.</p> <p>Mentorship and networking are key to the survival and longevity of an individual foster home. They are also integral to support and encourage the local level leaders.</p> <p>One of the reasons we have designed an in-person conference is to support the value of networking. This session is a designated networking opportunity. Last year we were told how very ,much our attendees learned from sitting with each other over the meals, and comparing notes, hearing each other’s realities and sharing what they have found worked – or perhaps did not work.</p> <p>We hope we will see you at this important session</p>

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." - Helen Keller

Fostering Meaningful Connections Workshops

Workshop # 8	
Therapeutic Play Activities for Parents and Children to Encourage Children to Share Their Feelings and Thoughts with Their Parents	
With Hannah Sun-Reid, MA, MDE, CPT-S, RP	
When	Sunday May 25, 1:00-4:00
Where	South Wing SW 201
Who	<p>Hannah Sun-Reid, MA, MDE, CPT-S, CTT, CTS, CDDPT, RP Hannah lives and works in Ontario Canada and has more than 35 years' experience working therapeutically with children and families. She is a Certified Play Therapist, Supervisor and Approved training provider with the Canadian Association for Play Therapy (CAPT). She has been teaching play therapy and mentoring play therapists in Canada and internationally for the past 20 years. Hannah is a board member and the Certification committee chair with CAPT. She is also a certified therapist, supervisor, and trainer in Theraplay and Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy. Hannah is an author of therapeutic children's books and games. www.hannahsunreid.com</p> 
What	The 3-hour workshop is a hands-on training for parents and caregivers. It will introduce therapeutic play activities that you can engage in with your children to invite and encourage them to share their feelings, thoughts, and worries with you. This workshop will emphasize hands-on learning and practice of various play activities. Participants will be able to replicate these activities with their children immediately following the training.

*"We make a living by what we get, but we
make a life by what we give." - Albert
Schweitzer*

Fostering meaningful Connections

Things you should know

Training Information

- ✦ Training packages listed on top of page 7

Accommodations

- ✦ Layout of suites noted on page 6
- ✦ If you can not manage a “stand up shower” please contact the head Office so accommodated rooms can be requested
- ✦ Each suite can accommodate:
 - Single – One person
 - Double – Two persons
 - Triple – Three persons
 - Quad – Four persons
 - ✦ Each of the accommodation options is listed on the registration form. And costed out accordingly.
 - ✦ Four person accommodations will require the sharing of a double bed, and may be cozy
 - ✦ For shared suites, roommates must be noted on registration form

Meal Information

- ✦ Any food accommodations will need to be noted on registration form
- ✦ All meals are “all you can eat” buffet format
- ✦ On Sunday at the end of conference there will be “grab and Go” meals to pick up and take along with you – this is designed to relieve you of a need to find dinner on the way home.
- ✦ There is a snack break mid way through each workshop, with both beverages and snacks.

Registration

- ✦ All registrations are calculated to cover the individuals meal costs, and accommodations plus a portion of “blended costs” which is the sharing of costs for presenters facilities and administration.
- ✦ Registrations can be received right up until the start of conference, however late registrations risk not getting a room as the ones in our rooming block may be full.
- ✦ No refund on registrations that come in after May 12th – as meals will already have been ordered and we will be charged for them.
- ✦ You can mail your registration form (hard copy on the next page) to FPSO, 340 Kingsway, Welland Ontario, L3B 3N9.
- ✦ You can also fill in the form and email to fpsocoe@fosterparentsociety.org
- ✦ Or you can use the link below, and submit through our document studio.

Any Question can be sent to fpsocoe@gmail.com, or call 905-788-6820

NOTE – Members have price softening as their membership dues help to cover training and administrative costs. If you re a non-member and interested in membership (\$30.00 per open home), please email fpsocoe@gmail.com and we will send you along membership forms.

Registration form link - <https://forms.gle/KZhgbEh1uMxTUP5p7>

Fostering Meaningful Connections Registration Form

For Online registration please use link – <https://forms.gle/KZhgbeH1uMxTUP5pZ>

Name	Phone	
Email	Agency	
Mailing address		
All Registrations fees are a “per person” rate and include GST		Please circle your choices
Three Day Three Night Package		Non-Member
Includes: <u>Workshops</u> – Friday, Saturday & Sunday Workshops <u>Meals</u> – Friday Breakfast, AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, Dinner Saturday – Breakfast, AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, Dinner Sunday- Breakfast, AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, grab and go meal Hospitality Suite – Friday & Saturday evening Accommodations – Thurs., Fri. & Sat. Night (three nights)	Single \$775.00	825.00
	Double \$610.00	660.00
	Triple \$560.00	610.00
	Quad \$535.00	585.00
Three Day Two Night Package		Non-Member
Includes: <u>Workshops</u> – Friday, Saturday & Sunday Workshops <u>Meals</u> – Friday - AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, Dinner Saturday – Breakfast, AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, Dinner Sunday- Breakfast, AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, grab and go meal Hospitality Suite – Friday & Saturday evening Accommodations – Friday & Saturday Night (two nights)	Single \$650.00	700.00
	Double \$540.00	590.00
	Triple \$505.00	555.00
	Quad \$490.00	540.00
Two Day Two Night Package (A)		Non-Member
Includes: <u>Workshops</u> – Friday, & Saturday Workshops <u>Meals</u> – Friday Breakfast, AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, Dinner Saturday – Breakfast, AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, Hospitality Suite – Friday evening Accommodations – Thursday & Friday Night (two nights)	Single \$490.00	540.00
	Double \$385.00	435.00
	Triple \$350.00	400.00
	Quad \$330.00	380.00
Two Day Two Night Package (B)		Non-Member
Includes: <u>Workshops</u> – Saturday & Sunday Workshops <u>Meals</u> – Sat.- Breakfast, AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, Dinner Sun.- Breakfast, AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, grab and go meal Hospitality Suite – Friday & Saturday evening Accommodations – Friday & Saturday Night (two nights)	Single \$520.00	570.00
	Double \$415.00	465.00
	Triple \$380.00	430.00
	Quad \$360.00	310.00
Two Day One Night Package (A)		Non-Member
Includes: <u>Workshops</u> – Friday, & Saturday Workshops <u>Meals</u> – Friday AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, Dinner Saturday – Breakfast, AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, Hospitality Suite – Friday evening Accommodations – Friday Night (One night)	Single \$365.00	415.00
	Double \$310.00	360.00
	Triple \$290.00	340.00
	Quad \$280.00	330.00

NEXT PAGE FOR ADDITIONAL REGISTRATION OPTIONS

Registration Form Continued		
Two Day One Night Package (B)		Non-Member
Includes: Workshops – Saturday & Sunday Workshops Meals - Saturday – AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, Dinner Sunday- Breakfast, AM Break, Lunch, PM Break, grab and go meal Hospitality Suite – Saturday evening Accommodations – Saturday. Night (One nights)	Single \$395.00	445.00
	Double \$340.00	390.00
	Triple \$320.00	370.00
	Quad \$310.00	360.00
Day Packages		Non-Member
All day packages include the workshops of that day, the AM & PM snack breaks and Lunch		
Friday Day Package - Includes Workshop #1 & #2	\$100.00	140.00
Saturday Day Package – Includes Workshops #3 or#4 & #5	\$100.00	140.00
Sunday Day Package – Includes Workshops #6, #7, #8	\$100.00	140.00
Individual Workshops		Non-Member
Workshop #1 - Understanding Shyness, Shame, and Social Anxiety and How Best to Support our Children	\$40.00	\$80.00
Workshop #2 - Presentation Panel Discussion Youth Unlimited Adoption Council of Ontario MCCSS	\$40.00	\$80.00
Workshop #3 - Responding to Friendship Drama with Trauma-Informed Conflict Management	\$40.00	\$80.00
Workshop #4 - The Cradle To The Crib	\$40.00	\$80.00
Workshop #5 - Why Do Children Steal and What Can Foster Parents Do About It?	\$40.00	\$80.00
Workshop #6 – FPSO Annual General meeting	No Charge	Members Only
Workshop #7 – Building Our Community	No Charge	No Charge
Workshop #8 - Therapeutic Play Activities for Parents and Children to Encourage Children to Share Their Feelings and Thoughts with Their Parents	\$40.00	\$80.00
If you are registering for shared accommodations – please note your roommate(s) here		
If you have any dietary requirements, please note these here		

*"A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees." -
Amelia Earhart"*