



## **ONLINE TRAINING FOR FOSTER PARENTS**

**Monday 4/6**

### **Trauma-Sensitive Parenting & Building Relationships**

**Michael Medeiros**

**6:30-8 pm**

Learn about how experiencing trauma, including abuse, neglect, separation, and loss can impact children. Together we discuss effective strategies for building positive relationships, increasing protective factors, and helping children recover from trauma.

Presented by Michael Medeiros, a foster/adoptive parent with decades of experience training other foster parents. He uses real life experiences and provides strategies that can be easily implemented.

**Tuesday 4/7**

### **Infant Safe Sleep**

**Alyssa Golner**

**7:30-9pm**

This session introduces the fundamentals of creating a safe and nurturing sleep environment for your family. Whether you're a new parent or caregiver, or you're seeking safe sleep methods for your growing family, this course equips you with essential knowledge and practical tips based on established safety standards. Join us as we explore strategies for promoting healthy sleep habits, ensuring peaceful nights and brighter days for you and your loved ones.

Presented by Alyssa Golner, a passionate advocate for infant safe sleep, this training blends expertise with personal experience. Alyssa's dedication to the safety and well-being of every child empowers caregivers with the confidence and skills needed to create the safest sleep environments for their babies.

**Wednesday 4/8**

### **Finances and Tax Information for Foster and Adoptive Parents**

**Helen Leue**

**7:30am - 9pm**

This training provides foster and adoptive parents with a clear, practical understanding of financial responsibilities, supports, and tax considerations related to caring for children. Participants will learn how to manage stipends, subsidies, reimbursements, and out-of-pocket expenses while ensuring compliance with state and federal guidelines. The session also covers essential tax information, including foster care payments, adoption assistance, tax credits (such as the Adoption Tax Credit), dependent claims, and record-keeping best practices. Real-world examples and common scenarios will be discussed to help families confidently navigate financial planning and tax reporting.

Helene Leue was a foster parent for over 15 years and a professional tax preparer for over 10 years. She has helped hundreds of foster and adoptive families understand their taxes and helped them think about finances as yet another tool to support the children in their care.

**Monday 4/13**

### **Centering the Child in High Conflict Situations**

**Gwenn Bass**

**7:30 - 9 pm**

During the session, participants will examine common sources of conflict within caregiving systems, including differences in expectations, communication breakdowns, stress, and competing priorities among adults. By recognizing these patterns, participants will gain insight into why conflicts escalate and how they can be redirected toward more constructive outcomes. The training introduces practical communication strategies that help adults slow down reactive responses and reframe conversations around the child's needs, strengths, and developmental goals. By the end of the session, participants will feel more confident navigating challenging conversations and maintaining a child-centered mindset even in high-conflict situations. The goal is to equip caregivers and professionals with practical tools that strengthen collaboration, reduce tension, and ensure that every decision ultimately supports the child's best interests.

Presented by Dr. Gwen Bass and her team—educators and foster/adoptive parents—for practical strategies to resolve conflict and reconnect after difficult moments, all grounded in personal and professional experience.

**Tuesday 4/14**

### **Emotionally Challenging Children: What to Look for and How to Help**

**Donna Shea**

**10:30 - 12 pm**

This workshop focuses on understanding the underlying challenges that may contribute to disruptive or puzzling behavior at home, in school, or in extended care settings. Often referred to as "A+ kids"—awesome kids with a little extra "plus"—these children may be working harder than they appear.

Participants will explore common signs associated with anxiety, attention challenges, emotional regulation difficulties, avoidance, and autism spectrum differences, and learn supportive ways to respond. The workshop emphasizes looking beyond behavior to better understand a child's needs and how to help them succeed.

Presented by Donna Shea, a social skills coach with over 23 years of experience working with children and teens (Grades K-12) using a playful, strength-based approach that supports confident communication and emotional growth.

**Wednesday 4/15**

### **General Injury and Home Prevention**

**Department of Public Health**

**7:30-9pm**

This training provides an overview of common childhood injuries and practical strategies to prevent them in home and community settings. Participants will learn about the causes of childhood injuries, including how a child's age and developmental stage might influence risk.

By the end of the training, participants will be able to recognize injury risks, apply age-appropriate prevention strategies, and access available resources, tools, and community services that support safe and nurturing environments for children.

Presented by a representative from the Department of Public Health

**Wednesday 4/20**

### **Cross Cultural Foster Parenting**

**Judith Wilson**

**7:30- 9pm**

This workshop provides knowledge and skills helpful for cross-cultural foster parenting. We address similarities and differences in how families thrive across cultures. We discuss aspects of cultural identity that can differ between foster children and foster parents and how to bridge cultural gaps. Culturally derived practices will be covered including: family structure and roles, interdependence and autonomy, communication, caregiving, gender roles, belief systems and norms, and identity development.

Presented by Dr. Judith Wilson, Associate Professor at Bridgewater State University and Dr. Wendy Champagnie Williams (she/her), Associate Professor at Bridgewater State University.

**Tuesday 4/21**

### **LGBTQ+ Identity, Expression and Transgender 101**

**Greater Boston PFlag**

**7:30-9pm**

In this training, participants will gain an understanding of LGBTQ+ terminology and the practice of inclusive language. You will learn to differentiate between gender identity, gender expression, sex assigned at birth, and sexual orientation as distinct, yet interconnected aspects of an individual's identity.

Through exploring transgender identity, participants will have the opportunity to practice pronoun usage and develop allyship skills to support gender-expansive individuals, engage in thought-provoking discussions to enhance your ability to embrace inclusive language and foster affirmation. This training equips you with the tools to cultivate respect and understanding for LGBTQ+ identities.

Presented by Greater Boston PFLAG.

**Thursday 4/23**

### **Understanding the Impact of Loss on Attachment and Helping Children Cope with Separation**

**Michael Medeiros**

**6:30 - 8pm**

Loss and grief are inherent parts of the foster care experience, and complex issues associated with dealing with loss impact everyone: children, birth parents and families of origin, and foster families.

Presented by Michael Medeiros, a foster/adoptive parent with decades of experience training other foster parents. He uses real life experiences and provides strategies that can be easily implemented.

**Tuesday 4/28**

### **Screen Time, Social Media, and Technology**

**Kelly Petraavicz**

**7:30 - 9 pm**

This training explores the complex relationship between social media, technology use, and child and adolescent development. Participants will learn about current research on screen time effects—both positive and negative—on physical health, mental well-being, social relationships, and academic performance. The session also covers digital safety, responsible online behavior, and practical strategies to help families and youth develop healthy technology habits. Loss and grief are inherent parts of the foster care experience, and complex issues associated with dealing with loss impact everyone: children, birth parents and families of origin, and foster families.

Presented by Kelly Petraavicz, LICSW, an Early Intervention Program Director.

**Wednesday 4/29**

### **Water Safety**

**Department of Public Health**

**7:30 - 9 pm**

Water recreation is a great way to stay cool and have fun. In this training, you'll learn how to beat the heat and stay safe. Participants will learn about the causes of childhood drownings based on age and development-specific risks, as well as how to identify drowning risks in the home and in the community and implement strategies to prevent childhood drownings. We will review key highlights of pool regulations as well as the sources of the regulations, and who enforces them.

Presented by a representative from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health as part of an on-going effort to prevent drownings.

[Register Here](#)