

Foster 

VC Kids

21st Century Caregiving :

Foster VC Kids Resource Family Training

Day 8

Day Eight Learning Objectives

- ▶ Provide information to **support families in transitioning to the fostering family** role.
- ▶ Understand **compassion fatigue** and the importance of self-care.
- ▶ Understand Foster VC Kids **resources to support you** in in the mission of high-quality caregiving.
- ▶ Understand the **various experiences and perspectives within the foster care system**.
- ▶ Identify **skills that will make for a high quality resource family** who partners with birth families.
- ▶ Make the decision to **move forward in becoming a resource family!**



Ice-Breaker



**Our Own
Transition**

Supporting Your Family Through the Fostering Journey

Just as bringing home a new baby causes the household to go through a process of adjustment, so does the fostering experience.

- ▶ **Open communication** about changes and the impact of those changes will be very important.
- ▶ **Attending networking groups and seeking support** from fostering peers is a great way to talk through these adjustments.
- ▶ **Have a plan** to maintain one-on-one time with any children in the home, as well as your partner/spouse/co-parent.
- ▶ Remember what you have learned about trauma and **try your best not to take things personally.**
- ▶ **Remembering small successes** and why you decided to become a fostering family will help during the tough times!



Compassion Fatigue

- ▶ **Empathy** is what will make you a high quality resource family because it will allow you to walk in their shoes of the children coming into you home.
- ▶ Empathy is also what opens us up to feeling the pain of others and therefore being hurt ourselves.
- ▶ **Compassion fatigue** is when the stress of caregiving affects your mental and physical health, and impairs your ability to parent effectively.
- ▶ A more severe form of this is called **Secondary Traumatic Stress**. This is when you start to experience symptoms similar to those of someone who has been through a trauma.
- ▶ If you experience a significant change in your mood, functioning, relationships and other aspects of your life, this is a in indicator that you may be “burning out.”



Self-Care Basics

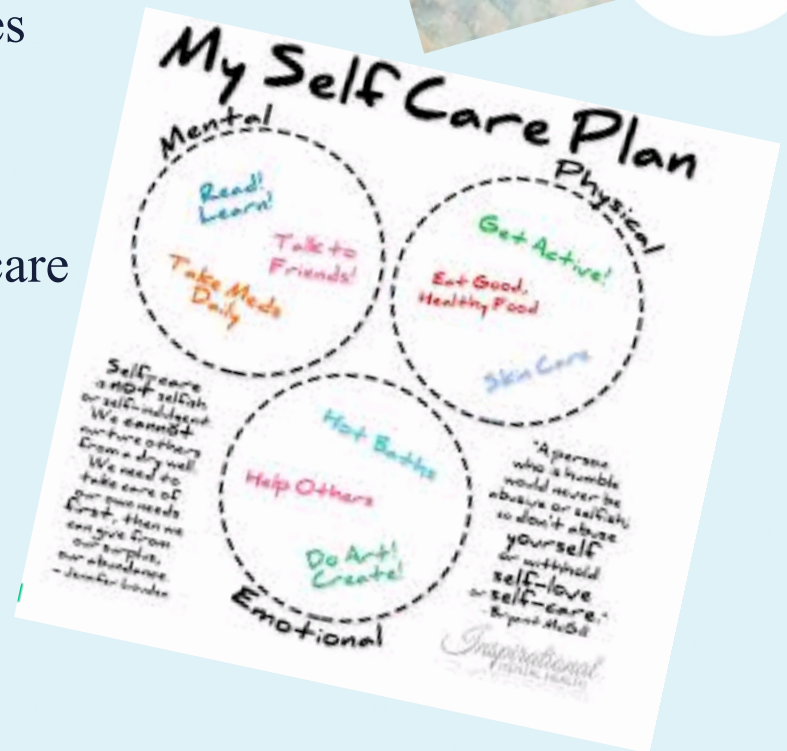
- ▶ **Self-care is not rocket science but it does take a commitment to practicing in order to be effective!**
- ▶ Some things to consider integrating into your day to day practice include :
 - ▶ Get enough sleep
 - ▶ Eat well.
 - ▶ Be physically active.
 - ▶ Use alcohol in moderation or not at all.
 - ▶ Take regular breaks from stressful activities.
 - ▶ Laugh every day
 - ▶ Express yourself.
 - ▶ Let someone else take care of you...

Self-Care is a
priority and necessity
- not a luxury -
in the work that we do.



Creating Your Self-Care Plan

- ▶ The goal of your self-care plan should be to help you maintain a balance between work and relaxation, and between your commitments to others and to yourself.
- ▶ Include activities that you do purely for fun!
- ▶ Include regular stress management approaches such as physical activity, meditation, prayer, reading, etc.
- ▶ Include mental, physical and emotional self-care activities.
- ▶ Your plan should have daily, weekly, and monthly activities/goals.
- ▶ Put your plan in writing to hold yourself accountable to following through!



Foster VC Kids Resources

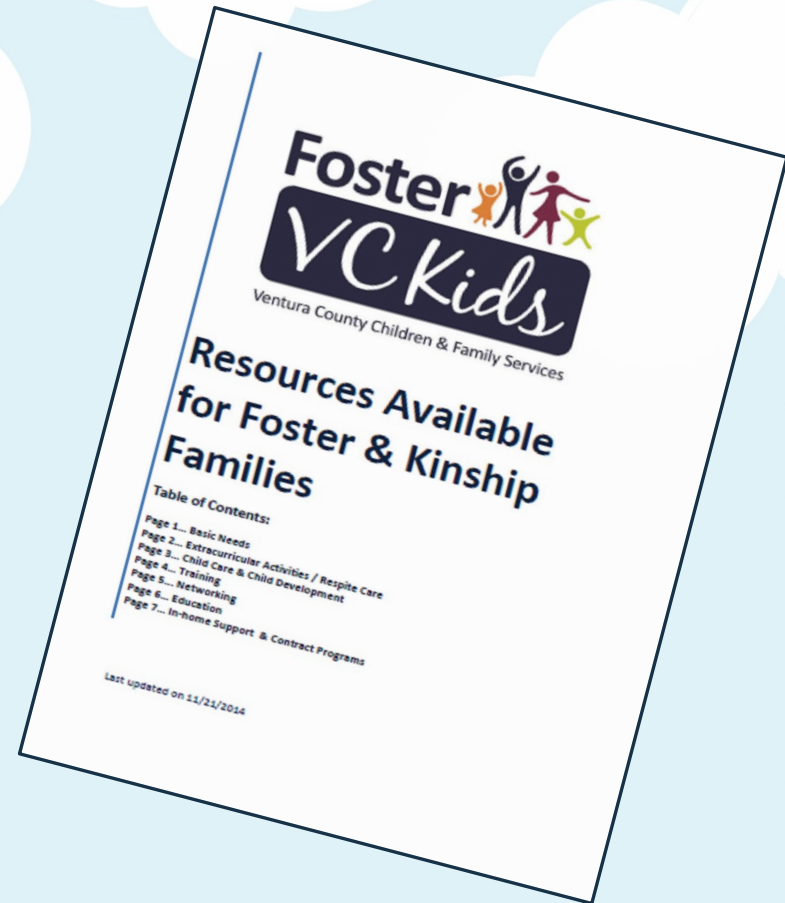
You can't, and shouldn't do it alone!

▶ The Foster VC Kids teams know that you need high quality supports and services!

▶ Part of your self-care plan should include using the resources that are available to you.

▶ These include:

- ▶ Access to clothing closets and other basic needs providers
- ▶ Access to funds to support youth engagement in extracurricular activities.
- ▶ Child care and educational resources
- ▶ Respite care
- ▶ Additional training-in-home and community based
- ▶ Networking groups



Foster VC Kids Panel



Where are your skills now?

Casey Family Applicant Inventory



Final Questions?

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End of Day Eight

**Thank you
for participating.**

