



post adoption PARENT GUIDE

November 2024 | Issue 11

Hello RISE Families,

Our team here is wishing you a Thanksgiving STUFFED with joy from all of us at RISE Family Services! For those who may not celebrate the holiday, we hope that this finds you preparing to enjoy the late fall and winter seasons in ways that are meaningful to you and your family.

November is also National Adoption Month, and it is only fitting that as our team members prepare to gather around our tables of gratitude, we express just how thankful and honored we are for the opportunity to collaborate and work with each of you and your families.

Your experiences, trust and willingness to partner and share with us is the secret ingredient that makes our work so special. We cherish every moment that we have the opportunity to support you and your family in your journey.

As always, we look forward to hearing from you about your needs and experiences as a post-adoptive family in Idaho as well as with our services.

Talk soon,

Sarah Andrade, LCSW
Executive Director
RISE Idaho Family Services

**Visit our
website**



Who Is RISE?

RISE, Inc is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1987. RISE provides a range of services to adults, children, and families in Utah, Oregon, Arizona, Florida, and Idaho.

Are you experiencing challenges that you didn't expect following an adoption, achieving permanency or dealing with changes in your family?

Well, no one can plan for everything! Encountering unanticipated challenges or circumstances when a family experiences a change is one of the only certainties that can *really* be guaranteed. The other certainly, is that **WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!** RISE Family Services Post-Permanency Support team members are standing by to support you throughout your journey.

RISE Family Service post-permanency support services offer a wide range of assistance options, tailored to the specific needs of your family. Supportive services can include:

- Supporting your family in applying for a renegotiation of subsidy payments to assist with the increased cost associated with more intensive needs.
- Supporting your child and family in gaining access to grant funding to allow for resources, enrichment activities, stabilization, or the overall well-being of your child(ren).
- Case Management/Intensive Case Management to support you in advocating for exceptional or emotional needs for your child, navigating the child welfare system or community resources and accessing support networks.

The bottom line is that ***we are here for you!*** If you or someone you know is in need of support related to a post-permanency adoption, please reach out to us. We know that supporting Idaho Families through their post-adoption journey is every bit as critical as entering an adoption. ***We are here.***

Please feel welcome to contact us via email at

idadoptsupport@riseservicesinc.org or by telephone at **208-252-6117**. As always, we look forward to answering questions and working with your family.

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

Celebrate National Adoption Month: Making a Difference in Children's Lives



November is National Adoption Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the urgent need for adoptive families for children and youth in foster care. This month, we celebrate the families who have opened their hearts to children in need and shine a light on the many ways adoption transforms lives and brings hope.

Every child deserves a permanent, loving family. Yet over 400,000 children are in the foster care system in the United States, with approximately 100,000 of them waiting for adoption. National Adoption Month aims to reduce this number by encouraging families to explore adoption, understand the process, and connect with the resources they need to make a lifelong difference. This month reminds us that every child deserves a safe and supportive home where they can grow, thrive, and feel a sense of belonging.

The theme for National Adoption Month 2024 is "Building Bridges to Belonging", highlighting the importance of creating lasting connections and support networks for children and youth in foster care. This theme encourages communities, organizations, and individuals to unite and support children in finding safe, stable, and loving homes through adoption.

Adoption is a profound and life-changing experience for everyone involved. Together, we can help bridge the gap for children in foster care, giving them a place to call home and a family to call their own.

For more information, reach out to your local adoption agencies.

Spotlight on Idaho's Wednesday's Child: Making a Difference for Youth in Need

Idaho's Wednesday Child is a vital initiative that helps connect children and teens in foster care with potential adoptive families. Each Wednesday, a child or sibling group in need of a forever home is featured on Idaho's local news station and social media, allowing the community to learn about their unique personalities, hopes, and dreams. By sharing these stories, Wednesday's Child's highlights the incredible young people who are looking for stability, love, and a chance to thrive in a permanent family.

For families and individuals considering adoption, Idaho's Wednesday's Child provides a window into the lives of youth who need support and belonging. Even if adoption is not the right path for everyone, simply spreading the word and supporting these efforts can make a huge difference. by engaging with Wednesday's Child— whether through viewing, sharing, or supporting the program— you help foster awareness, increase opportunities for these youth, and bring them one step closer to a nurturing, stable home.

Let's support Idaho's Wednesday's Child and show that our community stands together in caring for its most vulnerable members.

To learn more about Idaho's Wednesday Child please visit
<https://idahowednesdayschild.org/>

A JOURNEY OF LOVE & FAMILY



At RISE Family Services, we celebrate the stories that make our team truly special. This month, we're honored to share the inspiring adoption journey of our very own Kristina Shallies, our Independent Living Case Manager and her family. Their path to creating a family is one of resilience, hope, and profound love. Kristina and her family's experience is a beautiful reminder of the power of connection and the unique ways families are formed.

"Hi, my name is Kristina and my husband Jonah and I have been married for 20 years. Yikes, that makes me feel so old! We had always planned to adopt eventually, as we each have adopted family members and we always wanted adoption to be part of our story. We thought we would have at least one biological child first, but struggled with infertility for seven years. We made the decision to adopt from Foster Care when I was working in adoption and had learned extensively about all types. Foster to adopt was the route that seemed like the best fit for us.

Jonah and I grew up in Idaho and lived in Washington when we adopted our children from Foster Care in 2013. We moved home a year after adopting them so we could have family support. Our kids are now 12 (almost 13) and 14. They are full biological siblings and have a maternal half-sibling who lives in Michigan with a grandparent. Our children communicate with their oldest sibling throughout the year and we have an annual summer visit. This relationship has had its ups and downs. We are committed to working through the struggles though because this relationship is so very important to all of us, and it is going very well now. We also maintain digital communication with their maternal Grandmother and maternal Aunt. They experience so much loss, we find it important to work hard to ensure they don't lose any more connections to their biological family.

Our children experienced several delays in their development due to neglect and we have accessed resources from the first day they lived with us including: Infant and Toddler Program, Developmental Preschool, IEP/504 at school, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Neuropsych Evaluations, Medication Management, Sleep Studies, DD Waiver, YES System of Care, Mental Health Therapy and other miscellaneous medical tests. The amount of time we spend accessing resources is at least a part-time job! We both worked full-time before adopting and have not successfully had both of us work 40/hours a week for longer than a few months since.

We are so grateful for all of the interventions we have accessed and know our children wouldn't be where they are today without them, despite the reality that it often isn't enough. Many of these systems are overwhelming to access and cause all of us to relive each of our struggles when working to become eligible. Idaho also does not have enough people to staff many of these positions, so after becoming eligible we have found out we can't access the needed resources. It is utterly and completely emotionally draining.

The most beneficial thing we have done is to find like-minded people to become part of our village. We are more than a decade in and have found those people, thankfully. It took a lot of time and energy to get here and we lost many people along the way, friends and family whom we thought would support us forever. We hear this is not uncommon for adoptive families. People like to view adoption through rose-colored glasses and when it isn't a "happily ever after" story they have a hard time understanding these youth will likely always struggle with effects of the trauma they have experienced on some level. This doesn't mean there isn't healing that happens, simply that sometimes that healing moves much slower and is much messier than people expect.

One piece of advice I would have given my younger self would be to do the hard work to heal my own childhood trauma, as early in life as possible (even if that was after becoming a parent). I had done a lot of therapy around grief/loss and infertility, prior to becoming a parent, which was helpful. I had also focused heavily on attachment in my academic pursuits to become a Social Worker, but mostly in relation to how to help these youth gain healthy attachment. It is only recently that I have started to really work through my own attachment struggles from my childhood, which have been subconsciously unresolved. Supporting our children through their bonding and attachment struggles highlighted my own unresolved trauma. Many of you know these youth have a way of finding our struggles and weaknesses and bringing them to the forefront for us to examine, over and over and over again!

Adopting from foster care is not for the faint of heart, it is a journey of steadfast dedication to showing up each and every day despite not always having the resources needed to do so as well as we would like. I have learned the true value of taking care of myself in order to be able to care for others. I am a more empathetic and compassionate person today than I likely would have been without having become an adoptive parent. I have also learned how many things I can accomplish, despite extreme exhaustion! Truly though, this journey has included times of recalibration and working to have reasonable expectations of all of us; along with great celebration when our children reach goals we had dreamed of for them but didn't know if they might ever achieve.

These goals are different for us than many of our friends parenting youth who are living a different story, and that is okay. It has taken a lot of years for me to be okay with that, and I have learned that is okay too. We all have our experiences to work through. Our children are unique and each of their stories have nuanced differences that impact them. It isn't about our children achieving our goals for them, or society's goals, it is about them becoming the best versions of themselves they can be. Their lived experiences will impact them, that is a given. How they heal from their stories is up to them and we have the privilege to walk alongside them as they do."

EMPOWERING PARENTS GRANT

Applications Now Open



The 2024-2025 Idaho Empowering Parents Grant application is now open! This program provides eligible families with up to \$3,000 per child to help cover education-related expenses such as tutoring, technology, and learning materials. Families can apply through the official Idaho Department of Education website by creating an account, verifying their eligibility, and submitting their application online.

Don't miss this opportunity to support your child's education.

For more information or to apply please visit

<https://empoweringparents.idaho.gov/>

Please be advised that this program is through the Idaho Department of Education and is different from the Post Permanency grant program offered by the Department of Health and Welfare. For additional support, please contact:

*Idaho State Board of Education
empoweringparents@edu.idaho.gov
208-334-2270 Option #7*

HAPPY THANKSGIVING



As Thanksgiving approaches, it's the perfect time to pause and reflect on what we're grateful for. This season is all about gathering with loved ones, sharing delicious food, and expressing appreciation for the simple joys in life. Whether you're traveling to be with family, hosting friends, or creating new traditions, we hope your Thanksgiving is filled with warmth, laughter, and gratitude.

From all of us, thank you for being a part of our community. We wish you a wonderful holiday filled with cherished moments and lasting memories. Happy Thanksgiving! !

CALLING ALL CARING HEARTS

**RISE is seeking Treatment Foster Care
Parents**



Are you passionate about making a positive impact on the lives of children and youth in need? If, so we have an exciting opportunity for you!

We are actively seeking compassionate individuals or families who are interested in becoming treatment foster care parents in Region 3 & 4. Whether you are a seasoned foster parent looking to expand your impact or someone considering treatment foster care for the first time, we welcome you to join our dedicated team.

As a treatment foster care parent, you will have the unique ability to provide a nurturing and supportive environment for children and adolescents who have experienced trauma or have behavioral and emotional challenges.

By opening your heart and home to these vulnerable young individuals, you can play a pivotal role in their healing and growth. As a treatment foster care parent, you will receive specialized training, ongoing support, and a generous stipend to ensure that you have the resources and knowledge needed to provide the best care possible.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a treatment foster care parent, please contact RISE Family Services at 208-252-6117 or email TFCIdaho@riseservicesinc.org

RESOURCES JUST FOR YOU

FREE

Childcare Days

for our Safe Families
community!



What: Babysitting for children
ages 12 months–10 years

When: Each Monday, 9a.m.–12p.m.

Where: King of Glory Lutheran Church
3430 N Maple Grove, Boise

Who: For parents who need a little
extra time to themselves



Space is
limited -
Sign up
today!

Families
Must
Register
Ahead of
Time

Childcare
provided by
King of Glory
Lutheran
Church

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

The Healthy Foundations Family Program®

covered by Idaho Medicaid

Are your child's mental health problems making parenting seem impossible?

- Watch our FREE parenting video
- Schedule a FREE 15-minute consult
- Use our 90-day in-home program to help you build a bridge to better behaviors

Change your family's future here:
[www.healthyfoundations.co \(not .com\)](http://www.healthyfoundations.co)



the TBRI® podcast



The TBRI® Podcast features conversations about Trust-Based Relational Intervention®, an attachment-based, trauma-informed intervention designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children.

On this podcast we talk about the elements of trauma-informed care and chat with experts in the field about implementing TBRI® across different communities of care and practice.

To learn more [**click here**](#)



Silverwood Theme Park has partnered with Idaho Family and Children Services to provide all foster children in the state of Idaho the opportunity to visit the park for FREE once a year! The goal of this program is to help children in foster care create healthy bonds with their new families by providing a safe, fun, and exciting place to make lasting memories together.

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)

Currently, this program is only offered to foster families in the state of Idaho, but we are looking into future expansion to our bordering states.

Idaho Resiliency Project

<https://www.idahoresilienceproject.org/resources>

The Idaho Resilience Project (IRP) is an organization dedicated to helping Idaho's youth and families build resilience and forge a path beyond trauma. Understanding that adversity happens at the individual, family, and community levels, IRP is working with organizations across the state to improve and create a shared understanding of resilience-informed communities. Through regional collaboration, IRP is working to create safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments to positively impact the development of skills that will help youth and families reach their full potential. Explore the calendar to find upcoming training and events. Check out the resource page to find videos, documentaries and lesson plans for every age and stage.

Find Help Idaho

<https://findhelpidaho.org/>

Idaho Health Data Exchange is collaborating with findhelp to provide a safe, secure, and effective platform for users to connect people with social services. Simply search and immediately connect to identify medical, behavioral, financial and basic supports relevant and available to meet your needs.

Brown like Me

Brown like Me has become many of our family's favorite nonprofit organizations in the area. Brown like Me is a "local nonprofit that is helping black youth in Idaho connect with their culture through community outreach".

To learn more about this organization and to view their upcoming events, please visit <https://brownlikeme.org/>.



Idaho Care Line

The 2-1-1 Idaho Careline is a program of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. It is a free statewide community information and referral service.



National Parent Helpline®

1-855-4A PARENT 1-855-427-2736

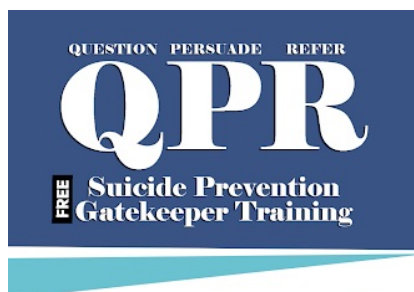
To get emotional support from a trained Advocate and become empowered and a stronger parent.

Youth Resource and Opportunity Collaborative

The Youth Resource and Opportunity Collaborative (YouthROC) provides upstream prevention support and resources to assist youth aged 10-17 with behavioral health needs. The ultimate goal is to prevent youth from entering the juvenile justice and child welfare systems by providing connection to community-based resources and services. YouthROC will assist youth in acquiring the resources and support they need to improve their health, well-being, and future success.

For more information about the YouthROC program or advisory committee please reach out to Savannah Swisher, Project Manager at Southwest District Health.

To learn more, click [here](#)



In partnership with the Department of Health and Welfare, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction is providing **FREE** online QPR suicide prevention training for our Idaho school communities through our Idaho Lives Project and the QPR Institute.

As a QPR-trained Gatekeeper you will learn to:

Recognize the warning signs of suicide
Know how to offer hope
Know how to get help and save a life

Adults 18 and older are invited to take this **FREE** 2-hour online training.

REGISTER



A flyer for the Western Idaho Youth Support Center. At the top is a photo of three young women talking. Below the photo is the title "WESTERN IDAHO YOUTH SUPPORT CENTER" and the tagline "We're here to support you in a crisis." The flyer is divided into sections: "Why Western Idaho Youth Support Center?", "The Western Idaho Youth Support Center provides:", "What to Expect", and "We're Here 24/7/365. Learn More". It includes a QR code and the website "WesternIdahoYouthSupportCenter.org". At the bottom is the logo for "WESTERN IDAHO YOUTH SUPPORT CENTER" with the tagline "PROVIDING YOUTH A SAFE PATH FORWARD" and "operated by Pathways of Idaho".

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