



November 2024

## SC Foster Care Newsletter



As we gather with family and friends during this festive season, let's cherish the shared laughter, the warm embraces, and the simple joys that bring us closer together. It's a time to reflect on the resilience of our communities, the kindness of strangers, and the power of hope to heal and inspire. May the spirit of gratitude guide us through these times, reminding us of the love and connections that truly matter.

### **Family Recognition and Celebration:**

**Family Name:** Joselma Dos Santos and Bethzaida Guzman-Cotto

**How long have you've been fostering?**

We started as Kinship in 2020 and got our foster license in 2023, so in total 4 years.

**Why did you decide to foster?** We decided to foster because we wanted to help! We had the urge to serve, to be a part of the solution in someone's life and we realized that the fact that there are so many kids in need broke our hearts. So, we decided to make our part and help, even if it was 1 kid, there was going to be 1 kid that had a home, that had a family, that had love!



### **Staff Spotlight:**

Name: Allison Sandin

Region Served: Low Country, Upstate and Midlands

Position with LSC: SC Foster Care Regional Manager

Years Served with LSC: 20 years

What is your Why? I always knew that I wanted to work to advocate for and help make a positive impact for vulnerable children, and I'm able to help do that in foster care by helping provide the stability and security that these children need. I also value being part of such a wonderful team of staff and foster families.

*From the Desk Of  
Dr. Roseina Britton, Clinical Director*

Hello Foster Parents,

As we move into November, the holiday season is just around the corner—a time filled with joy, celebration, and family gatherings. However, it can also bring added stress, especially for foster parents and the children in their care. For many foster children, the holidays can be a complex time, bringing up feelings of loss, confusion, or anxiety. This month, I want to share some tips to help you manage the holiday season while being mindful of the unique needs of your foster children.

**Understanding the Emotional Impact of the Holidays:** While the holidays can be a time of togetherness, they may also serve as a reminder to foster children of what they've lost or what might be missing in their lives. Whether it's memories of their biological families or the absence of familiar traditions, this time of year can stir up a range of emotions, from excitement to sadness or even anger. It's important to be aware of these feelings and to create a supportive environment where your foster child feels safe and understood.

#### **Managing Holiday Stress for You and Your Family:**

- **Set Realistic Expectations:** The holidays don't need to be perfect, and it's okay if things don't go exactly as planned. Set realistic expectations for yourself, your family, and your foster children. This helps to reduce pressure and allows everyone to enjoy the season in a more relaxed way.
- **Simplify Holiday Plans:** There can be pressure to do it all—attend every gathering, decorate extensively, and prepare elaborate meals. However, simplifying your holiday plans can reduce stress. Focus on the traditions and activities that are most meaningful to your family, and don't feel obligated to say "yes" to every event.
- **Take Breaks:** If things start to feel overwhelming, remember to take breaks. A little time away, whether it's a short walk or a moment to breathe, can make a big difference in managing stress and maintaining a sense of calm during the holidays.
- **Ask for Help:** You don't have to handle everything on your own. Lean on your support network—whether it's friends, family, or other foster parents—when you need extra help or just someone to talk to. Accepting help during the holiday season can lighten your load and give you more time to focus on the needs of your foster child.

#### **Helping Your Foster Child Prepare for the Holidays:**

- **Communicate Early and Often:** Talk to your foster child about the holiday season and what to expect. They may have questions about family traditions, holiday plans, or whether they'll see their biological family. Answer their questions honestly and provide reassurance about the support they'll receive in your home.
- **Honor Their Feelings:** The holidays can bring up a range of emotions for foster children. Encourage them to express how they're feeling, whether it's excitement, sadness, or frustration. Let them know that it's okay to feel however they feel, and that you're there to support them through it.
- **Involve Them in Planning:** Help your foster child feel included by allowing them to take part in holiday preparations. Whether it's decorating, cooking, or choosing activities, involving them in these tasks can help them feel more connected to your family's traditions.
- **Create New Traditions Together:** If your foster child doesn't have many positive holiday memories, consider starting new traditions together. These new experiences can bring joy and create a sense of belonging in your home. Whether it's a special movie night, baking holiday treats, or a fun family activity, creating new memories together can help foster a sense of unity and warmth.

-Continued from page 2-

- **Maintain Structure and Routine:** While the holidays often bring changes in routine, try to maintain as much structure as possible, especially around mealtimes, bedtimes, and daily activities. Routine provides a sense of security for foster children, particularly during times of change or uncertainty.
- **Prepare for Family Gatherings:** If you plan to attend or host large family gatherings, prepare your foster child in advance. Let them know what to expect and who will be there. If your child feels overwhelmed in group settings, consider setting up a quiet space where they can retreat if needed.

**Being Mindful of Their Needs:** The holidays can be overwhelming for foster children, especially if they're processing mixed emotions. Pay attention to their behavior and emotional cues, and adjust your plans accordingly. If they seem anxious or withdrawn, it might be helpful to scale back on certain activities or provide more one-on-one time to talk through their feelings.

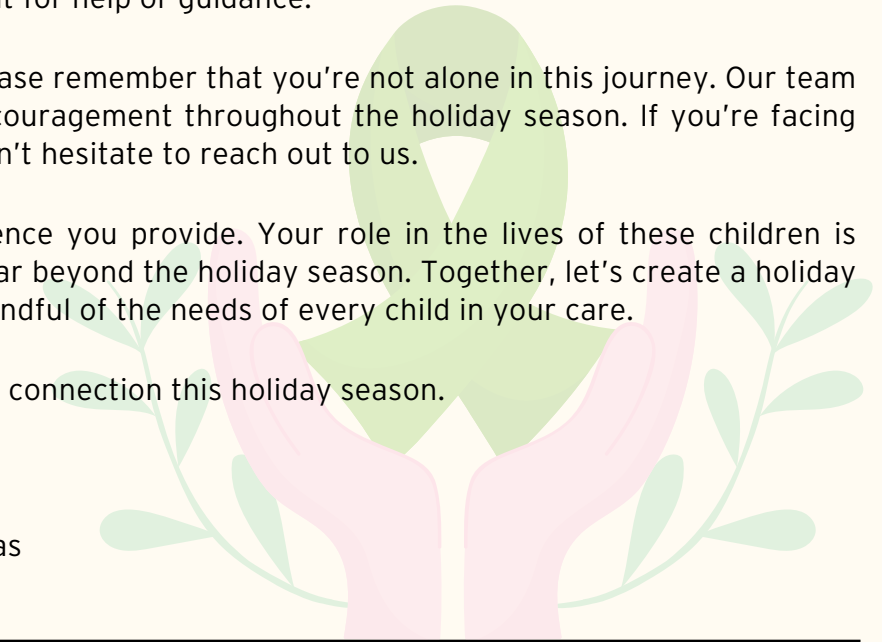
**Supporting Yourself and Your Child:** It's important to remember that self-care is just as crucial for you as it is for your foster child. The more you're able to manage your own stress and stay grounded, the better equipped you'll be to support your foster child through this emotional time. Take time for yourself when needed and don't hesitate to reach out for help or guidance.

**We're Here to Support You:** As always, please remember that you're not alone in this journey. Our team is here to offer support, guidance, and encouragement throughout the holiday season. If you're facing challenges or need additional resources, don't hesitate to reach out to us.

Thank you for all the love, care, and patience you provide. Your role in the lives of these children is invaluable, and the impact you make goes far beyond the holiday season. Together, let's create a holiday experience that is supportive, joyful, and mindful of the needs of every child in your care.

Wishing you and your family peace, joy, and connection this holiday season.

Warm regards,  
Dr. Roseina Britton  
Clinical Director, Lutheran Services Carolinas



Orientation Training - Statewide  
1st Saturday of each Quarter  
January, April, July (2nd Saturday  
due to holiday), October  
Contact [Chelsey Ryle](mailto:Chelsey.Ryle@LSCarolinas.net) for scheduling  
details at  
[CRyle@LSCarolinas.net](mailto:CRyle@LSCarolinas.net)



## Upcoming LSC Training

Foster Parent/Support Group Trainings:  
Low Country/Upstate/Midlands  
3rd Thursday of each month at 6:30pm  
[Zoom Link Here](#)

Foster Parent/Support Group Trainings:  
Pee Dee/Midlands  
November 25, 2024 at 6:00pm (last Monday night  
of every month)  
[Zoom Link Here](#)  
Meeting ID: 882 7040 6022  
Passcode: 843016  
Trainer: Amy McColl/Lead Clinical Specialist  
Training Topic: Substance Abuse in Foster Care

What is a change to my FC license?

- Biological child turns 18
- New individual (of any age) moves into the home
- Any individual moves out of the home
- Address change
- Separation/Divorce of Foster Parents
- The passing of a Foster Parent
- Finalized Adoption

As soon as you know a change will be needed to your license, please inform your case worker immediately so necessary paperwork can be completed and have time to process.

All Month: Pancreatic Cancer Awareness \* National Military Family \* November 2024 - Men's Health Awareness Month \*

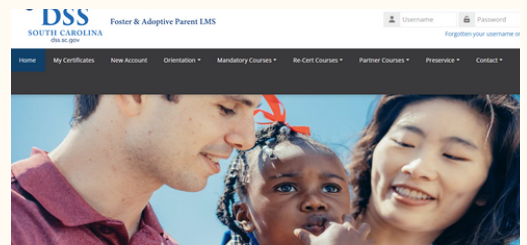


- November 3 National Sandwich Day
- November 5 Guy Fawkes Night (Bonfire Night)
- November 10 US Marine Corps Birthday
- November 11 Veterans Day
- November 13 World Kindness Day
- November 18 Mickey Mouse's Birthday
- November 20 Universal Children's Day
- November 21 Carers Rights Day
- November 25 White Ribbon Day
- November 28 Thanksgiving

Lutheran Services Carolinas Website

Foster Care Online DSS Training

links:



# WHAT'S NEW

From DSS

See the most recent DSS Foster Care Dashboard which provides a visual map of the SC Child Welfare Foster Care caseload statewide broken down by key demographic stats.

[View Foster Care Dashboard](#)

Additional Dashboards can be found at

<https://dss.sc.gov/about/data-and-resources/>



**CATAWBA COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR**

Come join us and find out about:  
**RESOURCES – TRAINING – EDUCATION & MORE**  
 at this **FREE** family-friendly event!

**TUESDAY, NOV 13<sup>TH</sup> 10am – 1pm**  
 Student Activity Center - Winthrop University Campus  
 611 Myrtle Dr, Rock Hill, SC 29730  
 For more info, contact: Candice Barber (803) 318-0119

SPONSORED BY:






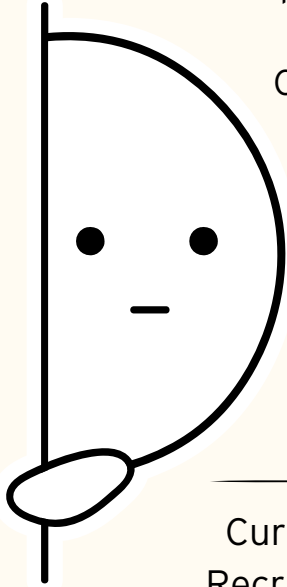
## DSS Podcasts for the Public

DSS makes podcasts available [on the DSS website](#) for professionals seeking to enhance knowledge and skills. The i3-Imagine.Ideate.Innovate Podcast, hosted by the Staff Development and Training Division, highlights innovative ways to improve policy, practice, and the culture within the social services profession.

The Driving Sustainable Success in Child Welfare Podcast, hosted by the Child Welfare Division, prompts great discussion and explores strategies for serving children and strengthening families. Be sure to check them out!

Check out the latest episodes of The Driving Sustainable Success in Child Welfare and i3 - Imagine.Ideate.Innovate Podcasts by clicking the podcast icon 





Upcoming Recruitment Events:  
November 20th at 2:45pm  
Cane Bay Elementary School  
Meeting with Staff

Contact [Robbie Dent](#)  
843-599-3227  
or [Jayla Coley](#)  
252-904-2585  
for your next speaking  
engagement

Current Statistics for  
Recruitment/Licensing:  
18 new homes in process  
Statewide

Current LSC Foster Care Statistics:  
24 Youths in Care - Low  
Country/Midlands/Upstate  
30 Youths in Care - Pee Dee/Midlands  
27 Foster Homes - Low  
Country/Midlands/Upstate  
35 Foster Homes - Pee Dee/Midlands

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Foster Family Web Demo/Training Coming Soon!**

We will be implementing the Foster Family Web in extendedReach for all foster care programs (NC, SC, UC) in November.

Foster Parents - Save the dates for this important upcoming training.

Links and invites will be sent the week prior to the training.

These will be online via Microsoft Teams

Foster Parent Demo/Training (excludes applicants - only licensed parents or those who will be licensed in November should attend):

**Choose One:**

Tuesday 11/19/24 6pm-7:30pm **OR**

Wednesday 11/20/24 12pm-1:30pm **OR**

Thursday 11/21/24 8pm-9:30pm



The Upstate Day Program went to the state fair on Thursday, October 17th. A fun time was had by all! Five youth and five staff attended. Riding the rides and playing games were the most popular things to do. The most popular food at the fair among our group were the turkey legs. A special thing that happened while at the fair was that one of the youth won a stuffed animal and gave it away to a little girl. One of our DSP's won the ring toss and a giant teddy bear. She gave it to one of the youth. Everyone had a great time!

Columbia Day Program went to the state fair on Wednesday, October 16th and Thursday, October 17th. Staff took 11 youth on the 16th and 12 on the 17th. Fun was had by all!

Current Statistics for Columbia and Upstate Day Service Programs:  
25 Youths in Care on average per day