



♥ fosterroster

A BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR FOSTER & ADOPTIVE FAMILIES IN UTAH : VOL 3, JUN & JUL 2011

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Foster Family Camp at Aspen Grove

Don't miss this year's Foster Family Camp presented by the Utah Foster Care Foundation! The camp is an opportunity for foster families to have a little fun, gain some new insights and bond as a family. It is open to all state licensed foster families who have a current foster care placement and to families who have adopted children from foster care within the past 12 months (October 2010 - September 2011). Space is limited.

- The three-day camp takes place September 16-18, 2011 and includes two nights of lodging, five meals, and all activities available at Aspen Grove Family Camp & Conference Center (the normal cost to attend is \$1200 per family!)
- Activities include supervised children's program, ropes course, Aspen follies, in-service training, and a most unusual talent show.
- The cost is \$10 per person - infants too.
- Registration is on a first come, first serve basis. Registration fee and form must be sent & postmarked no later than July 11, 2011 (preference will be given to families who have not attended in the past). **Registration will not be accepted without full payment.** Checks will not be cashed until July 18, 2011.



Utah Foster Care Foundation Board of Directors

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5296 S. Commerce Dr. #400
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3340 S. Harrison Blvd. #200
Ogden, UT 84403
Phone: 801.392.1114

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252 N. Orem Blvd.
Orem, UT 84057
Phone: 801.373.3006

Price

475 W. Price River Dr. #152
Price, UT 84501
Phone: 435.636.0210

Roosevelt

RR 3 Box 8008
Roosevelt, UT 84066
Phone: 435.724.0959

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1052 W. Market Dr.
Vernal, UT 84078
Phone: 435.781.4224

Moab

180 S. 300 E., Suite C
Moab, UT 84532
Phone: 435.259.3345

St. George

321 N. Mall Dr. #B102
St. George, UT 84790
Phone: 435.656.8065

Richfield

201 E. 500 N.
Richfield, UT 84701
Phone: 435.896.1232

- Packets will be **mailed** to confirmed families no later than July 21, 2011. If you do not receive a packet by this date, you will be placed on a waiting list.



- Aspen Grove is a camp in the mountains. Expect weather changes. It can go from snow to sunshine and back to snow in a matter of hours. Please note that the terrain is rugged around Aspen Grove so be prepared for a rustic, camp-like experience.
- If you are in need of special accommodations due to physical or medical needs please call Darcey at 877-505-KIDS **after** you mail in your registration form and fee.
- For more information on Aspen Grove, visit their website at: <http://aspen.byu.edu>

Watch your mailbox for a registration packet in early June!

Save the Date

This year, UFCF's annual foster family appreciation event will take place at Cowabunga Bay in Draper on Monday, August 1st from 5:00 – 9:00 pm. Watch your mailbox for the invitation this summer!

Summer Camp Opportunity

Royal Family Kids' Camp (through Good Shepherd Lutheran Church) is a one-week residential camp designed to meet the unique and overwhelming needs of abused, neglected, and abandoned children. It's a FUN week filled with all kinds of activities, such as horseback riding, swimming, crafts, music, dramatic art, and fishing. The staff is trained specifically to work with abused and neglected children. There is one counselor for every two campers.

To be eligible for attendance, children must be 7 to 11 years old, involved in the child welfare system, and in most cases, living in an out-of-home foster placement. There is a \$25.00/fee for the camp and there are NO other charges. This year's camp is August 8-12, 2011 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

If you have questions or a child interested in attending, please contact Christine McAtee at RFKC-GSLC@hotmail.com or 801-808-9069 or Darlene Johnson at darlenejohnson999@hotmail.com, or 801-860-1025.

They are accepting applications until July 15, 2011. **Camp fills up fast so PLEASE don't wait.**



Trauma and Attachment 2nd Annual UFCF Symposium 2011: A Closer Look

More than 200 foster parents and professionals gained new insight on trauma and attachment at Utah Foster Care Foundation's 2nd Annual Symposium on April 13-14 at the Zermatt Resort in Midway. Thank you to everyone who helped to make the Symposium the great success that it was!

Janine Driver, author of "You Say More Than You Think," thrilled the crowd with her insight on body language.

On UFCF's Facebook page, foster parents shared how they are using Janine's tips in their relationships with their children in foster care:

Stephanie: "I learned I really need to be careful how I stand and which direction my hands are facing when I'm talking. I also learned to be 'ridiculous' in my praising!"

Leah: "Learned last night that we say "don't" a whole lot!"

Dr. Susan Egbert's presentation, *Decreasing Stress When Parenting Children with Attachment & Trauma Issues*, had rave reviews from foster parents. Not only has Dr. Egbert been a child and family therapist, she is a foster/adoptive parent and an adoptee herself. Symposium attendees could relate to her!

Melinda: "Loved Susan Egbert's presentation. Like she said, those who are not foster parents will consider us either saints or 'a bubble-off.' I think I fit mostly into the latter category. As a new foster mom only a month into our first placement, we've had plenty of challenges already - but, every day I am reminded

of why I am doing this when I see the smiles on these girls' faces. So, glad to be a part of the 'Bubble-off Club!'"

Steve Andersen is a behavior specialist for Provo City School District. He taught foster parents about *De-escalating Behaviors in Children with Attachment and Trauma Issues*.

Shanelle: "He talked about brief empathic responses to let kids know we understand them. For example, if the child is throwing a fit because he/she wants to go outside, you could say, 'I can see that you really want to go outside right now. It makes you sad that we can't go out to play. Is that right?' It sounds redundant, but the kids know that you understand and that helps them feel validated."

Photo caption: UFCF Northern Region Trainer Brian Young with body language expert Janine Driver.

Division of Child and Family Services

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It's Never Too Late for Permanency *Through the Eyes of Zed*

By Crystal Vail, Caseworker, DCFS, Northern Region

Zed came into foster care in August 2004 as a victim of severe neglect, abuse and witness of domestic violence. He has struggled through his own drug abuse issues, gang involvement, behavior issues and schooling while being moved through ten different foster placements. Zed says one of the things he does not like about foster care is that none of his previous homes felt like a “real home” and he was not part of the “family.” He felt like he could not live a normal life while in foster care. Zed has also expressed frustration and disappointment in his biological family for not being a part of his life. The loss of his family has caused him to resist building new lasting relationships - until recently.

Zed was placed in the foster home of Kathy and Joe in January 2010. Zed initially struggled and even ran from the placement. However, the foster parents did not waiver in their commitment to Zed and welcomed him back when he returned. What Zed likes about this foster family is that they make him feel at home and he feels comfortable. The foster parents have helped him to make

appropriate choices by encouraging his musical and dance pursuits. He is a member of a dance crew and is working on a music CD with friends. The foster parents have been a constant support to him, even though things have not been easy. Zed credits his foster parents for helping him stay clean, leave the gang lifestyle and work harder in school. They are working together to build him a better future.

Once Zed realized the family was committed and that he could have a normal life, he asked to become a permanent member of the family. It took over 6 years for Zed to find and accept a “real home” and be a part of a “family.” Kathy and Joe already see Zed as a part of their family and plan to make it official in the near future.

It's never too late to find permanency.



Finding Joy and Getting a Payoff A Symposium Recap

By Rachael Whicker, Northern Region Intern, UFCF

If you didn't make it to the Utah Foster Care Foundation's Symposium on Trauma and Attachment, you missed some great presentations. Foster parents, as well as child welfare professionals, gained new perspectives and insights.

Dr. Susan Egbert spoke about finding joy in the "bumpy" ride of foster parenting. She started out by recognizing and admitting that fostering children is not the same as parenting children. It takes a lot more time and energy on your part, she says, but it is so worth it. One of the main themes was identifying common areas of stress in your family and how your family typically reacts.

Dr. Egbert also emphasized self-care. While self-care is important, she says foster families need to make sure that they don't overdo it and have it turn into a way to escape. She ended with the most perfect analogy I have heard for describing foster parenting.

"Foster care is like being engaged to a married person," says Dr. Egbert. "You are trying to help them save their marriage, but if it doesn't work out, you are going to marry them."

Behavior Specialist Steve Andersen also imparted some gems of wisdom. He said behavior is a way to get a payoff. When we eliminate the payoff, there is no need for the behavior anymore and it will cease.

Anderson recommended that foster parents disengage from the situation and use the 4:1 ratio technique when talking to children, especially children in foster care. For every ONE corrective statement to a child, give FOUR compliments or acknowledgements of positive attributes or behaviors.

Anderson encouraged foster moms and dads to give brief, empathic responses and to understand that anger is a secondary emotion. In other words, when a child or teen is angry, it is brought on by a much deeper emotion. He says it is triggered by rejection, being scared of new surroundings and not knowing what is going to happen.

When anger is evident, Anderson suggests these brief empathic responses:

1. Acknowledge that you know what emotion they are feeling.
2. Tell them you know why they are feeling that emotion
3. Tell them it's okay for them to be feeling that emotion.

Both Dr. Egbert and Anderson offered great tips on how to better connect with your family. If you didn't make it this year, keep reading the Foster Roster to find out the dates for next year's Symposium. It will be well worth your time!

Wishing Well Funds

Utah Foster Care Foundation has funds available to meet the special needs of children in foster care when DCFS is unable to meet these needs for any reason. *Funds are limited.*

Requests **MUST** include the following:

- Child's first name, last initial and age
- Foster parent's name and home address
- Caseworker's name and contact information
- The item being requested and the associated costs
- Brief description of how the child will benefit

Request should come in writing by a foster parent, the child in care or the caseworker.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Dispersal of funds can take up to 4 weeks
- Checks are mailed to the foster parent's home address
- Funds are for children in foster care ONLY
- Items covered by the foster care reimbursement or by Medicaid are not eligible.

VACATIONS:

- A child in care can receive vacation funds only ONCE in their lifetime
- Vacations are restricted monetarily & may not cover all costs

SUBMIT REQUESTS TO:

Kristie Schaefer
Utah Foster Care Foundation
3340 S. Harrison Blvd. #200
Ogden, UT 84403
801.392.1114
or kristie.schaefer@
utahfostercare.org



Utah Foster Care
Foundation's
**Chalk
art Festival**

FRI & SAT

June 17 & 18

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at The Gateway!



Photo Credit: UFCF



Want a chance to help? We're currently seeking
event volunteers!

chalkartfestival.org/volunteer.html



Foster/Adoptive Dad of the Year Timothy Ledna

By Kristie Schaefer, Retention Services Specialist, UFC Northern Region

I would like to thank everyone who submitted nominations for Foster/Adoptive Dad of the Year. We had a lot of submissions and I must say, it was extremely hard to choose just one dad!

The Northern Region has chosen Timothy Ledna as our Foster/Adoptive Dad of the Year 2011. Timothy was nominated by his Resource Family Consultant (RFC), Teri Erickson. Below is what Teri submitted:

“I have had the opportunity to work first hand with Timothy and see his dedication and commitment to the boys in his care throughout the complicated process of their placement and in his ongoing efforts to meet their needs.

As a single foster parent, I know he has had to make a lot of adjustments in order to make all meetings, court obligations, therapy and various other commitments. Yet he has still maintained (even excelled) in his role and in the commitment to the youth that he works with through his job and church.

Timothy has been a very good example to both of his boys and his community. He works at Utah State University as a residential advisor. Timothy has always been very involved in his community and in a number

of support programs for youth, adoptive families and education. He has consistently been involved with the Youth and Families of Promise (YFP).

Timothy deserves this award because he has shown the flexibility and consistency so vital to providing foster care. He believes that parenting full time is his priority. That commitment has impacted how much time he has left to volunteer. However, he has seemed to find a pretty good balance between all endeavors.

Timothy is a great example of ALL that is right with foster care. He is a caring and consistent parent that is committed to sharing all his accumulated knowledge and training to help provide his kids with the opportunity to excel in whatever their goals might be. I know I have CONSISTENTLY been impressed by his dedication, commitment and knowledge; he has been a GREAT resource for me!”

On Thursday, April 28 I had the honor of attending court when Timothy adopted Willey and Justin. It was an amazing experience for me. To make the day even more special, I announced to Timothy that he has been selected Foster/Adoptive Dad of the Year. What a great day!

Northern Region

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Area Representative

Brenda Durtschi

Foster/Adoptive Family Recruiter

Maryanne McFarland

Trainer

Brian Young

Retention Specialist

Kristie Schaefer

www.utahfostercare.org

How to Register for Training

Please register with the individual Cluster facilitators for specific Cluster training, for other training please register with the person identified in the course description.

Cluster Meetings/Training

Northern Region Cluster Info

For in-service training details, see the training pages.



Weber West
Facilitator: Rebekah
Phone: 801.773.7268
 houhi43@yahoo.com



North Davis
Facilitator: Danyelle
Phone: 801.510.1960
 dany3113@comcast.net



South Central Davis
Facilitator: Amanda
Phone: 801.298.6381
 david@davidburkemusic.com



Cache Valley
Facilitator: Laura
Phone: 435.753.7232
 laura.nelson@digis.net



Box Elder
Facilitator: Jenn
Phone: 801.643.0630 talk
 or text
 boxeldercluster@yahoo.com



Ogden
Facilitator: Amber
Phone: 801.814.5693
 tsprague3686@msn.com



Level III
Facilitator:
Phone:

PLEASE NOTE

There will be no Level III meetings in June, July or August.

There will be no meeting for So./Central Davis Cluster in July.

There will be no meeting for Cache Cluster in July.

There will be no meeting for North Ogden Cluster in August.

Enjoy some summer time with your family. For great ideas in Utah and at home, check out my favorite websites.

www.freeattractions.com
www.thingstodo.com
www.creativekidsathome.com

So./Central Davis

Transitions: When Children Enter and Leave Homes

Presented by
 Maryanne McFarland, CSW

Understanding, from the child's perspective, what the emotional trauma associated with moving from one placement to another feels like is critical in being able to support them as they attempt to make sense of their new situation

June 14

6 pm – 8 pm

Bountiful DCFS

57 W. 200 N.

Bountiful

So./Central Davis

Harnessing Homework Hassles

Presented by
 Anica Smith, PERC
 Coordinator, Davis School
 District

We will discuss new skills on tackling homework and learn new ways to help children succeed in school no matter what age they are.

August 9

6 pm – 8 pm

Bountiful DCFS

57 W. 200 N.

Bountiful

North Ogden

An Evening with the Director

Presented by
 Carol Baumann, DCFS
 Northern Region Director

Take advantage of this opportunity to talk with our Director about current issues facing the Division, as well as having a chance to ask and be asked questions about how to improve our working relationship.

June 7

6 pm – 8 pm

Ogden DCFS

950 W. 25th Street

Ogden

North Ogden

Multi-Cluster Swimming Party

Bring your own meal, drinks and treats will be provided. RSVP to your cluster leader for the location.

July 22

6 pm – 8 pm

Cluster Meetings/Training



<p>N.Davis/Weber W.</p> <p>Keeping Your Marriage Strong</p> <p>Presented by Jeff Tesch, LMFT</p> <p>Come spend a fun evening learning how we can improve our marriage relationships.... even while doing foster care.</p> <p>June 8</p> <p>6:30 pm – 8:30 pm</p> <p>Clearfield DCFS</p> <p>1350 E. 1450 S.</p> <p>Clearfield</p>	<p>N.Davis/Weber W.</p> <p>Multi-Cluster Swimming Party</p> <p>Bring your own meal, drinks and treats will be provided. RSVP to your cluster leader for the location.</p> <p>July 22</p> <p>6 pm – 8 pm</p>	<p>N.Davis/Weber W.</p> <p>Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder</p> <p>Presented by Lynn Tanner</p> <p>Come learn about FASD, its signs, symptoms, and how important it is to get help early if your child has been affected.</p> <p>August 4</p> <p>6:30 pm – 8:30 pm</p> <p>Clearfield DCFS</p> <p>1350 E. 1450 S.</p> <p>Clearfield</p>	<p>Box Elder</p> <p>Box Elder Cluster Family Barbeque</p> <p>Family dinner at the park! Dutch Oven dinner provided... please bring your favorite dessert.</p> <p>For location and to RSVP, call or email at boxeldercluster@gmail.com</p> <p>6 pm – 8:30 pm</p> <p>Clearfield DCFS</p> <p>1350 E. 1450 S.</p> <p>Clearfield</p>
<p>Box Elder</p> <p>Multi-Cluster Swimming Party</p> <p>Bring your own meal, drinks and treats will be provided. RSVP to your cluster leader for the location.</p> <p>July 22</p> <p>6 pm – 8 pm</p>	<p>Box Elder</p> <p>Start the School Year Off Organized</p> <p>Presented by John & Cayce Thill</p> <p>John and Cayce, (sane and amazing bio/foster/adopt parents of 15 children) will be sharing their secrets! Dinner will be served. All those who RSVP by Aug 10th to boxeldercluster@gmail.com will have their names entered in a drawing for a \$25 gift card!</p> <p>August 12</p> <p>6:30 pm – 8:30 pm</p> <p>Brigham DCFS</p> <p>1050 N. Medical Dr.</p>	<p>Cache</p> <p>Trauma and the Developing Brain</p> <p>Presented by Liz Rivera, MS</p> <p>Understanding what effects trauma can have on a child's brain. Childcare provided only if you RSVP to Laura, 435-753-7232, before the date of the training. Please leave a msg.</p> <p>May 20</p> <p>6:30 pm – 8:30 pm</p> <p>Brigham DCFS</p> <p>1050 N. Medical Dr.</p> <p>Brigham City</p>	<p>Cache</p> <p>Family Movie!</p> <p>More info., date, time and location to be announced. Plan to bring the whole family and watch Despicable Me!!! We will have refreshments. No child care since it's a family activity, but RSVP's will be necessary to get an accurate count a few days before.</p>

Cluster Meetings/Training

Join the Peer Team!

Presented by

Pam Takos, Northern Region Peer Parent Coordinator

Peer parents teach parenting, home management, and life skills while providing a support system to families receiving DCFS intervention. Peer parents earn **\$9.50/hour** and determine their own hours and schedules. It's fun, interesting, and immensely rewarding! If you are interested, please plan on attending the next Basic Peer Parent Training. Contact Pam Takos 801.397.1363 or grystone@burgoyne.com to register for the training. This training also counts towards foster care in-service training hours.

*Are you more interested in working with youth? The Youth Advocate Program might be just what you're looking for! Call Pam Takos for more information.

April 16

9 am – 1 pm


Clearfield DCFS

1350 E. 1450 S. (Enter on the south side)

Northern Region Clusters have a group on Facebook!

How do you find us?

1. Log into Facebook
2. Search for UFCF Clusters|Northern Region
3. Request to join the group.
4. Get in on all the fun!



**FAMILIES: PLEASE
TURN IN RENEWAL
HOURS TO YOUR
TRAINER AS SOON
AS THEY
ARE COMPLETED!**

We Need Your Help!

We have children of all ages that are in need of nurturing, stable homes. Unfortunately, we also have a difficult time finding homes for some of our youth—particularly those older than 6 and sibling groups. Even though the Resource Family Consultants (RFCs) work diligently making phone calls, we have discovered that we need another avenue to reach all of our foster homes in order to find that perfect match for these youth. We have an idea how to do this.

Starting in July, we will be piloting a 6 month project where RFCs will send mass e-mails to all of our foster families with e-mail addresses. Each e-mail will contain information about the child or sibling group we are struggling to locate a home for—either foster or adoptive. In order to maintain confidentiality, we will “blind copy” each foster family, only providing non-identifying information about the child(ren).

After receiving the e-mail, any licensed foster family interested in being a potential placement is encouraged to reply or contact their RFC.

Please note that the final placement decision is made by DCFS. We need to determine the best match for the child(ren) and

the family. So although you may express interest, that is not a guarantee your home will be selected for the child(ren).

Please be patient with us as we move forward with this new endeavor. As with most things, we may need to tweak a little as we go. Also, contact your RFC asap to ensure we have your current e-mail address.

Together, we can find homes for our children.

Thank you for your support and all you do!

Maegen Bernardo
RFC Supervisor

The Foster Adoption Option

By Allison R. Librett and Kellie F. Williams, Attorneys at Law, Van Cott

All children need a loving family. But, unfortunately, the journey from the decision to adopt to the final completion can be complicated. Involving an attorney experienced in adoption can help avoid the pitfalls and obstacles that may occur along the way.

There are different ways to adopt a child. Couples, or individuals, can pursue a domestic or international adoption through an agency or on their own. Closer to home, you can choose to adopt through a foster care program. Adoption petitions can be filed in juvenile, district or adult court and, different rules apply depending on whether the adoption is a family adoption, interstate adoption, foreign adoption, private placement adoption, step-parent adoption or foster care adoption.

Consistently though, the person adopting must be at least 10 years older than the child unless you are a married couple; then only one of you must be at least 10 years older. A child may be adopted by adults who are legally married to each other, or by a single adult, provided the single adult is not cohabiting in a relationship that is not a legally valid marriage under the laws of the State of Utah. The child must live with you 12 months prior to finalizing the adoption. A criminal background check is required, by filling out forms and submitting fingerprints to the Utah Bureau of Criminal Investigation. Additionally, the Utah Division of Child and Family Services will conduct a review.

In most cases, a home study is required, which is conducted by an independent agency and includes a home visit, family and health history, as well as a consideration of your motivation to adopt. You do not have to be wealthy, childless or own your home in order to adopt. What is most important is that you have a commitment to provide a safe, stable and nurturing home for the child.

The biological mother's consent is required unless her parental rights have been or are being terminated. If the child is an infant, the biological mother must wait 24 hours to consent. A biological father who was or is married to the mother must also give consent unless his parental rights have been or are being terminated. Utah law recognizes many categories of unmarried biological fathers and in some cases, the father must be given notice and consent. The consent of the child you are adopting is also required if the child is over the age of 12.

Once you have met these requirements and filed the necessary paperwork, you, your attorney, and your child will attend a judicial hearing. Your entire family is welcome and encouraged to attend. These hearings are closed to the public, but again, are the most joyous of proceedings in which attorneys and our judiciary participate. Once the court signs the adoption order, the child is legally your child, including all rights and privileges.

Van Cott is a full-service law firm committed to and capable of fulfilling the legal needs of our clients. We have a strong domestic relations practice group, which includes adoptions, custody arrangements and private guardian ad litem services. We continue to meet the growing needs of our clients by continuously evaluating, expanding, and reinventing the resources provided by the firm and our attorneys. Why do we do it? **Because it matters!**[®]



Jamie T.

Birthday: 04/1995
Grade in School: 9th
Heritage: Caucasian

This fashionista is Jamie. She is a trendy teenager who loves to look nice and dress up. Music, shopping and hanging out with people are just a few of her favorite things to do. Jamie dreams of being part of a family and having someone to whom she is connected. A people-person, this young woman has a great sense of humor and is easy to engage and talk to. If your family can provide for Jamie with the love and support she needs, we urge you to inquire.

For more information, please contact

The Adoption Exchange
(801) 265-0444
www.utdcfsadopt.org



BECAUSE IT MATTERS[®]



Eddie R.

Birthdate: 11/1994
Grade in School: 10th
Heritage: Hispanic

Edward, who likes to be called Eddie, is a great athlete. Sports come naturally to him and he enjoys playing them all, especially basketball. Not only does he enjoy sports, but he also likes playing video games and has shown a lot of interest in auto mechanics. He'd like to work in an auto shop one day. With his great sense of humor and infectious personality, it's hard not to like this incredible teen. If your family can provide Eddie with the love and support he needs, we urge you to inquire.

For more information, please contact

The Adoption Exchange
(801) 265-0444
www.utdfcsadopt.org



A message from Molar Man

Burg Pediatric Dentistry, www.burgpediatricdentistry.com

To Brace or Not To Brace

"Katie's new permanent teeth look all jumbled up and crowded. Is she going to need braces?"

I am asked this question quite often, and rightly so. It is the job of your child's dentist to recommend if and when orthodontic treatment may be necessary. In this article I will discuss some of the reasons why and when you may be referred to an orthodontist for your child's teeth.

First of all, most children will not require full braces (top and bottom, all teeth) until they have lost all of their baby teeth – around 12 years of age. That said, some children may still need a minor phase of treatment before that time. But by and large, most kids won't be looking at getting braces until they are 11 or 12 years old.

The exceptions to that rule are those children who have something unusual going on, like severe crowding or a jaw or tooth relationship problem. It should be noted that most children get a little crowding when permanent teeth start to come in. If you think about it, there are much larger teeth taking the place of itty-bitty baby teeth. There is naturally going to be a shortage of space. Over time, however, a little crowding will get better, because of the loss of other baby teeth and the natural growth of the jaws. In almost all cases, the initial crowding you notice when permanent teeth start to come in will get better. Now, "better" doesn't mean perfect. Braces may still be needed to correct a little crowding once all of the permanent teeth are in.

Getting back to those exceptions, some conditions that will require early orthodontic treatment include overbites, underbites, cross-bites, and again, severe crowding. The solution to most of these problems may not be braces right away. There are some really cool new treatment methods for some of these conditions that include the use of a retainer or other appliance that can be situated completely inside the mouth. Remember those medieval-looking treatment methods when we were kids?

Like I mentioned before, your child's dentist should be able to recommend when is the right time to see an orthodontist, if at all. Your dentist will be able to tell if one of these more serious issues is going on, or if your child is experiencing a normal amount of crowding. And if your dentist isn't answering all of your concerns, just call an orthodontist directly. Most of them won't charge you a fee for just a consult.

-Jeff Burg

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