



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

**Department of Human Services**

*Child Welfare*

738 W. Harvard Ave  
Roseburg, OR 97471-2969  
541-440-3373  
Fax: 541-673-9938  
TTY: 541-440-3308

November 23, 2021

Dr. Cordell B Smith, DPM  
2300 NW Stewart Pkwy  
Roseburg OR 97471



DHS, Child Welfare Program in Douglas County is interested in our families, both bio and foster (resource), having passes to the recreation center to promote and address the following:

### **Meaningful community visitation**

As we look to have children visiting with their parents, caregivers, siblings, and extended family members in the least restrictive setting possible, while promoting a positive visit experience, the recreation center will offer an alternative location and activity to what is currently available to us. This could have a direct impact on our ability to reunify children with their parents and families as quickly as possible. There is a direct correlation between frequency and quality of visitation, and parent/child reunification. The more time a family spends together, the better, and we don't want families visiting in the restrictive environment of the Child Welfare office, unless it is absolutely necessary due to safety concerns.

Family preservation work- as we, as any agency, move forward in our work to prevent children from being removed and placed in substitute care in the first place, and instead make diligent efforts to wrap around the family with safety and support resources, I can see the recreation center having a role. Oftentimes as families contend with the underlying issues resulting in a decreased capacity to safely parent, they learn how to parent in new ways which are unfamiliar. One example of this is a parent who struggles with substance abuse issues and has not ever parented sober for any length of time. Part of our efforts to support and help the family repair would be to introduce some parents to a whole new way of parenting, inclusive of healthy family activities. There are parents and families who have not experienced this type of family activity, or this sort of parenting, due to poverty, lack of access, or conditions that greatly reduce the capacity of a parent to meet the holistic needs of their child or children. It is to the benefit of these families, and our communities, to teach these parents a different way, and support their incredible and brave efforts at making difficult changes in their lives.

*"Safety, health and independence for all Oregonians"*  
An Equal Opportunity Employer

Foster care recruitment- One of my longer-term goals is to eventually offer foster parents for teens, sibling groups, and other hard-to-place populations of youth, a benefits package of sorts. We are currently exploring the possibility of writing a grant or requesting sponsorship of this project. I would like passes to the recreation center to be a part of a benefits package, to also include movie passes, Wildlife Safari passes, YMCA memberships, etc. Rec center passes would be such a great addition to a benefits package. I'm hopeful that the positive outcomes of this project will include placement preservation (stabilization for kids working through trauma), pro-social skill building in our older youth, and an increase in the number of foster parents willing to take youth who are experiencing trauma-related behavior challenges, which is something we see often in our pre-teens and teens and is one of the reasons why they can be an underserved population.

Sincerely,

Jessica Hunter  
Program Manager  
Douglas County Child Welfare  
[Jessica.hunter@dhsola.state.or.us](mailto:Jessica.hunter@dhsola.state.or.us)  
(541) 464-2109 desk  
(541) 643-1805 cell