

# What's in a Word?

**RESOURCE:(noun) A source of supply, support, or aid, especially one that can be readily drawn upon when needed.**

**Nationally**, the Children's Bureau, a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, uses the definition: "Resource families—which include foster parents, foster-to-adopt families, and kinship caregivers—are critical partners for child welfare professionals because they provide care for children who cannot live with their parents, and they can play a supportive role in reunification. A broad range of resource families are needed to support the many needs of children and youth involved in out-of-home care."

**Here in Oregon**, we believe in that definition and we wanted to let you know, as crucial partners, that we're making a change in the terminology we use to describe these important caregivers. Where we have used "foster parent, foster family and relative caregiver" previously, we will be transitioning to "resource parent, resource family and relative resource family", as of March 16, 2021. Over the next few weeks we will be making the change in real-time to align our communications with this terminology. This change aligns with a core strategy in our [Child Welfare Division Vision for Transformation](#); to ensure foster care is family based, time-limited, culturally responsive and designed to better stabilize families rather than just serving as a placement for children. It reinforces the concept of caregivers for children in foster care as a family-centered resource since the primary goal in Child Welfare is reunification, when possible.

**Resource families are** affirming, ensure cultural and community connections for children, youth and young adults and are partners in achieving best outcomes for families while providing for the safety, health and wellbeing of those they're committed to caring for in their home.