

What is Kids First?

Kids First is dedicated to fulfilling the unmet needs of children who are in foster care by building partnerships that link children with recreational, educational and vocational opportunities in Island and San Juan Counties. Established in July 2009, Kids First is entirely volunteer driven and is the only organization of its kind serving Island and San Juan County children.

Kids First has programs to provide foster children with:

- **A backpack with comfort items** that a child receives upon going into care
- **A birthday present**
- **Books** tailored to the child's interests
- **Learning fun**, activities to engage the child
- **A new outfit** for the start of school
- **Items that stimulate young minds** and provide care for children from birth to 2
- **A new bike or balance bike**
- **A Christmas stocking and present(s)**

For a full list of Kids First programs, visit our website: kidsfirst-ic.org



How to Help

In Island and San Juan Counties there are many ways to help kids who are in foster care.

Advocate for the best interests of a child in-care. Serve as a court appointed special advocate. Contact Island County VGAL at 360-240-5560 or San Juan County VGAL at 360-370-7440.

Become a licensed foster parent or provide occasional (respite) childcare for local foster parents. www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/foster-parenting/become-a-foster-parent

Stay aware of legislative matters that are shaping the future for WA State's children in foster care. www.mockingbirdsociety.org

There are also many ways to support the mission of Kids First

Share time, talent and heart as a member of the Kids First team. Our volunteers have widely varied backgrounds. If you are interested in helping us make a difference in the lives of these resilient and inspiring children, please contact us about seasonal volunteer opportunities.

You can help Kids First continue to make meaningful differences in children's lives. Donate by mail to Kids First Island County.

Kids First is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization
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888-969-4877 kids1st.islandcounty@gmail.com
PO Box 581 • Clinton, WA 98236
www.kidsfirst-ic.org



**Building
Partnerships
and
Opportunities
For Children In
Foster Care**

How Kids First Works

When a child has a need, want, or even a hope to participate in an educational, vocational or recreational opportunity, and child welfare funds run short, the child's social worker, caregivers, VGAL (Volunteer Guardian Ad Litem) or CASA submits a request for support to Kids First.

The Kids First Team collaborates with partners to pool resources, to generate matching funds, to provide or obtain scholarships and fee waivers. Partnerships are built. Children are linked with opportunity!

Kids First has a request program which handles all requests for assistance not covered by our other programs. Requests for Kids First support might include help with:

- Swimming, Gymnastic, Dance Lessons
- Tickets to a Community Event
- Musical Instruments and/or Lessons
- Passes to the Summer Fair
- Summer Camps or Programs
- Sports Fees and Equipment
- Tutoring



Who Are the Children in Foster Care?

Children who are in foster care are regular kids - but life has been especially hard on them. They may have endured abuse and/or neglect, and are in foster care to be protected. Children remain in foster care while their parents access resources that help them provide safe, stable, nurturing home environments.

Children who are in foster care just need a little help to access the kinds of opportunities that are part of a normal childhood.



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Community Partnerships

Kids First builds partnerships that link children with opportunities in Island and San Juan Counties.

The Kids First team is grateful for the compassionate response received from public and private organizations, merchants and individuals in helping us meet the needs of children in care. As a partner, you will help children gain experiences and build memories that make positive and meaningful differences in their lives.

Please visit our website to see some of our current partners: www.kidsfirst-ic.org We welcome the opportunity to form new partnerships! Call or email the Kids First team at:

888-969-4877

kids1st.islandcounty@gmail.com

