



KFCA NEWSLETTER

Kitsapfostercare.org

November 2008

KFCA November Dinner Meeting

November 19th, 6 to 8pm

@ Silverdale Community Center

Menu: Holiday Meal - Ham, turkey, mashed potatoes & gravy, mixed vegetables, rolls, salad bar & dessert.

Guest Speaker: Linda Thomas

Region 5 Update:

A New Look on the Horizon

Hello all,

Is it November already? Are any of you feeling like this fall is flying by? I think we have been tricked by Mother Nature by all this nice weather. Mind you, I've enjoyed it, but where has all the time gone? The Association has been very active the last few months from the back to school event, to the skating party, to the farm/pumpkin patch visit, the harvest festival and silent auction, and lastly the "Ghost" train. Thank you all for coming out and participating in these events. And all this would not have been possible without the KFCA Board, the support of our many volunteers, community partners and event sponsors. It's through our combined efforts and dedication of time, abilities and support that KFCA can provide these services and activities for you. Thank you all for your continued dedication to the foster children and youth in our community.

Next month is our Regional Quarterly Consultation (HB1624) meeting. You are invited to attend or if you can not attend please get your concerns or feedback to me prior to the meeting on Monday, Dec 15th 2008 in the Tacoma office from 10am-noon. These meetings are an effort to improve, fix, voice concerns, and give feedback to Children's Administration (CA) on how things are working or not working for local foster and relative care caregivers related to fostering in Region 5. You are personally invited and I hope to see you there. Speaking of input, if you take medically fragile infants/toddlers, we need your feedback. We (HB1624 consultation team with CA) are in the process of updating the rate assessment tool/form criteria to be more specific for infants (medically fragile) requiring more care than a normal 24hr care a healthy infant requires. They would like input regarding item related to care such as feeding tube, diagnoses, sleep apnea, breathing machines, heart monitors, surgeries, suction machines and other specialized equipment or skills needed for caring for these special children. If you take these special children and have input regarding the above, you can call me at (360) 692-1927 or email me at president@kitsapfostercare.org and I will pass the information on to the committee working on the updating the rate assessment tool.

Happy Holidays,
Debra Converse, KFCA President

Upcoming Changes – Effective September 1, 2008

Two changes in state law take effect September 1, 2008. Both may affect your role as a caregiver.

These changes include:

- When a child first comes into care, the child must visit with his or her parents within 72 hours. A plan for future visits is also required within this timeframe.
- Siblings placed apart must visit each other twice a month. The Legislature provided money to make this happen.

How Those Changes May Affect You

72-Hour Parent- Child Visit

When a child is first placed in foster care, their first visit with a parent may occur sooner than you expect. You should be prepared to help the social worker coordinate the visit within 72 hours.

Twice Monthly Sibling Visits

- Contracted visit coordinators will be available in most areas. However, those contracts won't be enough to build and keep strong sibling relationships.
- You can help with visits, although you are not required
- If you want to help, Children's Administration can pay you for mileage and help pay for activities that take place during the visit. Ask your social worker for details.
- The child's social worker may ask for your help in preparing the child for visits and coordinating schedules.

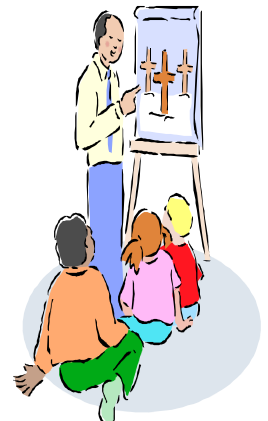
For more information, contact:

Carrie Kendig,
Permanency Planning Program Manager
Division of Program and Practice Improvement
360-902-7568

MEMORABLE QUOTE:

"In a completely rational society, the best of us would aspire to be teachers and the rest of us would have to settle for something less, because passing civilization along from one generation to the next ought to be the highest honor and the highest responsibility anyone could have."

Lee Iacocca, American businessman



Focus on Math and Science!

WASL scores are coming out now from the Spring testing. If your high school student, graduating in 2010 or beyond, scored a 4 on the math or science section, or above the 95th percentile on the math section of the SAT or ACT, he or she may be eligible for a scholarship in a math or science field. Go to www.hecb.wa.gov/paying/waaidprgm/getreadyformathscience.asp for more information.

The applications come out April 1, 2009 and are due by June 30th. Other websites for any student needing college financial assistance are: www.hecb.wa.gov/paying; www.gearup.wa.gov; www.get.wa.gov; and www.collegesuccessfoundation.org.

The College Bound program which was registering 7th and 8th grade students last year has expanded to reach 9th graders this year. Have your students check in with their school guidance counselor for more information or to get enrolled! Foster youth are automatically eligible—check out the website!

SCHOOL PROJECT FOR PARENTS

Sharon Kennedy Wynne, St. Petersburg Times
Tuesday, September 23, 2008

With the school year under way, the kids have already had a lecture (or two) on how to stay organized. But parents, too, must keep track of blinding amounts of paperwork and school-related duties.

Here are some tips:

-- **Get a binder** for all the school papers, fliers, Web site passwords and carpool info you'll be accumulating. MomCentral.com founder Stacy DeBroff, who has written several books on school and extracurricular activities, creates a notebook for each child each year in which she puts papers that may be needed later.

A notebook that has pocketed dividers lets you easily jam in handouts and newsletters. Think how smart you'll feel when your first-grader asks you how to write a cursive Q and you can lay your hands on the guide passed out the first week.

-- **Have a "launching pad"** near the front door for all the things you need the next day. Even if it's just a chair, it's good to have a designated place to put the backpacks, soccer cleats, library books that need returning — anything that needs to leave the house with you in the morning. If the pile is big, a laundry basket is a handy way to cart everything to the car in one trip.

-- **Routines are lifesavers.** Take five to 10 minutes each night while the children are doing homework to do paperwork of your own, such as signing permission slips or marking dates on your calendar. Do not set it aside to do later.

-- **Lay out tomorrow's clothes** and prepare lunches at night to make the mornings smoother. Or, better yet, *teach your children to lay out their own clothes and make their own lunches.*

E-mail Sharon Kennedy Wynne wynne@sptimes.com.



ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOLERS!

Washington Youth Academy

1211 Carver St., Bremerton

(360) 447-2073 or 1 (888) 228-8947

www.ngycp.org Is offering **free** programs for teens: Orientation on Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22, 2008. Females or males high school drop out or at risk of dropping out age 16-19. It is **FREE**. GED or High school diploma while in the program. See web site for more info.

Middle-school years called optimal time for teaching critical thinking

The notion that the middle-school years may be the best time to train people in complex reasoning and critical thinking has been borne out in initial studies by researchers at the University of Texas at Dallas's University Center for Brain-Health, writes Robert Miller, a columnist at the Dallas Morning News. "High-level reasoning and critical thinking are skills that have to be learned and practiced," says Dr. Sandra Bond Chapman, Brain Health's chief director. "If teens do not acquire the ability to learn strategically during this developmental period, they might never do so." Researchers at the center have created a program called SMART-- Strategic Memory and Reasoning Training -- to teach teens how to think critically. Special benefits are seen for those with attention deficit disorder.

Read more at http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/bus/columnists/rmiller/stories/DN-miller_14bus.ART.State.Edition1.26df6de.html

Getting to Know the CLERICAL UNIT!

Good day. My name is Kathy Mundy and I am part of the clerical unit (Secretary Senior to 2 CWS and the ICW units) at the Bremerton DCFS office. I have worked with the Department for 16 years. Some of you know me and I know some of you. Back in the day, I knew just about everyone of you foster parents. Now my duties as a Secretary Senior, pretty much have me catering to our illustrious social workers, whom I am very proud of and find it a pleasure to work with each and everyone of them. I do however, miss working directly and personally with the foster parents.

My cohort, which includes, Ken Ward (our lead worker) and king of the file room; Shannon Poole (was the reception) now one of the queens of the file room, Lana Parrett, the other queen of the file room, Kathryn Sundquist, commander of the reception area, Carolyn Perry, Secretary Sr. extraordinaire and the unit clerk for the Adolescent, Adoptions, and CWS units, and last but not least Carol Vanderheyden (the leader of the pack in my office) but more officially a Secretary Sr. and unit clerk to the CPS units, Intake office, and the Resource Unit. I'd also like to make honorary mention of the "grease to our wheels", none other than Claudia August, Administrative Secretary to Tom Stokes and Barb Geiger, our Area Administrators; they are all a fine bunch of people; hard working, devoted to our mission, and most of all caring individuals.

I know that our unit is very thankful for each and every foster parent/relative for the care and love that is given to "our" kids. It's a labor of love at best, but the rewards of seeing a foster child succeed at the end of the journey through our system is so satisfying and makes the rough days we all experience well worth it.

Our hats are off to each and everyone of you and thank you from the bottom of our hearts for "being there" for our kids.

Quarterly Regional & State Wide Foster Parent Consultation Meetings

House Bill 1624 is legislation requiring Children's Administration to consult with foster parents. The goal of the legislation is to ensure foster parents participate directly or through a representative selected by foster parents, and have a chance to offer input at each stage of ongoing work regarding:

- Recruitment of foster homes· Retention of foster homes
- Effective training for foster parents· Development of coordinated & plans that strengthen services for the protection of children

Quarterly Regional Consultation Meetings

12/15 2008; 3/16; 6/15 & 9/21 2009

Tacoma DCFS—1949 South State Street- Room 348

Quarterly Statewide Consultation Meetings

1/13; 4/8; 7/8 & 10/7 2009 1:00-4:00 PM

Tacoma DCFS 1949 South State Street—room 291

You are invited to bring your issues in person, or be represented by Debra Converse, KFCA President (360) 692-1927 Donna or Shannon at the Placement Desk (360) 475-3535

Questions?: Call Cherrie Druffel @ (253) 983-6235.

Training Opportunities Resource Family Training Institute

Orientation for Licensing:

1st Wed of the month, 10:00a – 12, at DCFS Bremerton and offered online - free of charge!
register @ 360-475-3598

Pride Pre-Service Training for Caregivers:

1/12—1/19 Tacoma 5:30 to 9:30 + 1 Saturday 9-4
12/1—12/10 Tacoma 5:30 to 9:30 + 1 Saturday 9—4
01-06—1/15 Tacoma—evenings
11/13—11/22– Bremerton Evenings
12/1—12/5—Days

On Site Classes for Caregivers in Kitsap County:

—Days 9a—4p + 1 Saturday to be announced

Parenting Physically Assaultive Children & Youth and Sexually Aggressive Youth—no Kitsap trainings scheduled at this time. There are courses available in Tacoma or online please visit the website below for more detailed information on course availability and content:

<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/training.asp>

There is no charge for classes.

classes are at Bremerton 1st Methodist 1150 Marine Dr. Register w/ H. Stone, 360-475-3586; 800 423-6246, or sthi300@dshs.wa.gov

FREE On-Line classes thru Pierce College for Foster & Relative/Kinship Caregivers

Topics include: Online Learning, Addiction Basics; Alcohol & chemical Abuse, Behavior Management, Care-giving for children w/Extreme Behavioral Issues, Cultural Identity:

Self-Esteem, Educational Advocacy for Caregivers, Introduction to Children's Administration for Kinship Caregivers, Maintaining a Connection: Importance of Birth Families, Multiple Placements-Impact on Children, Stuck in the Middle - Guide for Kinship Caregivers, Success Beyond Foster Care, Working with Developmentally Disabled Children. Register @ <http://www.pierce.ctc.edu/distance/ofpe>

Useful Links 4 Relative & foster caregivers:

DSHS Electronic Forms Link

<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/msa/forms/eforms.html>

Check out these helpful web sites & numbers:

www.familieslikeours.org

www.usfosterfamilies.com

www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/

24hr support line (800) 301-1868

First Aid/CPR Training 4 Foster Parents

www.keepthebeatcpr.net

Or call (253)217-1105

KFCA ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

KFCA Annual Holiday Party

Saturday, December 13, 2008

1:00 to 3:00pm

Silverdale Community Center

Now is the time for licensed foster parents, relative, and kinship caregivers to register the children placed & living in their home!

Call **Luanne Vail @ 876-5207** to register be prepared to give name, age, gender of child, and something specific they would like within a certain price range) Children must be registered and present to receive gifts! **Last day to register** is November 21st!

Can we talk?

All foster parents and relative caregivers are invited to join DCFS Area administrators Barb Geiger; Tom Stokes, & Linda Thomas for coffee and conversation!

This is an opportunity to get to know the decision makers; ask questions, provide suggestions & get feedback.

Where: Bremerton DCFS 3423 6th St.

When: Friday, December 12, 8:30 – 10:30

Wednesday, April 22, 3:00-5:00

Thursday, July 30, 11:00 – 1:00

We look forward to seeing you!

Back by popular demand!

FOSTER PARENT NIGHT OUT

WHEN: Saturday, November 8, 5:30 to 9:30PM

WHERE: Kitsap YMCA in Bremerton

Register with **Debra Converse @ 692-1927** by **November 1st, 2008**

Need time to 'Reconnect' or maybe you would like to just grocery shop alone for a change or get a jump start on your holiday shopping. This is your lucky Day! KFCA is sponsoring "date night" for foster & kinship care families.

Take advantage of this opportunity for your kids to have fun in a safe and fun location - the Bremerton YMCA.

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED!

Contact **Debra Converse (360) 692-1927**

Age appropriate activities & supervision will be provided to all from infants (4 weeks) to pre-teens (12 yrs) Snacks, **not dinner** will be provided.



What are Well Child/ EPSDT exams?

Well Child/ EPSDT exams are defined by federal rules as "regularly scheduled examinations and evaluations of the general physical and mental health, growth, development and nutritional status of infants, children and youth" that are provided as part of a health supervision program

What is included in a EPSDT exam?

At a minimum, the exam must include:

- A comprehensive health and developmental history, updated at each screening examination;
- A comprehensive physical examination performed at each screening examination;
- Appropriate vision testing;
- Appropriate hearing testing;
- Developmental assessment;
- Nutritional assessment;
- Appropriate laboratory tests;
- Dental/oral health assessment;
- Health education and counseling; and
- ◆ Age appropriate mental health and substance abuse screening.

How often should an EPSDT occur?

Within the first thirty days of placement foster parents **MUST** have an EPSDT for children in their home!

• Five total screenings during the first year of the life. Below is a recommended screening schedule for children from birth to one year of age:

- 1st Screening: Birth to 6 weeks old**
- 2nd Screening: 2 to 3 months old**
- 3rd Screening: 4 to 5 months old**
- 4th Screening: 6 to 7 months old**
- 5th Screening: 9 to 11 months old**

• Three screening examinations are recommended between the ages of 1 and 2 years.

• One screening examination is recommended per 12-month period for children ages 3 through 20. A Well Child/ EPSDT exam is really a screening, prevention, and education visit. A follow up visit may need to be scheduled if problem(s) are identified as a result of the screenings.

Change is coming your way—Please read the following message from Nancy Sutton, DCFS RA

The Tacoma DCFS office has been the largest in the state for a number of years. This has resulted in some efficiencies which allowed us to improve our services to children and families. As we've continued to grow, our communication and work processes have become cumbersome. In addition, it has been hard for our staff to connect with local communities who are vital to the success of families facing challenges to safe parenting.

Beginning October 6, the Division of Children and Family Services will be organized into two offices.

- **Pierce West** will encompass the Key Peninsula, Tacoma, Fife, University Place, Lakewood and Tillicum.
- **Pierce East** will include Bonney Lake, Sumner, Puyallup, Eatonville, Graham, Spanaway, Parkland and Roy.
- The exact boundaries are still being determined. We are looking at factors like: number of referrals by zip code,
- police jurisdictions, city boundaries, school district boundaries and CSO boundaries.

Cases will enter one of the two offices based on the residence of the family at the time the referral is accepted. If the children enter care and the case is assigned for on-going services, it will remain in the same office regardless of where the children are placed or whether the parents move elsewhere in the county.

Each field office will be full service – meaning it will offer investigations, Family Reconciliation Services (FRS), Family Voluntary Services (FVS), Child and Family Welfare Services (CFWS), Indian Child Welfare Services (ICW), Adoptions, Relative home studies, Guardianship supervision etc. Some specialized services such as Intake, the Resource Unit (placement desk), Drug Court and Behavioral Rehabilitation Services will remain regional or county wide.

Pierce West - Cheryl Rich will assume new duties as the Area Administrator for CPS investigations, Family Voluntary Services, Family Reconciliation Services, court filings and Child Health and Education Screens (CHET). **Dawn Cooper** will assume new duties as the Area Administrator for Permanency services including CFWS, ICW, Fast Track and Adoptions.

Pierce East -- Veronica Hinojosa will have responsibility for front end services, CPS, FVS, FRS, Filings, CHET etc. **Betsy Rodgers** will continue with Permanency services as listed above for Dawn Cooper. Betsy will also have Drug Court and Behavioral Rehabilitation Services.

By November, we hope to have the Pierce East office physically located on the 2nd floor of the Centennial 1 building (1949 So. State) in the space formerly used by the Lakewood CSO (they are moving to Lakewood at the end of September). The Pierce West office will be located on the 3rd floor of the Centennial 1 building. The regional office will remain on the 2nd floor of the building to the south, Centennial 2 (2121 So. State).

As much as possible, we intend to move intact units (social workers and their supervisors) as part of this change. This will reduce the impact felt at the line level at a time when staff are focusing on completing monthly child visits and preparing for the roll out of FamLink, our new data system, on December 8.

I'd like to ask for your understanding and support in the upcoming months as we implement a variety of changes.

- It is my strong belief that smaller, community focused offices will increase our ability to connect with communities and to strengthen the support systems families need to be successful after their CPS investigation or dependency case ends.
- FamLink will absolutely allow us to better link services to assessed need and track what services are offered, what are outstanding etc. We will have a better sense of the risk issues and the progress in addressing the risk issues. With that said, it will be a completely new way of doing business and we expect December will be a rough month.

September is the start of our responsibility to see children monthly. Staff want to do this. The challenge is that not much has come off their plates and efficiencies we hope to achieve through FamLink won't likely be felt until January or February, once staff get comfortable with the new data system. We are doing our best in a hiring freeze to support staff to prioritize seeing children and using those contacts to move forward the case plan.

We could not accomplish this challenging work without your partnership. Your feedback and suggestions for ways to smooth this transition time would be appreciated. Please feel free to share your concerns with me or with anyone on the management team. Thanks again, in advance, for your understanding and patience.

Nancy Sutton
Regional Administrator
DCFS Region 5

Fostering Connections to Success & Increasing Adoptions Act

HR 6893 - as passed by US House of Reps & US Senate

Co-Sponsored by Representatives J. McDermott (D-WA) & J. Weller (R-IL); Senators M. Baucus (D-MT), C. Grassley (R-IA) & J. Rockefeller (D-WV) Title IV-B, Part 1, re-named : **Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program**

Kinship Caregiver Supports

Title IV-E Relative Guardianship Program - a state option to support exits from foster care to judicial custody of relative; reunification and adoption to have been ruled out based on best interest of child; relative caregiver must be fully licensed; child to have resided with relative a minimum of 6 months; subsidy cannot exceed foster care payment. Grandfathers in families currently receiving Guardianship Subsidies as part of a Title IV-E Waiver program, such as in IL. (Sec. 101)

- Family Connection Grants (total \$15 M / year, 2009-13) for state or local public/private non-profits for Kinship Navigator programs (\$5 M/yr), Family Search and Engagement programs, Family Group Decision-making programs, Residential Family Treatment Programs. (Sec. 102)
- Requires notification of close relatives within 30 days of a foster placement. (Sec. 103)
- Allows case by case waiver of non-safety foster care licensure standards, for relative caregivers. HHS to do study of relative foster caregivers and waivers at two years. (Sec. 104)
- Federal Parent Locator Service access for kin connections. (Sec. 105)

Assistance to Foster Youth Up to the Age of 21

- Extends federal foster care maintenance payments up to the age of 19, 20 or 21, inclusive of supervised independent living settings. Youth must be involved in productive activity such as education, training or work. State option. (Sec. 201)
- Transition Plan - requires personalized 90 day pre-emanicipation plan. (Sec. 202)
- Avoids Permanency Disincentives - Extends adoption assistance and guardianship payments up to age 19, 20, or 21 for children adopted or entering guardianship after attaining the age of 16. State options. All Chafee IL services and Education & Training Voucher benefits also extended. (Sec. 201)

IV-E Short Term Training - allows Title IV-E training funds for private non-profit child welfare workers, court personnel, CASA/GALs, and relative caregivers; graduated reimbursement schedule. (Sec. 203)

Educational Stability - Requires plan for ensuring the educational stability of children in foster care, assurances of school attendance, supports transportation costs to maintain foster children in their neighborhood school. (Sec. 204)

Improving Oversight of Health Care - Requires oversight plan for the health care needs of foster children -- accounting for the assessment and treatment of health conditions, continuity of care, medical records, and prescription drugs. (Sec. 205)

Keeping Siblings Together - Requires reasonable efforts to place siblings together when removed from their homes; if not placed together, requires frequent visitation. (Sec. 206)

Tribal Access to Foster Care and Adoption funds - Title IV-E funding access to tribal governments for children in their care. Language incorporated from HR 4688, Pomeroy / Weller Tribal bill. \$3 M/year authorized for national technical assistance center and to provide one time technical assistance grants to Tribes. (Sec. 301 and 302)

Extending and Improving Adoption Incentives - Improves the Adoption Incentives Program for children adopted out of foster care, including updated base year (2007) and increased bonuses for special needs and older child adoptions. Reauthorizes program for 2008-2012, \$43 M / year (Sec. 401)

Promoting the Adoption Tax Credit - Requires efforts to inform prospective adoptive parents of foster children of potential eligibility for the credit. (Sec. 402)

De-linking Title IV-E Adoption Assistance from child's birth family income (AFDC lookback). Gradual, prospective de-link applies to older children, those in care for 5 yrs or longer, additional sibling adoptions beginning 2010, all children by 2018. (Sec.403)

Bill is Fully Offset - prohibition against fraudulent claiming of a child for EITC (Sec. 501); authorization for US Treasury investment of operating cash (Sec. 502), savings from Relative Guardianship Subsidy.

9/30/08

Foster parent survey released

Hello

I'm writing to let you know that the second annual [Survey of Foster Parents](#) and Caregivers in Washington State was released today. You can read the survey by clicking on the link above or by going to the web page devoted to the Braam Settlement Agreement.

As with last year's survey, foster parents and caregivers generally were satisfied with the services, training and support they received from the Children's Administration.

Remarkably only 33 of 147 questions showed a statistically significant different response from the 2007 survey. Generally, survey answers that differed tended to show increased satisfaction with their experience as a caregiver. Some high points:

- Nearly 85 percent of the foster parents and caregivers said they were treated professionally and with respect by their child's social worker always or most of the time.
- 80 percent said they talked with their child's social worker at least once a month; 60 percent of those foster parents said the contact was weekly or several times a month.
- 72 percent of licensed foster parents said they were likely to renew their license when it comes due.
- A higher percentage (69 percent versus 62 percent last year) said they had received training about understanding their role and responsibilities as a foster parent or relative caregiver.
- 73 percent (compared with 70 percent last year) said that the training they've received over the past three years had very or somewhat prepared them to care for the needs of foster children in their home.
- Nearly 95 percent said they were connected to ongoing and appropriate medical care for their foster child or children. 43 percent of foster children had been visited by a social worker one or more times each month. Nearly 70 percent reported that their foster child had been visited at least every three months, Children's Administration policy in 2007.

We worked hard in recent years to improve our working relationship with foster parents and I think those efforts are reflected in the survey results, and in the collegial atmosphere at the recent Foster Parent and Caregiver Conference in Yakima.

In my remarks, I told foster parents that they are an invaluable resource in our child welfare system. As was reflected in the recent Foster Youth Survey, when we pair a foster child with the right foster parents they thrive.

The survey results also reflect the hard work Children's Administration staff do on behalf of this state's most vulnerable children. On behalf of those children, and CA's Leadership Team, thank you for your work.

Comments? Please send them to the [Leadership Team](#)

Sincerely,
Cheryl Stephani
Assistant Secretary
Children's Administration

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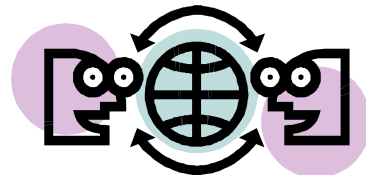
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