

CIRCLE CONVERSATIONS

Fostering Connections began with seeing a need and a calling to do something! In 2017, one woman felt in her heart that she could make a difference and bring the community together to support kids in foster care and foster families. And she did just that!

Lacy Nickelson along with her husband, family, friends, community partners, and volunteers formed Fostering Connections which is now a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in SEK with a mission to positively impact foster/adoptive families and children in our community. It was established to offer faith-based support and resources for both foster and adoptive families through a wide range of programs, training, and events that benefit both the child and the foster family. The programs range from providing adult interaction and support through parent coffees and retreats to free experiences for the whole family. Some of their key programs include the Anchor Family Program, Caring Closet, and VIP Kids bags for kids' out-of-home placement. Several programs and events have been supported by the Rita J. Bicknell Women's Health Fund over the years.

[continues on back]

Coming Up

- **April:** New *Circle Conversations*
- **May:** Coffee and Conversations for Women's Health Month
- **July:** New *Circle Conversations*
- **September:** Coffee and Conversations for Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- **October:** Grant Review Meeting
- **November:** New *Circle Conversations*

Mom's Night!

Fostering Connections hosted a group of foster moms for an artsy autumn event. Attendees painted a copse of birch trees surrounded by colorful falling leaves.



January 2025

In 2024, Fostering Connections worked with 168 teens, impacted over 800 kids with their events, distributed 446 VIP bags, and grew their parent reach to 188. And those are just a few of the impact numbers! In October 2024, a grant from the Women's Health Fund was given to Fostering Connections to provide college care packages to young women who were aging out of foster care.

"We are so grateful for the continued support from the Rita J. Bicknell Women's Health Fund. Rita had a heart for women's health mentally, spiritually, physically, and emotionally. She wanted to see them be able to change their futures. The funding has allowed us to make a difference in the lives of young women in Southeast Kansas who desire a different path for their lives, and we are incredibly appreciative."

For more information on Fostering Connections or to find out how to volunteer, please visit their [website](#) and [social media](#) pages.

Johanna Norton



Above, children at an event night

Below, Lacy Nickelson, FC Founder and Chair



Match Day Update

Many thanks for another successful Match Day! Through community contributions and matching funds, over \$650,000 were raised for area nonprofits. The WHF Nightingale Fund raised just under \$6,000 on Match Day!

Since 2016, CFSEK and its affiliates foundations have raised just shy of \$2 million. Learn more at our [website](#).

Why I Joined

I joined the Women's Health Fund because I firmly believe that ALL women should be entitled to the same level of healthcare, regardless of their socio-economic status.

I enjoy being part of a group that recognizes even though we come from different walks of life, we all have very similar needs.

Debbie Hambley

[Click Here to Join](#)
(or [renew](#)).

or scan with your smartphone:



The Rita J. Bicknell Women's Health Fund is a part of the
Community Foundation of Southeast Kansas

100 S. Broadway St., Ste. 100 • P.O. Box 1448
Pittsburg, KS 66762 • (620) 231-8897

SoutheastKansas.org