



June 2018

## *Morrison Joins Foster Plus Team*

13 social services agencies unite to help Oregon's foster kids

Morrison Child and Family Services is proud to join a collaborative effort between foster care agencies focused on recruiting and certifying foster parents who will provide support for Oregon's most at-risk youth.



Called [Foster Plus](#), the campaign's goal is to add 150 new foster beds over the next three years. The collaborative is made-up of 13 organizations who provide foster care services to 33 of Oregon's 36 counties. Using innovative research and storytelling, the Foster Plus campaign brings together the different efforts of each agency under one unified voice to raise awareness around the importance of fostering.

The campaign couldn't come at a better time. Oregon's foster care system is currently struggling with large deficits of qualified foster homes. Lacking enough foster parents, children miss out on being in homes where they feel loved and supported. A lot of the trauma and challenges from their past go unaddressed.

Morrison signed on to increase the number of available adults who can be that important connection. With the right foster home, the influence of a supportive adult can be transformational.

With more than 7,500 children in Oregon's foster care system, there is a strong need for foster parents who can make meaningful connections. Foster Plus agencies serve youth with higher needs than the general foster care population. Many have been in the foster care system for a significant amount of time or have behaviors from extreme trauma or neglect. These are kids who

are at a critical point in their lives where a foster parent can make a major difference.

With the additional attention, each Foster Plus agency has extra support to ensure foster parents are successful. The benefit of fostering through a Foster Plus agency is having a team of qualified foster care professionals. Foster parents receive specialized training to be prepared for kids with higher needs. They work with a local agency who will be there to provide frequent and regular visits to offer custom care. In times of crisis, there is 24/7 support from case managers and counselors.

Mindy and Amanda have been foster parents for six years with Morrison's Therapeutic Foster Care program. While most of their placements have been positive, when they have faced challenges, staff have been there to support them. They say the whole experience is completely worth it.

"With all the children we've had, I don't know without all of the supports we would have been able to do this for five years," Mindy said. "Caseworkers and skills trainers pop in to chat with us. They are there for the children to make sure their needs are being met. They've gotten us through some pretty tough times with great kids, but kids who need extra help," she said.

[Watch Mindy and Amanda's story here.](#)

Morrison's Foster Care programs provide homes for children ages 4 to 17 who have experienced significant abuse, neglect and/or trauma. Our goal is to carefully match children to nurturing homes where they can safely heal and grow. Morrison offers four different foster care programs, ranging from Full-Time Foster Care, Full-Time Adolescent Teen Treatment Programs, and Part-Time Planned and Crisis Respite Care.

If you have a compassionate heart for children, you most likely have what it takes to make a difference! You could be the person who changes a child's life just by showing them love and care. If you are interested or have any questions, please feel free to contact Caren Summers-Nomura at (503) 736-6510 or [caren.summers-nomura@morrisonkids.org](mailto:caren.summers-nomura@morrisonkids.org).



*Register today!*

*If you love to bicycle and love to help kids and families, join our benefit ride on Saturday, August 4th!*

Sign up today to join our multi-distance bike ride on August 4th to tour some of Oregon's most beautiful scenery in the Willamette Valley.

Presented by Pacific Office Automation and The Morrison Foundation, this first-class, multi-distance bike ride supports the youth and families of Morrison Child and Family Services. The routes tour the [Tualatin Valley Scenic Bikeway](#) and include distances of 26 miles, 43 miles, and 62 miles. The start and finish lines are at [Oak Knoll Winery](#), where riders can enjoy lunch, beer and wine, live music, and the opportunity to visit vendors and information booths.

Date: Saturday, August 4, 2018

Location: Oak Knoll Winery, 29700 SW Burkhalter Rd, Hillsboro, OR 97123

[Pre-order your 2018 Luminosa jerseys by Tuesday, June 12th!](#)



Visit [www.bikereg.com/luminosa](http://www.bikereg.com/luminosa) to learn more and to register.  
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For inquiries or sponsorship opportunities, please contact Deanna Kavanaugh at [deanna.kavanaugh@morrisonkids.org](mailto:deanna.kavanaugh@morrisonkids.org).

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## Get to Know Morrison

Featured Staff: Robin Wikoff

Robin Wikoff, Morrison's Director of Evaluation and Research, loves to make information make sense.

For the past two years, Robin has designed, implemented, and managed [Program Evaluation](#) studies at Morrison with the goal of helping staff effectively use data to evaluate the quality of the services they provide our clients. As Morrison shifts more and more towards using databases and electronic files, her job is to make data-recording processes easy for staff while making data evaluation processes useful for the programs as they strive to provide the best services possible for the community.

Robin loves her day-to-day tasks at Morrison, particularly the technical puzzles and opportunities to dig deeply into complex questions. Her favorite thing is collecting data that highlights the positive impacts of Morrison's programs. One example that stands out to her was found in a new-client survey from Morrison's Counterpoint Day Treatment program. A young client had been through a tumultuous journey with very little compassion or support until he arrived at Morrison. After entering the program, he began to develop a voice in his own treatment and stabilize. Every time Robin encounters a story like this, it reinforces her sense that she is doing the right work in the right place.



"Leading the Program Evaluation department is deeply satisfying. It makes me feel like I'm making a difference in my employees' lives as well as helping program staff make data-driven decisions, as well as helping to continuously improve the quality of service for our clients."

As a naturally inquisitive person, Robin also makes a point of learning new things in her personal time. Knitting, languages, and trying out new recipes are some of her recent interests. Robin is also a big fan of science fiction, historical fiction, and fantasy, and she is currently in the middle of reading a Lemony Snicket book, a poetry collection, and a book about yoga philosophy.

Robin has found the culture at Morrison to be very welcoming, responsible, and "scrappy." She is proud to work here, loves telling others about our services, and appreciates that while she manages an important department that is serious, productive, and technical, she can still express her hearty sense of humor with her colleagues and teammates. As she notes, "If you hear us talking in funny

voices and laughing, it's probably because we just finished a big data puzzle in Excel and need to reset our brains."

Thank you, Robin! We love your data and your laughter and appreciate having you on Morrison's team.

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## Save the Date: May 15th, 2019

Join us for our annual luncheon

Next year, Morrison's 6th annual Silver Linings Luncheon will take place on May 15th in the Governor Ballroom at the Historic Sentinel Hotel in downtown Portland. Each year, more than 300 of our city's most prominent business and community leaders gather to celebrate the programs and services Morrison provides.



Silver Linings is an opportunity to increase public awareness of Morrison's community impact. It is also a chance to visit our program gallery and to meet the staff who work directly with the children and families we proudly serve. Stay tuned for more details!

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### Stay Connected



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### Our Mission

At Morrison Child and Family Services, we partner with families and communities to provide effective and responsive services for children and youth coping with adversity and trauma.

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