

BRIDGING FAMILIES

A Pathway to Reunification

Bridging Families believes children belong with their families. Our mission is to help birth parents and their children nurture and grow their family relationships while children are placed in our care.

As part of Bridging Families, **children in care** receive professional mental health services, medical services, case management, educational assistance, recreational opportunities, and a strong support network. **Birth Parents** receive an organized structure for collaboration with Bridge Parents, parenting skills curriculum and coaching, psychoeducation on trauma, nurturing relationships with Bridging Families team members, and service access assistance. The **whole family** will enjoy enhanced family time in a natural environment and family therapy.

Additionally, the **Bridging Families team** walks alongside families during the reunification process. Birth parents are part of this team and participate in planning and decision-making all along the way.

Bridge Parents are trained in trauma-informed care. These professional parents bridge the gap by caring for children in a Crossnore home while birth parents are working their reunification plan. Bridge Parents support and encourage the family journey to becoming a stronger, healthier family living together again.

The Bridging Families program is divided into **five phases** to support the gradual return of the children to their home. Progression from one phase to the next is based on the Bridging Families team recommendation,

as well as confirming that each phase aligns with all court orders regarding family visitation.

Phase 1

- Bridging Families team meeting in first week
- Weekly family day with Parenting Skills course
- Individual therapy for children
- Family therapy begins

Phase 2

- Bridging Families team meeting at day 60
- Weekly family day with Sanctuary Psychological Education course
- Family therapy continues
- 24-hour family visits

Phase 3

- Bridging Families team meetings at days 90 and 120
- Family therapy continues
- 48-hour family visits

Phase 4

- Bridging Families team meetings at days 150 and 180
- Family time in the home begins
- Bridge Parents available for additional support

Phase 5

- Bridging Families team meeting to ensure supportive plan is in place for reunification
- Referral provided for in-home services

