



Cora Pearson fostered hundreds during her time as a resource parent with DCFS.

In nearly five decades as a foster mom, Cora Pearson of Harbor City welcomed hundreds of children and young people into a safe and loving environment they could call home.

“I stopped counting when I reached 400 children,” said Cora, who recently retired after 46 years as a resource parent with the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

“My family was their family, and I worked hard to make my home a safe haven for everyone,” Cora explained. “The grown kids I cared for over the years know that I’m always here for them.”

In addition to raising four biological and stepchildren, Cora fostered infants, toddlers, adolescents and young adults. She cared for some with unique needs who required special assistance, including pregnant teenagers and children with developmental delays and hearing loss.

Cora also legally adopted five children formerly in foster care, all of whom are now grown-ups.

Rebecca McCullough, a social worker with the Resource Family Support Liaison Unit that has worked with Cora for many years, credits her for giving children in foster care an opportunity to thrive in a stable and supportive environment.

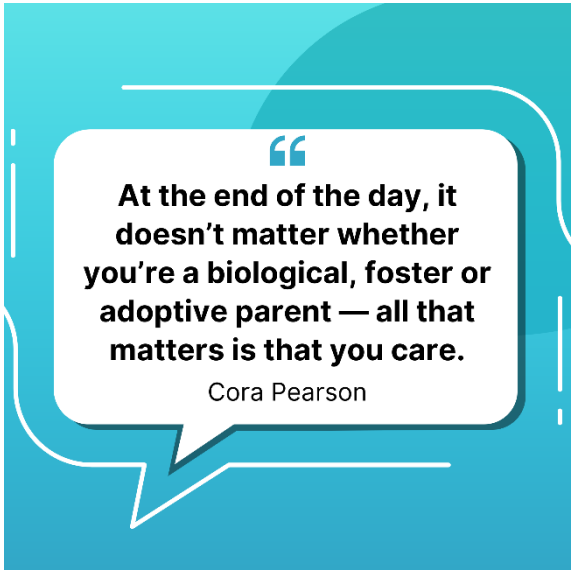
She also expressed admiration for Cora’s involvement in different aspects of child welfare, such as hosting support groups for caregivers and contributing to policy discussions about the rights and responsibilities of resource parents.

“I was struck immediately by Ms. Cora’s positivity and her can-do approach to everything she was involved in,” said Rebecca.

Cora’s passion was such that, in addition to helping other foster and adoptive parents, she participated in advocacy and training efforts at the local, state and national levels and served as president of the California State Foster Parent Association, among other prominent roles. She also founded the Stepping Stone Foster Parent Association as a local resource for caregivers.

“I loved making connections, building relationships and listening to other parents’ stories,” Cora said. “It helped to know that I wasn’t alone and that other parents had challenges.”

For those contemplating fostering or adopting a child, she offered both encouragement and words of wisdom. “Listen to the kids, be accepting and meet them where they are,” Cora said. “Remember to check in with them, talk to them, show them love, and try to make them feel special, because they all are. At the end of the day, it doesn’t matter whether you’re a biological, foster or adoptive parent — all that matters is that you care.”



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