

# Foster care rates rise amid drug addiction

Some unable to care for their children

By APRIL EHRlich  
The News-Review

ROSEBURG — When Natalie Robbins went into labor two months earlier than she expected, the doctors said her baby girl had gone into shock. Natalie's eyes welled and looked to the hospital ceiling.

"Oh, my God," she thought to herself. "I just killed this child because of my drug addiction."

Months earlier, when she first discovered that she was pregnant, she knew she would have to put the baby up for adoption. Struggling with an addiction to methamphetamine and alcohol, she wasn't in a place to care for her three children, let alone a fourth.

But she didn't expect her baby to die.



Michael Sullivan/The News-Review

**Natalie Robbins and her daughter Sirenity Mittendorf, 3, pose their home in Roseburg in July. Drug use is increasing in rural Oregon, particularly with an opioid epidemic sweeping the nation. As drug arrests, hospitalizations and overdoses have increased, so has the number of children entering the foster care system in these communities.**

"That was it, that was it," she recalled, sitting on a sofa in her home in Roseburg. "That was my God shot, my awakening moment, my lowest point of everything."

Then the baby started

breathing and crying, and Natalie held her on her shoulder for a few seconds before the nurses whisked her away to an incubator. She weighed 4 pounds, 11 ounces, but she would survive.

Natalie was discharged from the hospital two days later. She went straight to Crossroads, a transitional housing program for drug-addicted people and their children. She got a bed, and later, brought her baby, Sirenity. She started on a path to get her other three children back, who were under her mother's care as decreed by the state Department of Human Services.

That was all three years ago. She has since earned her associates degree at Umpqua Community College and has been accepted into Oregon State University, where she plans to study counseling. She has been sober since she left Crossroads and plans to use her education to help people who are trying to do the same.

Ask Sirenity how old she is and she will shyly hold up three fingers. She dances around the wood floors of their large home in a frilly dress that she insists on wearing almost every day. Photos of Natalie's other daughters are framed along the hallway that leads to their rooms.

## Stranger care

Natalie never wanted her children to go into "stranger care," a name she and other birth parents have given the foster care system. She is thankful her children stayed in the family, but many drug-addicted parents face different outcomes.

Drug use is increasing in rural Oregon, particularly with an opioid epidemic sweeping the nation. As drug arrests, hospitalizations and overdoses have increased, so has the number of children entering the foster care system in these communities. The number of children who have entered the child welfare system in Douglas County alone has increased from 41 children in 2013 to 204 children so far

this year. That's a 398 percent increase in less than five years, according to data released this year from the Department of Human Services.

For Lisa Hubbard, the clinical director at Adapt, parental drug addiction "has everything to do with it."

Adapt is a Roseburg-based nonprofit that provides an array of treatment, housing and medical services, including Crossroads.

"We went from about 400 kids in (foster care) a year or so ago, which was a shocking number at that time, and now the number is over 500," Hubbard said. "For a community our size, that's just a staggering number."

As of July 20, there were 624 Douglas County children in the foster care system, according to state data. And that number continues to grow.

The result is a system flooded with children with no place to go. Sometimes state workers have resorted to placing children in hotel rooms or in their own offices, a practice that led to a lawsuit this year.

Many children venturing through the foster care system do it with very little guidance. Some are lucky enough to have a court-appointed special advocate, a CASA volunteer who monitors a child and advocates for them in court. Now, instead of assigning one case to each volunteer, the organization assigns multiple cases.

"Our advocates are really stretching themselves to the maximum to cover as many children as possible," said Richelle Bryant, the executive director of the Roseburg-based CASA office. "It really is a crisis now."

## Children of drug addiction

A baby is born with an opioid addiction in the U.S. about every half hour, according to

the National Institute of Drug Abuse.

Those babies remain in the hospital for several days as they endure the same painful withdrawals grown adults experience after they quit using opioids. Locally, drug-addicted newborns stay at Mercy Medical Center in Roseburg until they are healthy enough to be transferred to a foster home.

It's still too early to tell how opiate addiction will affect infants' development, although some studies suggest they have a higher risk of neurological dysfunction.

As for children who are under the custody of drug-addicted parents, they are likely to experience neglect, and in some cases, abuse.

"The child wanders out into a busy street, or the river, or they are not getting enough food," said Katherine Elisar, program director at CASA of Douglas County. "Neglect is the real key when methamphetamine or heroin is happening with both parents. Then, sometimes other stressors create anger. So we have a lot of domestic violence involved with these cases."

Children of drug-addicted parents have a more direct access to those drugs and can start using those drugs themselves. Lt. Pat Moore, a former commander with the local narcotics team, recalled a case where the team found a 17-year-old girl who overdosed on her mother's fentanyl patches, which are a type of opioid prescribed for pain relief.

"When we did the autopsy and got her clothing off, we could see the number of patches she had, plus we could see the residual," he recalled in May. "It looked like she had duct tape on her arms."

**FIVE-DAY FORECAST FOR ASTORIA** AccuWeather.com

Tonight	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
51	68 54	68 55	67 54	67 54
Areas of low clouds and fog	Areas of low clouds and fog, then some sun	Areas of low clouds and fog, then some sun	Clouds to start, then sunshine returns	Mostly cloudy

**ALMANAC**  
Astoria through Sunday.

**Temperatures**  
High/low ..... 68°/55°  
Normal high/low ..... 69°/53°  
Record high ..... 90° in 1942  
Record low ..... 45° in 1955

**Precipitation**  
Sunday ..... 0.25"  
Month to date ..... 0.42"  
Normal month to date ..... 0.35"  
Year to date ..... 50.09"  
Normal year to date ..... 37.29"

**SUN AND MOON**  
Sunset tonight ..... 8:26 p.m.  
Sunrise Tuesday ..... 6:15 a.m.  
Moonrise today ..... none  
Moonset today ..... 1:49 p.m.

Last New First Full  
Aug 14 Aug 21 Aug 29 Sep 5

**REGIONAL WEATHER**  
Shown is tomorrow's weather. Temperatures are tonight's lows and tomorrow's highs.

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2017

**UNDER THE SKY**  
Tonight's Sky: The last quarter will be at 6:15 p.m., seven days to the total solar eclipse on Aug. 21, 2017!

Source: Jim Todd, OMSI

**TOMORROW'S TIDES**  
Astoria / Port Docks

Time	High	Time	Low
8:07 a.m.	6.0 ft.	1:55 a.m.	0.6 ft.
7:54 p.m.	8.2 ft.	1:36 p.m.	1.9 ft.

**NATIONAL CITIES**

City	Today	Tues.
Atlanta	90 74 t 88 74 t	88 74 t
Boston	80 67 pc 81 67 pc	81 67 pc
Chicago	83 66 pc 82 68 pc	82 68 pc
Denver	90 58 pc 84 56 pc	84 56 pc
Des Moines	87 68 t 89 71 t	89 71 t
Detroit	84 65 pc 86 64 t	86 64 t
El Paso	94 75 pc 94 73 pc	94 73 pc
Fairbanks	61 51 r 63 47 c	63 47 c
Honolulu	89 76 pc 89 77 pc	89 77 pc
Indianapolis	84 67 pc 87 70 pc	87 70 pc
Kansas City	85 69 pc 85 71 pc	85 71 pc
Las Vegas	103 78 s 97 76 pc	97 76 pc
Los Angeles	78 65 pc 74 63 sh	74 63 sh
Memphis	83 74 t 89 76 t	89 76 t
Miami	92 80 t 92 80 sh	92 80 sh
Nashville	81 71 t 86 74 pc	86 74 pc
New Orleans	90 77 c 88 78 t	88 78 t
New York	84 70 pc 84 68 pc	84 68 pc
Oklahoma City	84 71 r 91 74 pc	91 74 pc
Philadelphia	86 70 pc 88 70 pc	88 70 pc
St. Louis	88 71 pc 91 73 pc	91 73 pc
Salt Lake City	86 64 pc 83 63 t	83 63 t
San Francisco	69 59 pc 72 59 pc	72 59 pc
Seattle	72 53 pc 74 54 pc	74 54 pc
Washington, DC	83 73 pc 85 73 pc	85 73 pc

**REGIONAL CITIES**

City	Today	Tues.
Baker City	77 40 pc 82 42 s	82 42 s
Bend	78 44 s 81 47 s	81 47 s
Brookings	67 53 pc 68 55 pc	68 55 pc
Eugene	76 48 pc 80 50 s	80 50 s
Ilwaco	66 54 pc 66 57 pc	66 57 pc
Klamath Falls	80 44 pc 81 46 s	81 46 s
Medford	86 54 pc 90 57 s	90 57 s
Newberg	77 49 pc 81 51 s	81 51 s
Newport	63 49 pc 63 50 pc	63 50 pc
North Bend	67 51 pc 68 52 pc	68 52 pc
Olympia	73 47 pc 76 49 pc	76 49 pc
Pendleton	80 52 s 84 55 s	84 55 s
Portland	73 53 pc 77 55 s	77 55 s
Roseburg	82 53 pc 85 55 s	85 55 s
Salem	77 51 pc 81 53 s	81 53 s
Seaside	67 52 pc 68 55 pc	68 55 pc
Spokane	76 52 pc 80 55 pc	80 55 pc
Springfield	78 48 pc 83 51 s	83 51 s
Vancouver	74 53 pc 79 54 pc	79 54 pc
Yakima	82 50 s 85 53 s	85 53 s

**TOMORROW'S NATIONAL WEATHER**  
Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.

## Pavement crack sealing project on tap

The Daily Astorian

A contractor for Astoria is crack sealing pavement start-

ing Wednesday and continuing through Friday. Temporary road closures and delays should be

expected across the city. For questions, call the Astoria Engineering Division at 503-338-5173.

## LOTTERIES

**OREGON**

**Sunday's Pick 4:**  
1 p.m.: 4-1-6-0  
4 p.m.: 3-9-2-5  
7 p.m.: 7-1-1-0  
10 p.m.: 9-2-2-4

**Saturday's Megabucks:** 2-6-10-15-40-42  
Estimated jackpot: \$5.9 million

**Saturday's Powerball:** 20-24-26-35-49, Powerball: 19  
Estimated jackpot: \$430 million

**Saturday's Pick 4:**  
1 p.m.: 5-6-5-1  
4 p.m.: 1-5-9-6  
7 p.m.: 3-7-5-8

**10 p.m.: 7-1-8-7**

**Friday's Pick 4:**  
1 p.m.: 5-3-6-7  
4 p.m.: 6-4-6-4  
7 p.m.: 9-0-0-0  
10 p.m.: 4-5-6-0

**Friday's Mega Millions:** 23-33-53-56-58, Mega Ball: 6  
Estimated jackpot: \$15 million

**WASHINGTON**

**Sunday's Daily Game:** 1-6-2  
**Sunday's Keno:** 01-05-16-25-32-33-35-36-37-39-43-44-47-53-55-56-59-65-78-80  
**Sunday's Match 4:** 06-09-10-19

**Saturday's Daily Game:** 8-0-5  
**Saturday's Hit 5:** 04-18-21-31-36  
Estimated jackpot: \$100,000

**Saturday's Keno:** 04-05-06-09-20-22-33-36-44-50-51-61-67-69-70-71-72-73-75-76  
**10 p.m.:** 4-5-6-0  
**Saturday's Lotto:** 03-12-14-31-43-45  
Estimated jackpot: \$1.3 million

**Saturday's Match 4:** 04-05-11-21  
**Friday's Daily Game:** 2-9-3  
**Friday's Keno:** 04-06-07-18-33-37-46-48-49-51-59-61-62-63-64-67-69-70-75-77  
**Friday's Match 4:** 02-04-05-16

## DEATHS

**Aug. 13, 2017**  
GOODENBERGER, John Longstaff, 93, of Portland, died in Portland. Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary of Astoria is in charge of the arrangements.

**Aug. 12, 2017**  
DOWNS, Juanita J., 82, of Warrenton, died in Tualatin. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary & Crematory of Astoria/Seaside is in charge of the arrangements.

**Aug. 12, 2017**  
DOWNS, Juanita J., 82, of Warrenton, died in Tualatin. Hughes-Ransom Mortuary & Crematory of Astoria/Seaside is in charge of the arrangements.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

**MONDAY**  
**Astoria Library Board,** 5:30 p.m., Library Flag Room 450 10th St.  
**Youngs River Lewis & Clark Water District Board,** 6 p.m., 34583 U.S. Highway 101 Business.  
**Cannon Beach Rural Fire Department Board,** 6 p.m., Fire-Rescue Main Station, 188 Sunset Ave.

**Seaside City Council,** 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.  
**TUESDAY**  
**Cannon Beach Public Works Committee,** 9 a.m., City Hall, 163 E. Gower St.  
**Clatsop County Human Services Advisory Council,** 4 to 5:30 p.m., 800 Exchange St., Room 430.

**Astoria Historic Landmarks Commission,** 5:15 p.m., City Hall, 1095 Duane St.  
**Warrenton-Hammond School Board,** 7 p.m., Warrenton High School library, 1700 S. Main Ave.  
**Shoreline Sanitary District Board,** 7 p.m., Gearhart Hertig Station, 33496 West Lake Lane, Warrenton.

## CORRECTIONS

**Incorrect date** — The Astoria City Council on Sept. 5 will hear an appeal of a Planning Commission decision to allow a permit for Shooting Stars Child Development Cen-

ter near the Port of Astoria. A 1A story Friday incorrectly listed the date as Sept. 25.  
**Address wrong** — The address given for the Angels for Sara Sanctuary fundraiser/

bake sale in the In One Ear column on 1B Friday was wrong. The event takes place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday and Saturday at 60 S. Main Ave. in Warrenton.

**Klemp Family Dentistry...**  
We help keep families smiling!

**Klemp Family Dentistry offers The Planmeca ProMax 3D X-Ray**

**This 3-D imaging machine Tells the whole story**

- A complete, highly detailed image of your oral health in a low dose radiation image.
- Aids in ideal implant planning and placement.
- Diagnostics and airway management for DNA & Apnea sufferers.
- Reduces the time of X-rays by 50% and the dosage of radiation by 1/5.
- Extra oral imaging for patients that typically gag or struggle with x-rays.

Come and see how **comfortable dentistry** can really be...

**KLEMP FAMILY DENTISTRY**  
1006 West Marine Drive, Astoria  
(503) 468-0116  
www.klempfamilydentistry.com

**The Daily Astorian**  
Established July 1, 1873 (USPS 035-000)

Published daily, except Saturday and Sunday, by EO Media Group, 949 Exchange St., PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103 Telephone 503-325-3211, 800-781-3211 or Fax 503-325-6573. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Daily Astorian, PO Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103-0210

www.dailyastorian.com  
MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Associated Press is entitled exclusively to the use for republication of all the local news printed in this newspaper.

**SUBSCRIBER TO THE NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE**  
MEMBER CERTIFIED AUDIT OF CIRCULATIONS, INC.

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES**  
Effective July 1, 2015

HOME DELIVERY	MAIL
EZpay (per month).....\$11.25	EZpay (per month).....\$16.60
13 weeks in advance.....\$36.79	13 weeks in advance.....\$51.98
26 weeks in advance.....\$70.82	26 weeks in advance.....\$102.63
52 weeks in advance.....\$135.05	52 weeks in advance.....\$199.90

Circulation phone number: 503-325-3211  
Periodicals postage paid at Astoria, OR

**ADVERTISING OWNERSHIP**  
All advertising copy and illustrations prepared by The Daily Astorian become the property of The Daily Astorian and may not be reproduced for any use without explicit prior approval.

**COPYRIGHT** ©  
Entire contents © Copyright, 2017 by The Daily Astorian.  
Printed on recycled paper