

FOSTERING CONNECTIONS

Special Edition

FOSTER PARENT APPRECIATION MONTH



Dear CYFS Foster Parents,

May is Foster Appreciation Month, and nothing fills our hearts with more gratitude than celebrating our incredible foster parents! Whether you are a traditional foster parent, a relative caregiver, or an adoptive home, you have made the selfless decision to provide our youth with the support, stability, and love they need to truly thrive.

Being a foster parent means prioritizing a child's well-being, offering them a safe and nurturing home where they feel secure and valued. It means advocating for their needs, being a trusted figure in their lives, and standing beside them through their triumphs and challenges. It is celebrating their successes and guiding them through their disappointments with unwavering encouragement.

As a foster parent, you dedicate yourself to the daily care of our youth, supporting their educational, physical, and emotional growth. You attend meetings, appointments, maintain important records, and navigate complex situations with compassion and strength. You generously open your homes, your hearts, and your lives—making a lasting difference in the futures of the children you nurture.

For all that you do, **we at CYFS extend our deepest THANK YOU!** Our mission would not be possible without the extraordinary kindness and commitment of our foster parents.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Your CYFS Child Welfare Team

**"FOSTERING IS NOT ABOUT US. IT NEVER WAS AND NEVER WILL BE. FOSTER CARE IS ABOUT SERVING, LOVING ON OTHERS, AND BEING THE ONE CONSTANT IN A CHILD'S LIFE WHEN THEY ARE GOING THROUGH A REALLY HARD TIME."
-JEREMY GARMAN**

All of us at CYFS are so thankful for the dedication of our foster parents. You are all committed to serving our youth and as a token of our appreciation for your commitment, you are receiving a coupon book with discounts and resources to goods and services in your community.



"FOSTER CARE IS NOT ABOUT FIXING BROKEN CHILDREN, IT'S ABOUT PROVIDING A SAFE AND LOVING SPACE FOR THEM TO HEAL AND GROW"

YOU TRULY MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

As foster parents, you all go above and beyond for the youth in your home. We are all grateful for your dedication and service. Here are some stories of foster parents who are dedicated to serving our youth:

Robert and Paula Rutherford

"Robert and Paula are wonderful grandparents and foster parents. They have provided unwavering support for the youth in their care. They have been able to navigate the good times, the hard times and everything in between with compassion and love."

Tamela Burnside

"Tammy was a relative foster parent but completed the traditional training so she could take in more foster kids. She has been willing to provide at least one night of respite to several of our crisis youth. She is giving up her bedroom and sleeping on the couch so that she can take in more kids. She always answers calls and responds to messages. She has a huge heart for our foster kids and wants to help them any way that she can."

Judilyn and Mark Foote

"Judilyn and Mark have placement of their medically specialized grandson and his brother. Judilyn and Mark manage hectic school and appointment schedules, work with CYFS nurses and specialized team, agency in home nurses, and medical staff flawlessly! These caregivers are dedicated to providing the best care to children and are committed to working closely with the birth parents to support reunification."

Josh and Stacy Steele

"Josh and Stacey are veteran foster parents. During their fostering journey they have taken in otherwise hard to place kiddos. They are incredibly committed to every child that enters their home. They consistently find resources for those youth and tirelessly to make sure all their needs are met. Josh and Stacey are great advocates for the youth placed in their homes, their own biological children, and their adopted kids."

Peggy Hamilton

"Peggy is a ROCK STAR with the biological parents. She works to engage and co-parent alongside them while being a solid support for them as their children return home. Peggy embodies compassion and empathy and truly values keeping families safe, nurtured, and together."

Lawanda Mayze

"Lawanda has been a resilient foster parent who adjusts for the needs of the youth in her care and works to keep them in her home despite any difficulties that arise. She has been kind, caring, and nurturing to the youth in her care and has made her home as welcoming as possible. Lawanda is always seeking the best for the youth in her care and will reach out to workers when she feels she is ready for another."

Eldora Madison

"Eldora is fictive kin foster parent who is foster 5 youth as a single parent. Despite working full time, Eldora makes sure she is involved with the children and makes sure they always have fun activities to do. Eldora is passionate about making sure the youth in her home find safe and loving forever families. Eldora is currently working on becoming a traditional foster parent so she can continue to help youth with respite and/or placement. Eldora's dedication to the safety of foster children is evident in how she works with the youth placed with her."

Sharlene Koch

"Sharlene has taken many of our difficult teens! Much of the time she has taken these teens have been at the last minute and on the same day with very little time to prep. She has been willing to open her home to children when there has not been other options available. She is very deserving of recognition for being a huge support to our youth and staff!"

Danielle Sorey

"Danielle has taken over 16 placements in her 3 years as a foster parent. She has taken in long term placements, respites, and is open to providing permanency to our vulnerable youth. Danielle puts the needs of the kids first. She provides a safe, stable, and loving home while advocating for those in her home. Danielle has been a great foster parent to work with!"

FOSTER PARENT SUPPORTS AND TRAINING

We at CYFS want you to know that we stand by our foster parents. There are several ways that we help serve you as you support our youth. If you need training to help enhance your parenting skills, we can connect you to our monthly training courses, Foster Parent College, or our new Parent Training Program. If you need someone to talk to who has walked in your shoes as a foster parent, we can connect you to one of our Foster Parent Mentors. We also have our Foster Parent Roundtable, a foster parent-led support group that meets monthly that offers you a chance to just connect with other foster parents. For more information on these programs, please contact your licensing worker, or you can reach out to Mindy McBride at mlmcbride@cyfsolutions.org



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