



# FAMILIES FORWARD

ISSUE 6 AUGUST 2021



## IEPs & 504 Plans For Children in Foster Care

As we sadly approach the end of summer and prepare for your children to go back to school it is important to know the services offered to help your child succeed. The two main resources schools have to offer are Individualized Education Plans and 504 Accommodation Plans. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) was created by the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). This provides special education and other similar services to any student who is recognized with having a disability, that could affect their ability to receive academic instructions properly. Students who are recognized for having a disability that could impact their education are able to receive these special education services which include a modified curriculum, accommodations while in a classroom setting, specialized instructions, and related services. Related services include various types of therapy such as occupational, physical, speech therapy, and/or counseling. A student with an IEP is re-evaluated every three years to re-determine their eligibility. <https://www.additudemag.com/iep-vs-504-plan-idea-adhd-disability-education/>

A 504 Accommodation Plan is led by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which makes sure that any student with a disability will be able to access the accommodations that can help to improve academic functioning. The students who can qualify for this plan must have a diagnosis for either an emotional or physical disability, or impairment. <https://www.additudemag.com/iep-vs-504-plan-idea-adhd-disability-education/>

To compare the two options, an IEP is an individualized plan outlining how a student with a disability will receive their academic instructions. While on the contrary, a 504 plan ensures that proper accommodations are made to improve the student's functioning throughout their studies. Both resources are very effective in enabling a proactive learning environment.

It is important to know that the IEP process strongly encourages parental involvement. As a child in foster care the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) ensures that parents may retain their parental educational rights, unless they are specifically removed from them by the court. Additionally, in most states, foster care parents, guardians, relatives, and kinship caregivers who live with the child requiring the IEP services, are legally allowed to fill in the parental role if a parent cannot be present or is not participating. It is important for all parents, especially those of children who are in foster care, to be aware of both IEPs and 504 Plans as it is critical to a child's development and growth. For more information on these services please contact our agency and attend our upcoming training on Wednesday September 22nd, on Educational Support and IEPs. <https://practicenotes.org/v21n1/IEPs.html>

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Employee of the Month

---

Tiger's Game/ Sweet Cases Donations

---

One Family's Journey

---

Upcoming Trainings

---

# EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

## Kyle Fisher

Kyle has been with Forever Families for a year and in that time, he has become a vital part of the Licensing Department. He is a strong advocate for foster parents, the licensing team, and the agency alike. He facilitates support groups, orientations and develops a variety of trainings. He is self-motivated and a go getter. If he sees something that needs to be done, he takes it upon himself to get it done. In his free time, he enjoys playing video games and spending time with his girlfriend and fur babies. Thank you, Kyle, for your dedication to our foster parents!



## TIGERS GAME



Forever Families is sending a HUGE thank you to The Detroit Tigers Community Relations & Impact Teams for providing us with tickets for two Tigers games and technical support to obtain the tickets.

Their generosity is greatly appreciate!

# SWEET CASE DONATIONS

**Katie from Citizens Bank in Toledo partnered with Together We Rise to kindly donate 12 beautifully hand-decorated Sweet Case duffel bags for our children. Each bag consists of a fleece blanket, a teddy bear, coloring book with crayons and a starter toothbrush kit.**

**Thank you all!**



# One Family's Foster Journey: Josh & Julie

## Fostering Since 2017

### Why did you choose foster care?

We both love kids and work with kids in our professions on a daily basis. The need for foster parents is immense. Kids need a home and we have a home, and consider it a privilege to serve in this way.

### Tell us about your current placement!

At the beginning of Covid we were asked to take placement of a 5 month old who was being re-homed—about a week later we also took placement of his two biological brothers. We went from one boy in our household to four boys in a couple of weeks. All of these children have grown tremendously in the past year and we are proud of who they are as individuals. God has blessed them with sweet dispositions and resilient characters, and we love them very, very much.

### Any advice for prospective foster parents?

Take foster parenting a day at a time and take all of the trauma-informed parenting classes you can! When challenges come up (and they almost certainly will) foster parents work to answer them. We don't need to have all of the answers for all of the children's needs right now, we just need to care enough to try as hard as we can to meet them. All kids, regardless of their past, need the exact same things. They need to feel safe and loved. They need to get enough sleep and have a healthy diet. They need people in their lives who fight for them. To us, that's what it means to be a foster parent.

# What else are we up to?

- We currently have 95 foster children in care.
- In 2021, we have:
  - Reunified 20 children with their birth parents.
  - Finalized 14 State Ward adoptions.
  - Licensed 5 foster homes.
  - Completed 1 Guardianship.

## Don't forget about your training hours!

The monthly support group for foster parents is the 4th Saturday of the month from 9-11 am.

Remember you earn 2 training hours every time you attend a support group, and have an opportunity to receive a prize by attending support groups.

Our upcoming trainings, support group dates & topics:

8/19/21- Oakland Family Services Presents Foster Parent Training via zoom

8/21/21- Spaulding for Children Presents a Free Resource Fair

08/28/21- Mental Health in Children

09/25/21- Educational supports and IEPs

Don't forget to check out our monthly blog post on our website!

**Email [SNEDWID@Forever-Families.org](mailto:SNEDWID@Forever-Families.org) to Register.**