



# FAMILIES FORWARD

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## PTSD & Children in Foster Care

Walden Family Services defines Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as “a mental health condition that effects survivors of life-threatening events. The events can include combat, but also include incidences of abuse, witnessing, or experiencing violence, and separation from primary caregivers in children”. According to the Specialized Alternatives for Families and Youth (SAFY), one in four youth in foster care will suffer from PTSD symptoms. Additionally, current, or former foster children are twice as likely United States war veterans to experience PTSD in adulthood.

There are some tools and treatments for dealing with PTSD. To start, physicians and mental health providers should develop a care plan that is personalized to each individual based on their symptoms, age, and their overall health. It is also important to be knowledgeable about normal trauma responses, developing skills to combat anxiety, revisiting the trauma with guidance, and being open with their caregivers, as these are all essential aspects to the therapeutic process for children dealing with PTSD.

It is important to be aware of potential PTSD symptoms which could vary based on age and the individual. For example, children under 6 years old are more likely to have sleeping issues and will require comfort from their caretakers. School age children (7-10 years old) tend to “act out” their various trauma through play, drawing pictures, or telling stories. Children of school age range (7-10) may also suffer from nightmares or act more aggressive and frustrated than normal. They may also have trouble with schoolwork and friends. Pre-teens and teenage youth (ages 12-18) commonly show symptoms such as depression, anxiety, withdrawal, or more reckless behaviors like substance abuse, and more.

Forever Families is dedicated to the wellbeing of every one of our foster children. Knowing this information can be very beneficial when faced with a child who is diagnosed or may be showing symptoms of PTSD. For more information please visit <https://waldenfamilyservices.org/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd-in-foster-youth/> , <https://www.safy.org/ptsd-in-foster-care/>, or [forever-families.org](https://forever-families.org) and for any questions please call us at (734) 762-0909.

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# EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

## Lakiyyaa Bohanon

Lakiyyaa has been working with Forever Families as a foster care specialist for a little over one year. Lakiyyaa goes above and beyond for her clients, safety is her first priority and she is always willing to be a team player. In her spare time, Lakiyyaa likes to travel and spend time with her grandson Mason.



## LIVONIA SCHOOL DAZE 2021



Forever Families was excited to participate in Schoolcraft Colleges annual School Daze event on September 9th, 2021. Each year Schoolcraft College hosts the Livonia School Days event to help educate students about local businesses and organizations in the community. This year, they held a community service day for nonprofit organizations to help raise awareness about the services they provide to the community. We were happy to share information about Forever Families as well as obtain resources that will help our families going forward.

# One Family's Foster Journey:

## Eric & Flor- Fostering Since 2019

### Why did you choose foster care?

We chose foster care because we wanted to share our family with a child in need of a loving home. We felt like it was the right path for us since we got married and we are very happy we did it because it is very rewarding and we love our foster child to pieces!

### Tell us about your current placement!

The child in our placement is 4 years old. We have had him since he was a little over 2. It was an adjustment and sometimes really hard at the beginning, we all grew to understand and love each other within the first couple months of him being placed with us. Our placement is the most caring and playful little kid, and we hope we get keep him through adoption, even if we do not end up being able to adopt him.

### Any advice for prospective foster parents?

Be patient not only with the kids but with yourself, being a foster parent is a highly rewarding and fulfilling job but it also can be really hard at times. If you have extra love to give and patience, foster care may be for you.

Layla is a kind and bright 8 year old girl. She loves to read and has a library of over 600 books.

For her 8th birthday, she wanted to give books to foster children. Layla and her mom,

Lisa, in partnership with Usborne & Miller Books, raised funds and donated more than \$500 worth of new books to our foster children. Layla, we appreciate your generosity and thoughtfulness towards our children. A special thank you to our foster parent, Julie, for suggesting our agency.



Forever Families would like to say thank you to the **Detroit Lions' Community Relations Coordinator** for accommodating Forever Families' families with 42 tickets to the Detroit Lions vs Baltimore Ravens game on September 26th, 2021. Our families had a great time at the game!

# What else are we up to?

- We currently have 90 foster children in care.
- In 2021, we have:
  - Reunified 32 children with their birth parents.
  - Finalized 20 State Ward adoptions.
  - Licensed 9 foster homes.
  - Completed 1 Guardianship.
  - Domestic Adoption placed 2 infants with adoptive families in August.

## 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:

10/23/21- Resources

11/20/21- Mental Health-"Fostering Resilience in Children" training will occur during this support group.

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.**