



FAMILIES FORWARD

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RAD & Adjustment Disorder

There are two disorders that are common in children, especially those in foster care who go through many emotional changes at a very young age. The Cleveland Clinic defines Reactive attachment disorder (RAD) as a condition affecting infants or young children in a way that means they do not form a natural or secure emotional bond with their primary caretakers. RAD is most common amongst children between the ages of 9 months to 5 years old. Children who struggle with RAD usually have issues managing their emotions and may struggle to have deep conversations with others. The article "Signs of Adjustment Disorder in Children" discussed the other common disorder, adjustment disorder. The article explains this as being a mental health condition that can require professional help. Adjustment disorders typically respond positively to treatments like therapy, or other appropriate interventions. Adjustment disorders can affect people of all ages but are most common amongst children and adolescents.

These disorders can both be caused by various factors. According to the Cleveland Clinic, RAD does not have an exact cause, but researchers have found that a lack of consistency in a child's caretaker and the level of appropriate loving can be large contributors of this disorder. Adjustment disorders are primarily caused by a "maladaptive response to stress". According to the "Signs of Adjustment Disorder in Children" article, these disorders come about as a result of some kind of change in a child's life that caused them stressed.

Children in the foster care system may be more likely to be affected by one or both of these disorders because they are a result of change in a child's life. Whether it be with their primary caregiver, their emotional bonds, and changes in school, household, parents, etc. Many of the factors that caused this disorder are not in the child's control. To learn more about both of these disorders and how to help your children to the best of your ability, please check out the articles referenced or contact us at (734) 762-0909 for more information.

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EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Deirdré Walker

Deirdre was chosen for employee of the month for her hard work and dedication, for her recruitment efforts, and for the unmatched youth that she has on her caseload. Deirdre continues to provide detailed MARE listing profiles and has received compliments from the MARE staff about her writing of the youth. Deirdre is a fierce advocate for her unmatched youth and always ensures that they received adequate services to meet their extensive needs. Deirdre is a great asset to the state ward adoption team and we are extremely grateful for her dedication to the children and families that we serve!



FERNDALE PRIDE 2021



Forever Families would like to thank Julia Music, Ferndale Pride Executive Director, for allowing us to come out and show our support for the LGBTQIA community at the 10th annual Ferndale Pride Fest. Ferndale Pride strives to recognize and promote pride for the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, asexual, intersex and ally communities, working with residents, businesses, community groups, and all segments of the community to welcome and promote the celebration of diversity. Forever Families supports their mission and strives to be a place of inclusion where ALL are welcome. See you next year Ferndale!

One Family's Foster Journey:

Nick & Amanda- Fostering Since 2020

Why did you choose foster care?

Foster care has been something we've wanted to explore for a long time. We started the licensing process in 2017 prior to having our birth daughter with our hearts set on fostering a teenager. That was cut short because at the time our basement wasn't finished yet and did not have an egress window, which was a requirement at the time. We decided to make moving our goal and also got pregnant. Fast forward to 2020, everything was starting to become virtual because of the pandemic and we talked about trying to get our license again (yes - preferring the virtual options!). As fate would have it, we got a call that a relative had a baby and they were hoping family could be an option for foster care. We came forward and brought her home from the hospital 3 days later. We then got our foster license and are in the middle of our adoption license.

Tell us about your current placement!

Our current placement is an amazing little girl! She has brought so much joy that we didn't know was possible. Although the goal was reunification and we were full supporters, the parents changed their mind. She is now nearing the end of her foster care journey.

Any advice for prospective foster parents?

Find support! This has at times felt like the loneliest road. Starting in December 2020, I started listening to podcasts, reading books, and truly embracing foster care as a world I wanted to know more about. This has opened our eyes and we want to continue down this road. With two little ones and us both working full time, a placement immediately after our adoption is final would not be a good fit for our family. We want to try providing respite, and I plan to keep networking and finding how to help biological families who need support during an incredibly difficult time.

What else are we up to?

- We currently have 93 foster children in care.
- In 2021, we have:
 - Reunified 42 children with their birth parents.
 - Finalized 20 State Ward adoptions.
 - Licensed 10 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, and support group dates & topics:

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!