



# FAMILIES FORWARD

ISSUE 10  
December 2021



## Respite Care

Forever Families defines respite care as a temporary placement when a foster parent is in need of a break, whether it is for self-care, family emergencies, or a vacation. There are a few steps that are important for every foster parent to know when it comes to seeking respite care through our agency. It is very important that the foster family is able to notify both their licensing and foster care workers as soon as they know they will be in need of respite care. The sooner a family can notify their licensing and foster care workers the better because respite care is not always a guarantee. It is something we work very hard to try and secure for our families who are in need of it.

Another step in the respite care process is a form that will need to be filled out. This form is used so foster parents can identify the basic information about the child. This is to ensure that the worker can try and place them with the best fit for respite care. Additionally, it is important to note that the form will require both a begin date and an end date for the days respite care will be needed. We cannot guarantee respite, but we will always work towards it. The more time we have to try and find a respite placement the more likely we are to get one.

Some suggestions if respite care through our agency does not work out is using your alternate care provider as a respite care person first before needing the agency to find a home. Additionally, it is important to find one alternate care provider that is not a family member simply because if there is a family emergency and respite care is needed that relative may be unavailable to help out. Another way to find respite care is to be involved and participate in agency events as often as possible because through the events we host, foster families are able to network and connect with one another and utilize one another for help when needed.

It is important for all of our foster families to remember to focus on building their support systems, know where to find the people who can help, and always notify the agency if something comes up! Look out for the respite days our agency hosts, where you can drop not only your foster children off with your own children as well, and we will watch all of them while you run errands, have a date, or just relax.

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# EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

## MJ Hebner

Mary Jo has been with Forever Families for 16 years. Over that time she has proven to be a key person in our agency.

She was chosen as employee of the month for all of her efforts in coordinating our expansion to an additional suite in our building. Her ability to wear many hats allowed us to have a seamless move to our new offices. As she always does, MJ went above and beyond her normal duties. Her willingness to go the extra mile has made her invaluable!

Thanks MJ, for all that you do.



## Livonia Turkey Trot 2021



The Livonia Turkey Trot was an awesome event our agency was able to attend! We appreciate the Bicentennial Park for allowing us to engage and participate with our fellow community through this event!

# One Family's Foster Journey:

## Justin R.– Fostering Since 2018

### Why did you choose foster care?

I chose foster care because I was a foster child growing up and I felt like I had a lot of love and space available for kids. The time in my life that I decided to become a foster parent was the “right” time for me because I had complete confidence and felt that I was ready to share love and open my home to a child.

### Tell us about your current placement!

My current placement is an 11-year-old boy with severe trauma. We work through his trauma and struggles through various services, such as individual therapy, group therapy, and my partner and I go to a parent support group. The support group we go to is a great tool because it is specifically for parents who are parenting children with trauma or ADHD. This group makes us feel less alone, normalizes, and helps to provide other resources and interventions. This placement is so special to our family, and we enjoy working with him and will continue trying to help him overcome his trauma and struggles.

### Any advice for prospective foster parents?

Pay close attention to the program “GROW”, attend a foster care support group, and make friends with other foster parents and families. Also, understand that it is okay to say no, and to remember to take everything one day at a time. There is so much joy brought from any child, and fostering a child truly brings so much joy to my heart and home.

# What else are we up to?

- We currently have 93 foster children in care.
- Wrapping up the year, in 2021 we have:
  - Reunified 42 children with their birth parents.
  - Finalized 21 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.

Check out our upcoming trainings, and support group dates & topics for 2022:

1/22/2022: IEP/Education

2/26/2022: Court

3/26/2022: Resources

4/23/2022: Cultural Comp

5/28/2022: Self-Care

6/25/2022: LGBTQ/SOGIE

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





Forever Families is wishing you all a happy and healthy holiday!

Just a reminder that our agency will be closed from noon on December 23rd until 9am January 3rd.

If there is an emergency please call our emergency phone number  
(248) 794-3168