



Heartland for Children

FOSTER CARE NEWSLETTER

February 2024

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Welcome to our new Program Manager - Licensing, Chelsea Hand!

Greetings! My name is Chelsea Hand and you may see my name a bit more as I am the new Program Manager for Foster Home Licensing here with Heartland for Children. I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you all and share a bit of my experience and history in the system of care, as well as my passion for child welfare.

I began my career as a Child Protective Investigator in 2015 with the Department of Children and Families. I have had a career in child welfare ever since in various capacities, such as case management and other programs within Circuit 10 with a background in supervising and leadership. I have always had a strong focus on meeting the needs of those people I have had the pleasure of serving. In this role, I will be shifting my focus on meeting the needs of our foster homes and of the children we care for. I am excited to be working with you all in the future and look forward to our ongoing collaboration for the children within our system of care.

Co-Parenting Works!



Feature by Nichole Perrett, foster caregiver

Amanda and I began our co-parenting journey in 2015. Simple hellos and sharing in Juan and Jose's experiences in her life and in mine. Allowing phone calls, supervising visits, and being a support to her on rough days eventually earned her reunification in 2016. To this day, I'm still the boys bonus mom, and I still get to take part in their lives, such as JROTC competitions and welcoming our first grandbaby!

Just over seven years after reunification, I still get to be a part and both of our families are blessed by co-parenting!

Foster Home Statistics

As of 1/29/24

- 27 homes licensed since July 1st, 2023
- 42 inquiries for the month of December
- 180 homes total in Circuit 10
- 60 Children & Teen entered out of home care in December 2023

YOU are our best recruiters for new foster families! Please share your stories with other and ask them to contact us at (863)519-8900 x. 289.



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Happy Valentine's Day!

Did you know?

Octopuses have 3 hearts. One pumps their blood around their body, while the other two pump blood to their gills. AND their blood is actually blue!

Source: www.treehugger.com
"36 Random Animal Facts That May Surprise You"



Important Dates in February 2024

- 9 Applications due for Teen Reach Adventure Camp – Girls traclakeland.org/campers
- 13 Board rate payments mailed
- 16 TLC Meeting at Mulberry Christian Academy, 6–9pm
- 27 Challenging Behavior Support Group (Watch your texts for details!)
- 29 Foster Caregiver Advisory Council Meeting, 12–1pm

Let's Talk TAYS! (Transition Age Youth Services)

Transition Age Youth Services resources are eligible for all youth aged 13 – 18 who are in out of home care (removed from parents). Services and supports connect youth to community partners through Heartland for Children staff and Case Management Agency Life Coaches.

Supports include:

- Academic support
- Health and wellness access
- Career and vocational training
- Financial education
- Life skills training

Please look out for more information on specific services in upcoming newsletters.

You can learn more now by going to our website: www.heartlandforchildren.org/youth

From HFC's Training Department: Field Trainers

We are proud to introduce our field trainers to you: Tiffani Hayes, Danielle Day, Sherby Saimplice, and Cris Allphin! Their role was created to provide extra supports to newly hired case managers and their supervisors and to assist with the transfer of learning from the classroom to the field. They work out of the Case Management Organization offices so they can be ready when their assistance is needed. This is all to help reduce case manager turn-over, which will benefit our children/teens.



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HUB Home News

Over the next few months, the hub home support team will be making efforts to create stronger connections between hub leaders and their hubs living in the same region within our three counties. If you are a hub leader, you can expect to receive an invitation to meet face-to-face with the hub home lead, Olivia Paulson, and one of our hub home coordinators - Jill Lovely, Beth Ann Prickett, or Lori Chapman Peacock. We will discuss creating an accessible channel of communication for foster caregivers in your region, as well as ideas for gathering together. Heartland for Children believes it is best practice for our foster caregiver network to be connected for encouragement and support. Any journey in life is more enjoyable when we have others with us along the road!



Provider Spotlight:

NAFI's Functional Family Therapy in Foster Care

The Functional Family Therapy in Foster Care (FFT-FC) model is a comprehensive and systematic approach to helping families overcome individual and relational trauma. It promotes stable foster care and long-term permanency placements. The team engages foster parents and permanency families to develop a family focus to treatment, and help families unify for successful permanency placement.

It is designed for families in the foster care system with children ages 8 and up. The program can serve children and families in these circumstances:

1. Foster Family with kids going back to birth parents or another permanent placement.
2. Youth in out of home placement and are returning back to birth parents or a permanent placement.
3. Children/Youth with a TPR status and do not have a plan yet but would benefit from the support.
4. Children/Youth in Foster Care who do not have a TPR status or an identified permanent placement.
5. New foster parents just completing the class for licensing, but have no children yet, but can go through the training.

Foster families will participate in a series of trainings with FFT clinical staff. The first training is one 3-hour session and then they can actively start with the services and will continue with the training and services thereafter.

If you are interested in this service, please contact your Re-Licensing Specialist for a referral.