



Heartland for Children

FOSTER CARE NEWSLETTER

July 2024

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Dear Foster Caregivers,

I hope you are having a wonderful summer and enjoying quality time with your family. I wanted to let you know Heartland for Children has been selected by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to be the Lead Community Based Care agency going forward for the next five years. I will be signing our new contract with DCF very soon.

A strong focus area for Heartland for Children this coming year will be foster home recruitment. We must grow our foster home network in Circuit 10 to meet our local needs. We need placement options when a child(ren) needs a safe placement. Please join in our efforts to spread the news with others that our greatest need is quality foster caregivers. Our goal is to build the network back to 250 homes by June 2025. Currently, we have 180 homes. I am confident that we can do this together. Our current caregivers are our best recruiters.

Thank you for your commitment to local children and families. You are making a difference each day and I appreciate you very much.

Kim Daugherty
Chief Executive Officer
Heartland for Children



(Click on image above to go to the podcast)

In the month of June, we celebrated Father's Day! So, in this special episode of Let's Talk About It, we connect with Raymond Clay, Fatherhood Coach with Healthy Start Coalition of Hardee, Highlands and Polk Counties. Ray shares the staggering statistics of the impacts of fathers, the importance of a dad's role in the lives of their children, and the support that the TEAM Dad program provides.

To learn more about Healthy Start's TEAM Dad Program, visit <https://www.healthystarthhp.org/team-dad/>. Connect with Ray: rclay@healthystarthhp.com or call 863-512-5702

Be sure to subscribe to receive email updates on our podcast. If you have a suggestion for a podcast episode, email us at info@heartlandforchildren.org.



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Important Dates July 2024

- 9 Board rate payments disbursed
- 25 Foster Caregiver Advisory Council Meeting, 12-1 pm
- 26 TLC Monthly Meeting

HFC Online Resource Guide

HFC has added a Resource Guide to the website with which contains. Our Provider Resource Guide is a dedicated hub designed to support and empower those serving children and families in Polk, Highlands, and Hardee counties. Our mission is to connect providers with the tools, information, and community support necessary to enhance the quality of care and services available to our local families. Together, we can build a stronger, healthier, and more vibrant future for all.



Licensing Staff Spotlight

Congratulations, Chelsea Hand!

Last month, Chelsea was promoted to our Director of Foster Home Licensing! She is excited about the work and collaborating with our families to help the children and teens in our care. Chelsea can be contacted at: (863) 519-8900 ext. 217 or chand@heartlandforchildren.org



Welcome to Johnathan Figueroa!

Our Licensing team is so excited to introduce our newest member to you! Jonathan is originally from Puerto Rico. For the last 12 years, he has worked in child welfare as a Case Manager, Adoption Specialist, and most recently, Foster Parent Trainer with Embrace Families.

Foster Home Statistics

As of 6/21/24

- 42 homes licensed since July 1st, 2023
- 75 inquiries for the month of May
- 174 homes total in Circuit 10
- 33 Children & Teens entered out of home care in May 2024

YOU are our best recruiters for new foster families! Please share your stories with others and ask them to contact us at (863)519-8900 x289 if they are interested in learning more about fostering.



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Heartland Celebrates Another 5 Years!

On Friday, June 21, 2024, Kimberly Daugherty, our CEO, signed the contract with the FL Department of Children and Families (DCF) to renew our services for the next 5 years. We are all excited to see what the future holds for our system of care!

What Are the TBRI and FFT Initiatives?

Trust-Based Relational- Intervention (TBRI) is a nationally recognized evidence-based trauma informed care program model. It is designed to help caregivers provide healing relationships to children and teens especially when behaviors become challenging. Heartland is encouraging and reaching out to all foster homes to discuss enrolling with TBRI to have extra tools to assist with placements within the foster home. Foster parents will be able to use TBRI with Worthy & Known to complete yearly relicensure hours and each person will be provided a certificate of completion for the modules you complete. Please reach out to your licensing specialist for more information and how to get enrolled!

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) offered through the North American Family Institute (NAFI) is another evidenced based program for children ages 8 & up. This is a family-based practice that can strengthen bonds and provide intervention for older children that may be placed in the foster home. FFT has 3 session classes and ongoing family therapy for services, and they come directly to you in the home. Foster parents will be able to use FFT with NAFI to complete yearly relicensure hours and each person will be provided a certificate of completion for the 3 main training sessions you complete. Please reach out to your licensing specialist for more information and how to get enrolled!

The Heartland for Children Foster Care Newsletter is always looking for suggestions for features, people/events to spotlight and even ideas for gift card give aways! Please submit yours to:

Faye Dyer at fdyer@heartlandforchildren.org



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Early Learning Coalition (ELC) Referral Updates

To help expedite the ELC referral process and to assist our Department of Children and Families and our case management organizations, your HFC Placements team will be completing ELC referrals for eligible children that are placed into any level 2-5 foster homes. The ELC referral will be completed on the day of placement or the following morning if it is a late evening placement. To help us with the process, if you are accepting a daycare aged child into your home, please share the name of the daycare that you will be using when speaking with the placement specialist. Following the submission of the ELC referral, the ELC team will follow up with you to help get the child enrolled in daycare. For any ELC referral needs for children already in your home, please contact your licensing specialist and the licensing team will assist in submitting an ELC referral.

Building a Better Tomorrow Conference

The Foster and Adoptive Parent Association (FAPA) held their annual conference June 14 - 16 in Orlando, FL and we are lucky that three attending families shared their amazing experiences with us! Each talked about inspiring keynotes, knowledgeable breakout presentations, social and emotional supports from peers and amazing exhibitors. Below are a sample of their experiences.

"The keynote Keith L. Brown, Mr. I'm Possible, was phenomenal. He stood on the chairs and had everyone up dancing and interacting, he even had yours truly do a dance on the red carpet, he liked my hair, and gave me a t-shirt. I have never seen so many people participate at once" - LCP

"Tina Miller, our closing breakfast keynote, had the most inspiring and encouraging message for us. She shared her journey and showed us that she understands the journey we are on as foster and adoptive parents. This was possible my favorite presentation." -TA

"This experience was very special to us and we both agreed we cannot wait for the next conference. Thank you, Heartland, FAPA and TLC for the support, love and continued relentless belief in us as foster/adoptive caregivers!!" - GP & MS



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TLC Association News



Please make plans to join TLC Association on Friday, July 26th at 6:00 pm for our monthly dinner, social time, and training meeting. Our topic this month is "The Five Levels of Foster Care" with Chelsea Hand, Director of Foster Licensing with HFC and Martina Baker, Medical Foster Care RN. We will also have presentations on Enhanced Levels II & III as well as information regarding Therapeutic Foster Care. As always, TLC will provide a free dinner for your family and free childcare for your children during our training. Please contact Lori Chapman Peacock at loriapacocktlic@gmail.com to reserve your childcare with ages of the children and to let us know how many to prepare dinner for. We will be meeting at Trinity Baptist Church located at 6633 Old Rd 37, Lakeland 33811. We will also have our new Care Closet open for you to browse and free food to give away from 5:30 to 6:30 before the meeting.

Foster Care Advisory Council News

Each month, your Foster Care Advisory Council meets to talk about and find solutions to common concerns and issues related to fostering. June was a particularly productive month for the council. Some of the topics discussed:

- **Council Charter:** A subcommittee was formed to create a charter for the council to outline its purpose and how it will function in the coming years. The charter will soon be finalized and ready to implement. A big thank you to all who served on the subcommittee!
- **Miscommunication and/or Lack of Communication with Partnering Agencies:** The example given was a meeting that was canceled, but the providers did not notify the foster caregiver. Some solutions shared were: Ask for confirmation 1-2 days before meetings; and If this is a regular occurrence, notify supervisors and your Licensing Specialist.
- **Sibling Visits when Siblings live a great distance apart:** Recognizing each situation is unique, it was recognized that all parties involved would need to find the solution that best meets the needs of the children/teens. These solutions might include meeting half-way between the two placements; holding some of the visits virtually; and hosting a sleep over so the siblings have more time together.

If you have a topic that you would like presented at the Foster Care Advisory Council meeting, please let your Licensing Council know!



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Sunshine Health Benefits

Heartland for Children wants to share Sunshine Health benefits for children enrolled on the Child Welfare Specialty Plan.

- **Care Grant**- \$150.00 annual grant can be used for items that involve social, educational, or physical activities such as sports, sport equipment, outdoor play equipment, camps, etc. Send application and receipts to Mcastro4@heartlandforchildren.org, dcaufman@heartlandforchildren.org
- **KidzDocNow**- This telehealth service is for members 0-21 years old. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Video visit with a pediatric clinician on demand. No appointment necessary. [KidzDocNow | Sunshine Health](#)
- **Teladoc**- Access to board-certified doctors 24-7 who treat minor illnesses such as cold/flu, allergies, sinus infections, rashes, sore throats, pink eye, etc. Create an account by logging onto www.teladoc.com/sunshinehealth. Input child's name, DOB, and your email address. [Welcome to Teladoc](#)
- **OTC**- \$25.00 monthly allowance for over-the-counter items per household. You can use the benefit in store at a participating CVS. Complete order online [OTCHS Login \(cvs.com\)](#). When completing the Registration, please enter 33830 as the Zip Code. You will only be able to register 1 child as the benefit is per household. If you have additional children in the home, you will need to create a new email address in order to use the benefit. When checking out, you will see Heartland for Children's address. Please select Edit and update to your address. This will have to be completed each month as it will revert to HFC's address each month. The order can also be called in 888-262-6298 and ship the items to your address and not to Heartland for Children. [OTC OTC Benefit | Sunshine Health](#)
- **Transportation**- Free transportation with ModivCare: Unlimited for medical/mental health appointments; 3 monthly non-medical trips. Make reservations 24 hours in advance at 877-659-8420; to confirm your identity provide your name, date of birth, Medicaid number, and address on file with Sunshine. [Transportation Services \(sunshinehealth.com\)](#)
- **Nurse Advice Line**- Available 24 hours, 866-807-4490. This can be utilized for medical concerns, find network providers, reissue an ID card, and assist with supportive program referrals.
- **My Health Pays**- Visa Prepaid Card. Money is added each time a qualifying health activity is completed. [Rewards Program | Sunshine Health](#)



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Favorite Summer Recipe!

Firecracker Salmon by CafeDelites.com
Submitted by LB



Ingredients:

1 teaspoon minced Garlic
1/2 teaspoon minced ginger
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon low sodium soy sauce
1 tablespoons Heinz chili sauce (substitute with Buffalo sauce or hot sauce to suit your heat preference)
1 teaspoon brown sugar (or brown sugar substitute - OPTIONAL)
1 pinch of crushed red chili flakes
1-2 teaspoons of siracha (adjust to suit your heat preference)
4 skin off salmon fillets
Salt & pepper to season
1/2 teaspoon paprika (mild, smoky or spicy)
1/4 cup chives, chopped

Instructions

In a shallow bowl, whisk together the minced garlic, minced ginger, olive oil, soy sauce, chili sauce, brown sugar, red chili flakes and siracha to combine.

Season salmon with salt, pepper and paprika. Add salmon fillets to the marinade, turning each to evenly coat in the sauce.

Cover with plastic wrap and let marinate in the refrigerator for 2 hours or overnight (if time allows).

Preheat oven to 370F (190C). Heat an oven proof skillet over medium heat with a small drizzle of oil.

Sear salmon for 2-3 minutes on both sides, undisturbed, to get a nice crust. Transfer to plate and repeat with remaining salmon.

Return all salmon fillets to the skillet. Alternatively, transfer to a baking dish. Bake for 8-10 minutes, or until cooked to your liking.

Serve warm with chopped chives.

Hosted by Heartland for Children



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for children in the foster care system & post-adoptive families in Polk, Highlands & Hardee Counties.

GIVEAWAYS
FREE SCHOOL SUPPLIES, BAGS & MORE



SATURDAY, JULY 27
10AM-1PM

FREE School Supplies for Kids (Grades K-12), Lunch, Hair Cuts, Sports Physicals, Giveaways, Bounce Houses, Firetruck, Games and more!

Heartland Youth Village - Activity Center
(Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranch)

3350 E State Rd 60, Bartow, FL 33830

Space is limited to the first 350 people who register.
To attend you **MUST** register by Friday, July 19.

