

October 2024

# News You Can Use

## Foster Parent Newsletter



Dear Tita,

Each month, we provide important information and resources that help caregivers throughout Brevard and the tri-county area meet the needs of the children in their homes.

And we've got lots of information to share in this issue, including:

- A new point-of-contact resource
- In-service training opportunities
- New background screening requirements for "visitors"
- An opportunity to participate in a focus group for foster parents of older teens

If you need information about a topic we haven't covered, or you'd just like to learn a bit more, please reach out to us at [communications@fpocf.org](mailto:communications@fpocf.org). We'll try to include information about the topic in an upcoming edition.

As always, thanks for all you do!

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## Initial Clothing Allowance

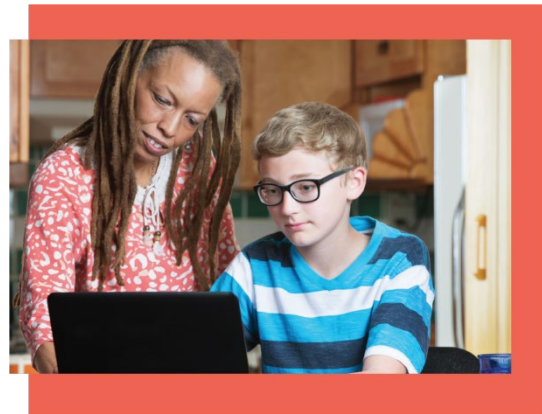
The process for issuing an initial clothing allowance is now consistent across all counties. When a child is sheltered by a child protective investigator (CPI) and placed in a foster home for the first time, there will be an initial clothing allowance of \$150 issued within 30 days. This is only

for the first long-term placement and does not include night-to-night placements.

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## New 'Visitor' Definition, Background Screening

Chapter 39 was updated this summer with a new definition of visitor and background screening requirements, and we've recently received guidance from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) regarding who this affects.



"Visitor" means a person who provides care or supervision to a child in the home at any time or who will be in the child's home at least five consecutive days or seven days or more in one month.

This means that anyone who acts in a caregiving capacity in a foster home must be fully background screened. This includes babysitters, people who care for the kids as additional support, and medical professionals, such as nurses.

If someone provides care to the kids placed in your home but has not been background screened, please let your relicensing coordinator know right away so we can begin the screening process.

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## Focus Group on Parenting Older Foster Teens

The [Florida Institute for Child Welfare](#) is collaborating with foster parents on the adaptation of a brief online parenting intervention for foster parents caring for youth ages 12 and older who have behavioral needs related to traumatic

experiences. The institute is currently conducting focus groups with foster parents and offering an incentive for participation.

**Eligibility:** Foster parents who are or have had experience caring for teens with trauma-related behavioral challenges will be considered, with up to 10 foster parents recruited for the study.

**Participation:** Participation is voluntary, and foster parents may withdraw from the study at any time. Foster parents chosen to participate will complete two 90-minute audio-recorded interviews or focus groups via Zoom. Participants will receive a \$75 gift card after completing each interview or focus group (up to \$150 total).

Examples of interview topics include:

- Your experiences with adolescent behavioral or emotional challenges.
- Strategies you have learned to support adolescents with behavioral and emotional challenges.
- Your understanding of trauma symptoms in adolescents.

[MORE INFORMATION | LINK TO APPLICATION](#)

## In-service Training Opportunities

### Step Up for Students

- Date: **Nov. 5 at 7 p.m. via Zoom**
- Topic: Scholarship opportunities available to children in Florida, with Q&A
- Pre-registration is required at <https://tinyurl.com/3ctcwrwm>.



- After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the session.

## IEP Process

- Presenter: Alisia Campos, former Youth Services team member
- Date: **Nov. 14 at 7 p.m. via Zoom**
- Topic: Navigating the IEP process.
- Pre-registration is required at <https://tinyurl.com/343pdsau>.
- After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the session. In-service training hours will be provided for caregivers who attend.

## Lunch and Learn

### Topic: Senate Bill 80

- Date: Nov. 6, 12-1 p.m., via Teams
- [Join the meeting](#)  
Meeting ID: 292 514 007 628  
Passcode: FK5XZE

### Topic: Vicarious Trauma

- Presenter: Lifetime Counseling
- Date: Nov. 13, 12-1 p.m., via Teams
- [Join the meeting](#)  
Meeting ID: 240 203 174 833  
Passcode: FTWvsF

### Topic: Introduction to Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI)

- Date: Nov. 20, 12-1 p.m., via Teams
- [Join the meeting](#)  
Meeting ID: 244 260 914 833  
Passcode: dwVq2B



## Sunshine Health Over-the-Counter Benefit

Sunshine Health is now accepted at CVS, Walgreens and Publix pharmacies. And have you used the over-the-counter benefit this month?

Through Sunshine Health, each participant can receive up to \$25 worth of over-the-counter items every month.

Use this benefit to purchase items like baby wipes, vitamins and Tylenol tablets. You can also get everyday items like laundry detergent, soap and toothbrushes. Visit the [Sunshine over-the-counter web page](#) for details.

If you have problems accessing the benefit or have questions about anything related to Sunshine Health, please contact one of our nurse care coordinators for assistance: Sabrina Beharie at [Sabrina.Beharie@fpocf.org](mailto:Sabrina.Beharie@fpocf.org) or 407-490-6665 in Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties and [Lauren.Madden@brevardfp.org](mailto:Lauren.Madden@brevardfp.org) in Brevard County.

## In Brief & Reminders

### Point of Contact Guide

We now have a [point of contact guide](#) to help you quickly connect with the person best able to meet your needs when you have inquiries and questions about licensing, adoptions, youth services, subsidies and much more. It's available [online](#).



### Camera Policy Changes

DCF has new guidance related to cameras in licensed homes. This includes baby monitors and ring cameras. All cameras must be approved by DCF and able to record and store video footage for 14 days.

### Planning Ahead for the Holidays

Family Partnerships of Central Florida will be closed Nov. 28 and 29 for the Thanksgiving holiday. Please remember to communicate your out-of-state travel plans as soon as you know them or at least 14 days prior to leaving to give all parties the opportunity to agree or object and for a court involvement if needed.

### Foster Care Board Payment Schedule

Foster board and childcare subsidies are issued the second Thursday of the month following the date of service. Below are the payment dates for the remainder of the year:

- October services reimbursed Nov. 14.
- November services reimbursed Dec. 12.
- December services reimbursed Jan. 9.



## October Foster Parent Spotlight

**Julie and Steven Muckerheide**, recognized by case management. "I wanted to say that Julie and Steve are amazing. I have never worked with foster parents as kind and genuine as they are. Julie and Steve are the ideal foster parents. They are accommodating to the difficulties that present themselves in foster

care. They are advocates for the kids in their home, as well as their families when appropriate. They are understanding to the kids and families, as well as case managers. They go above and beyond for the boys, and I'm sure for all other kids, as well. They are remarkable. Julie and Steve should be applauded for all that they do. These two boys do not make it easy for them, but they have not given up. They are actively advocating for the boys' biological mother because she ... is doing amazing. They are the most selfless and kind people I have had the pleasure of meeting/working with, and I am glad to know them."

**The Brechbills Family**, recognized by case management. "The Brechbills are an incredible family. They have a lot going on in their home, and it is all managed SO incredibly well. They are a breath of fresh air. They always include the kids in their family plans, including vacations, day trips, etc. They keep the kids busy and organized on a routine. They truly have a gift of being foster parents."



## We Appreciate You!

### About Family Partnerships of Central Florida

Family Partnerships of Central Florida is committed to protecting children, strengthening families and changing lives through a comprehensive, integrated, community-based system of care that provides adoption, foster care and independent living services for children and families in Brevard, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties.

Contracted with the Florida Department of Children and Families as the lead child welfare agency in the four-county area, Family Partnerships of Central Florida's mission is to ensure that the children it serves thrive in safe, healthy and loving families.



## Family Partnerships of Central Florida

BREVARD | ORANGE | OSCEOLA | SEMINOLE

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