



Helpful Resources and Support Opportunities

- [Partner Family Resources - Partnership For Strong Families](#)
- [North Florida Foster Adoptive Parent Association](#)
- [Caregiver Support Email](#)
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Back to School: Helping Children Start Strong

The start of a new school year brings excitement, new opportunities, and often a few challenges. New routines, teachers, classmates, and expectations can be overwhelming for children who have experience trauma, loss, or multiple transitions. As a caregiver, you play an important role in helping children feel prepared and supported. Whether your child is preparing for the first day or has already settled into a new routine, use the checklist below as a quick “back-to-school check-in” to celebrate what’s been accomplished and identify any remaining tasks that can help set the year up for success.

Back-To-School Reminders

- Transportation & Daily Routines
- Educational Supports
- After-School Routines
- School Communication
- School Supplies & Clothing
- Appointments, Therapy & Family Time

Community Connection

The beginning of a new school year often brings questions about educational supports and accommodations. Through the North Florida Foster Adoptive Parent Association (FAPA), caregivers have access to guidance from Dr. Lorilynn Bowie, Educational Advocate.

If you have questions and would like additional guidance, contact North Florida FAPA to learn more about available educational advocacy resources..

Agency News Update

Coming Soon: Florida's Child Welfare Information System

Florida is in the process of moving to a new child welfare information system called the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS). This change is part of a nationwide effort to modernize how child welfare agencies collect, share, and manage information to better support children and families.

For foster parents, the goal of the CCWIS transition is simple: improve communication, accuracy, and coordination across the child welfare system. The new system is designed to give authorized professionals faster access to important information about a child's needs, services, medical care, education, and placement history. By reducing duplicate data entry and improving information sharing, case managers and support staff can spend more time focusing on children and families.

During the transition, foster parents may notice changes in forms, processes, or the way information is shared. There may be temporary adjustments as staff learn the new system, but the long-term goal is a more efficient and user-friendly experience for everyone involved in child welfare.

What will not change is the critical role foster parents play in a child's life. Your observations, documentation, and partnership with the child welfare team remain essential. As Florida continues its CCWIS implementation, foster parents can help by responding promptly to requests for information and staying informed about any updates shared by their local community-based care agency.

The move to CCWIS represents an investment in a stronger, more connected child welfare system, helping ensure that children, caregivers, and professionals have the information they need to support safety, well-being, and permanency.

Payment & Reimbursement Corner

A Note about Adoption Subsidy Payments

Effective September, 2026 monthly Adoption Subsidy Payments will be issued under the same schedule current Board Rate and GAP payments are issued. This change will help ensure our payment process aligns with workflows to improve operational efficiency and payment processing.

Standard Board Rate Update

The Legislature approved and increased in Standard Board Rates set by DCF in July 2026. The current rate for 0-5 year olds is \$663.03, 6-12 year olds is \$680.01, and ages 13 and up is \$795.94 plus 10% IL stipend. If you have a child in your care now, you would have seen this increase in your most recent direct deposit. Please use the QR code to access the payment portal to check for accuracy.



Back to School & Family Connection

Helping Children Transition from School to Home

For many children, especially those who have experienced trauma or have developmental differences, the school day requires a tremendous amount of emotional, social, and mental energy. By the time they arrive home, they may be running on empty.

Remember, difficult after-school behaviors don't always mean your child had a bad day. Home is often where children feel safest expressing big emotions. Setting the home environment up for success can help children make the transition more easily.

The Reset Routine

A simple way to help children transition from school to home..

R-Rest

Give your child time to decompress after the school day. Some children need quiet time; others may benefit from movement or a calming activity. Not every child is ready to talk the moment they get home

E- Empower

Meet physiological and sensory needs first. Offer a healthy snack, water and any sensory supports your child needs. A regulated body is better prepared to learn, connect, and succeed.

S- Spend Time Together in Connection

Before homework or difficult conversations, spend a few minutes connecting. Read together, play a game, sit and talk, or simply enjoy being together. Connection helps children feel safe and understood.

T- Transition

Once your child has time to rest, refuel, and reconnect, transition into homework and an evening routine. Moving from connection to expectation often leads to greater success.

Learn to Earn

Click the QR code for a short video on transitions from the Child Mind Institute.

They detail five steps to help with transitions. What is number four?

Email christy.vanvaley@pfsf.org for your chance to win a gift card.



Something to Remember

Children may not remember every word we say, but they remember how safe, supported, and connected they felt with us.

Know someone interested in foster care? Have them email HopePartner@pfsf.org or call (352) 244-1615 to learn more!