



PARTNERSHIP FOR
STRONG
FAMILIES

Partner Family Connection *Newsletter*

September 2026



Helpful Resources and Support Opportunities

- [Partner Family Resources - Partnership For Strong Families](#)
- [North Florida Foster Adoptive Parent Association](#)
- [Frontliner Registration](#)
- [Caregiver Support Email](#)
- [Placement Email](#)
- [Payment Questions Email](#)
- [Primary Care Provider Change Email](#)

Celebrating the Heart of Foster Care

**We look forward to seeing all of you that have registered for our
Foster Family Fall Festival October 3rd, 2026 at 11:00am.
There will be food, games and giveaways!**

Thanks to the Alan Madden Foundation who partners with Proctor and Gamble, no one will leave empty handed. The Alan Madden Foundation supports children and young adults involved in foster care by providing resources and opportunities that help them build stable, successful, and independent lives. The foundation assists youth with education, career development, life skills, mentoring, transportation, housing, and connections to community resources.

Through programs such as Rising Voices, youth can also receive musical instruments and lessons. The Alan Madden Foundation works to help foster youth overcome barriers, prepare for adulthood, pursue their educational and career goals, and successfully transition to independence.

Agency Update

DCF has postponed the implementation of the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System that was set to take place October 1, 2026. We have not yet been given a new go live date.

The Hidden Grief Of Foster Care



Foster Care carries a kind of grief that is often unseen, unnamed, and misunderstood. Crystal Small-Rivera will be hosting a 4-week virtual series for the North Florida FAPA. Join us September 8, 2026 at 6pm as we explore the hidden grief of foster care and the emotional impact of loving, attaching, releasing and continuing to care. For more information email christy.vanvaley@pfsf.org.

Crystal Small-Rivera is a licensed clinical social worker, trauma-informed educator, and founder of Root Work Counseling, LLC and Small Adjustments Foundation. She is the creator of the Capacity Wise Series which provides neuroscience-informed, evidence-based, and faith-respected psychoeducation for individuals, families, caregivers and community organizations.

Learn to Earn

Visit [North Florida FAPA YouTube Channel](#) to find more information about [The Hidden Grief of Foster Care](#). Take a screenshot of the YouTube Channel. Email christy.vanvaley@pfsf.org for your chance to win a gift card.

August Learn to Earn
Winner
Marilyn Y

Share a Moment that Mattered

From school activities and celebrations to dance lessons and school uniforms, normalcy funds help the youth in your care enjoy the opportunities every child deserves. Because these funds are 100% donor-supported, we need your help telling the story. Please send our development team photos and short stories so we can share the impact with the community that makes it possible. Please remember that photos must protect the youth's privacy, so please take from behind or side, you can get creative. Quotes and brief stories of impact are also powerful. Help us ensure we can continue providing normalcy funds for our children!

Please send to get.engaged@pfsf.org.

Picture examples:

- A youth from behind wearing their sports uniform on the field or court.
- A youth in a dance costume photographed from the back or side, without their face visible.
- Hands holding a recital program, dance shoes, or competition ribbons.
- A birthday cake, decorated party table, presents, or a candle-blowing moment photographed from behind.
- A child participating in an activity where only their hands, feet, or back are visible.

Story examples:

"Thanks to normalcy funds, our teen was able to join the school soccer team this season. It gave them a chance to build friendships, stay active, and feel connected to their peers."

"Normalcy funds helped us celebrate our child's birthday with a small party and cake. Seeing their excitement and sense of belonging made the day truly special."

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Month

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) are lifelong brain-based disabilities caused by prenatal alcohol exposure. FASD can affect how a person learns, processes information, regulates emotions and behavior, and manages the demands of everyday life.

FASD may affect:

- Executive functioning, such as, planning, organizing and completing tasks
- Working memory and remembering learned information
- Attention and the ability to shift from one task to another
- Processing speed
- Impulse control
- Emotional and behavioral regulation
- Understanding cause and effect
- Problem-solving and judgment
- Social skills and interpreting social cues
- Adaptive skills needed for everyday life



Resources

The Early Center for Early Childhood has many resources and additional information. If you have a child with confirmed prenatal alcohol exposure, they can also evaluate your child for FASD.

Visit their [training calendar](#) to find information to help better understand the complexities of FASD

FASD can be difficult to recognize because its symptoms often overlap with other developmental, behavioral and mental health conditions. A child may also have FASD and another diagnosis at the same time. The goal isn't to replace one diagnosis with another, it is to make sure we understand the whole child. Three areas caregivers may hear discussed include ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder and Attachment Concerns.

ADHD

Attention difficulties, impulsivity, hyperactivity and executive-function challenges are common in FASD. In fact, ADHD is the most common co-occurring diagnosis identified in children with FASD. But sometimes what appears to be ADHD may also reflect differences in working memory, processing speed, cognitive flexibility and the brain's ability to take in and organize information.

Autism Spectrum Disorder

FASD and autism can share challenges involving social communication, sensory processing, regulation and understanding social situations. They can also occur together. A comprehensive evaluation can help identify what is driving a child's individual challenges so that supports are matched to the child's needs.

Attachment Concerns

Children involved in foster care and adoption may understandably have histories that lead professionals to consider attachment and trauma. However, brain-based differences associated with FASD can also affect social judgment, boundaries, emotional regulation, memory and the ability to learn from previous experiences. A child with FASD may desperately want relationships and connection while repeatedly making social mistakes. This is especially important when thinking about empathy. A child may care deeply about another person but have difficulty connecting an action to its consequence, remembering what happened previously, reading another person's response, or accessing what they have learned when dysregulated. What can appear to be a lack of remorse or empathy may sometimes reflect a brain struggling to process all of those pieces together.

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