

March 2025

News You Can Use

Foster Parent Newsletter



Dear Tita,

With summertime comes hurricane season. Are you prepared? If not, now is the perfect time to start planning, and the [National Weather Service](#) offers great advice about supplies you'll need for your emergency kit, evacuation plans and ways to strengthen your home. In this issue, we've also included information about what we need from you to ensure you and your family are safe in the event of a storm.

Here's what else you'll find:

- Foster parents receive cost of living increase
- Survey to share your 'why'
- Scholarships available for annual conference
- Advisory council to launch soon
- In-service training opportunities
- Reminders (board payment schedule, complete medication logs, Sunshine Health OTC benefit)
- Foster parent spotlights

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. We'll try to include information about the topic in an upcoming edition.

As always, thanks for all you do!



Foster Parents Receive Cost of Living Increase

We realize your role as a foster family is a calling, but we also recognize that there are many personal sacrifices and expenses that come with having additional children in your home. To help make your invaluable role a little easier, we are pleased to share that **the monthly board rate has increased to the**

following:

License Level and Age Range	Monthly Room and Board Rate Effective Jan. 1, 2025
Level I Ages (0 – 5)	\$586.90
Level I Ages (6 – 12)	\$601.94
Level I-V Ages (13 – 17)	\$704.56

- There is an additional supplemental payment of \$70.46 monthly pertaining to life skills for youth ages 13 -17 years old.
- **These increases do not apply for children who have a child-specific rate.**

This adjusted rate **and** any applicable retroactive payments for January were reflected in your February board payment, which was paid March 13. If you have any questions about this increase, or anything else, please call Lori Garcia at 407-490-6722. She will be happy to assist you or direct you to someone on our team who can help.

Share Your 'Why'

As foster parents, you play a vital role in the lives of our children and our system of care. You have so generously opened your heart and home, and this system doesn't work without you. We'd love to know your 'why.' What made you decide to become a foster parent? What drives your commitment to our children?

We hope you'll take a moment to share your 'why' with us by completing our [survey](#), which will be open through April 15.





Scholarships Available for Annual Conference

The annual [Foster and Adoptive Parent Annual Education Conference \(FAPA\)](#) will be held June 13-15 at the Doubletree by Hilton Orlando at SeaWorld, and we are excited to announce that we have scholarships available on a first-come, first-served basis for 30 people who would like to attend.

Additionally, a NexGen session is open to youth ages 10-18 whose lives have been impacted by foster care or adoption. Six scholarships are also available for this group. Participants must be accompanied by an adult who is also registered for the conference. More details about this program will be released soon on the [FAPA page](#).

If you're interested in attending and would like to apply for a scholarship, please contact Monica.Martin@brevardfp.org by April 30.

Please note that children younger than 10, including infants, will not be able to join you in the general sessions and workshops or during meals. If you are planning to bring children, please arrange for another adult to stay with them during conference events.

[Registration](#) for the conference is now open.

Time to Prepare for Hurricane Season

Spring is the perfect time to start preparing for hurricane season, which begins June 1 and ends Nov. 30.

One first step is ensuring that we have the correct cell phone number and email address for you so we may connect with you about your plans. Please let your relicensing specialist know if you have made any changes to either, so we can update our system.

These are needed for our emergency communication with you, which include two procedures. When a storm is approaching, we will send alerts by text, phone



call and email to ask if you are prepared with an evacuation plan. You'll be prompted to answer by one of those methods to let us know if you do or do not have a plan, and your response will be recorded. Please respond as soon as possible. Because we are required to report that we have connected with all our caregivers, a member of our staff will continue to contact you until we gather this information.

Following a storm, the same process will occur so that we can determine if your family and the children and youth in your care are safe. You will again be prompted to respond via text, email or phone call, and we will continue to reach out to you until we have received a response.



Advisory Council to Launch Soon

As we continue moving toward one integrated licensing department for Brevard, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties, we are creating a formal charter for an advisory council of foster parents and system of care team members to represent all counties.

This group will develop and advocate for solutions-based initiatives that enhance the foster care system and support caregivers in their invaluable role. Look for more information soon.

In-Service Training Opportunities

TBRI Training: We had a wonderful response to the TBRI training class taking place March 26-April 30. That session is now full, but we're happy to announce that we'll be offering another session next quarter. More information about upcoming dates and times for the training will be provided soon.



Mid-Year Changes for Foster Homes: This 30-minute online training can be accessed through your [MyFLLearn](#) account. If you have not taken it, please do

so. It covers information that needs to be reported immediately to licensing when mid-year changes take place.

Youth Services In-Service Foster Parent Training: Our Youth Services team will be holding a virtual training session April 22, 6-7 p.m., that focuses on fostering teens. All foster parents are welcome to participate.

- **Join the meeting**
- Meeting ID: 294 090 228 81
- Passcode: gzF9z74P

Compassion Fatigue Lunch and Learn: This session is presented by Lifetime Counseling April 21, 12-1 p.m.

- **Join the meeting**
- Meeting ID: 299 404 333 133
- Passcode: 3rp9zrE2



Reminders

Foster Care Board Payment Schedule Set

Foster board and childcare subsidies are issued the second Thursday of the month following the date of service. Below is the reimbursement schedule for the next four months.

- March services reimbursed April 10
- April services reimbursed May 8
- May services reimbursed June 12
- June services reimbursed July 10

Don't Forget to Complete Your Medication Logs

Caregivers, we need your help to achieve compliance with psychotropic medication requirements.

Case managers are required to review and obtain medication logs (maintained daily) at each home visit. We are asking caregivers in Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties to please [complete and upload the logs](#) to the [caregiver](#)

[portal](#) and for caregivers in Brevard County to email [them](#) to BHS@familyallies.org.

This will ensure that the logs are properly saved to FSFN for the child's official record. If you cannot access the portal or have difficulties uploading the forms, please email them to your assigned case manager. Your assistance with this important step is greatly appreciated.

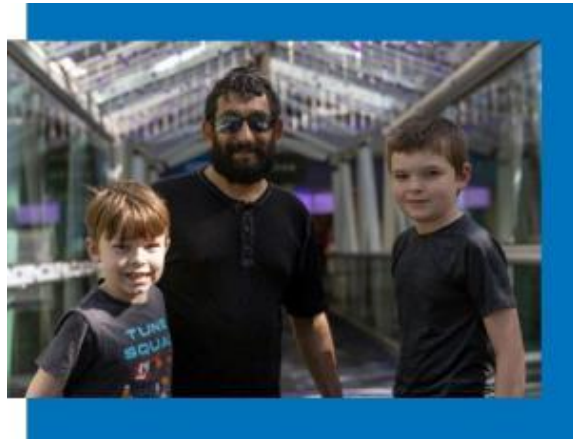
Over-the-Counter Benefit Increases

Visit [Sunshine Health's benefits overview page](#) for details about the benefits available through the agency's specialty plan. Select the expanded benefits option at the end of the information to see a list of old and new benefits, including an **increase in the monthly over-the-counter benefit from \$25 to \$50**. If you have problems accessing the benefit or questions related to the Sunshine Health plan, please contact one of our nurse care coordinators:

- Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties — Sabrina Beharie, Sabrina.Beharie@fpocf.org or 407-490-6665, and Gayle Hicks, Gayle.Hicks@fpocf.org or 407-619-8762.
- Brevard County — Lauren.Madden@brevardfp.org.

Foster Parent Spotlights

Imran Rajwani has been fostering since 2021. It began with one child, but he saw the need and bought bunk beds so he could help two more children. He has also helped keep siblings together. Once a child is placed in his home, he is fully invested in them. He works hard to help them receive the services they need and follows up consistently to ensure things get done. He recently adopted two boys who had been in and out of the system for years. They had been removed from their previous foster homes, but he took them in and gave them a chance. It was not always easy, but Imran was able to give the boys what they needed, and they have been thriving in his home. He bonded with the boys so much he made the decision to adopt them and be their forever home. The boys have grown so much in his care, and we are so thankful for Imran's dedication and commitment to his boys and all his foster kids.



Jessica and Michael Howell are a true example of what it means to be a foster family. A child was placed in their home in 2022, shortly before her birthday so

the family held a birthday party for her and invited her sibling and mother to attend. They also facilitated ongoing contact with her mother and grandparents, allowing the child to speak to her mother daily, drove her to and from any appointments and extracurricular activities, and kept case management abreast of everything related to her care. When the child was preparing to move to Tennessee, the family helped coordinate the change. Jessica and her family think of the child often and pray for her, and Jessica remains a resource for the child. This family is so loving and caring, and they accept any child that comes into their home as a child of their own, and you truly would not know otherwise.

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