



Benchmark Family Services

Therapeutic Foster Care

"FEBRUARY IS THE BORDER BETWEEN WINTER AND SPRING."
-TERRI GUILLEMETS

Happy Valentine's Day! We would like to take a moment to celebrate what we hold dear - our fantastic foster parents, dedicated staff, and our commitment to providing the best therapeutic care to young individuals in need. Your hard work and dedication is truly remarkable, and we are honored to have you as part of our team.

In this edition of our newsletter, we have a few things in store for you. We have a list of virtual trainings specifically designed for foster parents, to enhance your skills and knowledge. These trainings will give you the tools to take your parenting game to the next level, and help you continue to provide the best possible care to the children in your care.

We also know that winter can sometimes be a little boring, which is why we've included an article on indoor activities that are both fun and educational. No more excuses for "I'm bored," because these activities will keep little minds and bodies active even on the coldest days.

So, make yourself a hot beverage, take a deep breath, and let's dive into this edition of our newsletter. And as always, we are grateful for all you do, and for being a part of our team.

[Visit Our Website](#)

Upcoming Events

Virtual Training Opportunities

Our virtual training sessions are live webinars, and count toward your face-to-face training hours for the year. We added all virtual training opportunities for the year to our website. Click [here](#) to easily find and sign up for the courses that are most convenient for you!

02/09: Empty & Broken Promises

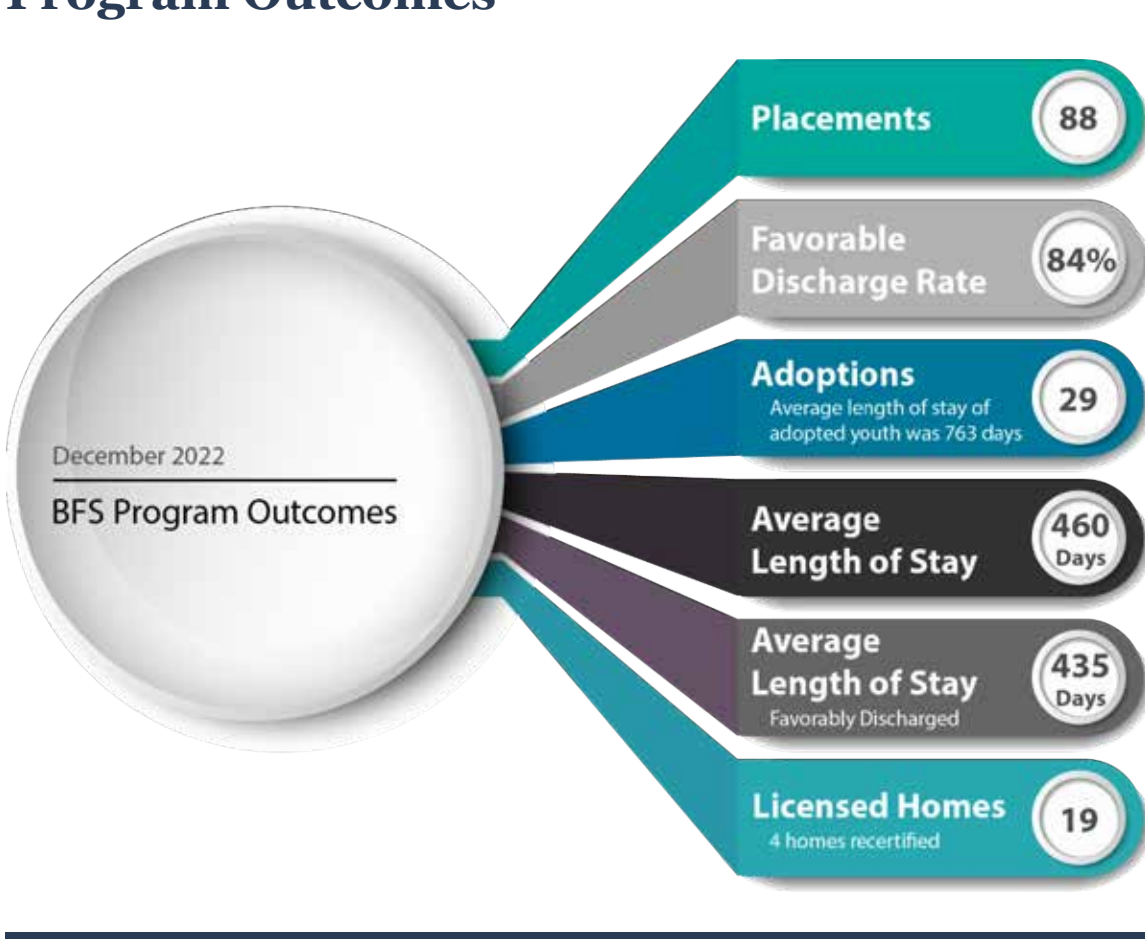
02/18: ADHD



Don't miss out on training opportunities or any of your office's upcoming events! Just click the link below to go to our website and find your local office!

[View Calendar \[Full Training List\]](#)

Program Outcomes



Therapeutic Foster Parents Needed

Did you know?

Over **420k** children in foster care

Over **250k** enter care each year

61% enter due to NEGLECT

Every month, our agency receives more referrals for children in foster care than we have beds to accommodate. With your help, we will be able to provide more of these children with a good home and a bed to rest their head. Please help spread the word and get your friends and family involved in our mission.

Remember, if you are currently a foster parent with us and you successfully refer a new foster parent to our agency, you will receive a referral bonus. Please reach out to our regional office for more information!

Indoor Activities For Kids During Cold Weather

Winter weather can be harsh, and with the colder temperatures and snow, kids can feel cooped up inside. But there are many fun indoor activities to keep kids entertained and active during the winter months. Whether your children are preschoolers or teenagers, here are a few ideas for indoor activities that will keep them engaged and entertained.

- Art Projects:** Art is a great way for kids to express their creativity and imagination. Give your children a variety of art supplies such as paper, markers, crayons, paint, and more. They can create anything from drawings to paintings and collages. You can also have them make homemade gifts for friends and family.
- Baking:** Baking is not only a fun activity, but it also teaches kids about cooking and nutrition. Let your children help you make cookies, cakes, or other treats. They can measure out ingredients, mix, and decorate their creations. And of course, they get to taste the final product!
- Board Games:** Board games are a great way to bring the family together and have some fun. From classic games like Monopoly and Sorry, to newer games like Splendor and Ticket to Ride, there are many options to choose from. If your kids are younger, consider getting them educational games like Chutes and Ladders or Candy Land to help with their development.
- Reading:** Encourage your kids to get lost in a good book. Let them choose books from the library or buy some new ones. If your kids are younger, read to them and have them follow along. For older kids, have them read to you or have a family book club where everyone reads the same book, and then discusses it.
- Indoor Obstacle Course:** Create an indoor obstacle course for your kids to navigate. Use furniture, pillows, and other household items to create a fun and challenging course. Have your kids race each other or see who can complete the course the fastest.
- Crafts:** Crafts are a great way for kids to express their creativity and imagination. You can buy craft kits or gather supplies like glue, construction paper, and beads to make things like jewelry, picture frames, and more.
- Movie Night:** Pick a family-friendly movie and have a movie night. Snuggle up on the couch with blankets and pillows and enjoy a good movie. You can even have a themed movie night, where you all watch movies based on a specific topic or genre.
- Science Experiments:** Science experiments are a great way for kids to learn about the world around them. You can do simple experiments like making slime or creating a homemade volcano. There are many science experiment books available at the library or online that can give you ideas for fun and educational experiments.
- Indoor Exercise:** Exercise is important for kids, even when it's cold outside. Create an indoor workout routine that includes activities like jumping jacks, push-ups, and sit-ups. You can also invest in some fun exercise equipment like a mini trampoline or hula hoops.
- Build with Building Blocks:** Building blocks are a classic toy that kids of all ages can enjoy. You can use blocks to create towers, buildings, and more. Or, you can use blocks to create fun games like Jenga or Tumbling Towers.
- Have a Dance Party:** Turn on some music and have a dance party. Dancing is a fun way for kids to get moving and stay active. You can also create fun dance routines or have a dance competition.
- Play Video Games:** Video games can be a fun and interactive way for kids to spend their time indoors. From action-packed games to educational games, there is something for every type of kid. Just make sure to set time limits and encourage breaks to avoid overuse.

There are many fun indoor activities for kids during cold weather. From arts and crafts to science experiments and dance parties, there is something for every child's interest and skill level. Encourage your children to try new things and spend quality time together as a family. And remember, the most important thing is to have fun and stay active.

Employee of the Month

Kentucky: Briana Hammons, Therapeutic Support Specialist, Berea Office

Briana started with Berea in August 2021 as a Therapeutic Support Specialist and jumped right in with her positive, eager to learn attitude. Briana has built great rapport with not only her foster parents, but the kiddos she works with as well. She has shown great time management skills and is efficient in her day-to-day tasks as a TSS. Lately, she has stepped up and shown initiative to help newer TSS's understand their role and the BFS culture. She is such a vital part of our team at the Berea Regional Office, and we cannot thank her enough for all she does!

Indiana: Brooke Laughlin, Therapeutic Support Specialist, Indianapolis Office

Brooke has been a valuable member of our team for almost a year now and has consistently demonstrated her commitment to providing exceptional support to her foster families. Her passion for her work is truly evident in the way she interacts with families and carries out her responsibilities. Brooke embodies the PACE values of our agency and consistently demonstrates a strong work ethic and positive attitude. She is a dedicated employee who consistently strives for excellence in her work, always looking for ways to improve her productivity, customer service and overall effectiveness. Her commitment to her role has not gone unnoticed and it is with great pleasure that we nominate her for Employee of the Month.



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