

Happy Thanksgiving!



“Fallen leaves lying on the grass in the November sun bring more happiness than the daffodils.”

— Cyril Connolly



Benchmark Family Services
Therapeutic Foster Care

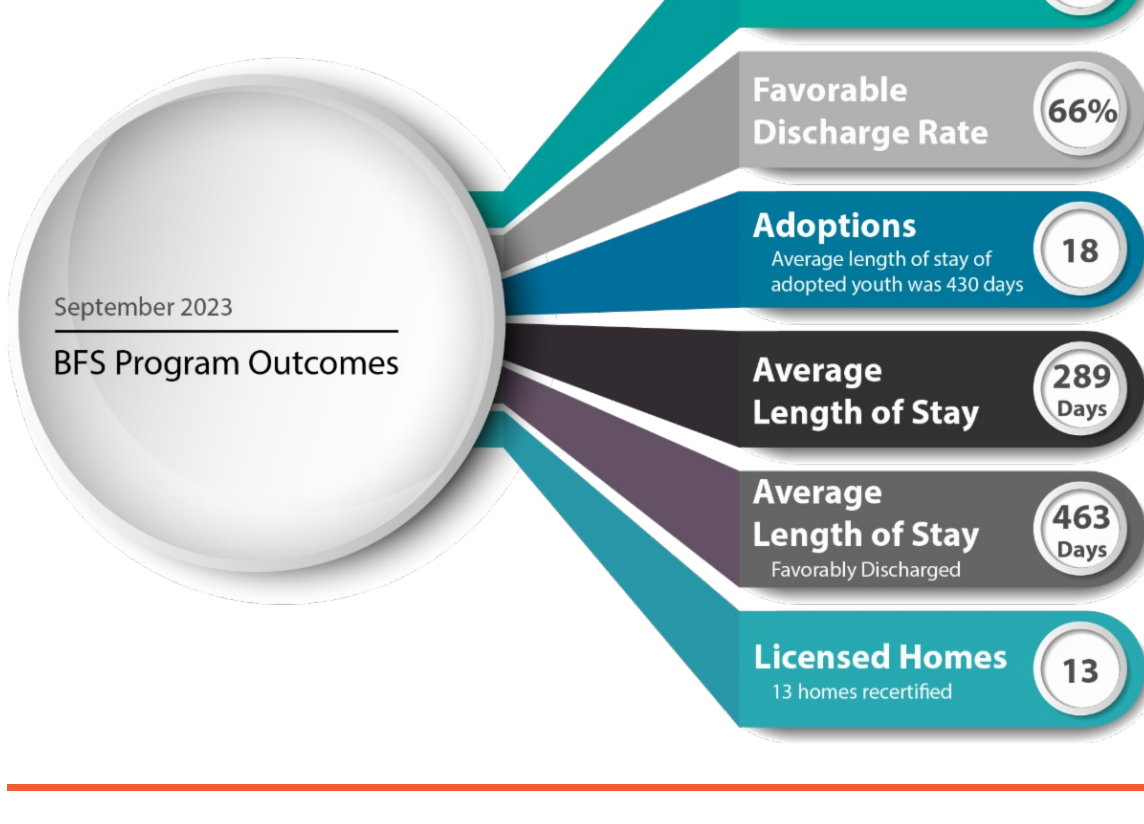
As Thanksgiving approaches, we want to express our gratitude for foster parents and staff like you! Wishing you and your family a wonderful Thanksgiving and joyous holiday season!

As we enter the holiday season, it's crucial to be aware that some youth in foster care may feel particularly vulnerable. Check out the article below for valuable tips on supporting these youth as they navigate their emotions during this time.

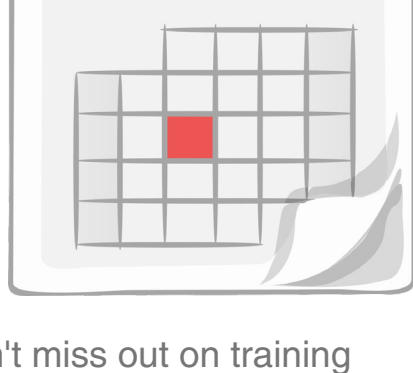
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Program Outcomes



Mark Your Calendar



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](#)

Virtual Training

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!

November

11/16: [Children in Foster Care and Holidays](#)

December

12/7: [Learning Disabilities](#)

12/12: [Working with the State](#)

Nurturing Holiday Joy: Supporting Foster Youth Throughout the Festive Season

The holiday season is a time of joy, connection, and reflection. As foster parents, your role becomes even more pivotal during this special time, providing a safe and supportive space for the children in your care. Here are some thoughtful ways to support foster youth throughout the holidays, ensuring a season filled with warmth and lasting memories.

Create Inclusive Traditions

Building inclusive holiday traditions can help foster youth to feel a sense of belonging. Involve them in the decision-making process for holiday activities, decorations, and special meals. By incorporating their preferences and cultural backgrounds, you not only create a festive atmosphere but also demonstrate that their presence and contributions are valued.

Open Communication

The holidays can bring a mix of emotions for foster youth. Encourage open communication about their feelings, expectations, and any anxieties they may have. Create a safe space for them to express themselves, reassuring them that it's okay to feel a range of emotions during this time. Active listening and understanding go a long way in fostering a supportive environment.

Maintain Consistency

While the holidays often bring changes in routine, strive to maintain a sense of consistency for foster youth. Predictability can be grounding for children in care, helping them feel secure amid the festive hustle and bustle. Clearly communicate any schedule adjustments and prepare them for upcoming events to ease potential anxiety.

Thoughtful Gift-Giving

When selecting gifts, consider the unique preferences and interests of each foster child. Thoughtful gift-giving shows that you've taken the time to understand their individual needs and desires. It's not about the monetary value but rather the thought and consideration behind the present that can make a lasting impact.

Cultivating Holiday Connections

Facilitate meaningful connections for foster youth during the holiday season. While not all children may have the opportunity for visits with their biological families, there are alternative ways to foster connections. Encourage the creation of holiday cards, video messages, or other thoughtful gestures that allow them to connect with loved ones, even if from a distance. This can provide a sense of continuity and belonging during this special time of the year. Work collaboratively with the child to explore creative and heartwarming ways to maintain connections with those they hold dear.

Self-Care for Foster Parents

Lastly, don't forget to prioritize your own well-being. The holidays can be demanding, and self-care is crucial to maintaining the energy and patience needed to support foster youth. Take breaks when necessary, seek support from your fostering community, and remember that your well-being directly contributes to the positive environment you provide for the children.

Fostering a supportive and inclusive environment during the holidays requires understanding, communication, and a genuine commitment to each child's well-being. By incorporating these strategies, you can create a festive atmosphere that fosters joy, security, and a sense of belonging for the foster youth in your care. Together, let's make this holiday season a truly special and memorable time for every child in our extended family.

Referral Bonus Opportunity



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 your regional office for more information!

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Employee of the Month

Kentucky: Joyce LaRusch

Therapist/Treatment Director,
Somerset/Columbia Office

Joyce has been with the Somerset office since almost the very beginning! She has dedicated the past 17 years to serving children and families through Benchmark Family Services. Joyce has worn multiple hats throughout her time with us in Somerset/Columbia as well as various other offices with the main ones being Therapist and Treatment Director. We appreciate Joyce for always being ready and willing to help de-escalate youth in crisis situations as well as for all of the other extra duties she takes on outside of her job responsibilities within the office. Joyce has always been there for our parents, children, and staff and we are very thankful to have her on the Somerset/Columbia Team!

Indiana: Monteria Phillips

Home Developer,
Indianapolis Office

Monteria represents Benchmark Core values of Productivity, Attitude, Customer Service, and Efficiency. She is a dedicated team player and assists others often – in the Indianapolis region and beyond. Mo is maintaining a thriving pipeline and carrying forward the Benchmark mission in all of her interactions with prospective foster parents. Mo is a valued Indy employee and well deserving for employee of the month!

Ohio: Jaz Williams

Systems Specialist,
New Carlisle Office

Jaz started as an intern with Benchmark Family Services before being hired in 2018. As a Systems Specialist, Jaz has excelled in this position since day one. Full of knowledge, Jaz always takes the time to explain IT-related issues to staff in terms they understand. He is patient, yet understands the urgency to resolve these issues for all staff. Jaz maintains a positive and humorous attitude, all while ensuring that things are done by the book to ensure all operations run smoothly.

