

Between Families

Foster Family Matters Customer Service

What does customer service mean to you? With over 700 foster homes licensed with TFI, we would certainly get a variety of answers to the question. Still at the center of past surveys, feedback through support group meetings, and one-on-one talks with homes, we (TFI) believe it comes down to a few simple ideas.

First: Be responsive to people. We may not always be at our phones to take your call, but we should be returning calls quickly. We should also be updating our messages to indicate when we can return calls if it will be more than 1 business day.

Second: Follow through on things. If you ask for something or need something from us, we should give you a time line on when we believe we can complete it, and we should be keeping you informed on the progress.

Third: Be a partner in preparing you. The natural relationship between a Foster Care Worker and a Foster Home is greatly important to the success of the home and children. Part of that partnership also means we must at times provide each other with challenging feedback. Our worker's role is to ensure your family is effectively trained, appropriately licensed, and suitably maintained to meet the needs of children you are caring for and KDHE regulations at all times. We owe it to you to engage with you on issues that could result in negative situations for children, you, or with KDHE.

All of these things come down to helping your home be the best it can be and providing advocacy for you when needed. Part of that process of advocacy is the manner in which TFI will respond to complaints both internal and external. To do this we have two main systems of response for either type of complaint.

The first is our natural department supervision chain. This would be taking concerns to your worker first and their supervisor if not resolved. If we are unable to resolve the situation through the supervisor, our second form of assistance, by way of our Ombudsman Nadine Terry-Washington, is there to assist you and others as well. She can be reached through our concern line (877-942-2239) or email (concernline@tfifamily.org). Over the next several months, Nadine will be attending support group meetings around the state to provide further information on her role and how to seek her assistance.

We thank and appreciate you for everything you do. We also want you to know our commitment to providing you with the supports, services, and advocacy that help support the children of Kansas is greater than ever before.

*Submitted by Gaven Ludlow, MBA, MSW
Vice President of Kansas Foster Care &
Adoption Services*



**Devoted
to the Strength
of Family**

Welcome Foster Families

David and Denise Lewis

Jake and Ginger Mattingley

Spencer and Amanda Brown

*Phothisa and Keneta
Vongtheva/Darabouthirath*

Pam Davis

Latonya Shuford

Leonard and Ann Swink

*Clay and Krystin
Schmidtberger*

Jessica Magana

Mike and Diane Audiss

Tammy Hedge

Arman and Jennifer Taskesen

Recruitment Moment

Respite and Emergency Care

Did you know that the need for foster families willing to provide emergency (often called Police Protective Custody or PPC) foster care and respite services is great?

Emergency placements are generally for 72 hours and calls for them often happen in the evening and nighttime hours. Generally, the children in Police Protective Custody are not allowed to attend school while in PPC, which means they need a caregiver who can be home with them while they are in protective custody.

Respite care is a supportive service to you as providers of longer-term foster care and is designed to provide care for children whose placements need a break or are going out of town, and occasionally as a service to birth parents in an effort to prevent a child in Aftercare from returning out-of-home.

Providers of respite and emergency care do have to meet the same requirements to become li-

censed as those of you who provide longer-term foster care to children. Respite and PPC care are a great alternative for families who wish to help children in need but who are unable to commit to caring for children on a longer-term basis.



If you know friends or families who would be interested, please have them call! And be sure they mention your name because you will receive a \$500 referral bonus when they get licensed whether they provide regular foster care or emergency services!

Submitted by

*Tabitha Rosebrough, LMSW
Director of Recruitment - Kansas*



Care Provider of the Month

Leon and Ryneck Sharp

Leon and Ryneck Sharp, foster parents in Western Kansas, have been selected as TFI's Care Providers of the Month for August! Leon and Ryneck do an amazing job of bringing children into their home and making them a part of their family. They are dedicated, not only to meeting the children's needs, but also improving their overall quality of life. They help prepare the children they foster for the future and provide them with the tools they need to be successful. The Sharp family is supportive of the children's connections and helps facilitate contact when appropriate. They even open their home to those connections for events such as graduation. The Sharp family provides the children in their home with everything they need and more, going above and beyond to ensure they feel like they are a part of the family. They include the children they foster in decisions in the home and take input from everyone.

Leon and Ryneck are the primary advocates for the children in their home. They make the children's wishes and desires known to the staff involved in their lives. The children in their home feel loved and supported. They always know they have someone in their corner advocating for them. Leon and Ryneck are great representatives for children, families, and TFI Family Services.

Congratulations, Leon and Ryneck, and thank you for everything you do!

Submitted by Kortney Poire, Foster Care Supervisor, Phillipsburg

TFI's Golf Tournament

Raising Funds to Support Youth in Care



TFI Family Services' 18th Annual Tee Off For Children Charity Golf Tournament is scheduled for Saturday, September 7th, 2013 at Crestwood Country Club in Pittsburg, KS. This tournament is one of our annual fund-raisers which raises money to support you and the youth in your home.

The proceeds from TFI's golf tournament go towards the flex funds available to you by request to help with all the extra costs that are not covered by your room and board reimbursement. We make these funds available to ensure that

the youth in your home receive all of the enriching and positive experiences possible, even when those experiences would not be otherwise financially feasible. If there is ever an activity, item, or service of extra cost that would benefit a youth in your home, please contact your foster care worker and ask that he/she request use of flex funds to cover the additional expense and ensure the best experience for that youth.

Many community members and businesses will participate in our golf tournament to support the work and care you provide for youth in foster care! We would like to encourage you to share about the tournament to anyone who may be interested in volunteering, golfing, sponsoring, or donating in support of the work you do each and every day!

More information is available online at tfifamilyservices.org.

Foster Family Anniversaries

One Year

James and Becky Wheeler

Sally Burdick

Jennie Cooper

Jarrett and Shirine Peters

Troy and Julie Babcock

Travis and Ashley Warstler

Benjamin and Audra LeClair

LaShawn Miller

Jesse and Kara Larimore

Marilynn Littlejohn

Robert and Tracy Harris

Kenneth and Donna Watkins

Scott and Lisa Woosley

William and Stephanie Mitchell

Susan Gaither

Jason and Leah Graves

Christopher and Teri Battershell

Daniel and Tammy Roth

Keith and Sheila Kroenke

Mark and Wendy Leenerts

Prince and Gayle Imonitie

Thomas (Ed) Horan

Jeffrey and Heather Martens

Trence and Linda Robinson

Three Years

Matt and Shelly Bradford

Jason and Melissa Gossard

Angie Reinking

James and Sandra Nider

Five Years

Troy and Cherylann (Susie) Snider

Ten Years

Allen and Norma Combs

After hour emergencies, please call 1-877-921-4114.

For the most current calendar for Kansas Children Alliance Training, go to: www.childally.org/train/foster-training/

Visit www.tfifamilyservices.org for more helpful information.



Like us on Facebook, [facebook.com/tfifamilyservices](https://www.facebook.com/tfifamilyservices), and follow us on Twitter @TFIFamily for tips, support group reminders, and more!

Between Families is published by TFI Family Services, Inc., a private, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is **Devoted to the Strength of Family**. TFI is licensed as a child placing agency in Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Oklahoma.





8595 College Blvd, Ste 160
Overland Park, KS 66210
800-279-9914
www.tfifamilyservices.org

Foster Family Living

Here at TFI, we know there can be challenges for foster families that other families don't necessarily face. Your families may be larger than average, making family outings more expensive; and you are often managing more special needs than the average family, making family outings more "interesting."

In our newly-revised Between Families, we wanted to dedicate this section to offering tips, suggestions, and resources that fit the often unique dynamics of everyday living in the homes of foster families. Here, you can find ideas for low- or no-cost family activities, activities that are easily adaptable to children with special needs, or connections to resources that are designed to support your exceptional family.

As summer break draws to a close, you may be looking for gently-used, affordable back-to-school clothes for the children in your home; particularly if they are not due for clothing vouchers just yet or if you just want to stretch the clothing voucher a little further. Many communities have Salvation Army Thrift Stores or Goodwill stores that offer great finds for considerable discounts. By visiting <http://satruck.org/national-family-stores> and entering your zip code, you can find Salvation Army Family Stores near you. For Goodwill Thrift Stores in your area, visit <http://locator.goodwill.org/> and enter your zip code.

Enjoy the remainder of your summer and Happy Back-to-School Shopping!

Submitted by Tabitha Rosebrough, LMSW, Director of Recruitment - Kansas

