

RAISE HOPE & FOSTER DREAMS



REGIONAL RESOURCE TEAM: REGION 4 FAMILY NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **GROW trainings** are currently being held online. Interested families should be referred by their licensing workers. All upcoming GROW trainings can be found on our website at <https://www.fcnp.org/pridegrow-training-schedules>.
- **ORIENTATION DATES** for local agencies can be found on our website at <https://www.fcnp.org/become-foster-parent/inquiry-and-orientation>.
- Local **SUPPORT GROUPS** can be found on our website at <https://www.fcnp.org/support-group/>.
- **Additional Trainings** can also be found on our website! Browse a full list at <https://www.fcnp.org/news-events/calendar>.

The Setty Saga

In the late 2000s, Ashley Setty found herself wanting to help children and families involved in the child welfare system. She always wanted to become a foster parent and even considered going to school to become a social worker. Life had other plans though, and she pursued nursing school while offering childcare in her home. In this role, Ashley befriended a mom who was down on her luck and she offered childcare for her infant. One fateful evening, mom never came to pick up the baby and Ashley called CPS for assistance. Because she was not licensed for foster care, the baby was placed with a licensed foster family as they worked to locate the biological mother.

This incident showed Ashley and her husband Jarred the need for foster homes and the impact they could make on other children and families. They immediately contacted their local county department to complete foster parent training and were licensed in 2014 as a treatment foster home in Ohio, where they were living at the time.

After a few years, the Setty family moved to Michigan. While they were still interested in fostering, they needed time to develop their support network in their new community. In an effort to meet other families locally and identify alternate caregivers who would be safe, positive people to involve in their foster journey, Ashley and Jarred took the year to develop relationships with fellow parents through their children's preschool and online support groups.

Once supports were developed, the Settys completed licensing through Livingston County MDHHS with a focus on medically fragile youth, thanks in part to Ashley's nursing background. They were contacted by numerous agencies about placement right away, and tough decisions needed to be made. The Settys understood that medically fragile youth often have significant needs, and by then, they had 4 biological children. Yet when they got the call about Kaiden, Ashley knew they could help him and quickly said 'yes' to placement.

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(The Setty Saga, continued from page 1)

Weeks passed with no word and more calls coming in about placement, so Ashley and Jarred decided to say 'yes' to a sibling group. The same day the sibling group came to their home, Kaiden's worker called again and asked when he could be dropped off. Ashley remembers what a whirlwind of a week that was, adding 3 more children to their family of 6! Her first task: Mobilize the support network.

Since the Settys were focused on fostering medically fragile youth, the sibling group was eventually transitioned to a pre-adoptive home. While heartbreaking, the family knew this decision was in the children's best interest and would allow them to continue fostering more children. Ashley offered support and friendship to the pre-adopt family, and offered an open-door policy for questions and maintaining their relationship with the siblings. Ashley shared that the most difficult part of this transition was the loss her family felt even though they knew the kids were transitioning to a great home.

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Each quarter, the FCNP recognizes a child welfare worker who exemplifies "above and beyond" passion, partnership, and determination with children and families. Congratulations to Jordan Barnes, who was nominated by Foster Futures Licensing Supervisor Casey Butler:

"Jordan Barnes is a dual worker, managing both foster care and adoption cases at our agency, Fostering Futures. Jordan has been with our agency for over three years, and since she has joined our team, she has worked very hard to complete adoptions timely for children and their families. Jordan has a great rapport with all of her families, especially with relative caregivers.

Through unforeseen hurdles, including challenges navigating the pandemic, Jordan has been a great advocate for relative caregivers. Jordan has remained positive and a source of strength for her families despite delays and challenges that remain out of her or a family's control. Whether it be finding affordable housing for a family or helping coordinate services for the children on her caseload, she has been the biggest cheerleader for her families.

Jordan works hard to empathize with her families when they are struggling and has never made them feel any less than for their hurdles. She has great interpersonal skills and a great passion for the work that she does. Fostering Futures is grateful to have her among our amazing staff!"

Have you seen a child welfare worker go above and beyond? Nominate them to be featured by emailing FCNPwebupdates@judsoncenter.org.

BREATHING TECHNIQUES FOR STRESS & ANXIETY

We all find ourselves in moments of stress and anxiety from time to time, and that's normal! How you handle your stress in the moment affects your body, your mind, and the rest of your day.

Deep breathing techniques can be helpful to you or to model to your child by bringing balance and regulation to your natural and internal rhythm. There are many different methods— below are a few of our favorite techniques. Try doing a few rounds of one technique and take note of how you feel before, during, and after.

Triangle Breathing

- Inhale for 3 counts
- Hold for 3 counts
- Exhale for 3 counts

Box Breathing

- Inhale for 4 counts
- Exhale for 4 counts
- Hold for 4 counts
- Inhale for 4 counts

4-7-8 Breathing

- Inhale for 4 counts
- Hold for 7 counts
- Exhale for 8 counts

KIDS' CORNER

NATURAL CONFETTI POPPERS

Supplies:

- Balloon
- Scissors
- Empty toilet paper roll
- Hole puncher
- Dried leaves
- Scotch tape

Making Them:

- Prepare your confetti popper by tying a knot in the balloon and cutting the bottom 1/3 off of the opposite (rounded) side. You will now have a tied balloon with a cut open top.
- Stretch the open balloon over one side of the toilet roll and secure around the center of the roll with tape.
- If you want to, decorate your tube with markers for maximum fun.
- Using your hole punch, punch holes in dried leaves to create a pile of natural confetti.
- Fill your tube with your confetti and use the bottom balloon tail to “snap” the confetti out!



(The Setty Saga, continued from page 2)

Eventually, Drew came to join the family. The Setty's now had 6 children consistently in their home—2 of whom were considered medically fragile with a plethora of services.

Ashley remembers some of her toughest advocacy, including creative ideas for transportation to parenting time, medical advocacy for life-altering procedures and services both of the boys needed, and educational advocacy for non-traditional school schedules. Over the last 8 years of fostering, no stone has been left unturned for the children in the Setty home.

The Settys were thrilled when Kaiden's adoption was finalized in November 2020 and Drew's adoption was finalized in November 2021 on Adoption Day. While many people would view these adoption stories as a happy ending, Ashley and Jarred are well aware of the grief and loss this meant for the biological families.



Ashley and Jarred worked tirelessly with both children's families of origin to build the partnership needed between foster families and biological families. They encouraged sobriety, celebrated new jobs and safe housing, and shared the children's milestones with their extended family. When it became obvious neither Kaiden nor Drew's biological parents were able to alleviate the reasons the boys came into care, Ashley and Jarred talked about permanency and what it would mean for the families of origin, and how they would maintain an open adoption as long as it was safe for the boys. This respect and empathy for the biological family shows the compassion the Setty family have for the boys' origin and history.

While the Setty family's license is currently closed, they feel confident their fostering journey is not yet complete. When asked what advice she would offer other foster families, Ashley shared, “Sometimes you have to push and advocate when you know something is not right. You must do what's in the child's best interest, and you're going to encounter people who have the wrong idea about you or the kids or what is needed. You need to have the time to devote to advocating for these children and participate in all of their services.”

Thank you Ashley and Jarred for sharing your foster care adoption journey with us! While facets of this deeply personal story are unique, many families will share the loss, frustration, happiness, and gratitude the Setty family have experienced.

*Interested in sharing your story? We would love to hear from you!
Email FCNPwebupdates@judsoncenter.org*



Contact Us

Adoptive & Foster Parent Recruitment & Retention (AFPRR) Program - Region 4

Judson Center

30301 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 100
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 549-4339

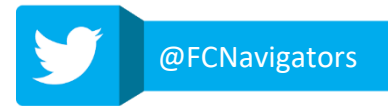
Jane_Argiero@judsoncenter.org

www.fcnp.org

WHAT IS A FOSTER CARE NAVIGATOR?

A Foster Care Navigator is someone who serves as a liaison between current and prospective foster parents and their agency. As trained and experienced foster parents themselves, each Navigator will mentor, through their own experience, parents navigating through the world of foster care.

The Adoptive and Foster Parent Recruitment and Retention (AFPRR) Program in Region 5 is a program of Judson Center and is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. For more information about becoming a foster parent, please visit us at www.fcnp.org or call 1-855-MICH-KIDS.



Judson Center

AFPRR – R4
3840 Packard, Suite 170
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Recipient Name

Street Address

City, ST Zip