



Foster Care

LITTLE CITY FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION PROGRAM

FOSTERING FUTURES

W I N T E R 2 0 2 5 E D I T I O N

MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

**AMY BOARD, MSW, LCSW, DIRECTOR OF
COMMUNITY-BASED CLINICAL SERVICES**

Happy New Year, Little City Families & Staff! As we kick-off 2025, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible success of our holiday gift drive. Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of our donors, we were able to bring joy and warmth to so many of the kids in our program. Whether it was a toy, a warm piece of clothing for the winter, or a gift card for some post-holiday shopping, you made sure that each child felt seen, valued, and loved. It's moments like these that remind us of the power of community and how much we can accomplish when we come together.

As we move into the new year, it's a great time to set some positive goals – both for ourselves and for the children we support. Whether it's focusing on our own self-care, strengthening communication between each other, or simply finding moments of connection in our busy lives, let's approach 2025 with intention and optimism. After all,



this work can be challenging, but it's also full of growth, hope and small victories. And maybe we'll all find a little more balance this year – because we all know that's something we can always use more of, right?

Here's to a year filled with even more moments that remind us why this work matters. Let's make 2025 a year that counts!

WHAT'S NEW

These past few months have been filled with fun, celebrations, and much to be thankful for! We held our Annual Gift Drive, which was made possible by our incredible donors, hardworking staff, and selfless volunteers. We have also continued to add to our team – we have welcomed 6 new staff members!

Our Clinical Team remains hard at work preparing to offer additional services to more members of our community. Check out our Event Recaps on the next page to see what we've been up to and keep an eye out for some fun-filled upcoming events!

EVENT RECAP

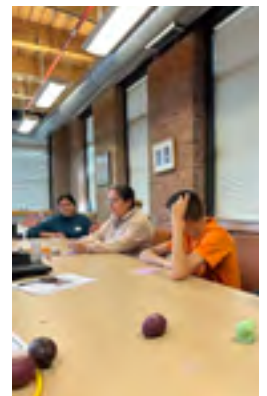
JOLIET PRIDEFEST

We attended the annual Joliet Pridefest back in September to celebrate our community and show our support! It was a hot day, but we had a fun time, and we met a lot of great members of the Joliet and surrounding communities. We can't wait to get back out there this summer!



SOCIAL SKILLS GROUPS

Our Clinical Team offered two sessions of Social Skills Groups – one in October and one in January. These sessions are free and led by our clinical staff. They focus on age-appropriate skills including learning boundaries, taking turns, building empathy, and encouraging positive interactions. We are already planning our next session in a few months, so stay tuned!



SKATING EVENT

We held our annual Winter Break Skating Event in early January at the MLK Skating Center. Over 40 youth, caregivers, and staff came together and skated the winter blues away. It was a great way to spend a chilly day during holiday break! We are planning another event for foster families and youth in the next few months, so keep an eye on your email.



THANK YOU DONORS

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 Jason Brock (PPM)
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 Jess & Ryan Needham
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 Jill Thomas
 Jim Rawsky

JNAM - FA Bulls
 JNAM Accounting Team
 JNAM Legal &
 Compliance Team
 Joe Bass & Suzanne Scanlon
 John Penicook (PPM)
 Joliet Junior Woman's Club
 Jordan Chappel
 Josh Przybyla
 Julia Zimmer
 Julie A Bruzek (PPM)
 Julie Stamm
 Kali Haltenhoff
 Karen S Kiern
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 Kathryn S. Shrader (PPM)
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 Kathy Gowgiel
 Kelly Kuby
 Kelly Norris
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 Kelsey Gordon
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 Linda Egner
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 Victoria Gallegos
 Victory City Church
 Whitney Gawenda
 Williamson/ Zolkowski Family

PROGRAM UPDATES

CLINICAL

As you may remember, we are so excited to report that we have been awarded a large grant to expand our clinical service offerings and improve our clinical office space. This will allow us to offer additional prevention, intervention, and aftercare mental and behavioral health services to youth and their families. We have secured a suite in our Chicago office building and are currently working on preparing it for client use. We are hiring additional clinical staff to meet the increasing needs of our community.

We continue to offer our monthly virtual Foster Parent Support Groups. These are led by one of our clinical supervisors and focus on a different topic each month. These are a great way to get support and advice from other foster parents who really understand what you are going through. If you need information about how to join the next one, ask any of our staff. **Foster Parent Support Groups meet on the 4th Thursday of every month from 6:30-8:30.**

Our Clinical Team also continues to offer Social Skills Groups every few months. These are free to attend and are led by members of our clinical team. They provide our youth with important social skills and other tools, all while being fun and interactive! If you think a youth in your home would benefit from attending our next session, please ask a member of our staff for the information.

CASE MANAGEMENT

We are proud to report that we have a placement stability rate of 95%, which means fewer moves and placement changes, and a higher likelihood of success for our youth. This is due to the hard work of our caregivers and staff to ensure that our youth are remaining in their homes even when things get rocky. We continue to work hard to license our relative caregivers, as well as recruit and license non-relative foster parents in order to continue to provide supportive homes for all of our youth.

FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT

Virtual Information Sessions – Little City continues to host monthly Prospective Foster Parent Information Sessions as well as one-on-one sessions as needed.

Referral Incentive – If you are a licensed foster parent, you will receive a \$1000 Referral Bonus if you refer someone to us who becomes a licensed foster parent and takes a placement. Email foster@littlecity.org for more information!

We are always looking for partnerships and donors. Remember, there are many ways to support youth in foster care – become a volunteer, a donor, a mentor, a respite provider, or a foster parent! Contact us at Foster@LittleCity.org to learn more!

PERMANENCY

Our Permanency Team supported 3 adoptions in September, 10 adoptions in December, and 1 adoption in January. Year-to-date, our Permanency Team has assisted with 35 permanencies, which includes youth returning home, guardianship, and adoption. Their work is vital to all that we do and we are so grateful for them! They also led our annual Adoption Panel training in November, which was a success.

LICENSING

2025 TRAINING TUESDAYS:

Trainings are offered the 2nd Tuesday of every month
(TRAINING CREDITS PROVIDED)

11am - 1pm via ZOOM | **6pm - 8pm** via ZOOM

Foster Parent Panels (First Session: March 18, 6pm - 8pm)

LCF MONTHLY TRAINING FOSTER PARENT 2024:

JANUARY: FIP/Medication Management

FEBRUARY: What is Trauma?

MARCH: Adoption Panel

APRIL: Behavioral Techniques – What's New?

MAY: Applied Behavioral Analysis/Setting Expectations & Managing Behaviors

JUNE: Developmental Milestones

JULY: No Training

AUGUST: Educational Advocacy: IEPs, 504s, and School Setting Supports

SEPTEMBER: Supporting the Individual Differences of Youth in Our Care

OCTOBER: Proactive Strategies and Managing Crisis

NOVEMBER: Adoption Panel: Understanding Adoption

DECEMBER: Holidays! (No Training)

QUARTERLY TRAININGS:

PRE-SERVICE: January/April/July/October 2025, via Zoom

CPR/FIRST AID | IN-PERSON: 2nd Saturday of every month by appointment

CPI | ONLINE/ZOOM: 4th Saturday of every month by appointment

RSVP FOR TRAININGS:

FosterCareTraining@littlecity.org or Licensing@littlecity.org



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TO VIEW OUR **2024**
FOSTER PARENT LAW
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



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