

FLORIDA FOSTER CARE REVIEW



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We hope that you and your loved ones are healthy, safe and successfully practicing social distancing. During our collective struggle to adjust to life in the midst of a global pandemic, the foster children and young adults served by Florida Foster Care Review (FFCR) need our services now, more than ever. As a critical partner in our work, we would like to bring you up-to-date on important changes as well as our plans for the immediate future.

The Miami-Dade County Children's Courthouse is closed to the public through April 17, 2020, and possibly longer. Our office, which is located in the courthouse, is also closed, and all staff are working remotely. The court is only conducting emergency hearings, at which parties and attorneys are appearing telephonically. All other hearings, including Citizen Review Panel hearings, are being reset. Meanwhile, the court is planning for the implementation of "virtual hearings."

FFCR has doubled our efforts to advance the safety, stability and well-being of these vulnerable children by finding creative ways to ensure foster children receive quality care and critical services. Our Citizen Review Panel Program staff have been submitting review panels' findings and recommendations from hearings held before the shutdown, and our Advocacy Manager is actively working with case managers and Guardians ad Litem to resolve issues identified by CRP volunteers. Our Permanency Roundtable team has been conducting telephonic roundtables and have even successfully created a forever family for two children last week. To ensure programmatic continuity, we are actively working to institute secure virtual CRP hearings and Permanency Roundtables via video-conference in the next 2-4 weeks.

Behind the scenes, FFCR's leadership and board is focused on sustaining and adapting our program operations and fundraising strategies. We have decided to postpone our Roaring 2020's Fundraiser originally scheduled for April 30th; however, we will be launching several new outreach efforts over the next few weeks and months, and we are hopeful that our 15th Annual Claws for Kids Fundraising Luncheon set for November 9th will proceed as planned.

There is an unfortunate correlation between economic downturns and the occurrence of child neglect. This is compounded by the fact that so many children are out of school while their families face immense pressure, uncertainty and isolation. Many of our volunteers and supporters have asked how to help vulnerable children and families during this unprecedented time. [The United Way of Miami-Dade's special webpage](#) is a valuable resource of the many ways you can help while also staying safe.

We are immensely grateful for the ongoing support of individuals, foundations and corporations throughout the year. As funding streams are diverted to deal with the pandemic, we especially appreciate those who have stepped forward during the past few weeks with generous unsolicited gifts.

Please join us on social media for updates and information. Of course, I am always happy to hear from you as well via email at cmaze@fostercarereview.org.

In the meantime, please take good care of yourself and your loved ones. Together, we can halt the spread of COVID-19.

Warm wishes,

Candice L. Maze, JD
Executive Director



Team FFCR after a fun and successful Claws for Kids Fundraising Luncheon at Joe's Stone Crab in November 2019. We look forward to gathering and celebrating again soon with our supporters!