

Stacia Stribling, PhD and Kelly Henderson, PhD
August 20, 2024

Who I Am…

- Stacia Stribling - Mom; Training and Administrative Coordinator; Part-Time Farmer; Former Elementary School Teacher; Former Assistant Professor, Education at GMU
  Stacia.Stribling@FormedFamiliesForward.org



Who I Am…

- Kelly Henderson- Mom; Executive Director; Adjunct Faculty, Special Education at GMU Kelly.Henderson@FormedFamiliesForward.org



Formed Families Forward - who we are…

- A family-led resource center in Northern Virginia supporting foster, adoptive and kinship families who are raising children, youth & young adults with specialized needs, and professionals who work with our families.
- We offer free training, consultations to families, events, resources, and systems navigation. Also - peer support groups; webinars; virtual trainings; videos and other resources.
- Family partner to Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS; a VDOE project)

Certificates of Attendance

Learning Your Way
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https://bit.ly/FFFLYWfall24





Stronger Together Youth Peer Support Groups

- IN-PERSON for youth and young adults ages 14-22
- Weekly for 8 Tuesday nights, 6:30 – 8 PM, starting October 1. Clinician-led. FREE of charge.
- In Fairfax city
- Register at https://bit.ly/STgroupfall24



Upcoming Offerings

Sept. 10, 7-8 PM Changing Tough Behavior: A Focus on the Nervous System webinar

Oct. 2, 7-8 PM Communicating Effectively: The Hard & The Easy webinar

Nov. 13, 7-8 PM Functional Behavior Assessments: What Families Should Know



Starting the School Year Safe and Calm

9/9/2024, 6:30 - 8:00 pm: Fairfax County @ the Sherwood Community Center, Fairfax City

9/20/2024, Noon - 1:30 pm: Virtual via Zoom

9/23/2024, 6:30 - 8:00 pm: Manassas @ the Pat White Center at Ben Lomond



Peer Support Groups

FAIRFAX KINSHIP SUPPORT GROUP

Fairfax Kinship Support Group- Virtual on first Thursday evenings; In-person on third Thursday evenings

FORMED FAMILIES TOGETHER PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

Formed Families Together (foster, adoptive and kinship) Support Group- Virtual on first Sunday evenings; In-person on third Wednesday evenings

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POLL

Mark all that apply:

- Foster Parent
- Adoptive Parent
- Kinship Caregiver
- Birth or Step Parent
- Professional

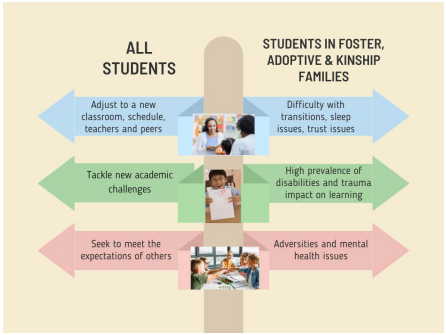


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Overview of the Webinar

- Back to School Challenges
- Creating Effective Routines
- Managing Anxiety & Helping Students Regulate
- Building Effective Working Relationships with School Staff
- All About Me!

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Back to School Challenges

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The Foster, Adoptive & Kinship Connection

- **Reasons** for entering care are associated with disability. In 1 state, more than a quarter of children over age 5 with **substantiated maltreatment** were identified as having disabilities. (Lightfoot et al., 2011)
- 37% of infants and toddlers in **nonrelative foster care** have developmental delays. 29% of children 3 to 17 years old have identified developmental, cognitive, or academic needs. (Casanueva et al., 2020).
- **Adopted children** are more likely to have ever been diagnosed with depression, ADD/ADHD, or behavior/conduct disorder. (NSAP, 2009)
- Although the rate of intercountry **adoption** is decreasing, the percent of adoptees with a disability is increasing. (Roach, 2023)

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These Challenges Create Stress



Brief increases in heart rate, mild elevations in stress hormone levels.

Serious, temporary stress responses, buffered by supportive relationships.

Prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships.

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The Window of Stress Tolerance

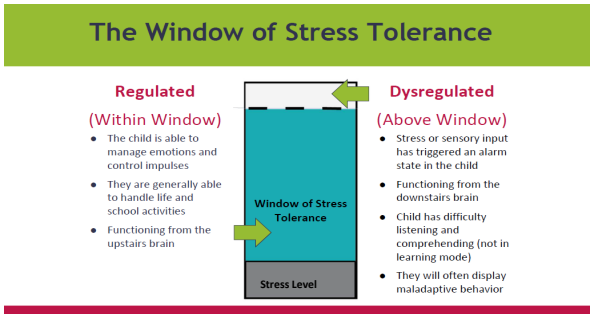


Image adapted from South Dakota Statewide Family Engagement Center

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POLL

What creates the most stress for the child(ren) in your care:

- Mornings
- In School - academic subjects
- In School - social situations
- After school - homework
- Bedtime



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Creating Routines



- Routine - a regular procedure or sequence of actions regularly followed. Is predictable; typically occurs at a specific time of day or in a specific order.



- Predictable structure eliminates “unknowns” and can reduce stress
- Reduces negotiation
- Makes the child AND adult feel more competent

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What are key routines in your home?

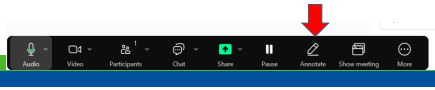
WAKE UP

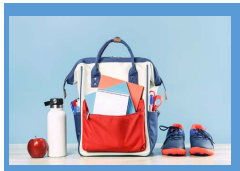
MEAL TIMES

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES/ HW

BEDTIME

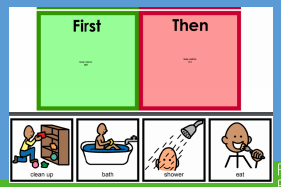
ADD OTHERS:







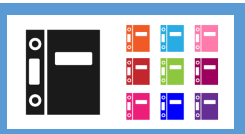














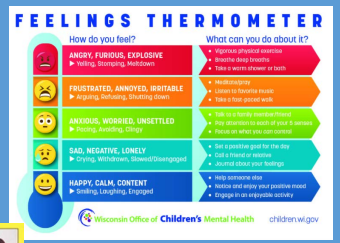
Managing Anxiety

"Behavior is the language of trauma. Children will **show** you before they tell you that they are in distress." -Micere Keels

- Key strategies are rooted in:
  - Co-regulation
  - Modeling (tools)
  - Connection



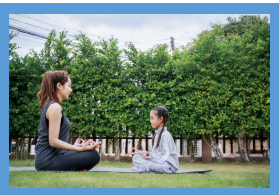


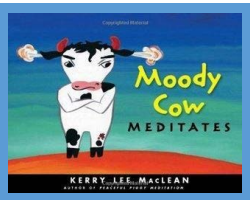


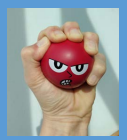








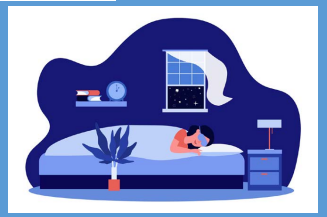














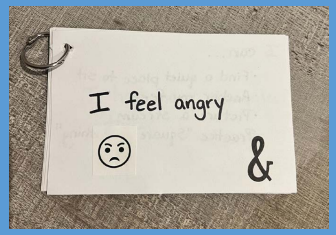


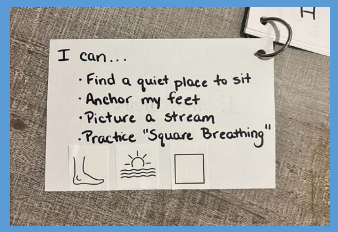
I Wonder…

Use "I wonder…" statements to help your child articulate emotions and root causes; prompts ideas to begin brainstorming solutions…

- I wonder if you really like P.E., and you feel sad when this class ends…
- I wonder if writing makes you feel icky and frustrated…
- I wonder if it is hard for you to leave home and start your day at school…
- I wonder if you really want to play with (insert name) and want some help to let them know…
- I wonder if the lunch room is too loud for you, and you would prefer an option to eat in a more quiet space with just one or two friends…

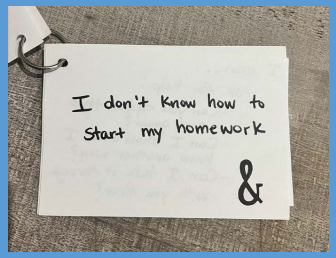
Ampersand Cards

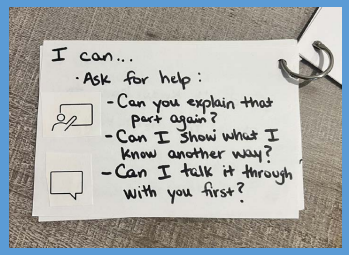




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More Ampersand Cards





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POLL

How would you describe your relationship with your child(ren)'s school:

- Contentious - constant conflict
- Minimal - no news is okay news
- Collaborative - respectful & supportive
- Depends on the day



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Building Relationships with School Partners

- Meet in person - lay the groundwork for a reciprocal relationship - each person brings expertise
- Be proactive - share your child's challenges with teachers BEFORE they happen
- Share what works and what doesn't work with your child (and why!)
- Create a culture of problem solving

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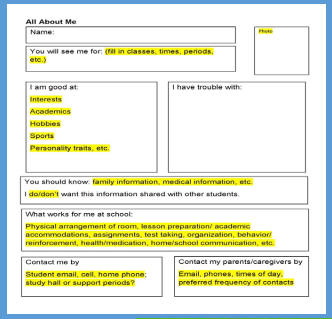
All About Me!

- A positive student profile helps quickly and visually orient teachers and other staff with whom your child will be working
- Clarifies important family and other background information
- Clearly states what information is/is not to be shared
- Succinctly states strengths/challenges
- Leaves no room for lack of contact!

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Let's do this!

Form in Word & format guide at https://www.formedfamiliesforward.org/resource_category/special-education-advocacy/


All About Me

Name:

Photo

You will see me for: (fill in classes, times, periods, etc.)

I am good at:
Interests
Academics
Hobbies
Sports
Personality traits, etc.

I have trouble with:

You should know: family information, medical information, etc.
I do/don't want this information shared with other students.

What works for me at school:
Physical arrangement of room, lesson preparation/ academic accommodations, assignments, test taking, organization, behavior/ reinforcement, health/medication, home/school communication, etc.

Contact me by
Student email, cell, home phone; study hall or support periods?

Contact my parents/caregivers by
Email, phones, times of day, preferred frequency of contacts

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Other Student Profile Formats

- Student Personal Profile (IU)
- Student Introduction Letter (Understood.org)
- Positive Student Profile (UNC)
- Understanding Me: An Individual with FASD (FASD Success)
- Dear Teacher, What I Want You to Know About Me (Embracing the Brain)

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Time to Talk



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Session Evaluation



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Formed Families Forward – Stay in Touch!

PLEASE COMPLETE EVALUATION right after we end.

****Certificates (only available for those who attended the live session) Email: Natalie.Johnson-Abbott@FormedFamiliesForward.org****

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