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**Community
Alternatives**

Accreditations
COA | AdvancED/SACS

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Eckerd.org

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Greetings Foster Families,

We want to thank you for all you do every day for our foster children. There have been many changes in the foster care system over the past few years, and we have recently had questions about how the Normalcy Act impacts individuals/families who are interested in becoming the adoptive parents to children in your homes. Communication and quality customer service are values at Eckerd Community Alternatives. We hope this letter clarifies your role and reiterates how valuable foster parents are to the team.

Thanks to the Normalcy Act children in foster care are being provided opportunities to participate in appropriate social and extracurricular activities in order to promote social development. Without having an adult approved through background checks to supervise, children are now able to participate in field trips, sleepovers, birthday parties, Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, spend time with extended family, and have reasonable curfews so long as it is determined to be safe and appropriate. Foster parents are still expected to be prudent parents, diligently determine approval for such events as he or she would for his or her own children, familiarize themselves with the individual or group that the child wishes to spend time with, evaluate the child's maturity level and ability to participate in the activity, and consult the case manager as necessary.

We understand that the Normalcy Act has increased the level of interaction between foster children and others in the community. The longer these children are in your homes, the stronger relationships can develop. We want children to learn how to form healthy attachments, and Normalcy has allowed excellent opportunities for children in care. However, several situations have been brought to our attention where family members or friends have obtained case specific information; they then believe the amount of time they've spent with a child and the love they have already developed will make them the preferred adoptive family. Please remember you have signed the HIPAA Confidentiality Agreement and case specific information should only be shared with members of the professional team; this includes the permanency goal, status of visitation with the biological family, and the parents' case plan progress.

If at any point you become aware of an individual/family who would like to be considered as a potential match for the child should TPR occur, please notify your case manager and licensing specialist immediately. This does not guarantee they will be matched with the child but could be considered. It is our goal for children to achieve permanency timely and identify an individual/family whose strengths best meet the child's needs. Our intention is not to upset those who are not selected, so we ask for your assistance in communicating this information.

Thank you for your continued partnership. We could not do this job without our amazing foster parents!

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me.

Laurallyn Segur
Director of Licensing