



# Building Family Connections, Fostering a Brighter Future Suggestion Project Lists



## Recognize Monthly Themes via Club Projects/Speakers and Social Media

Month	Theme	Ideas
<b>October</b>	Safe Sleep Month	<p>Collect safe sleep items to donate to the local <a href="#">Healthy Families</a> Program to provide to families right after the baby comes home from the hospital. These items could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sleep sacks</li> <li>• onesies that say “This Side Up” on the belly</li> <li>• safe sleep education materials that go over the ABC’s of safe sleep</li> <li>• collect pack-n-plays to provide families with a safe place for their infant to sleep</li> </ul>
<b>December</b>	Giving Season, Lots of Projects to Support!	<p>Participate in local foster children/angel gift drives</p> <p>Sponsor a family for the holiday season and provide toys, dinner, and decorations.</p> <p>Host a breakfast with Santa event for your local <a href="#">Healthy Families</a> program.</p>
<b>March</b>	National Nutrition Month	Do a food drive to support low-income families. Do a formula drive to be distributed by your local <a href="#">Healthy Families</a> program
<b>April</b>	Child Abuse Prevention Month	Plant pinwheel gardens throughout your area to raise awareness for child abuse prevention
	Black Maternal Health Week	Host a screening of <a href="#">Aftershock (on Hulu)</a> and discuss then collect diapers to be donated to your local <a href="#">Healthy Families</a> program to support new mothers during the postpartum period.
<b>May</b>	<b>National Foster Care Month</b>	Media campaign to bring attention to foster care and club projects
	Water Safety Month	<p>Participation with Kiwanis Drowning Prevention Program</p> <p>Sponsor swim classes at the local YMCA.</p>
	Mental Health Awareness Month	<p>Collect and assemble “self-care” kits. These could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coloring books and colored pencils</li> <li>• Face masks</li> <li>• Affirmation cards</li> <li>• Gift card to a local coffee shop</li> </ul>
<b>June</b>	Start of hurricane season	Assemble hurricane kits to be distributed by the local <a href="#">Healthy Families</a> or other at-risk program when discussing hurricane safety
	National Safety Month	<p>Collect home safety items to be provided to the local <a href="#">Healthy Families</a> program when the home safety checklist is completed with families. Safety items to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outlet covers</li> <li>• Corner covers</li> <li>• Cabinet locks</li> <li>• Door alarms</li> <li>• Emergency contact magnets</li> <li>• Poison Control Number on a magnet</li> <li>• Baby gates</li> </ul>
<b>July</b>	Get your Last-Minute Governor Project Reports in!	
<b>August</b>	Come Celebrate what we did for Foster Children at DCON!	
<b>September</b>	National Infant Mortality Awareness month	Collect diapers, wipes, onesies, pack-n-plays, bottles and host a baby shower for <a href="#">Healthy Families</a> participants



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## Preventing Children from Entering Foster Care

- Invite speaker to increase awareness
  - [Healthy Families](#)
  - [Better Together](#)
- Curriculum-based home visit activity kits ([Healthy Families](#))
- Diaper Drive for Low-Income Families
- Support a Parent Support Group
  - Meals
  - Childcare/Activities
  - Annual sponsorship (Healthy Families (~\$5000))
- Parents' Night Out
- Mini-Grants for [Healthy Family](#) Participants (Cost outside of food stamps & WIC)
- [Healthy Family](#) Leadership Development Sponsorship
- Baby/Toddler/Birth care product drives
- Gift care for food delivery after birth of babies in prevention program
- Mentor parents
- Transportation to job interviews, doctor visits – bus passes, uber gift card, offer a ride
- Create more Bridges out of Poverty like Santa Rosa County: [Bridges out of Poverty | Santa Rosa County, FL](#) More information: [aha! Process - Poverty Reduction Professional Development and Solutions \(ahaprocess.com\)](#)
- Advocate to your elected officials to change laws around maltreatment (more concrete supports to struggling families, more incentives to change, more voluntary services)
- Invite a representative from local Managing Entity (mental health services) or the Behavioral Response Crisis Unit to speak to a group.  
<https://www.myflfamilies.com/services/substance-abuse-and-mental-health/samh-providers/managing-entities/managing-entities>

## Supporting children and families in the Child Welfare system.

- Sponsor a youth to attend a quarterly statewide [Florida Youth Shine](#) meeting (usually about \$300).
- Send a mentor to a quarterly statewide [Florida Youth Shine](#) meeting (about \$350).
- Attend a local [Florida Youth Shine](#) chapter meeting or provide life skills training for the meeting.
- Become a Guardian ad Litem (GAL) volunteer or do a recruitment drive for the local GAL program.
- Provide childcare for training or parents night/afternoon out for local foster parents (volunteers will need to be background screened).
- Encourage church to provide childcare for training or parents night/afternoon-out for local foster parents (once a year; recruit four churches in your area).
- Offer gift cards or food delivery in the first week for foster parents receiving new placements.
- Connect with local Foster and Adoptive Parent Association [FloridaFAPA.org – FloridaFAPA – Florida's Foster/Adoptive Parent Association](#) and ask them what their needs are. **Contact List in Padlet**
- Provide tax preparation support for foster and biological parents.
- Do a gas gift card drive for foster parents and biological families.
- Provide transportation to visitation, job interviews, appointments/doctor visits.



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- Collect supplies/comfort items to be provided to children who have just been removed from their parents and placed with a foster parent or relative caregiver.
- Invite DCF Program Administrator to speak to club about investigation process (they could retrieve back packs collected as mentioned above).
- Invite the local CBC (Community Based Care) Lead Agency's Placement Department to speak to a club about the process.
- Invite Early Childhood Court coordinator to speak to your club (advocate for those services in more cases).
- Attend the DCF summit, [Foster and Adoptive Parent Association](#) conference, Florida Institute for Child Welfare symposium or the Florida Coalition for Children conference. Sponsor a family to attend.

## Encouraging Youth in Transition coming out of Foster Care

- Open your home for extended foster care (which would be coordinated through the local lead agency's Independent Living program).
- Hire a teen in care or provide an internship for a teen. A new law just passed in 2023 that will provide paid internships for youth who have aged out of care.
- Offer to take teen for driving practice. You could do this through the local lead agency, GAL office, or Keys to Independence: [Keys to Independence \(keystoIndependencefl.com\)](http://keystoIndependencefl.com)
- Establish hope court in more places (restorative justice base): [About HOPE Court | Helping Older Teens Powerfully Engage \(hopecourtfl.org\)](http://AboutHOPECourtHelpingOlderTeensPowerfullyEngage.hopecourtfl.org)
- Offer scholarships for teens in foster care graduating from high school.
- Conduct item drives for teens setting up independent living or going to college/training schools.
- Gift laptops for teens going to college/training schools.

## Projects for greater understanding of ACEs, Trauma, and Child Welfare

- Hold a book club and read one of the books below:
  - The Deepest Well by Nadine Burke Harris
  - The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down by Anne Fadiman
  - The Boy who was Raised as a Dog by Bruce D. Perry
  - Orphan Train by Christina Baker Kline
  - Shattered Bonds: The Color of Child Welfare by Dorothy Roberts
  - Bridges Out of Poverty by Ruby Payne
- Watch Jessica Pryce TED talk and discuss: [Jessica Pryce: To transform child welfare, take race out of the equation | TED Talk](#)
- Host a community immersive simulation. There are several simulations that help community members understand struggles better. The [Florida Institute for Child Welfare](#) offers 4 on the child welfare process. There is a national one based on youth experiences: <https://yexls.com/> and one based on poverty: [Home Page - Poverty Simulation](#) John would be happy to help a club figure out which is best and how to connect with a facilitator.