

Foster Joy: A Holiday Drive to Brighten the Lives of Foster Youth and Families

SANTA ROSA, CA, UNITED STATES, December 3, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Alternative Family Services (AFS) is proud to launch its Foster Joy Holiday Drive, an annual initiative to spread warmth and cheer to foster youth and families during the holiday season. Community members are invited to participate by donating toys, gift cards, and other essential items to bring joy to those who need it most. Donations will be accepted through December 15.

"The holidays are a time for giving and creating moments of joy," said Angela Taylor, Director of Development. "Through Foster Joy, we can remind foster youth that they are seen, valued, and supported by their community."

For children in foster care, the holidays can be a difficult time, often marked by separation from loved ones or instability. The Foster Joy Holiday Drive provides gifts and a sense of normalcy, hope, and belonging for these youth.

"Our mission is to offer stability, love, and opportunity to foster youth year-round, but the holidays hold a special significance," said Marsha Lewis-Akyeem, CEO of AFS. "This drive ensures that foster youth feel the warmth and care they deserve, and it's a powerful way for the community to come together and make a lasting impact."

Why Foster Joy Matters

The following statistics highlight the importance of initiatives like Foster Joy:

- Over 391,000 youth in foster care in the U.S. face unique challenges, particularly during the holiday season.
- Nearly 60% of foster youth leave care without permanent housing, making community support essential.
- 25% of foster youth experience PTSD symptoms, compared to 4% of the general population. Holiday kindness can help alleviate stress and foster connection.
- 80% of foster youth feel forgotten or isolated during the holidays, underscoring the importance of community-driven efforts like Foster Joy.

Giving, such as donating toys or gift cards, creates happiness and builds a sense of community and positive connections for foster youth.

How You Can Help

Every contribution to Foster Joy, big or small, helps foster youth experience the holiday season as a time of love and belonging. For many, these gifts represent hope, stability, and the knowledge that they are cared for.

To learn more or donate, visit www.AFS4Kids.org. Together, we can make this season unforgettable for foster youth and families.

About Alternative Family Services

Alternative Family Services (AFS) is a dedicated foster family agency providing support, care, and opportunities for foster youth and families across Northern California. Since 1978, AFS has worked to create a nurturing and supportive environment for children, youth, and families in need. For more information, visit www.AFS4Kids.org.

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