



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A Partnership to Make a Difference in the Lives of NJ's Youth in Foster Care

MONMOUTH JUNCTION – At-risk youth will be getting their hands dirty by digging and planting to transform an abandoned neighborhood lot into a colorful garden bed. Two organizations are working together to help these young people realize they are important and can bring about positive change in their community.

Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS), a 501(c) (3) dedicated to children in foster care, and H.E.A.L.T.H. for Youths, Inc., a non-profit that empowers youth by exposing them to wellness and education, are collaborating on projects geared towards nurturing New Jersey's kids in care.

"We are honored to work with H.E.A.L.T.H. for Youths on several projects. We are united in our commitment to directing efforts and resources to helping young people realize their potential and achieve their goals," said FAFS' Chief Executive Officer Mary Jane Awrachow.

The partnership will include three projects:

- August 25 at 6 p.m. - There will be an interactive literacy event that includes a book reading, an activity and the distribution of healthy snacks to licensed resource families in Mercer County. This is an effort to make learning engaging and fun and to prepare children in foster care for the upcoming school year.
- September 26 at 10 a.m. - In conjunction with the Perth Amboy Police and Fire Departments and the Office of Recreation, a garden bed will be planted at 467 Seaman Avenue in Perth Amboy. In addition, there will be clean-up of the surrounding area in Middlesex County. This will not only bring beauty to the neighborhood but also teach youth about the importance of caring for their communities. The event is open to the public.
- The last project is a webinar in October. The purpose is to educate all resource parents and youth in New Jersey about their legal rights so they can advocate for themselves and their families.

"Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) provides support to foster, adoptive and kinship families with the belief that 'children in foster care are the community's children, with the same hopes and dreams as all children,'" said H.E.A.L.T.H. for Youths co-founder Heather Butts.

“We at H.E.A.L.T.H. for Youths agree and believe that all children and their families should have the opportunity to participate in activities that expand their minds, broaden their experiences and improve their communities. This partnership will do just that, and we are honored to be working with FAFS on this important initiative.”

The mission of H.E.A.L.T.H. for Youths, Inc. is to approach health as making the best choices in all areas of life, including physical, mental, academic and financial. Through their model of total health, they guide young people after high school and beyond to realize their future goals.

The mission of FAFS is to provide support, training and advocacy to meet the special needs of foster, adoptive and kinship families who provide safe, stable and nurturing homes for children in foster care in New Jersey. FAFS is a federal 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization.