

**Cornerstones of Care and the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition
Partner to Bring Outpatient Counseling to Foster/Adoptive Families**

Cornerstones of Care, providing behavioral health services to families from more than 80 counties in Missouri, and the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition, a St. Louis-based agency that supports foster/adoptive families, are partnering to bring expanded mental health services to St. Louis-area foster/adoptive families, beginning in May, to fill a critical service gap.

Foster/adoptive families often face unique challenges due to emotional, mental and/or physical trauma experienced by children in their care. The majority of families receive excellent support from existing programs and partnerships in the St. Louis community.

A small percentage of families need additional, more intensive services. The Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition will identify these families and connect them to Cornerstones of Care for outpatient counseling. Cornerstones of Care's therapists are highly trained in the areas of trauma, attachment, and adoption. The Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition will augment the counseling with training and in-home services for the families.

"We are thrilled to tap into Cornerstones of Care's decades-long experience in trauma-informed care," said Melanie Scheetz, Executive Director of the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition. "Our partnership will address concerns that can lead to psychiatric hospitalization or long-term residential placements, with the goal to keep families together."

This expanded partnership builds upon five years of collaboration between the entities, which has included Cornerstones of Care adopting the Coalition's 30 Days to Family® model in Kansas City and the two organizations working collaboratively to provide Secondary Trauma & Resiliency Training to over 2,200 child welfare professionals across the state of Missouri in 2016.

"Our partnership really grew out of shared values that children are best served in a family setting and we need to ensure families have necessary supports, as well as our deep admiration for the Coalition's responsive and innovative approaches to meeting the needs of today's families," said Ryan Dowis, Cornerstones of Care's Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President.

The Cornerstones of Care outpatient counseling office, which will be co-located in the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition's Brentwood office, creating greater integration of care and access to services for families.

"It is the perfect scenario when we can partner with an agency like the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition. They know programmatic gaps in the community, and we can tailor our services to address those needs," said Denise Cross, President and CEO of Cornerstones of Care.

The outpatient counseling office will open in May 2017 with two therapists. Additional therapists will be added as need to best serve the community.

To learn more about the partnership between Cornerstones of Care and the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition, contact Melanie Scheetz at melaniescheetz@foster-adopt.org or 314-363-7043, or Stephanie Sheldon at stephanie.sheldon@cornerstonesofcare.org or 816-469-9252.

About Cornerstones of Care:

Cornerstones of Care has a long legacy of partnering with children, young adults, and families to create safe and healthy communities. A team of nearly 800 professionals provide programming in the areas of mental and behavioral health, foster care, adoption, education, and youth and family support. Their service area includes 12 locations in Missouri, Kansas, and beyond. Learn more at cornerstonesofcare.org.

About the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition:

The Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition is known for its groundbreaking foster care and adoption programs, Extreme Recruitment® and 30 Days to Family®. They support the 7,000 metro St. Louis foster/adoptive families with programs that include training, advocacy, and in-home services. Learn more at foster-adopt.org.

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