

Children's Case Management Who's Who

CHILDREN'S CASE MANAGERS

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Braiden V. is enrolled in the Family Support Services Program. Below, his mother shares how FSSP has had a positive impact on Braiden and his family.

"FSSP has given our family the opportunity to connect with services and supports that we otherwise could not afford.

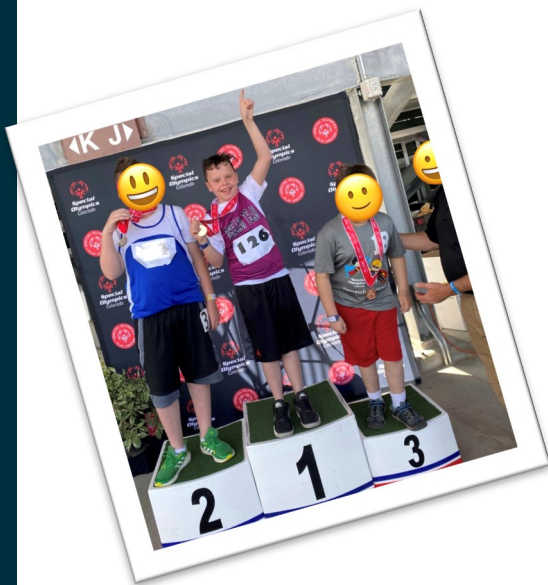
Braiden is very social, he has so much to say and is not always understood by everyone. He has been in speech therapy since he was 2 years old. After we enrolled in FSSP we heard about music therapy helping children with their speech. Braiden loves attending music therapy and has made improvements in his speech intelligibility, so that he is now better understood by others!

Shortly after Braiden enrolled in FSSP, the funds were used to purchase an adaptive bicycle. Because of this, Braiden is able to ride bikes with the neighborhood kids and go on family bike rides.

Respite care has given my husband and I the ability to have a

break and recharge so we don't burn out.

Through Foothills Gateway we learned about the Special Olympics Track Team. Braiden practiced every weekend for a few months and put forth his best effort every time. He attended both the regional and state track meets. At the state track meet, Braiden earned 1st place in the 50 meter dash and showed every single person his medal as he walked through the stadium. We loved seeing how proud he was of himself. There is so much joy being spread in Special Olympics Community, everyone is cheering on everyone and I can let Braiden be himself without trying to constantly teach him appropriate social boundaries.



FSSP: Portal Training Video

Did you know that a training video was created to help you learn how to make the most of the FSSP Portal?

The video is just over 12 minutes long, and reviews how to access the Portal, the difference between receipts and invoices, how to submit receipts and invoices for reimbursement, how to check your plan balance—and more! Link to the video from the FSSP Portal homepage: www.foothillsgateway.org/communitylogin/

CHCBS & CHRP: In-person Meetings

The Department of Health Care Policy & Financing is reinstating in-person case management requirements.

Effective August 1, 2022, case managers will be required to complete some meeting in-person, including initial and continued stay assessments, and routine monitoring visits. During the ongoing Public Health Emergency, HCPF will continue to offer flexibility around in-person meetings to members with health and safety concerns. Questions? Ask your case manager!

Employee Spotlight: Q&A with Olivia Knieff

Describe your role at Foothills Gateway. How long have you worked here?

I am the Lead Children's Case Manager, which means that I supervise the team of case managers who oversee supports for the Family Support Services Program, Children's Home and Community Based Services Medicaid waiver, and the Children's Habilitation and Residential Program waiver. I currently supervise four case managers. I also maintain a caseload of families whose children are enrolled in FSSP, CHCBS, or CHRP. I have worked at Foothills Gateway for a combined 7 ½ years, the last 3 ½ of which have been in case management. I love what I do, and appreciate the trust that so many families have in me. I feel very privileged to be part of the lives of the children and families on my caseload, and the caseloads of the case managers I supervise.

What initially drew you to FGI? What do you like about working here?

I am currently in my third stint at Foothills Gateway. I began what I thought was a summer job in one of the day programs in June 2001, and quickly realized that supporting with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities was a calling, and is something that will always be part of my life in some capacity. I went back to school in 2004, and returned to FGI from 2009-2010. From 2012-2018 I managed all aspects of the CES and SLS programs for a local service agency, and came back to FGI as a case manager in late 2018. I like the commitment FGI makes to preserving a positive culture, including through the use of person-centered practices for both the individuals who receive services and the employees. I feel like this contributes to the longevity of many of our employees, which, in turn, creates stability and consistency for the people we serve. I appreciate that Foothills Gateway "walks the walk."

What do you do for fun outside of work? What are your hobbies? Who makes up your family? Where are you from?

I really enjoy spending time with my husband and our "dog-ter," Juniper. My husband and I enjoy live music, and are excited to be able to attend concerts again with the easing up of COVID restrictions. We just celebrated our 18th wedding anniversary with a trip to Santa Fe. I have twin 11-year-old nephews who live in New England with my brother and his wife, so FaceTime plays an important role in our family. I also like spending time with friends, reading, cooking, and photography. I grew up in southern Colorado, but was born in Kansas City, Missouri. I moved to northern Colorado in 1998 to attend the University of Northern Colorado, where I started as a music major on flute, piccolo, and piano, and ended with a bachelor of arts degree in political science. I've lived in Greeley, Fort Collins, or Loveland ever since.

What is something about services, Foothills Gateway, and/or case management you like to share with families?

Don't be afraid to open up to your case manager about your needs, even if you're not sure it's something we can help with. We'll do what we can, and may have ideas or resources for the things we can't help with.



Olivia, her husband, and their "dog-ter," Juniper

Guest Article: Why Disabled Voices Must be Heard

By Julian Alderman Marx, age 15, Fort Collins, Colorado

It is not unusual to be disabled. Worldwide, one billion people have some form of disability. That means 15 percent of everyone. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "at some point in their lives, most people will either have a disability or know someone who has one." My disability is autism. But it isn't just about who you know who has a disability, because the social effects of disability run deep.

A study by the World Bank found that, "barriers to full social and economic inclusion of persons with disabilities include inaccessible physical environments and transportation, the unavailability of assistive devices and technologies, non-adapted means of communication, gaps in service delivery, and discriminatory prejudice and stigma in society." No person's voice should go unheard, but around the world, the voices of disabled people are not heard or are ignored in society. I think giving disabled people a voice would strongly demonstrate that we are an important part of our society.

The problem, as I see it, is that disabled people are not trusted to advocate for themselves and not believed when they do. The interest by society to change how disability is viewed is minimal, and the discriminatory mindset is well-established.

Disabled people have not historically been seen as fully human or worthy of rights given to the rest of society. I believe disabled people are different but fully deserving of all rights a society offers. While I am of the opinion that the full rights of disabled people are achievable, it is helpful to understand the problem on a deeper level.

While the good intentions of regulations to help disabled people may make other people feel good, they are

"The problem, as I see it, is that disabled people are not trusted to advocate for themselves and not believed when they do."

useless if they are not enforced. Here in the U.S., the historic Section 504 laws, though approved by Congress, sat unsigned on then-President Carter's desk. An impatient disability rights community was tired of waiting. They insisted that President Carter sign the regulations.

It took strong, decisive action, pushed by the disability community, to make real improvement. This tells us that completion of Section 504 was a strug-

gle. I find it maddening that its implementation was so hard. Now that we understand the problem, it is essential to understand why rights for people with disabilities are so important.

As a movement, disability rights should be supported by everyone, because everyone can become disabled. It is morally right to do so. The drive toward disability rights must be a thoughtful and concerted effort. In an article in the *New York Times* by Julia Carmel, Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha says, "Disability justice is about political organizing and legal change and all of that, but it's also about creating communities where we can be all of ourselves without shame, and with joy."

Why should we care? In response, I ask, "How can people not care?" Caring about us means being morally right, and creating a smooth path for yourself and your loved ones should they become disabled. Creating more effective structures that give us voice and choice as to how our lives are lived is essential. All activities must branch out from this central concept. My parents have had to fight for years for me to be included for a real education. If inclusion is society's goal, then I will know my parents' struggle – unnecessary as it should have been – was worth it.

FSSP Reimbursement Tips and Payment Dates

- Submit receipts in a snap! You can access the FSSP Portal from your smart device and take pictures of receipts while you're logged in to the portal!
- Don't wait! Submit receipts and invoices as you accrue expenses!
- The FSSP Portal is most streamlined and secure way to submit receipts and invoices! Need help? Check out the FSSP Portal training video [here!](#)

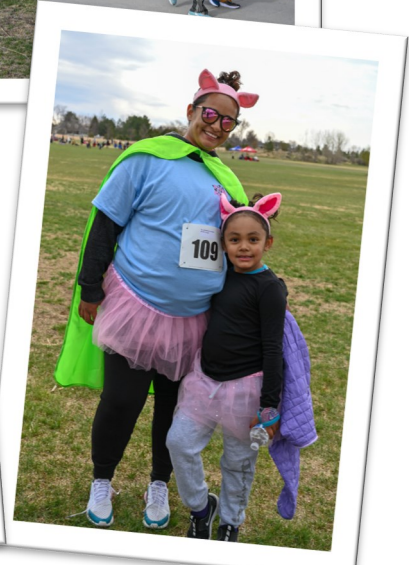
Upcoming Payment Dates

July 22, 2022
August 5, 2022 · August 19, 2022
September 13, 2022 · September 27, 2022
September 30, 2022

FSSP: Updates from Council

The Family Support Council plays an important role in how the Family Support Services Program is implemented at Foothills Gateway. Council meets quarterly, in March, June, September and December, to discuss and plan FSSP activities and trainings, vote on procedure changes, and monitor the implementation of the program. Meetings last 90 minutes and are currently held virtually. The FSC is composed of family members of individuals with developmental disabilities, and interested community members. Individuals with disabilities are also welcome to join.

- The annual FSSP Pool Party will be August 13 at Winona Pool in Loveland!
- The Flying Pig 5k raised \$18,500 at the annual race in April! There were 22 total sponsors this year.
- Council voted to allow families to exceed their typical funding amounts for qualified expenses for the new fiscal year (2022-2023). Requests for excess funds can be made through your case manager, and will be approved or denied based on the availability of funds
- In fiscal year 2021-2022, \$260,000 in additional funds were approved to help enrollees and their families meet critical, disability-related, needs
- Council will set aside \$25,000 to use toward promoting FSSP in the community, and providing resources and educational opportunities to families
- Council has voted to allow families to be terminated from FSSP after 3 consecutive months of no reimbursements, when funding is available in the enrolled individual's plan; previously this timeframe would reset at the beginning of a new plan year



Upcoming FSSP Pool Party!

Brought to you by the Family Support Council

August 13th

5:30-7:30pm

RSVP with the number of guests to:
jeneenv@foothillsgateway.org

⇒ Come join us at Winona
Pool in Loveland

Address:

**1615 4th St SE
Loveland, CO 80537**

FYI:

Applied Behavior Analysis

Applied Behavior Analysis, or ABA, has been around since the 1960's. ABA is therapy based on the science of learning behavior. While ABA is typically known to help children with Autism, it can be beneficial for any child who has behavior that needs to be modified. ABA therapy applies an understanding of how behavior works to real-world situations. The goal of ABA is to increase behaviors that are helpful, and decrease behaviors that effect learning or are harmful. ABA therapy programs can help increase language and communication skills and decrease problematic behaviors, as well as improve attention, focus, social skills, memory, and academic performance. ABA is covered by HealthFirst Colorado with a doctor's prescription; not all private insurances cover this therapy. Check with your private insurance to see if ABA is a covered therapy. There are many ABA providers in Fort Collins and Loveland. Reach out to your case manager if you'd like more information about ABA or other HealthFirst Colorado benefits!

Information gathered from the Autism Speaks website: <https://www.autismspeaks.org/applied-behavior-analysis>



Upcoming Events

Foothills Gateway Events

- **FSSP Annual Pool Party · August 13, 2022 5:30-7:30 PM · Winona Pool in Loveland**
Free to all families enrolled in FSSP! Pizza will be provided!
Sponsored by the FGI Family Support Council RSVP: jeneenv@foothillsgateway.org

Community Events

- **Guardianship & Less Restrictive Options · The Arc of Larimer County**
Registration required! September 7, 2022
[Guardianship & Less Restrictive Options - The Arc \(thearcoflarimercounty.org\)](https://thearcoflarimercounty.org)
- **Roots & Branches Playdates · The Willow Collective**
Thursdays 10:00-11:00 AM, for families with young children
[The Willow Collective | Infant Mental Health | United States \(willowcollectivefoco.com\)](https://willowcollectivefoco.com)
- **Fall Classes and Camps · The Recreator**
Registration opens August 11, 2022
[The Recreator \(Recreation Program Guide\) - City of Fort Collins \(fcgov.com\)](https://fcgov.com)
- **Mosaic Compass · Webinars and Family Connection Group**
Webinars are held the third Tuesday of each month (July 19, August 16, September 20)
Family Connection Groups are held the fourth Tuesday of each month (July 26, August 23, Sept 27)
Sign up for email information [Mosaic in Northern Colorado \(list-manage.com\)](https://list-manage.com)
- **No Barriers Youth Retreat · The Arc of Larimer County · August 4-7, 2022**
Now accepting applications! [No Barriers - Youth Retreat - The Arc \(thearcoflarimercounty.org\)](https://thearcoflarimercounty.org)
- **Parents Café · The Arc of Larimer County**
BYO Picnic at Mahaffey Park · 6-7 PM · July 21, 2022
[July 21st - Parent Cafe' - The Arc \(thearcoflarimercounty.org\)](https://thearcoflarimercounty.org)

Presenter Megan Kramer, BCBA · 6-7 PM · August 18, 2022
[August Parent Cafe' - The Arc \(thearcoflarimercounty.org\)](https://thearcoflarimercounty.org)
- **Connection Call for Adults with I/DD · The Arc of Larimer County**
Weekly on Thursdays from 10-11 AM Registration required!
[Connection Call - for Adults living with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities - The Arc \(thearcoflarimercounty.org\)](https://thearcoflarimercounty.org)
- **Engage Fort Collins · City of Fort Collins**
Campfire at Nix Farm—Animals with Altitude! · August 6, 2022 · 6:30-8 PM
Nix Farm · 1745 Hoffman Mill Road · Fort Collins · Wheelchair accessible with accessible bathrooms
Registration required: [Engage: Activity Registration \(fcgov.com\)](https://fcgov.com)

Campfire at Coyote Ridge Cabin—Avian Melodies! · August 12, 2022 · 7:30-9 PM
Coyote Ridge Natural Area · Wheelchair accessible with accessible bathroom 1 mile down trail
Registration required: [Engage: Activity Registration \(fcgov.com\)](https://fcgov.com)
- **Loveland Summer Concert Series · City of Loveland**
Foot Lagoon Amphitheater · 500 E. 3rd St. · Loveland
[Loveland Summer Concerts - Visit Loveland \(visitlovelandco.org\)](https://visitlovelandco.org)
The Wendy Woo Band · July 21, 2022 · 6:30 PM
Dale Cisek Band · July 28, 2022 · 6:30 PM