



Families Helping  
Families 2025

[www.fhf.care](http://www.fhf.care)



Mentoring isn't always a heavy lift – sometimes it's the lightest ask of all.

## EVERY PARENT AND EVERY CHILD MATTERS!

**FHF is breaking the cycle of poverty by supporting kids in our program! Medical doctors, nurses, social workers, teachers, software engineers, and – not one, but two – Ph.D. chemical engineers!** This is how some of our grown up FHF “kids” are making a difference in their communities, and we are proud to be part of their journeys.

Did you know for **31 years, every FHF teen had graduated from high school** while in our program, thanks, in part to connecting kids with tutoring and other supportive services. And wait... There's more!

Our FHF kids who choose to continue on to college are supported by our **Bruce Terlep Education Fund**. Thanks to this fund, students receive generous scholarships each semester. This includes students whose families have already graduated from the program.

Over the past 31 years, we have found one absolute truth among all the families we've had the privilege to serve: **Every parent wants a better future for their children.**

### With Heartfelt Gratitude: Clara's Story

When we met “Clara” two years ago just before Christmas, she had only recently found the courage to leave her abusive ex-husband, but she and her three kids had nowhere to go. Clara was exhausted and scared – but also fiercely determined. More than anything, she wanted to give her children a safe home and the chance to simply be kids during the holidays. That's when Clara and her family were welcomed into Families Helping Families.

The story of Clara's journey to stability continues inside this newsletter, and spoiler: it has a truly inspiring ending – including her kids' dream for their own Christmas tree!

We deeply appreciate our generous donors who make it possible for families like Clara's who are experiencing homelessness to rebuild their lives. **Your compassion creates stability, opportunity, and hope for a brighter future for their children, their greatest priority.**

Thank you for making all this possible!

*Suzanne Thibeault*  
Executive Director

## GRATITUDE FROM OUR FAMILIES:

### From Josie, at the start of her FHF journey:

"Life has been full of false starts, mistakes, and hard lessons that ultimately led me to feel like someone I didn't even recognize. I felt that my life was so small. I did not know what to do.

Enter Families Helping Families! This wonderful group has shown me nothing but kindness from day one. They've given me courage and see me as a whole person not just someone in need. They've shown up; consistently, kindly, and without judgment. It's the kind of support that creates space for hope. And with hope, everything starts to shift.

I now have specific, tangible goals. Thanks to my mentors, I have come to embrace the value of a good, well-organized Google spreadsheet and budget; I can now see the value reflected in my bank account, credit score, and my relationship with money. I'm no longer fearful. I am excited. I'm no longer disillusioned; I am inspired. Thanks to the generous people who make this program possible, I see a life worth celebrating! Thank you for your kindness, your time, and your support."



### *You might not see their faces, but you will feel their resilience*



#### Clara's Dream Comes True

"I'm a home owner! Coming full circle and moving into a home before the holidays that I have just purchased is very important and meaningful to our family. We will reset and reflect on our journey to this new beginning. Because of FHF and the donors, I can stand here accomplished and proud of myself and know that my children are proud of me, too. Thank you, Families Helping Families!"

---

### *Our volunteers donated over 7,000 hours in 2025!*

---

"Never did I think that the program would help me this much, this fast. Being able to feel safe and secure is a feeling I had forgotten was possible. I appreciate everything and can't wait to see my light shine bright."

"I feel so lucky to have FHF in my life. Thank you for creating so much space for me to grow and to feel safe to love and be loved. Your support is empowering."



"FHF has changed my life for the better. I've learned so much and I hope to pay it forward using my experience as a testimony to others in similar situation. Bless you for your help."

## SUMMER MEMORIES: GRATITUDE FROM OUR FHF KIDS

"My child received a new bike, helmet, and lock. It has contributed to her self-confidence."



"I am so happy my mom gets help to send us to camp, so we are not sitting around all summer."

From A, who attended cheerleading camp:  
"I can do a backbend, a back-walkover, a handstand – and it's just fun!"



"I love summer camp!"  
We do fun things. I wish summer camp never ends!"

### ***Thank You for your generous hearts!***

"I like that I get to explore the woods and go on nature walks."

"I like playing in the sand and there are buckets to build sandcastles!"

"I like that I was able to be more independent and swimming with my friends – instead of just my siblings."

"I love being able to go to camp because I hang out with the cool counselors at the camp!"



### **FEELING CHARITABLE? USE DONOR ADVISED FUNDS**

#### **Do You Have a DAF?**

Families Helping Families is grateful for all donations! Donor-advised funds are the fastest-growing charitable giving vehicle in the United States because they are one of the easiest and most tax-advantageous ways to give to charity. Please let us know if you'd like to donate to FHF through your DAF.

Tax exempt ID 501(c)(3) 93-2519774  
All donations are fully tax deductible.

Email us at [info@fhf.care](mailto:info@fhf.care) for more information.

*"FHF is the perfect example of what we should all be doing. So much is accomplished by these acts of kindness. Congratulations on your 31 years of changing lives!"*

*From generous donor,  
Donna*





## SAVE THE DATE!

### ANNUAL FHF BENEFIT DINNER

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2026

6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.

Meson Sabika

Live and silent auctions, dinner  
open bar, friends, and tons of fun!

**SEE YOU THERE!**

We are grateful for all donations!

**\$35 Funds a Family for 1 day.**

**\$245 Funds a Family for 1 week.**

**\$1050 Funds a Family for 1 month.**

To make a secure online donation go to [www.fhf.care/donate](http://www.fhf.care/donate).

Or mail this form with your credit card info or check to

**FHF/P.O. Box 8, Naperville, IL 60566**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email (needed for emailing your receipt)

Donation (Check made out to **Families Helping Families**)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donation to **Bruce Terlep Memorial Education Fund**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ If your company offers to match  
your donation, please include this information with your check

Visa/MasterCard (Circle one)

# \_\_\_\_\_

Verification Code \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized amount to charge \$ \_\_\_\_\_

To ensure 100% of your gift supports our mission,  
please check here to cover the 3% processing fees ☐

Tax exempt ID 501(c)(3) 93-2519774. All donations are fully tax deductible.



### The Bruce Terlep Memorial Education Fund

Bruce Terlep was an  
enthusiastic supporter of  
FHF. Sadly, he passed away  
in 2007. His wife, Ginger, who is an FHF mentor  
and board member, and their three sons  
established this fund to help FHF moms and their  
kids go to college. Please let us know if you'd like  
to direct your donation specifically to education.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

**Monetary Donations:** To pay housing and utility costs.

Tax exempt ID 501(c)(3) 93-2519774. All donations are fully tax deductible.

**Gift Cards:** Walmart, Target, and gas cards.

**Cars:** Our families need serviceable cars to get to school and work. Your donation is tax deductible.

**Mentors:** Volunteers interested in coaching our families toward reaching self-sufficiency. Training provided.

**Service Projects:** If your group is looking for a service project, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss  
it with you: [info@fhf.care](mailto:info@fhf.care).

**Professional Services:** We are always in need of help from the community. Let us know if you can provide  
services to our families, such as dental care, orthodonture, legal advice, and more.

**Other Donations:** Join our LINK email list to see what our clients need and to offer  
donations of clothing, furniture, etc. [info@fhf.care](mailto:info@fhf.care).

Scan to  
donate



Printing generously donated by  
VISOgraphic [visographic.com](http://visographic.com)

7-year-old Alex loves this car  
that was donated for his family!

