

# Quarterly Newsletter



## Reaching Our Community

### CEO Corner

#### Looking Forward:

This year, we're focused on strengthening our current partnerships and creating new ones. These collaborations will help us expand our reach and deepen our impact. We're excited to create new initiatives that together will continue to make a lasting difference.

One of the ways we do this is by hosting a monthly Community Collaborative Meeting, where partners come together to connect, share ideas, and explore new opportunities. This is a valuable chance to build relationships, foster collaboration, and work towards our shared goals.

If you're interested in joining us at the Community Collaborative, please email Shannon at [CEO@marioncountyfrn.com](mailto:CEO@marioncountyfrn.com).

#### Celebrating Our Achievements:

Thanks to the hard work of our dedicated team, volunteers and supporters, we achieved incredible milestones in 2024! These efforts are truly inspiring and I can't wait to see the amazing things we accomplish in 2025!

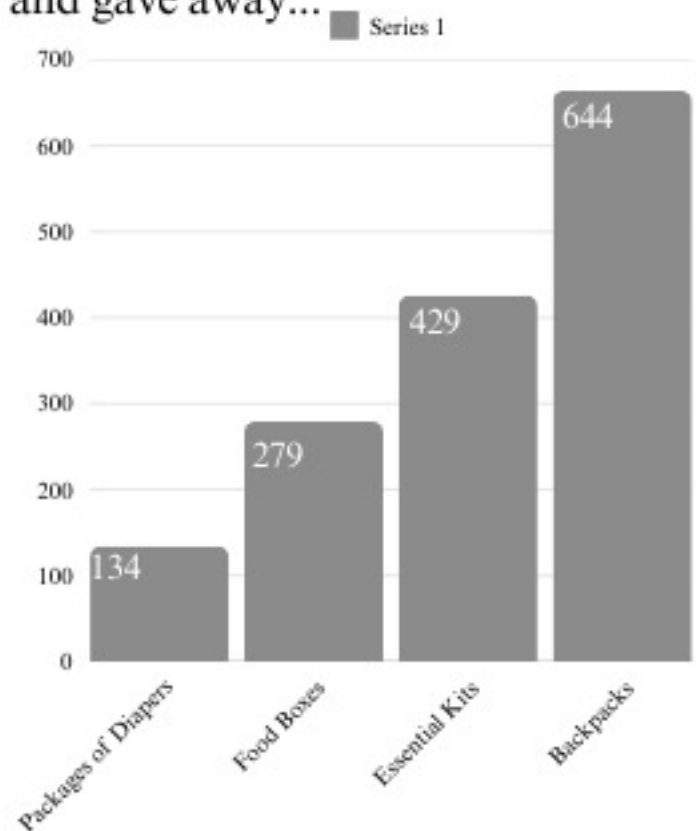


**Shannon Hogue, BSW, MPA**  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
[ceo@marioncountyfrn.com](mailto:ceo@marioncountyfrn.com)

### How We've Served

In the year 2024...

- we served 848 households,
- we stocked 13,899 Food Pantry items, 781 of which were donated,
- we referred 79 participants to Partner Agencies,
- we hosted/ participated in 95 community events,
- and gave away...



Access our  
 Marion County, WV  
**Digital Resource Guide**  
 at:  
[www.marioncountyfrn.com/ResourceGuide](http://www.marioncountyfrn.com/ResourceGuide)





## MCFRSN Food Pantry Takes Off

The Marion County Family Resource and Support Network (MCFRSN) proudly opened a food pantry at the end of September. This initiative, made possible through the support of the Department of Human Services, Aetna and an agreement with the Mountaineer Food Bank, has already made a significant impact in the region. In just a few short months, the pantry has served 185 families, providing critical food supplies to those in need.

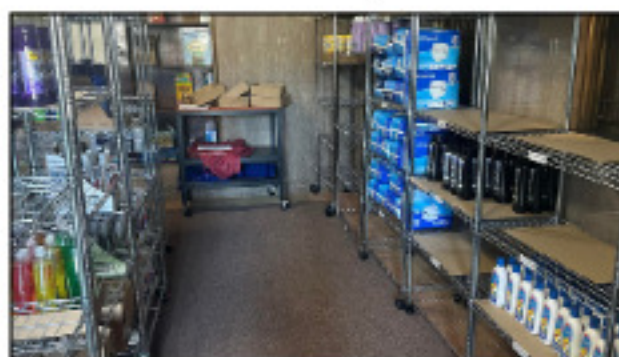
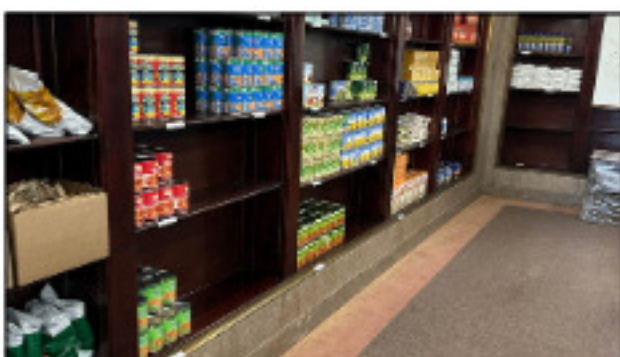
This achievement wouldn't have been possible without the support of our partners. Country Roads Moving has played a pivotal role, generously donating their time and resources to transport supplies from the Mountaineer Food Bank to our facility. Their efforts ensure that the pantry remains stocked and ready to serve the community.

Donations from various local organizations have further strengthened our mission. Contributions from City on a Hill Christian Academy and the Girl Scouts of Black Diamond have been particularly beneficial, helping to ensure a steady supply of food and other essentials for families facing hardship. Additionally, the Posey Perry grant awarded through the state of West Virginia has provided crucial financial support, enabling us to expand our reach and sustain operations.

The pantry's opening comes at a critical time, as many families in the area continue to face economic challenges. By offering this resource, the MCFRSN aims to alleviate food insecurity and foster a stronger, more connected community.

"We are overwhelmed by the generosity and support from our partners and the community," said Jan Smith, Family Support Center director. "This pantry is a testament to what we can achieve when we come together for a common cause. Each contribution, big or small, has made a difference in the lives of the families we serve." Looking ahead, the MCFRSN is committed to continuing its efforts and exploring ways to expand the pantry's services. Community members and organizations are encouraged to join in this mission by volunteering or making donations.

Together, with the support of dedicated partners and the compassion of our community, the Marion County Family Resource and Support Network is bringing hope and nourishment to families in need. This food pantry stands as a beacon of what collaboration and kindness can accomplish.



**Jan Smith, MSW, MPA**

*Director*

[jan@marioncountyfrn.com](mailto:jan@marioncountyfrn.com)

## Birthday Cake Kits

For some families in our community, our Birthday Cake Kits are the only birthday celebration they receive. We love to see a parent's eyes light up when they know that they get to celebrate their child's birthday.

These kits typically include birthday cake mix, frosting, Sprite for the cake to rise, and various small decorations.





# Get Involved



"Happy Mamas" is a monthly gathering for all variations of mother-figures offering a supportive space for connection and self-care. Each month, we explore a new theme while sharing a meal and engaging in fun, hands-on activities like making self-care kits or DIY soup in a jar. Our thriving online community of nearly 300 members on Facebook provides ongoing support, encouragement, and resources, fostering lasting relationships among moms in our community.

Join us online at  
[Facebook.com/groups/mchappymamas/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/mchappymamas/).



**Leah Peck**  
Program Coordinator  
Family Support Program  
leah@marioncountyfrn.com



If you haven't had the chance to join our in-person "Dad Life" meetings, you're missing out on a wealth of valuable skills and knowledge. It's a fantastic opportunity to share experiences and learn from other dads, which can significantly enrich your parenting journey.

Dad Life welcomed several new members this quarter, bringing our total to 27!  
Join us online at [Facebook.com/groups/mcdadlife/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/mcdadlife/).



**Steve Osborne**  
Outreach Specialist  
Family Support Program  
steve@marioncountyfrn.com



## Playgroups

Our monthly playgroups provide a free, welcoming space for families to come together and enjoy fun, age-appropriate activities. Each meeting offers a unique experience, from DIY crafts to interactive sessions, allowing children of all ages to explore and engage in creative play. Stay up to date with our Facebook page.



## Upcoming Events

**\*Fun Fact:**  
Everything we do is FREE to the Marion County community!\*

200 Fairmont Ave, Suite 106  
Fairmont, WV 26554  
304-365-4445

### EVENT SCHEDULE

2025 JANUARY - MARCH

1/24 @ 10:00 AM	Play Group
1/27 @ 4:00 PM	Dad Life Meeting
1/28 @ 12:00 AM	Happy Mamas Meeting
2/7 @ 10:00 AM	Play Group
2/10 @ 4:00 PM	Dad Life Meeting
2/10 @ 10:00 AM	Happy Mamas Meeting
2/18 @ 10:00 AM	Community Baby Shower

For more updated events and times please visit our website and follow us on Facebook!  
[www.marioncountyfrn.com](http://www.marioncountyfrn.com)  
[Facebook.com/MCFRNWV/](https://www.facebook.com/MCFRNWV/)

For up to date information on our events, check [Facebook.com/MCFRNWV/events](https://www.facebook.com/MCFRNWV/events).





*Warm Hearts, Healthy Traditions*

## Virtual Outreach



*Fright Nights & Frayed Nerves with MVA Health Centers.*



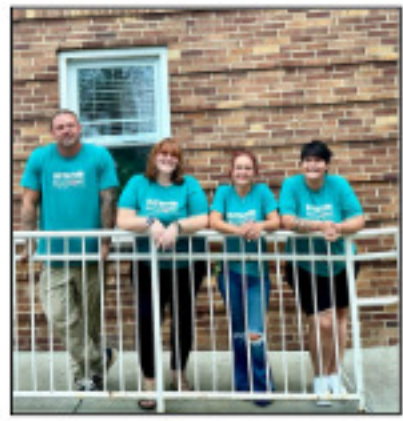
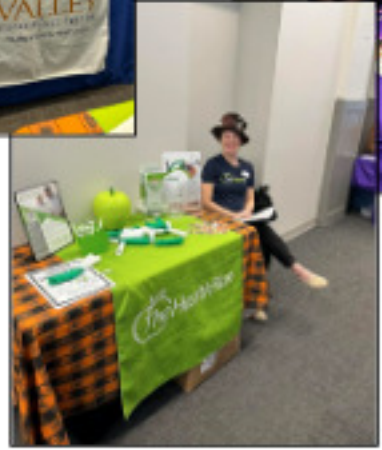
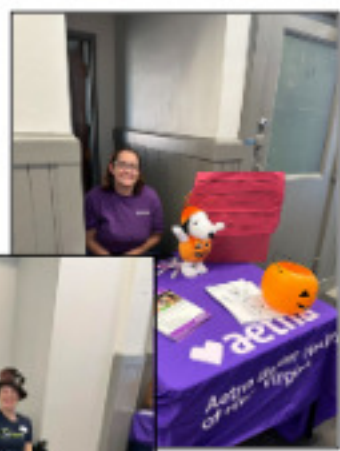
*Healthy for the Holidays Parts 1, 2, and 3 with MVA Health Centers and UniCare.*

Our new virtual outreach video series offers convenient online access to resources and support.

## Stronger Together

### Caring Partners

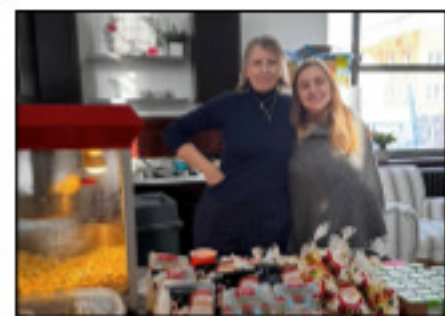
Through strong community partnerships, we work together to ensure access to services that promote well-being, resilience, education and growth.



## Dedicated Volunteers

We are appreciative of all the help we can get, especially for events! As a staff of only six we work hard to keep everything running but it's not always enough. That is where our dedicated volunteers come in. A huge thank you goes out to all the volunteers who have put in a helping hand when we needed it most!

Our biggest thanks, however, goes to Kathi and Betty who go above and beyond for the MCFRSN.



*Betty Nataro has helped us with everything from filling intakes to making popcorn! Her helpful spirit is always appreciated.*



*Kathi Summers does a wonderful job with desserts for our events, stocking pantry boxes, and helping with anything she can. We are blessed by her giving heart!*



## Community Engagement



*Donations to our food pantry from City on a Hill Christian Academy and the Girl Scouts of Black Diamond.*



*Donations from Aetna, Arsenal Resources and the Farmer Family Foundation*



*Volunteer service from Country Roads Moving and a generous discount from Price Cutter for our pantries.*



*Hosting tables at events in our community.*



# What We've Been Up To

## Mindfulness Journey

### WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness is the practice of giving your full attention to the present moment, being aware of what is going on with your thoughts and feelings without judging, taking time to appreciate the good, and being gentle and compassionate with yourself and others. Practicing mindful habits has proven benefits for mental, physical and emotional health and for relationships.

Our Family Mindfulness Series focused on five Mindful Habits of Presentness, Calm, Gratitude, Compassion and introduced ways for families to integrate these habits into their daily lives.

### OUR JOURNEY OVER FIVE MONTHS

#### **September - Presentness Monday**

The foundation of all mindfulness is the habit of Presentness, or being aware and accepting of the world around you rather than focusing on the past or future. For our first Mindfulness session, we practiced family-friendly activities to cultivate presentness such as Mindful Snacking, Spidey Senses, and Belly Breathing!

#### **October - Calm Saturday**

Being in nature is an excellent way to find calm in our busy lives. During our Calming Family Bird Walk, we practiced "Deer Walk," or walking slowly and quietly, and took in the beauty of the world around us on a perfect fall day. We even saw a Belted Kingfisher!

#### **November - Family Thankfulness**

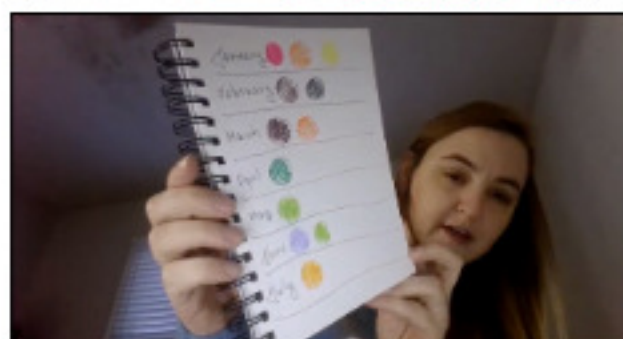
November is the perfect time to express gratitude for the people and things that support us and give us joy. Kids and grownups crafted Gratitude Wreaths and Magic Gratitude Stones, and made holiday greeting cards with the help of our awesome Girl Scout volunteers Kim, Mady and Ava Board. And each family went home with a gorgeous keepsake family photo by Emily!

#### **December - Compassion Saturday**

To share the joys of the holiday season with others, participants packed boxes for our Food Pantry and painted ornaments to share with family members and to donate to those who could use a little cheering up. The donated ornaments were given to the VA Hospital in Clarksburg to spread holiday cheer to veterans!

#### **January - Reflection Friday**

Journaling has many benefits for our mental, physical and emotional health. For Reflection Friday, we reflected on the year that was and set positive intentions for the year to come with fun journaling activities like Colors of the Year, Letter to 2024, and Family Awards.



**Samantha Nataro**

*Data Management Specialist*

Family Support Program

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# Family Fun Events - Happy Mamas & Playgroups



*Engaging activities for the littles in our community.*



*Sensory kit activity night with Necco Foster Care.*

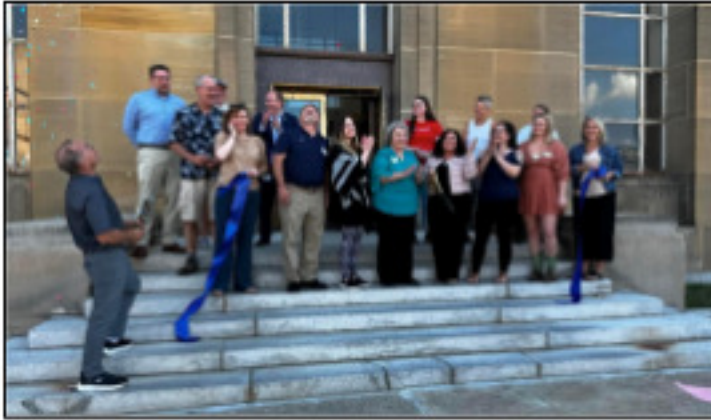
*More family fun!*



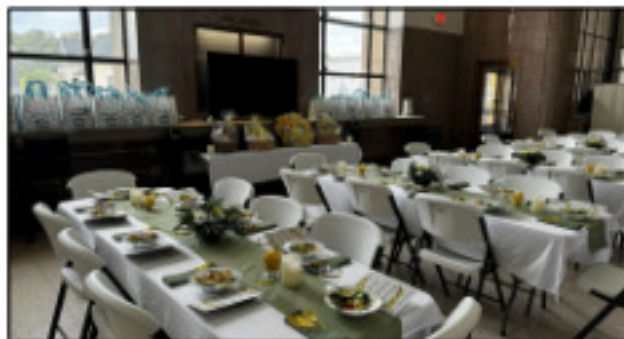


## Ribbon Cutting

We were honored by those who joined us for our official Ribbon Cutting held on September 20th. By combining the core services of the Family Resource Network and the family-focused programming of the Family Support Center this special event marked the beginning of new opportunities and support to our community.-Shannon Hogue-CEO



## Women's Self-Care Dinner



*"When life gives you lemons, make lemonade."*

Our first ever Women's Self Care Dinner was held in celebration of the hard working women in our community. The event was beautifully arranged and we hope it provided a much-needed space for reflection, connection and rejuvenation. A special thank you to our partners UniCare and MVA Health Centers.

## "Not So Scary" Halloween

Our "Not So Scary Halloween" event provided an emerging Halloween experience and resources for the young and easily scared. It also provided a scary haunted house for the more daring participants.





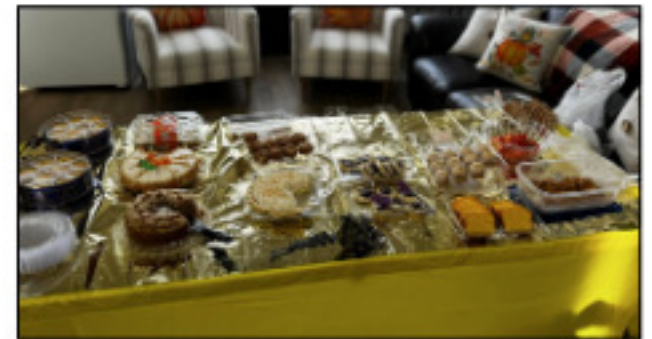
## Red Ribbon Week



For Red Ribbon Week, we hosted City on a Hill Christian Academy and visited Watson Elementary School. We were honored to partner with local schools to support a drug-free lifestyle for our youth!

## Community Collaborative "Friendsgiving"

Our annual Community Collaborative Friendsgiving is always a time where we pause to be thankful. During November's meeting we like to have every attendee share a thankful memory.



## Winter Celebrations Around the World

This season, local students joined us in exploring the rich history of winter celebrations and learning how cultures around the globe honor the holidays.

Experiences like these remind us of the importance of investing in our children's futures—fostering learning, connection, and a deeper appreciation for the diverse world around us, something we strive to bring to each event we offer!





# Contact Us!

## Our Team



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Facebook.com/MCFRNWV/