

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 9, 2023

**FREE FOSTER CARE EXPO AT HOF OFFERS INFORMATION,
FORMER NFL PLAYER SHAWN CRABLE TO SPEAK**

Canton, Ohio - Public and private foster care agencies in Northeast and East Central Ohio are teaming up to host a free Foster Care Expo on Saturday, April 29, 2023 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton. The Expo will feature celebrity guest speaker Shawn Crable, a former New England Patriots defensive end who grew up in the foster care system. This event will offer families the opportunity to learn about the process of becoming a licensed foster caregiver.

“The need for foster parents is growing across Ohio, and there are children right here in Stark County who need families just like yours to open their hearts and homes,” said Robert Myers, LISW-S, Deputy Director of Children Services at Stark County Job & Family Services. “I encourage anyone who has considered becoming a foster parent to attend the Foster Care Expo. It’s a great opportunity for interested parents to meet with agencies, ask questions about the process, and find the guidance they need to take those next steps to becoming a foster and adoptive parent.”

The expo will begin with training sessions for current foster caregivers and a panel presentation for prospective families. Over lunch, Crable will share his personal journey through foster care and the role his foster family played in providing structure and guidance to help him become a successful adult. In the afternoon, families will have time to visit with foster care agencies and meet Crable.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided to those in attendance. Families will be entered into a drawing for prizes, which includes tickets to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Please note that admission to the Pro Football Hall of Fame is not included with the Foster Care Expo.

All children need and deserve to grow and thrive in a loving family. Foster parents provide temporary care for children who have experienced abuse or neglect and play a vital role in helping families heal and reconnect.

The need for foster caregivers is at a record high. Families across Ohio face challenges that impact their ability to care for their children. The treatment and services required to help families overcome the devastating effects of substance use disorders, mental illness, domestic violence, poverty, homelessness, and other challenges can be lengthy, which result in children remaining in foster care longer and limits the availability of new placements in those homes.

To register for this free event, please visit <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/fostercareexpo/>. For more information about foster care and adoption in Stark County, visit StarkJFS.org.

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