

## Meet the Shulers

Kim and Rusty Shuler are passionate about children. “I can’t imagine what it would be like to be separated from my family,” says Kim. “We opened our home to children that need a place to live, whether it’s temporary or long-term, until their home situation improves or an adoptive family becomes available.”

Kim and Rusty are treatment foster care parents for The Arc and have been fostering for over 12 years. The last eight years they have been working with The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region. Kim and Rusty have created a caring home for six beautiful children, including three adopted children and two who are in foster care. Two of the children they adopted are brother and sister. The third child is a young man who lived in a residential treatment facility.



Kim explains the decision to become Treatment Foster Parents: “One of the reasons we decided to become foster parents was that Ryan, our firstborn child, had lost oxygen at birth and had global delays that impacted his learning and development. Early on we were exposed to an entirely new world and never realized that so many children out there didn’t have supportive families or their families were unable to care for them. So many children with disabilities were placed in residential treatment facilities. They didn’t have a home, parents or anyone that was there for them. We wanted to give back to the community because we both were truly blessed as children as well as adults, and we felt like this is what God’s will was and is for our life. We both had the nurturing and support from our families that we needed to grow into the responsible adults we are today. Our families were always there for us, and all our needs were met. No child should have to live in a residential setting because they don’t have a place to call home. These children are growing up quickly, and they will be our future leaders one day or possibly parents themselves.”



Kim has tackled many issues for children with special needs who are now more fully included in educational and community programs because of her efforts. In the past, the Shulers conducted the U-Fit Easter Egg Hunts for five years in a

row where children with and without disabilities have participated in a fun outdoors activity. Kim is also an active leader in improving mental health services for children in the State of Maryland.