

# *Becoming a Foster Family and Fostering a Child*

Foster homes provide care to children while the child's family is resolving the circumstances that led to the child's placement outside of the home. While the child lives in the foster home, the foster family becomes an important team member in the provision of care to the child. It is likely that the foster parent will need to work closely with the child's parent(s), caseworkers and other service providers to ensure that the child's needs are met. This can include going to school conferences, assisting with transportation to visitations, and arranging for and attending medical appointments with the child and the child's parent.

Our efforts are to return children to their parents or another appropriate family member as soon as possible. However, sometimes this is not an option and the child remains in foster care, (In some cases, children are then adopted, often by their foster parents).

To become a foster parent you must meet with the Foster Home Coordinator, you will have several orientation meetings, some at the Coordinators office, some at your home. You will complete an application, provide personal references, get fingerprinted, complete a Child Abuse Clearance Form, have a physical from your doctor. The coordinator will complete a home –study, which involves getting to know you and your family. There will be trainings available for you to take also. At any time during this process the Foster Home Coordinator is there to answer any questions you may have.

Foster parents also receive a daily board rate (paid monthly), clothing allowance for the foster children in their home (paid 4 times a year) and if yearly trainings are up to date, they receive an incentive with the board rate. Foster children are covered by Medicaid and Managed Care. Upon becoming a licensed foster home, the Coordinator will visit with you 4 times a year; for recertification, and 3 other times to check in to see how things are going.

## There are 4 main types of foster homes:

Traditional

Respite

Emergency

Cluster

Each type of home has to become a licensed Foster Home.

## *The following are explanations of the 4 types of homes:*

### *Traditional Foster Homes*

Traditional fostering is what most people think of when thinking about foster care. Children who have been removed from their homes due to neglect or abuse or PINS are placed with foster parents who have been screened and received foster training. The goal is reunification of the child with his or her parents, and there is generally a great deal of contact between the two families. If the parents fail to make adequate progress, their parental rights may eventually be terminated, but there is no expectation that this will occur. Traditional foster placements may last for months or even years as biological parents work to get their children back.

### *Respite Foster Home*

Respite homes are homes which provide short-term planned respite services to foster families. These homes typically provide care from 1 to 2 day increments although sometimes it may be a week or two. Short-term and planned-care are ideal situations for individuals who do not wish to make a long-term commitment to foster a child.

### *Emergency Foster Homes*

Emergency homes foster families take children for short periods when the need arises. Emergency foster parents may receive children with virtually no notice, and the children are often highly traumatized. Emergency homes typically take have the children for less than 30 days.

### *Cluster Foster Homes*

Cluster homes usually deal with children who have more problems or may act out more. In many instances they are Juvenile Delinquents (JDs) or Person in Need of Supervision (PINS). Cluster homes are usually more restricting and there is a Youth Care Worker that helps out the foster parents.

*Orleans County is in need of foster homes and cluster homes.*

*We are always looking for respite homes and emergency homes.*

For more information please contact:

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