

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the average length of stay a foster child will be in our home?

A child stays in a foster home until his or her biological parents are able to care for him or her again or until a suitable placement can be made with a relative. If this is not possible, a child may stay in the foster home until he or she can be adopted. Currently, the average length of stay in foster care is 12-18 months; however, the length of stay in foster care varies depending on the child and the biological family's case plan.

Do the children have contact with their biological parents while in foster care?

Foster parents are asked to be a support to the child's biological family. Foster care is intended to be a short-term arrangement until kids can safely return to their family. Biological parents have the right to visit and have contact with their children as determined by the child welfare agency and the Court. The ideal fostering situation is one in which all interested parties work in partnership toward the best interests of the child.

Who are the children in foster care?

The children, newborn to age 17, have been removed from their families and are placed in out-of-home care typically because of neglect and/or abuse. The majority of children and youth have some degree of physical, behavioral, and emotional needs stemming from the difficulty they have experienced in their lives. Many children in foster care are part of a sibling group. Training, information, and referrals to community resources are provided for parents to help them deal with issues that their child(ren) may experience. Children are amazingly resilient. Foster parents can make a difference by providing a structured and nurturing environment.



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Frequently Asked Questions Cont'd.

Who can become a foster parent?

Foster parents can be single, married, divorced, or partnered individuals. They can be employed outside of the home, or not working, as long as they can provide verifiable income to cover expenses. Foster parents can have biological children in the home, or have never parented before.

What if I work full time?

Foster parents may work full time outside the home. Many foster children attend day care while foster parents work outside the home.

What if I have a police record?

Your criminal history will be carefully reviewed as part of any foster care licensing process. Some crimes will permanently prevent you from fostering because they will prevent you from being approved as a children's caregiver. Some crimes require you to participate in a rehabilitation review process. Remember that you must have been convicted of the crime in question, in most cases.

The room that a foster child can use as a bedroom:

- Must have a minimum of 40 square feet of open floor space per child
- Is not an unfinished attic or unfinished basement. (Children under age 7 cannot have a bedroom in the attic, basement, or third floor of the home. All bedrooms on the third floor, attic, or basement must have two exits.)
- Is not in my room or any other adult's room if child is above age one
- Cannot be with the opposite gender when they are six and older
- Is not normally used for purposes other than sleeping
- Is not a room that someone must pass through to get to another part of the house
- Has a door for privacy



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