

## HOW DO I BECOME A FOSTER PARENT?

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1. Request and complete a foster parent application packet.
2. Home Study & Interviews- Will be used to assess the ability of the applicant and joint applicant to care for a troubled youth.
3. Reference check- Request for references that address the applicant and joint applicant's character and abilities.
4. Criminal Background Check-Local and FBI background checks for all adults in the household. Existence of a criminal record does not automatically eliminate applicants.
5. Medical Certification- Statement from doctor that the applicant and joint applicant and family members do not have any conditions that would interfere with the care of the youth.
6. Fire Inspection- Inspection to insure that the home meets fire and safety standards.
7. Health Inspection- Inspection to insure the home meets health standards.

**To obtain a foster parent application, please contact:**

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**Foster Care  
Program**



# WHAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT FOSTER CARE

- 1) **WHAT DOES THE DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES (DJS) DO?**

DJS is a state agency that is required by law to provide treatment for delinquent youth and youth with behavioral problems such as chronic running away.
- 2) **HOW DOES SHELTER AND FOSTER CARE FIT?**

Shelter care is temporary (usually between 1 to 30 days) form of treatment in a family-type environment. Youth placed in shelter homes are awaiting a court decision or another more permanent placement.

Foster care is a longer term (usually 3 to 18 months) form of treatment in a family-type environment. Youth placed in foster homes have been found to be in need of treatment in a family-type environment.
- 3) **DOES DJS PROVIDE SHELTER/FOSTERCARE FOR INFANTS OR YOUNG CHILDREN?**

No. DJS generally places youth between the ages of 10 and 17. Remember DJS youth have come to the attention of the agency because of delinquency or behavioral problems. *Youth between the ages of infancy to six are not referred to DJS.* Youth between the ages of 7 and 9 are

very seldom taken out of their homes by DJS.

- 4) **CAN YOUTH PLACED IN DJS FOSTER HOMES BE ADOPTED BY THE FOSTER PARENT(S)?**

The goal of our foster care program is to provide treatment to youth and reunite them with their families. In some situations, family conditions are so problematic that other plans such as long term foster care or independent living are necessary. However, as a rule it is expected that the youth will return to their families.
- 5) **WHAT LEGAL RIGHTS DO FOSTER PARENTS HAVE OVER THE YOUTH?**

Natural parents retain their parental rights when a youth is placed in a DJS home. Generally, this means DJS is legally responsible for the care, custody and supervision of the youth, but does not have guardianship of the youth. DJS must obtain authorization from the natural parent or the court in order to make decisions regarding medical care or school placement. Since foster parents are a part of the DJS system, they too have the responsibility of care, custody and supervision.
- 6) **ARE FOSTER PARENTS INSURED?**

Yes. The State has insurance against property damage, loss and personal injury.
- 7) **ARE FOSTER PARENTS FORCED TO ACCEPT YOUTH?**

Every youth is not for every foster parent. It is also very important that

the youth and foster parent feel comfortable with each other in order to develop a workable and beneficial relationship. Foster parents' state who they think will work best within their home. The Department attempts to "match" youth with the foster parent best for him or her.

- 8) **OTHER THAN CARE AND SUPERVISION, WHAT IS EXPECTED OF FOSTER PARENTS?**

Foster parents are expected to participate in treatment planning for youth. Supportive services from the Department are also provided to foster parents. We believe that participating in treatment planning and use of available resources lessens the possibility of crisis, and increases the chances of success.
- 9) **ARE FOSTER PARENTS PAID FOR THEIR SERVICES?**

Yes. Foster parents receive a monthly stipend. The rate varies depending on the length of time a child is in care. As of August 14, 2008, the rate is \$930 a month per youth or \$31 per day.
- 10) **IS TRAINING OFFERED TO FOSTER PARENTS?**

Yes. Training is available on a regular basis for parents.

**Are you up to the  
challenge?**

