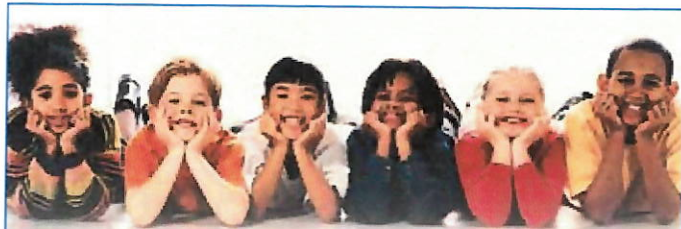


**You Can Make a Difference!**

## *Be a Foster or Adoptive Parent*



*Right now, there are thousands of New Jersey children who need the warmth and guidance of a family. Many parents are welcoming these children into their homes to provide safety, stability and love. These wonderful people are New Jersey's foster and adoptive families.*



### *Foster Care*

Foster families provide a home for children who have been abandoned, neglected or abused. These children are in need of nurturing families who will help them heal and grow.

### *Adoption*

Many children long for a forever family because they are not able to be reunited with their birth parents. Being an adoptive parent can change a child's life forever, as well as bring new joy and fulfillment to your family.

Call or visit our web site:

**1-877-NJ FOSTER**

[www.njfoster.org](http://www.njfoster.org)

**1-800-99 ADOPT**

[www.njadopt.org](http://www.njadopt.org)

#### **To become a foster or adoptive parent:**

- ▶ You must be at least 18 years old.
- ▶ You can be single, married, in a domestic partnership or civil union.
- ▶ You can live in either a house or an apartment.
- ▶ You can have your own children or be parenting for the first time.

#### **We will help you through the process of becoming a licensed foster/adoptive parent. This involves:**

- ▶ Personal, employment, school and child care references
- ▶ Criminal background and child abuse history checks
- ▶ Pre-service training
- ▶ Interviews and assessments of all household members
- ▶ Home inspection

#### **Support services are available for children in your care:**

- ▶ Monthly board stipend
- ▶ Health insurance
- ▶ Child care services for employed parents



Department of Children and Families  
Child Protection and Permanency

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Who are the children who need a foster family?**

Families are needed for all children but especially siblings and children with special medical needs.

## **Is a single person able to be a foster parent?**

Yes. Foster parents can be single, married in a domestic partnership or a civil union. The important thing is their willingness and ability to parent.

## **Is a foster parent able to hold a job?**

Yes. Foster parents are able to be employed outside the home. In fact, CP&P may provide child care for your foster children while you are at work.

## **How many foster children may I have?**

This is determined for each family during the licensing process. However, foster homes are not approved for more than four foster children.

## **What does the licensing process consist of?**

The licensing process includes nine training sessions; a home evaluation; reference checks (medical, employment, personal, school); criminal history checks (including fingerprinting and local police checks); and a life safety home inspection. The licensing process usually is completed within five months.

## **Once a child is placed with me, how long will he/she stay?**

Foster care is considered temporary. A foster child may stay a few days or several months, depending on the child's family situation. If reunification efforts are not successful, foster parents are encouraged to adopt.

## **What happens when the child returns home?**

A foster child's return home is generally a planned activity, allowing the foster parent the opportunity to participate in the planning and to say good-bye to the foster child. This can be a difficult time, but the child's return home represents a success. Returning home is the goal for most children in foster care.

## **Are there board rates for foster care?**

Yes. A board payment is made to assist a foster family in providing food, shelter, transportation and entertainment for a foster child. A clothing allowance is added to the board rate.

Monthly board rates vary, depending on the age of the child. These rates may be higher if you are expected to spend additional time caring for the child as a result of extraordinary emotional or physical needs. The foster child's caseworker will evaluate this with you and determine whether you are eligible for higher board rates.

## **When will I receive a board check?**

Board payments are made on a monthly basis, no later than ten working days after the end of the month, i.e., the board check for January would be issued no later than the tenth working day of February.

## **How are the costs of the child's health care paid?**

Foster children are covered by Medicaid, which covers all necessary care and treatment.



Department of Children and Families  
Child Protection and Permanency