

Frequently Asked Questions on

Foster Parenting

➤ **What are the qualities required to become a foster parent?**

- A. Have a genuine desire to help foster children transition to permanence
- B. Work well in a team
- C. Be open to learning new skills by going to trainings and engaging in support efforts
- D. Meet all FCNI and state-mandated licensing requirements,
- E. Have a safe home
- F. No criminal record
- G. Be free of drug and/or alcohol problems
- H. Be able to safely and reliably transport a foster child, especially in emergencies.

For more information visit: [FCNI.ORG/FOSTER](https://www.fcni.org/foster)

➤ **What are the steps to become a foster parent?**

Social workers who interview prospective foster families look for some special qualities:

- A. the warmth to care for a foster child and make him or her feel wanted and loved;
- B. the tolerance to accept a child from an unstable family background who may or may not want to be with a foster family;
- C. the patience to work with a child who may be withdrawn or hyperactive;
- D. the willingness to accept the fact that the child may still want to be involved with his or her family;
- E. the commitment to attend training to gain additional knowledge necessary for helping the foster child.

If you think you have the special qualities and time to become a foster family or want more information on fostering, contact your local child and family services agency or The Kinship & Foster Family Network of Manitoba. A worker will explain the foster program to you in detail and answer any specific questions you may have.

For more information visit <https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childfam/fostercare.html>

➤ **What is foster care?**

A child who is not able to live with his or her birth family still needs and deserves a caring and supportive home. In fact, being separated from family is very troubling for a child, so there may be no time in a child's life when living in a good home is more important. The best place for these children to live is with another family, a family that is able to accept the child as one of their own.

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➤ **Why become a foster family?**

There are many ways to help children and families, but none more direct than opening your heart and your home to a child. Extending a hand to a child who has experienced difficulties, and through him or her to a family, can be both challenging and rewarding.

Every member of a foster family learns and grows through the process of caring for a foster child. Helping a child to heal, then grow and learn can be one of life's most fulfilling experiences.

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➤ Who are foster children?

Foster children come from all age groups, from newborn to 17 years of age, and from all backgrounds. What they all have in common is their need for a good home.

A child may need foster care for a number of reasons, including:

- A. illness, death, or conflict in his or her family;
- B. neglect or abandonment; and
- C. physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

Some adolescent children need foster care when their views severely conflict with those of their families. Foster children may have special needs because of a disability or emotional problem and require more care and attention than their families can provide.

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➤ How long will foster children stay?

Some children need emergency care for overnight or for a few days. Others need short-term care for a few weeks. Still, others need longer-term care that can continue until they are ready to go out on their own.

Every effort is made to reunite a foster child with his or her family or find a permanent home for the child. But while a foster child's stay may be temporary, it should be time well spent with the foster family.

Foster families have to be prepared to give their foster children a lot of time and attention but still be prepared to help them leave in a positive way when the time comes. This is difficult to do and is one of the reasons why fostering requires very special people.

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➤ **What is the difference between foster care and adoption?**

An **adopted child** becomes the legal child of the adoptive parents.

When a **child is fostered**, the foster child's parents or a child and family services agency is the legal guardian. Whenever possible, the goal of the agency is to reunite the foster child with his or her family.

For more information visit <https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childfam/fostercare.html>

➤ **Who can become a foster family?**

Single persons or couples, with or without children, can apply to become foster families. Foster parents may live in an apartment or their own home. They can live in an urban centre or a rural community. Foster parents may be from any ethnic, racial or cultural background.

For more information visit <https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childfam/fostercare.html>

➤ **Do foster families receive support?**

Foster families receive a daily allowance to cover costs such as food, clothing and spending money for the foster child. Medical, dental and education costs are also covered. The agency provides support and training. There is a foster family manual that provides useful information like the Foster Parents' Rights and Foster Parents' Responsibilities.

Foster families receive direct support through the child and family services agency with which they work. The agency that places a child in your home is required to spend time with you and your foster child. They can help solve problems, plan interventions, arrange family visits and provide respite services.

There are additional programs designed to support foster families, such as:

- A. The Foster Parent Intentional Damage Compensation Plan; and
- B. The Foster Parent Legal Aid Assistance Plan.

Details about these plans can be obtained through a child and family services agency.

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➤ **How do you apply to become a foster family?**

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