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**Clinical and Family Services Division - Foster Care**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**What is foster care?**

- ▶ It is temporary care, supervision, and maintenance of a child placed in a home or foster care facility licensed by Dodge County or a private child welfare agency.

**What ages of foster children need care the most?**

- ▶ The answer is that children of all ages can require foster care.
- ▶ What is more important is what age ranges, genders, and situations you feel most comfortable with in your home.
- ▶ We look for foster families who come in any size and shape imaginable. Dodge County is always actively recruiting foster families as it is helpful to have a pool of resources to choose from when matching a child to a foster home. In many cases, it is beneficial if we can keep the children within the same school district if applicable and near their biological family.

**Why are children in foster care?**

- ▶ Foster care is needed when children cannot remain with biological families for a variety of reasons. These include: physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect, medical or physical disability of the child, or the biological parent's emotional or physical needs prevent the parents from parenting their children.

**Who pays for the medical or other expenses of the child?**

- ▶ The Agency reimburses foster parents for monthly expenses related to room, board, and other items. If the child has emotional, behavioral, or physical needs, foster parents will also receive an additional supplemental and/or exceptional payment.
- ▶ Foster children's medical expenses are covered through their parent's medical insurance or through Title Nineteen (Medical Assistance). In addition, foster parents can also apply for day care funding if both foster parents work outside of the home.

**What about expenses such as clothing, food, and shelter for foster children?**

- ▶ Again, each foster family will receive a monthly stipend that is determined by the age and special needs of the child placed in the foster home.

**Will I have all the information I need about a child before they come to my home?**

- ▶ The Agency will share with you any and all information that we have available to us on the child and their family situation. You can then determine whether or not you are comfortable accepting them into your household. In turn, foster parents must maintain a high degree of confidentiality and not share this information with people outside of their home.

**I work outside of the home, is that a problem?**

- ▶ No. In many instances child care funding is available for foster parents when they are employed outside of the home. If child care is necessary, the only requirement is that child care be performed by a licensed or certified day care provider.

**Are children in foster care waiting to be adopted?**

- ▶ Most children placed in foster care need temporary placement until they can return back to their biological family/guardians. There is no expectation that foster parents will adopt children placed with them, although some children are eventually adopted by their foster parents. However, the expectation of foster parents is that you will work towards family reunification up until the time that the parental rights of the parents are terminated.

**Will we receive training to assist us in dealing with the challenges of being a foster parent?**

- ▶ Yes, foster parenting is a very difficult job. As a result, a training program has been developed to assist foster parents in caring for someone else's child. Each foster parent is required to complete an online pre-service training prior to licensure and a 30 hour foundation training to be completed within the first two years of licensure. In addition, foster parents are required to complete 10 hours of ongoing training each year, beginning with the third year. This training may be obtained through many different methodologies. Foster parents may be able to obtain most if not all of their ongoing training without leaving their home.

**At what age can I become a foster parent?**

- ▶ Foster parents must be at least 21 years of age and all caregivers in the household must be licensed. In two parent households, it is required that both parents become licensed.

**If you need more information or you would like to apply, please call 920-386-3634 to talk to the  
Foster Care Coordinator - Jim Wiersma**