

Foster Care Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is foster care?

Foster care is the temporary care of children placed in licensed foster homes who are unable to safely live with their biological parent.

2. What is the greatest need for a foster family?

There is always a need for foster parents that are interested in fostering children of all ages, and are willing to actively engage in the reunification plan of the child, which includes parent and siblings visitations. There is also a high need for foster parents who understand that children who have experienced trauma are likely to have a higher level of medical, mental health and behavioral needs. The greatest need is for foster parents who are willing to foster sibling groups, teenagers, and children with medical or mental health needs.

3. Can I be a foster parent if I have a full-time job outside of the home?

Yes, most of our foster parents have jobs outside of their home and plan for the childcare of a foster child the same as if they were their biological children. This may include a licensed day care facility, school, etc.

4. Where do foster children live?

It is the preference of the state of Michigan that foster children reside in a foster home, where they can be provided with a loving and stable family while they are in care. Should a foster home not be available, group homes and residential facilities are another possible placement for a child in care.

5. I am not married or I am in a same sex relationship, can I be a foster or adoptive parent?

Yes, Orchards welcomes individuals from all backgrounds, relationship status, marital status, religious and cultural background.

6. Do I get to choose which children I take placement of?

Yes, foster parents choose the age, capacity, gender and basic characteristics that they are willing and able to foster, based on their abilities and home assessment.

7. Does my spouse or significant other have to participate in fostering?

Yes, licensing requires that with a married couple or living together partners, both individuals are required to be applicants on the license. Further, any significant other will be required to be assessed in some capacity during the licensing process, even if they do not reside in the home. In addition, any primary caregivers or individuals who financially support the home would likely be assessed as applicants on the license.

8. How long will it take to become licensed?

It generally takes a family six months from the time they sign an application to become licensed for foster care. The process can be delayed based on any barriers in your household that need to be resolved (i.e. home repairs, criminal history, obtaining beds/car seats, scheduling home visits).

9. Is there a cost to fostering?

There is no cost to becoming licensed as a foster parent; however, foster families are responsible to obtain the items needed in their home to care for a child (i.e. cribs, beds, car seats and other household items).

10. Who is responsible for the transportation to scheduled visits and appointments that a foster child might have?

When taking placement of a child, foster parents are agreeing to the transportation needs of that child. This would include transporting them to their parent visitations, medical appointments, school and other activities, just as you would your biological child. Transportation arrangements are the responsibility of the foster parent.

11. Is there any financial support for a foster parent?

The State of Michigan provides a daily reimbursement rate for the care of foster children. The reimbursement is designed to assist with room and board, personal/incidental items and allowance, and clothing for a foster child. Foster parents also receive a clothing allowance for foster children twice each year to assist with clothing costs.

12. Can I “foster to adopt”?

The primary goal of foster care is to reunify a child with their biological family. Should a child not be able to be reunified, adoption may become the goal. Typically, children in foster care are adopted by their current foster parent or a relative of that child. Children who do not have an identified adoptive family are generally ages ten and older and have various mental health and behavioral needs.

13. I am interested in learning more about foster care, what do I do now?

Click on the link below to complete an online inquiry to start the process, and sign up for an orientation:

<http://form.jotformpro.com/form/51655478248971> [*Become a Foster or Adoptive Parent*]

14. For more information on adoption, please click on this link: [Adoption Frequently Asked Questions]