



## Opening Your Home and Your Heart to Children in Need

The best place for children is with their families. However, sometimes there are unfortunate circumstances that require children to be moved into a foster home. While children are in a foster home, birth parent (s) can focus on resolving difficult, personal issues. Caseworkers and foster parents will work with the children's biological family to help parents make necessary changes.

Children in need of foster homes range in age from infants through teens and come from all racial and ethnic groups. Some children have special physical or education needs and many require special support to catch up both educationally and socially with their peers.

By welcoming a child into your home and showing them love and guidance, you are giving them a gift that will benefit the child for the rest of his/her life. And while most children in foster care are returned to their parents or another family member, your time with them will allow them to live in your heart forever.

For more information on how you can help a child in need please call:

New Castle County: 451-2800  
Kent County: 739-4800  
Sussex County: 422-1400

or the Delaware Helpline  
**1-800-464-HELP**

You can also visit us online!  
**[www.kids.delaware.gov](http://www.kids.delaware.gov)**



**THINK OF  
THE CHILD  
FIRST.**

DELAWARE CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

Delaware Children's Department  
Division of Family Services  
1825 Faulkland Road  
Wilmington, DE 19805

# FOSTER CARE

Providing Hope for the Future



## DELAWARE CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

## How Can I Help?

### FOSTER CARE

Foster Care is the temporary care in your home for a child who has been removed from his/her home due to abuse, neglect, or dependency. The goal for most foster children is to return to their parent(s) when the circumstances that led to the foster placement have been resolved. However, sometimes children are not able to return home and need a permanent family. This is accomplished through adoption. Oftentimes, foster parents adopt the foster children they care for. The Division of Family Services offers special training and support to foster parents who decide to adopt.

### RESPIRE CARE

Respite Care is very short-term care of a child who already has a full-time foster placement. You would help foster parents by caring for a child in your home for a few hours to a few days.

### VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

There are many activities available, such as: tutoring, organizing donation drives, sponsoring events, etc. Foster Families need a variety of volunteer supports.

**Call today for more information**  
**1-800-464-HELP or 302-633-2643**



## Am I Able To Help?



**To be a foster parent in Delaware, you must meet certain requirements:**

- You must be at least 21 years of age and no older than 65.
- You must be economically stable.
- You can be single, married, divorced or widowed.
- You can rent or own your home.
- You can be any race or religion.
- You will need to participate in 9 weeks of pre-service training.
- You will need to have a criminal background check and be fingerprinted.
- You will need to have a home, health, and safety study.
- You will need to provide references.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **I have children of my own. Can I still be a foster or adoptive parent?**

Yes! As a foster parent, you can have up to five children living in your home, including your own.

### **Can we foster or adopt a sibling group?**

Yes! Family connections are important. We attempt to keep siblings together.

### **I'm not sure if I want to foster or adopt.**

That's okay. Most folks need more information before they make a commitment. Orientation sessions are provided to help answer questions you might have.

### **Can I choose the age range and gender of the child I want to care for?**

Yes. We try to match a child to a family based on strengths and needs.

### **What group of children is in most need of foster parents?**

Teenagers and medically fragile children are the hardest group to place and therefore, the most in need of foster parents.

### **Isn't it hard to give up a child once you become attached?**

Loving the child and then sending him/her back to a healthier family is one of the hardest and most important aspects of fostering. By helping the child stay connected to his/her family, foster parents often feel they have contributed to the strengthening of a family. The love you provided the child will live in his/her heart forever.

