

Integrated Family Services, PLLC

Becoming a Foster Parent 101

"Connecting the pieces; creating stronger families"

Who can become a Therapeutic Foster Parent

Foster parents must:

- Be at least 21 years old
- Have a valid driver's license
- Have a stable home and income
- Be willing to be fingerprinted and have a criminal records check (anyone over 18 who lives in the home)
- Maintain a drug free environment
- Complete all required training and be licensed by the state of North Carolina



Types of Foster Care IFS provides

What is Therapeutic Foster Care?

The most general definition for “Therapeutic Foster Care” is the provision of comprehensive care and services for children who the State has determined require therapy as a part of other services due to a serious emotional, behavioral, medical or psychological condition. Therapeutic foster children often require a higher level of care, more intensive therapy (medical or psychological), more tutoring or other educational aid and more supervision. Therapeutic foster care offers additional support to assist children with trauma, abuse, neglect, and dysfunctional lives.

What is Intensive Alternative Family Treatment (IAFT) Foster Care?

Intensive Alternative Family Treatment (IAFT) is a specialized, in-home, family-based foster care option for children who have been unable to maintain in lower levels of care such as Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) or who may need additional supports when stepping down from a higher level of care. Integrated Family Services is overseen by Rapid Resource (RR) in order to provide IAFT foster care services. The goal of IAFT services is to ensure stability and a successful transition back home with the child’s family of origin or a lower level of care.

Children who may be served in IAFT treatment display severe emotional or behavioral difficulties. They are at a higher risk for hospitalizations, have had disruptions in previous placements, and may have additional developmental diagnosis and needs

What is Respite Care?

Temporary care for a foster child. Usually, a weekend or week at a time.

Who are the Children

- Thousands of children in North Carolina enter the foster care system each year. All foster children have unique backgrounds, experiences, personalities, strengths and needs. Some children in foster care require extensive care for physical or emotional handicaps and disabilities.

- Some also require help with undisciplined and delinquent behaviors. Most foster children do not have a strong sense of belonging or self-worth. Many have been victims of physical or sexual abuse. All children who are in foster care require special care, support and nurturing.

"My foster parent is funny and makes me laugh. When I get a consequence, she always tells me why. I like that she talks to me." – A foster youth

Our Greatest Needs

"Being a foster parent, it's very important to have patience, empathy, and love. Working with these children daily, seeing progress, makes me feel happy." – An IFS foster parent



Homes for Teenagers

There are a large number or male and female teenagers in the foster care system who will unfortunately age out of the system with no consistency or sense of belonging. These teens need your help and support to learn adult living skills and to help them meet their goals.

Homes for Females:

There are over 5,000 females in the foster care system needing either TFC or IAFT treatment. Females are in need of supportive foster parents.

Road to becoming a Therapeutic Foster Parent

1. Getting Started

Your journey to becoming a foster parent begins with and online informational meeting, fingerprinting and a background check for anyone over 18 in your household. As well as the submission of the following paperwork:

- Agency Application
- Drivers License
- Social Security
- Home Requirements checklist

There is not set timeline from start to finish for becoming a foster parent.

It typically takes about 6 months from first call to being fully licensed and ready for placement

However, there are many variables that can shorten or lengthen the amount of time needed.

2. Initial Visit

Once we have received your paperwork, a staff member will call you to schedule an initial visit. During that visit, the Foster Care licensing Social Worker4 tours your home and gets you started on additional paperwork. The visit lasts two or more hours.

The Licensing Social Worker needs to become familiar with your family and household, so the more family members available, the better

Who Should be there?

- You and your spouse/partner (both are required)
- Your Children
- Other people living in the home (e.g., parents)
- Pets

Road to becoming a Therapeutic Foster Parent

3. Paperwork

Be prepared. On the path to becoming a foster/ adoptive parent, you encounter a mountain of paperwork. Items you need to compile include:

- Physicals on all family members
- Birth certificates
- Marriage licenses
- Divorce decrees
- Auto insurance policies
- Driving records

4. Training(s)

Trainings are and important part of becoming a foster parent and maintaining your license as a foster parent.

- 10 weeks TIPPS-MAPP class
- Together facing the challenge training
- Agency yearly trainings
- Bi-monthly agency training

5. Home Study

A home study is all about you. It is an assessment of your history, Marriage, Family life, and motivation for wanting to foster children. A Mutual assessment is made by you, your family and the Licensing social worker about whether foster children is a good fit for your family.

6. Background and Health Checks

Integrated family services runs a criminal background check on all members of your household ages 18 and older per state policy. We also require that everyone in your household receive a physical. This is to ensure the safety and health of entering your home.

7. License

You are considered a Fully licensed therapeutic foster parent once the following is complete

- All paperwork is submitted, and your home study and training are complete
- You have been approved by Integrated family services to be a therapeutic foster parent

Contact Us

- Please contact us for more information!
- Licensing worker: Marilynn Andrade 910-599-7796
- Foster Care Director: Denike Davis 252-414-4457

- Visit our website: http://www.integratedfamilyservices.net/