

The Process to Becoming a Foster Parent

People just like you provide foster care to children every day. Monroe County Children & Youth Services wants to make becoming a foster parent a thorough and straightforward process.

Step #1: Learn More about Fostering

Attend the foster care information session or come meet with a staff member at the office. Ask questions.

Step # 2: The Questionnaire

After you have completed the pre-screening process you will be mailed or given paperwork. Complete and submit the questionnaire. It can be mailed to or brought to the Foster Care Unit, 730 Phillips Street, Stroudsburg, PA 18360. The Foster Care Unit will receive and review completed questionnaire. Families that appear to meet the agency's current foster care needs and basic requirements will be contacted by telephone to schedule a home visit.

Step # 3: Family and Home Assessment

Agency personnel will come visit you at your home at a pre-arranged date and time. Agency personnel will provide some additional information and will answer questions you may have. After the question and answer time, a tour of your home will be requested. Staff will be assessing the home to make sure the required safety items are present and that ample space for fostering is available. After the tour, an agency staff member will meet one on one with each adult member of the household to conduct an interview. This will be the first of at least two interviews held during the process. Some topics discussed include: your background, personal characteristics, and values; your parenting skills and experience; your family preparation for fostering; and overall family relationships and family support network. After the first interview and home visit, agency personnel meet and decide who to invite to the pre-service training series.

Step # 4: Attend Pre-Service Foster Parent Training while working on Step #5

The pre-service training series consists of 8 training classes. The training series is intended to be an orientation of fostering. Some of the topics of the pre-service training include:

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| ★ Agency Policies and Procedures | ★ Child Growth and Development | ★ First Aid Certification |
| ★ Behavior Management Strategies | ★ Cross Cultural Issues | ★ CPR Certification |
| ★ Permanence and Concurrent Planning | ★ Legal and Financial Issues | ★ Safety Issues |

Step # 5: Paperwork & Clearances

All applicants are required to submit specific paperwork and documentation prior to the completion of the pre-service training. Don't get overwhelmed with the amount of paperwork; we have staff members that will help you with the process. Some of the documentation required include: Child Abuse Clearances, FBI Fingerprint Based Clearances, a physical assessment, and verification of a driver's license, car insurance, car registration and house insurance. All paperwork requirements are reviewed during your home visit and can be done week by week instead of all at once.

Step # 6: Approval

Usually a final home visit is conducted prior to approval. The family profile and home assessment with your completed paperwork will be presented for approval. Once approved, you will receive a license and then you will be placed on the availability list. When a child needs a foster home placement, you will be called. Some kids need emergency care, others short term fostering and still others need long term care. A foster parent coordinator will be paired with your family. That coordinator will be available to meet with you, answer questions and guide you through any concerns.

Step #7: Receiving a Foster Placement

Once a child or children are placed in your home you will work with agency personnel to make the placement a success. Communication and patience is necessary. You will have on-going contact with the agency as you provide day to day care for your foster children. Being a foster parent is an on-going learning experience and no two placements will be the same. Thank you for your time and consideration.