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FOSTER CARE

1:1 project



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WHAT IS FOSTER CARE?

Foster care is a temporary living arrangement for minors who have been placed in state custody. Foster care is a part of a system called child welfare.

WHEN IS FOSTER CARE NECESSARY?

Foster care is needed when children are living in impoverished, abusive, or neglectful homes. Over 85% of cases in Oklahoma are due to some type of “neglect”. Substance abuse is the greatest common factor.

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION 3 TYPES OF PLACEMENTS:

1. **Foster Family Home:** This is where a child is placed in a private home with a family. If possible, the child will be placed with a relative or someone who knew the child before they entered care, a placement called kinship care. A kinship family where siblings can stay together is the most preferred placement.
2. **Group Home:** This is a facility that can house a larger number of children, who are cared for 24 hours a day by staff.
3. **Shelter:** Shelters are intended for a short-term basis and are available to house children in immediate crisis. Oftentimes, kids will be placed in a shelter as soon as they are removed from their home due to no available family placement.

Not all foster children will stay in foster care. The goal of child welfare is to keep families together while protecting the children within the home. Many children will be removed from their parents only for a short time while their parents work to meet the state's requirements for raising their children. During this time, many children will still be allowed to maintain contact with their parents and have supervised visits. The most common goal of foster care is reunification when it is safe to do so.

However, sometimes the state will determine, or even the parents themselves will decide, that the home will never be healthy and safe enough for the child's development. When this happens, a judge will terminate the parents' guardianship. At that time, that child is considered a ward of the state, and often the hope is for that child to be adopted.

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5 DIFFERENT TYPES OF FOSTER CARE:

Kinship Foster Care: the full-time care for children in DHS custody, from birth to 18 years of age, by relatives, extended family, or close family friends.

Traditional Foster Care: provides 24-hour-a-day substitute temporary care and supportive services in a home environment for children in DHS custody, from birth to 18 years of age.

Specialized Foster Care (SFC): serves children and adults aged three years and older who have a primary diagnosis of intellectual disabilities and qualify for Developmental Disabilities Services.

Therapeutic Foster Care: The Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) program provides treatment for children aged 4- 18 who have unique life experiences that require enhanced patience, structure, and an understanding of each child's individual needs. Children in this level of care require more specialized therapeutic services to enhance their well-being.

Intensive Treatment Family Care (ITFC): provides treatment for children aged 6-18 who have experienced multiple placements in various settings, but can be successfully served in a family setting. This child has experienced trauma and may have behavioral, medical, developmental and/or intellectual challenges.

Agency Companion Services (ACS): provides a residential option allowing a child (aged three years and older) or an adult who has a primary diagnosis of intellectual disabilities and qualifies for Developmental Disabilities Services to share a home with a companion who provides support services based upon the recommendations of the individual's team.

Source: <https://okfosters.org/foster-care/types-of-foster-care/>

To see the current need for foster families in your county visit:

www.111project.org/ahomeforeverychild

111Project is not a foster agency, but we work closely with agencies across Oklahoma. If you need assistance navigating which agency is the best fit for your family, please reach out to us.

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OTHER SIGNIFICANT ROLES:

Respite: Temporary relief for families or caregivers, which requires the individuals providing the respite care to have completed the foster care training. If you are assisting a foster family with whom you have an existing relationship, you may be able to provide overnight care. Contact the foster family's agency to find out more.

Informal Care: This form of care takes place typically during the day for less than 7 days or 72 consecutive hours. The caregiver has fewer requirements but needs to be a trusted family member or have a relationship in which the foster parents would feel comfortable leaving their biological children. This allows those that know the foster family to offer childcare for a limited amount of time.

Safe Families: Oklahoma has a family hosting program that provides a voluntary placement option for families in crisis and in need of support. This program operates outside an active child welfare investigation or case and is a great option for family strengthening and support.



5 REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME A FOSTER PARENT (PROVIDED BY OKDHS):

- At least 21 years of age
- Responsible, mature, healthy adults capable of meeting the needs of the children in DHS custody.
- Have a stable living arrangement and relationships, whether married, single, separated, or divorced.
- Complete and pass all required background checks; these are required for all adult household members.
- Have sufficient income to meet their needs and ensure the security and stability of the household without relying on the foster care maintenance payment.

STATEWIDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- <https://okfosters.org/foster-care/types-of-foster-care>
- <https://okfosters.org/benefits>
- <https://www.fcao.org>
- <https://www.oklahomacompletehealth.com/members/scp.html>