

# THINKING ABOUT BECOMING A FOSTER PARENT?

## SOME THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

There are many reasons why people consider becoming a foster parent—wanting to give back to the community, the desire to help children, biological children are grown and miss the day to day parenting, etc. What ever your reason may be, there is some basic information you should have to help you make your final decision.

Foster parenting is an opportunity to provide a much needed service to your community and to help a child in needed of safe, caring home. The children who come into care have different level of needs and are of various ages and races. The largest need for foster homes is for homes for teens and pre-teens. Most children who come into care will return to their biological parents. The Division needs loving, caring people to help care for and nurture these children until they are able to return to their parents' home.

There are responsibilities and benefits to becoming a foster parent. The responsibilities include working with the Division, the court and the biological parents to develop permanency plan for the child(ren); work with the school(s) to assure the child's educational needs are being met; provide transportation to appointments (counseling, medical, visits, etc.); provide updates to the Division on how the child(ren) are progressing; and maintain a lifebook for the child(ren). {A lifebook is like a family album for the child during their stay in foster care.} The benefits to becoming a foster parent are specialized training for working with foster children; maintenance payments for caring for a child; becoming a professional member of our team; developing a bond with a child in need; and building relationships with other foster parents in your community.

Some things that you might want to consider in making your decision about becoming a foster parent are:

- ❖ Working with the biological family members
- ❖ Dealing with the loss of child who returns home/leaves your care
- ❖ Some of your personal information can be accessed by the general public (parts of the foster home record are public record – this information is not made public but can be requested.)
- ❖ The impact of a child moving into or out of your home on your own children/family members