

Myths About Foster Care: What's Stopping You?

MYTH: I could never be a foster provider because I don't make a lot of money, don't own my home and I'm not married.

FACT: There are no such requirements. You can be married, single or partnered, male or female, a homeowner or a renter. The only financial requirement is that you need to be able to meet your own household financial needs through a verifiable source of income as you go into fostering.

MYTH: Fostering a child is dangerous because the birth families will present risk to our family.

FACT: Children in foster care are children who, through no fault of their own, had to be removed from their families due to abusive or neglectful situations. A child entering foster care will generally have continued visitation and contact with their birth family, but the frequency and nature of the visitation will vary depending on the specifics of the case and the placement being considered for the child. DSS will only ask foster parents to have contact with birth families when it is safe and appropriate for all involved.

MYTH: I am too old / too young to foster.

FACT: You must be at least 21 to foster for our programs. Many "empty-nesters" and retirees find resource foster parenting to be a rewarding way to share their life experiences.

MYTH: I don't have any children, and resource foster providers need to have parenting experience.

FACT: Not true! Many of our resource foster providers are childless. They are, however, responsible people who have made a commitment to children and have learned parenting skills through our excellent training programs.

MYTH: Foster children have been abused so much that they're beyond repair. I can't really make a difference, anyway.

FACT: Children are amazingly resilient. Resource foster parents can make a tremendous difference in the life of a child by providing a structured, nurturing environment where a child can begin to heal. You **can** change the future of a child **how powerful is that?!**

MYTH: I'm not allowed to adopt children I foster.

FACT: While slightly more than half of all children who enter foster care return to their birth families, there are still thousands of children who cannot return home. Nationally, of the 51,000 children in foster care adopted last year, 54 percent were adopted by their foster parents.

MYTH: Once I take in a foster child, I'm on my own without any help.

FACT: When you foster, you become part of a team. The supports for resource foster providers include

- 24-hour support and crisis intervention, seven days a week
- Respite services to give you a break when needed
- Resource foster parent associations to provide training and support

MYTH: The expenses of taking in a child would be too much.

FACT: A monthly stipend is provided to help offset the costs for children placed in your home. The children in our programs also have medical, dental and mental health insurance through Medicaid.

MYTH: I've heard it takes up to a year to become licensed as a foster parent.

FACT: By partnering with an SCDSS Licensing Coordinator, the licensing process generally takes around 120 days from the time the application is received. The Licensing Coordinator is with the applicant every step of the way to ensure that the licensing process is completed as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Find more information at www.scfamilies.org

If you're ready, call today!
888.828.3555 (Hearfelt Calling)

