

# **Nepenthean Homes Foster Family Agency Frequently Asked Questions**

## **What is the role of a foster parent?**

- Foster parents provide a nurturing and stable family environment for children who cannot live with their birth parents until family problems are resolved. In most cases, foster parents work with social services staff to reunite the child with birth parents.

## **What are the requirements of a foster parent?**

- Foster parents must be at least 21 years of age and in good physical and mental health.
- Foster parents must be able to support themselves financially.
- Foster parents must be willing to assist and support the foster children's contact with their birth parents.
- Foster parents assist in reuniting children with their birth families or prepare them for permanent homes through adoption.
- **Foster parents can adopt foster children.** The Foster-To-Adopt program is designed for families willing to foster a child with the expectation of adopting.

## **How are foster children placed in foster homes?**

- Children are placed in foster homes by matching their special needs with the agency foster parent's ability to provide quality fostering services. Some children stay in foster care for days or weeks; some for years.

## **What types of kids are waiting to be placed in foster care?**

- Children of all ages, origins, ethnicity, backgrounds, and special needs are waiting to be fostered.
- Thousands of children in California's foster care system require temporary out-of-home care because of parental neglect, abuse, or exploitation. The largest percentages are African-American and Latino children.

## **Does it cost a lot of money to be a foster parent?**

- Foster parents receive monthly compensation for each child to cover the costs of food, clothing, shelter, and recreation.
- The cost for the children's medical and dental services is covered by the State.
- Financial help with special recreational and educational activities is available.

## **What types of people are foster parents?**

- Men, women, single, married, homeowners, renters—everyday people just like you—are fostering children!

**How do I become a foster parent?**

- A Certificate of Approval is required to operate a foster home through Nepenthean Homes FFA. The process starts with an agency social worker visiting your home to meet with you and other family members.

**Will the foster care certification process take a long time?**

The length of time will vary. On average, the certification process can take up to six weeks. The process usually includes:

- State-mandated criminal background screening check;
- Completing a foster parent application and the state-required paperwork;
- Attending a 12-hour orientation training program;
- Completing a health exam (including TB test)
- Completing First Aid/CPR certification;
- Participating in and completing a foster home social study.

**What is a home study?**

- A foster home study is a blending of foster parent background information, including but not limited to: references, health screening, foster parent interests, parenting styles and strengths, and brief biography of the family history. The study is used to match foster children with foster parents.

**Can I still work?**

- Yes—for working parents, appropriate child care arrangements must be made by the foster parents, with a licensed day care or background-cleared relative.

**Are there upper age limits?**

- Age requirements are flexible as long as your health, energy, and desire are appropriate. Retired foster parents are also needed!

**SPECIAL NOTE:** County placing agencies have indicated a particular need for foster homes that:

- Will provide structured homes for adolescent and teen foster children,
- Have enough room to permit siblings to stay together,
- May be used on a short-term emergency shelter basis.

**Thank you for inquiring about foster care with Nepenthean Homes FFA!**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Telephone toll-free: Sacramento Area: 1-800-439-8998  
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