

# Your Guide

## to becoming a foster parent

Start your life-changing experience with Foster Calgary



**FOSTER CALGARY**  
The Calgary and District Foster Parents Association

These children  
**need security** in adults.

They need someone  
to **be with them** at the depths  
of their pain and the height of  
their happiness.

They need to be **understood**,  
and they need to know  
they are **loved.**



# Why should you foster?

Being a foster parent is a life-changing journey for you and your child in care as you provide them with the safety, support, and love they need to thrive.

Foster parents play a crucial role in the lives of children who are temporarily unable to live with their biological families. All foster children have experienced trauma and missed out on the care and security they need. As a foster parent, you can help foster children build their self-esteem, become more resilient, and realize their potential.

## How will Foster Calgary support you and your foster child?

Foster Calgary trains foster parents to care for children in need, from newborns through to the age of 18, until they can be reunited with their birth families. We use an approved curriculum based on the Trauma-Informed Care model to help you cope with the emotional and practical challenges of fostering. We also connect each new foster parent with an experienced foster care mentor and a peer group.

Our combined services include supporting foster children to ensure their emotional, educational, and physical needs are met. As part of this collaborative process, every foster child has an individualized care plan implemented by a caseworker.



## Your fostering checklist

You don't have to be in a relationship, have a lot of money, or be under a certain age to foster. But you must:

- ☐ Be an Alberta resident over 18 years of age
- ☐ Earn a regular income
- ☐ Live in a home that has at least one spare bedroom, and a home insurance policy
- ☐ Have a driver's license, insurance, and access to a registered car
- ☐ Be free of criminal conviction or interactions with Children's Services over concern for a child
- ☐ Be physically and mentally healthy, and not have had a major life event in the past year
- ☐ Live separately to any renters in your home. That means you have separate entrances and live in self-sufficient areas
- ☐ Not currently providing services or care from your home for, but not limited to, students or persons with a disability



# Steps to Becoming a Foster Parent

Thank you for your interest in fostering. The following is a brief explanation of the steps involved in becoming a foster parent. Each step is a vetting process that is considered before moving to the next step.

## 1 Sign-up for an Information Session

Step one is a basic introduction to our Foster Care Program – and your chance to ask any questions about becoming a foster parent. The information session is a zero commitment session and your first step in finding out if foster care is right for you. To be eligible to attend your first information session, you will complete a pre-screening questionnaire to determine whether you meet some basic requirements.

## 2 Screening Interview and Application Begins

A foster screener will meet with you to discuss your motivation for becoming a foster parent. A Child Intervention Check will also be done. If applicable, we'll start your Application Package.

## 3 Get Caregiver Training

You'll do a total of 24 hours of specialized training around relevant issues in fostering, including Trauma-Informed Care. This Orientation to Caregiver Training is currently offered online due to COVID-19.

## 4 Complete your Application

There are a few more documents to submit as part of our Application Package, but don't be daunted – we will support you to complete your application. At this step, you will need to supply a criminal record check and personal and medical references, among other documents.

*\*Disclaimer: Foster Calgary evaluates each prospective foster home on a case-by-case basis. Each step outlined above is part of a vetting process, and it is not guaranteed that every applicant will be eligible to foster a child and complete all seven steps.*

## 5 Complete a Home Study

A home study writer will contact you to complete a home study assessment. The assessment will include three to four appointments to meet with your family about your family history, relationships, and attitudes.

## 6 Licensing

Children's Services makes the final recommendation towards licensing and placement. If deemed appropriate, they will assign you a foster home license.

## 7 Mentoring & Matching

You will have the opportunity to be matched with a mentor: a seasoned foster parent who will provide guidance and support throughout your first year.

A child will also be matched to your home – and your journey as a foster parent begins.



# Ways to Foster

There are different types of foster care, and Foster Calgary can help you choose the one that is right for you and your circumstances.

## Full-time care

This type of care involves temporarily taking on the care of a child, from newborn up to the age of 18, who for any number of reasons can't live at home with their biological families. You will support and nurture a child or children full-time, with the goal of returning them to their biological families wherever possible.

## Respite care

Respite placements involve taking a foster child or children for a weekend or a few days to give their full-time foster parents a break. As a respite caregiver, you will look after children up to the age of 18 and must be available at least one weekend per month. The process of becoming a respite caregiver is the same as a full-time caregiver, but respite caregivers are recruited on an as-needed basis.



# Make a Difference Today

## Learn more about fostering

Sign-up to attend an information session or read stories from foster parents at **[www.fostercalgary.com](http://www.fostercalgary.com)**.

Join us on Facebook and Instagram for updates on fostering stories and upcoming events: **[facebook.com/FosterCalgary](https://facebook.com/FosterCalgary)**  
**[instagram.com/FosterCalgary](https://instagram.com/FosterCalgary)**

## Foster Calgary is a part of:

### The Calgary & District Foster Parents Association

We're a non-profit association dedicated to supporting foster and kinship parents in Calgary and the surrounding areas.

#### We're responsible for:

- Recruitment and screening of new foster parents
- Providing training and mentoring to new foster parents
- Organizing activities for children in care and their foster families.

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