

Helping Other People's Enrichment, Inc.



SO YOU WANT TO BE THERAPEUTIC FOSTER PARENT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the requirements to become a foster parent with HOPE, Inc.? The requirements to become a foster parent vary from agency to agency. At HOPE, Inc. you must be at least 24-years old, may be married, single or divorced, have space in your home and heart for additional children, have a stable income sufficient to provide for your family, have no "founded" child abuse and/or neglect complaints, no felony of any kind, have not committed a barrier crime "see barrier crime list" good driving record, your home must meet basic requirements and you must be willing to work as a member of a team in meeting the needs of children placed in your care.

What are the children like who need treatment foster care? Typically, they are children who have experienced various types of abuse, abandonment or who come from dysfunctional environments. They often have emotional and/or behavioral problems. The symptoms of these problems can vary from bedwetting to physical and verbal aggression. Most have at least one DSM-IV diagnosis such as depression, post traumatic stress disorder, borderline personality, oppositional defiant, and/or ADHD. They attend outpatient therapy, are on medication and can have multi-appointments on a weekly basis.

Do I have a choice about the type of children placed in my home? Yes, you will always be given the choice of the type of child to be placed in your home. This may include such things as age, sex, and presenting problems or behaviors such as those discussed above. Don't be afraid to say no to a possible placement. It is in everyone's best interest to be honest about your concerns and preferences.

How much will I be paid? Foster parent stipend is based on many factors and will be discussed more during orientation and at the time that a contract is issued for placement of a child in your home.

If I only want to be a RESPITE parent, what are the requirements? The requirement for respite parents is the same as for Foster Parents, please see above.

What do I need to do and how long does it take to become a therapeutic foster parent? For certification as a therapeutic foster parent with HOPE, Inc., please review "*Five Steps to Becoming a Foster Parent With HOPE, Inc.*" or call the HOPE office at 804-684-255. The period of time needed to complete the process varies depending on how quickly you can complete all the requirements, to include home visits, reference checks and income verification.

How long does it take to get a child placed in my home and how long will they stay?

This also varies. It may take longer to place a child in your home depending on what you request in a child, such as age, gender, and behaviors that you either have the skills to work with or are willing to work with. The length of stay in your home also depends on a number of factors, such as the permanency plan, and treatment goal. This information will be discussed more during the orientation, training and home visits.

FIVE STEPS TO BECOMING A FOSTER PARENT WITH HOPE, INC.

Becoming a foster parent with HOPE, Inc. involves several steps requiring varying amounts of time, paperwork, and face-to-face meetings. Each step builds on the previous steps.

The process gives you an opportunity to make an informed decision on whether foster parenting is indeed something you want to commit to. It also gives us a chance to get to know you better so that an appropriate match is made between foster family and youth.

Once you contact us to explore the possibility of becoming a foster parent, you can expect to follow the steps outlined below.

Step 1: Contact the agency

- Contact the agency at 804-684-2555 to inquire about becoming a foster parent or complete the Prospective Foster Parent Questionnaire on this website and submit.
- A HOPE, Inc. staff member will contact you to confirm receipt of your email. If you still want to become a foster parent, you will also receive a letter inviting you to attend an orientation to learn more about HOPE, Inc. and the services offered.

Step 2: Attend Orientation

- Attend the orientation where you will meet with other interested families and learn more about what it will mean for you to be a foster parent.
- Staff members from HOPE will be on hand to answer your questions.
- You will receive information on the home study process.
- During orientation you will be given an application package if you still want to be a foster parent. "Application package can also be downloaded from website".
- You will schedule a family consultation in the home with all members of the household present. This meeting will be scheduled at your convenience but must be completed prior to pre-service training.

Step 3: Pre-Service Training

- Complete intensive pre-service training (both spouse required to attend if married.) Training consists of 47 hours - which includes Crisis Prevention/Management Training and CPR and First Aid Certification Training.

Step 4: Home study

- Completion application package - "required before visits and home inspection can be scheduled".
- Complete all pre-service training requirements.
- Staff members from HOPE Inc. will visit your home to interview family members and other persons residing in your home. Three face-to-face meetings with each prospective foster parent are required.
- Successfully complete a home inspection. This will take place during one of the face-to-face meetings.

Step 5: Licensing Certification

- The Home Developer will review all your documentation, and complete your home study report. You will receive a letter from HOPE, Inc. advising you of your licensure status. If approved you will be advised of the number, gender and age range of children you have been approved to serve. After receiving your certificate you may begin providing respite care for other foster parents licensed with HOPE, Inc. and will become eligible to have a child to be placed in your home. If we are unable to certify your home, you will receive a letter from the agency informing you of the decision.



Fostering is a Family Affair

Don't Forget to Talk
With Your Children and
Other Members of Your Household
When Making the Decision
to Become a Foster Parent.