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# How to Become a Foster Parent

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## About our site:

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FosterParenting.com focuses on writing content that will help foster parents and children. We answer a variety of different questions about what it's like to be a foster parent. Our focus is to help parents know how to foster a sibling group and how to be the best foster parent out there.

**Fostering a child** is a wonderful opportunity to help out local children in your community that need a safe, healthy home and stability while experiencing difficult challenges we all wish no child would ever have to face. Few things in this world are more important than protecting our children and **foster** parents are on the front lines of this crucial work. Becoming a foster parent will not only enrich your life and the life of the children you care for, but their birth families as well. Though it varies from **state to state**, here are the basic steps to becoming a **foster** parent.

First, contact your local foster agency. Depending on your state, there may be one universal **foster** agency or many, including those that may specialize in more difficult to handle cases such as physical, mental, or emotional disabilities. Do your homework and don't hesitate to ask for information from multiple

agencies in order to ensure that the agency you go with is the best fit for your family.

Once you have contacted an agency, they will usually conduct an initial interview with you to ensure you and your family will most likely meet the requirements to become a **foster** family. This can be done via email, over the phone, or in person. Most likely, the representative will want to meet with you in your home and speak with your family face-to-face. Please note that this is **not** a **home study**. It is simply an interview to ensure that fostering is a viable option for you and that the foster agency you have chosen to work with is a good fit.

The next part of the fostering process will begin when the representative sends you a copy of the official application to become a **foster** parent. The **application** is usually quite large and will often include many other verifications that you must provide or obtain yourself. These verifications may be but are not limited to: a copy of your marriage certificate (if you are married), proof of income, proof that all vaccinations are up to date, a detailed family history, a health form, CPR and or First Aid Certifications, questioners regarding your availability, what behaviors you are willing to work with in your home, as well as your family structure, rules, and

habits. The application is very thorough and will take time to complete. Your representative should be able to answer any questions you have and are usually more than happy to help you with any part of the application you are struggling with.

A very thorough background check is also usually part of the application, but it is most often submitted before the rest of the application. They can be as simple as a one page application turned into the appropriate office, or as complex as a multi-page application as well as fingerprinting, depending on the state. Be sure to follow all instructions to ensure you do not have to repeat or slow down the process.



Once you have been entered into the system but not necessarily before you've finished the application and turned in all of the required documents, you will be required to take a series of classes to prepare you for fostering. The length, and content of these classes

are determined both by the state and the [foster](#) agency you are working with. Generally speaking, most programs require between eight and twelve classes with one hundred percent attendance. Tests may or may not be required based on these trainings; again, this depends on your foster agency and the state in which you reside. (Of course, these classes don't always teach you everything you need to know, [so read this!](#))

In most states after your background check has cleared, you will become eligible for a home visit to be conducted. These visits are inspections done by a licensed professional to ensure that the environment is safe and healthy for children and that all state regulations are being followed. These may or may not include, but are not limited to: having one or more escape ladders on any non-ground level floor of the home, locks installed on cabinets and/or drawers containing any hazardous chemicals, medications, or dangerous objects, a fire extinguisher in the home, specifications on how to store any guns and ammunition, carbon monoxide detectors on every floor of the home, smoke detectors on every floor of the home, as well as a general good standard of cleanliness. If you do not pass the first time, do not panic, often times the inspector will point out the infraction, give advice on how to bring the home up to

code, and schedule another inspection in the near future.

Once the background check, application, and home inspection are completed, you will be cleared to be a **foster parent**. Depending on your state and its needs, you may have a child in your home within hours of being cleared for fostering or you may have to wait for months.

Be patient with the process and yourself. Fostering a **child** is a big commitment and the professionals working with them want to ensure that the children in their custody are going to safe, healthy, happy homes. The process is laborious and detailed in part to weed out those who do not have the necessary patience or attention to detail needed to be a **foster parent**. Reach out to your foster representative to help you smooth out any bumps in the road. They are ready and willing to help you.

Becoming a **foster parent** is an incredible opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of children and your community. The process is to ensure that children go to the best homes possible where they can thrive and heal surrounded by people who will give them the love, devotion, and care they deserve. Stay strong, be resilient, and you will receive the

amazing opportunity to watch and assist children as they rise from the cruelest of circumstances and become strong, healthy, self-reliant adults.

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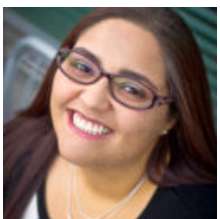
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## About The Author



**Ariel Higgs**

Ariel Higgs is a happily married, mother of one. She loves the outdoors and spending time with her family including her lovable

dog.

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