

## Families For Children, (FFC) Fact Sheet

A staff person will assist you through this process with detailed instructions:

### **How do I become a licensed foster/adoptive parent/family?**

Applicants must contact a training agency, such as FFC, to complete a general application and clearance documentation including BCI, fingerprinting and DCYF background checks. This is followed by pre-service training, (MAPP,) and a comprehensive homestudy, which includes the applicant(s) legal, (citizenship status and any other court-related circumstances), financial and medical status. The home must also pass inspection by a DCYF Fire Inspector.

### **What is MAPP? How often are these classes offered?**

MAPP, *Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting*, is the curriculum used by FFC. Pre-service training is required by the DCYF for all foster and pre-adoptive parents. Each training session runs approximately 9 consecutive weeks. FFC holds trainings on Tuesday evenings from 6p-9p, unless otherwise stated. Our program offers training 3-4 times a year. The following 9-week sessions are tentatively scheduled as follows:

MAPP Winter '10 start date: Tuesday, 2/23/10

MAPP Summer '10 start date: Tuesday, 6/15/10

MAPP Fall '10 start date: Tuesday 10/5/10

### **Does my spouse/partner have to train as well?**

Yes. Due to the needs of pre-adoptive and foster children, training is essential for any adult in the home who will serve as a caregiver. Both married and unmarried couples must demonstrate a stable, committed relationship, with both adults motivated to co-parent.

### **Must I be married in order to adopt/foster?**

No. Fostering and adoptions by single people are on the increase, and some children actually do best with a single parent. Unmarried heterosexual couples can also foster/adopt, and singles and couples of any sexual orientation are welcome as adoptive parents.

### **Must foster/adoptive parents meet age requirements?**

In Rhode Island, you may adopt a child if you are over 21 years of age. There is no upper age limit, and adoptive parents in their 40s and 50s are quite common.

### **How much does it cost to foster/adopt an older child?**

There is no fee to foster/adopt a child in state care. The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is a public agency and offers its services free of charge. Furthermore, some children in DCYF care are eligible to receive adoption [subsidies](#) until they are 18 or 21, depending on their needs. Families fostering or in the pre-adoptive placement stages receive weekly stipends to cover the costs of having an additional person in the home (i.e. groceries, utilities, clothing, etc.)

### **What kind of income must a foster/adoptive parent have?**

There are no income requirements for foster/adoptive families, however applicants must demonstrate financial solvency.

### **Must a foster/adoptive parent be a homeowner?**

No, and you are not required to provide a separate room for the foster/adopted child. There are guidelines regarding gender and age for children sharing bedrooms. Regulations do not allow for family members or children placed in the home to sleep on couches.

### **What is a homestudy?**

The social worker writes an official document about your family that legally approves you to foster/adopt a child; this document is called a homestudy. A homestudy is conducted through a series of meetings with a social worker in your home. The purpose of these interviews is to narrate family history, lifestyle, and health, as well as the motivation to become a resource family. During training and the homestudy, applicants discover the kind of child they might best parent and the agency learns a great deal about the family so that the child/ren eventually placed will be well matched.

### **How long will it take?**

Once you have been accepted into training, the process takes approximately 3 to 5 months to complete. After licensing, the waiting period to be matched with a child can vary; families who are most flexible about the behaviors, ethnicity and age of the child are typically matched with children the fastest. Families are cautioned not to overextend in their matching in an effort to be matched more quickly.

### **How old are the children in Families for Children (FFC)?**

The children placed through our program range from 6 to 21, with occasional exceptions made for younger children who are deemed specialized.

### **What makes a child specialized?**

There are many factors that determine if a child requires specialized care. Any one of the following factors may qualify a child for services through a specialized program: children who are of a minority, who are over the age of 12, sibling groups placed together, or any child who has medical, educational or emotional needs requiring more attention, such as an IEP, nutritional plan, or specific behavioral interventions. The majority children attend weekly counseling and some may require daily medication for behavioral, emotional or medical reasons. Most of our children attend public school and participate in typical recreational and social activities.

### **What makes a family specialized?**

Resource families providing specialized care are expected to be highly competent in areas such as child development, effects of abuse and neglect, grief and loss, and other issues. In addition to the comprehensive pre-service training, ongoing, 2 hr monthly trainings are mandatory for all families within FFC after they are licensed. Only one parent per household is required to attend, with the assumption that the information will be shared with other adults caring for the child. Specialized parents are expected to arrange/provide before and after school care, vacation childcare and transportation to all regular and emergency appointments. FFC Case Workers coordinate all services and provide additional assistance to the family as needed. After placement, families meet with their assigned caseworker in their home once a week for a 1 hr family meeting.

### **Where are the children while they're waiting to be fostered/adopted?**

Most of the waiting children are living in foster homes, group homes, and residential treatment facilities. They are moved to foster/pre-adoptive homes when assessed to be emotionally ready by their treatment team.

