Indiana Department of Child Services Foster Parent Recruitment

A temporary stay…
Makes a long lasting change

Indiana Foster Care Demographics
(DCS, 2010)

There are approximately 10,000 children in care:

- 5%   < 1 year
- 31% 1 – 5 years
- 22% 6 – 10 years
- 25% 11 – 15 years
- 14% 16 – 18 years

- 49% are Male
- 51% are Female

Indiana Foster Care Demographics
(DCS, 2010)

Race/Ethnicity

- 56% White
- 31% Black
- 6% Hispanic
- 5% 2 or more races
- .3% Unknown
- .2% American Indian/Alaskan Native
- < .1% Asian/Pacific Islander

Indiana Foster Care Demographics

In April 2010:

- 46.1% CHINS placements were in foster care (non-relative)

- 74.2% were locally placed

- 71.3% of siblings were placed together

- Average number of placements moves per foster child: 2.5 moves

- Average number of days in care was 596.5 days

- 65 children were adopted in April 2010

DCS Goals

With more foster parents, we will be able to:

- Increase the number of locally placed children

- Reduce the number of placements disruptions

- Allow sibling groups to remain together

Commonly Used Terms

Foster care: a safe, nurturing, stable, and temporary environment for children who can no longer remain in their own homes due to the risk of abuse or neglect.

Foster parent(s): a person who acts in the best interest of children who are currently wards of the State. A foster family provides supervision and stability during a challenging time.

Matching process: the method of placing children with licensed foster parents. Placement decisions are based upon the needs of foster children and the skill set, resources, location, etc. of the foster parent.

Commonly Used Terms

Reunification: When possible, a child is placed in close proximity to the child's family, particularly when reunification with the family is the case plan goal. Placement may occur until reunification with the child's family takes place or another permanent placement is established.

Permanency: Permanency for a child means a safe, stable and secure home and family, love, unconditional commitment, and lifelong support in the context of reunification, adoption, or legal guardianship, where possible.

Concurrent Planning: This is when DCS will address "What could go wrong" with the identified permanency plan (Plan A) at a Child and Family Team Meeting. There the team will discuss an alternative or 'Plan B' for permanency if 'Plan A' is not successful.

Quick Facts

Foster Parents:
- No marital requirements
- Do not have to have biological child(ren)
- Must be at least 21 years old
- Receive a per diem payment to cover expenses of the foster child
- Do not need to provide health insurance

Foster Children:
- Majority of children enter as a result of abuse, neglect, or abandonment by their parents
- Abuse and neglect do not leave children damaged for life. They are very resilient and can thrive in a structured, nurturing foster home

How can you help?

Foster Parent: Contact your local Foster Care Specialist to find out what your next step will be in the process.

Advocate: Become a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), or a Guardian Ad Litem(GAL).

Steps to Becoming a Foster Parent in Indiana

- Contact your local DCS office (www.in.gov/dcs/2372.htm)

- Complete an application

- Begin the licensing process (e.g., fingerprint check, references, home study, background check, etc.)

- Complete pre-service training

Websites for additional information

- The Indiana Department of Child Services Foster Care Program: www.in.gov/dcs/foster

- Indiana Foster Care and Adoption Association: www.ifcaa.org

- Office of Guardian ad Litem / Court Appointed Special Advocate (GAL/CASA) http://www.in.gov/judiciary/galcasa/