



Children, Youth & Families Department

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

Foster a New Mexico Youth – Become a Resource Parent!

As a CYFD resource parent (formerly known as a foster parent), you provide safety and nurturance to children who cannot live at home with their families because it is not a safe place for them.

Resource parents and their families open their homes and their hearts to children in custody by allowing them to feel safe, grow and learn in a trauma informed family setting. Resource parents encourage children in their home to remain connected to their religion, culture, and community. Resource parents can be a part of a child's life even after they have returned home if they choose to, and the child and family are willing.

Each year about 100 youth emancipate from the foster care system without a family, let's change this together.



Skills you will learn in resource parent training:

- How to Support Reunification
- Becoming Trauma Responsive
- Providing Basic Needs
- Becoming a Team Player
- Support Sibling and Family Relationships
- Be Culturally Sensitive and Encourage Diversity
- Self-Empowerment and Advocacy

Log onto <https://www.cyfd.nm.gov/protective-services/foster-care/> to learn more about becoming a Resource Parent.

Log onto <https://family.binti.com/users/signup/new-mexico-initial> to submit your Resource Parent Application.

You can also call or email for more information:
MaryLou Martinez, NE Navigator, 575.779.1704
Marylou.martinez@cyfd.nm.gov

See back of flier for frequently asked questions.

Q: How long does it take to become a licensed foster parent?

A: It can take about four to six months to complete the required training and investigative home study. A thorough assessment of your family dynamics will take place through interviews, home visits, inspections and through training program participation.

Q: I am/we are LGBTQ. Is this an issue?

A: No. CYFD does not discriminate based on age, gender, race, ethnicity or sexual orientation. CYFD does not discriminate against individuals and families (married or not) who apply to become foster or adoptive parents.

Q: I am a single male/female. Is this an issue?

A: No. As long as you are over the age of 18 you can be single, married or cohabitating to be considered for foster parenting. All adults who reside within your home must be willing to participate in the full licensing process.

Q: What if I was convicted of a crime in the past?

A: Current or past criminal issues are assessed on a case-by-case basis. There are crimes, however, which are deemed as "automatic disqualifiers" which would prevent a person from becoming a licensed foster parent. These crimes include, but are not limited to, murder, rape, child abuse, and having been convicted of a serious felony. Individuals with substantiated allegations of abuse and/or neglect with CYFD or other child protective agencies are also assessed on a case-by-case basis. Some substantiations are automatic disqualifiers which will prevent a person from becoming a licensed foster parent. It is important to be completely honest with your placement worker regarding any past or present issues related to crimes. All adults (over the age of 18) living in the home will be required to undergo a federal background check, as well as a check of local police and sheriff's department records.

Q: I have a diagnosed mental health issue (depression, bi-polar, etc.) Is this an issue?

A: If you have a mental health issue or concern, as part of the assessment process, you may be asked to provide statements or reports from your past or current mental health provider stating their professional opinion as to whether or not this would preclude your ability to safely care for a foster child.

Q: Do I get money for being a foster parent?

A: As a foster parent you will receive a monthly reimbursement to help provide food, clothing, shelter and transportation for the foster children placed in your home. The reimbursement is based on the foster child's age and need level.

Q: Will we have to work with or know the children's biological family?

A: In most cases, yes. In fact, visits between birth parents and children are an essential part of the efforts to reunite families. Visits go a long way in helping the child work through the emotional trauma of being separated from his or her family. Each case is different and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine whether or not it would be appropriate for the foster and biological family to work together. The child's caseworker has the primary responsibility for planning visits and arranging supervision, if required.

Q: As a foster parent, can I adopt a child I am providing care for?

A: Yes. However, the first goal is to reunite children in foster care with their biological families whenever possible. If a foster child who has been in your home for some time becomes available for adoption, you can discuss your interest in adopting him or her with the child's caseworker.

Q: Won't it be hard on us when the child is reunited with his or her birth family or is adopted?

A: Yes. That is, in fact, one of the hardest parts of being a foster parent, but it can also be rewarding to know that a child has a solid home. You will certainly feel sad for a time. It's only natural, just as it is natural for the child to want a family of his own. Many foster parents stay connected to children after they are returned to their biological family, are adopted and/or even after they become adults. It is important to remember that foster care is a way to build connections and positive experiences that will stay with a child no matter where he or she goes. This topic gets addressed in training to become licensed for foster care.