

# Important Considerations in Your Decision



FOSTER *care.*  
& ADOPTION



Becoming a foster or adoptive family is a big step! How do you know if you're truly ready?

## Looking at your financial readiness



- ✓ **Is my current income covering all of my monthly bills?** This is a requirement for foster/adoptive parents that will be assessed in your home study.
- ✓ **Do I have enough margin to be able to handle small, unexpected expenses as they come up?** This could include things like a car seat or bedding, or temporary childcare costs while waiting for subsidy funding to be available. While the foster care stipend helps, many foster parents find it does not cover every expense.
- ✓ **Will I be ok if I have to miss some days of work?** Becoming a parent means having to figure out how to handle sick days, snow days, and medical appointments. For foster parents, new placements often require a few days off work to get childcare set up and help kids settle in to your home.

## Looking at your family situation



- ✓ **Is the whole family on board?** For two-parent families, is there equal buy-in and commitment from both partners? If you already have kids, be sure to have the conversation with them about your plan to foster or adopt and find out how they feel about it.
- ✓ **Do we have enough support?** It takes a village! Who do you have in your life that can provide emotional, physical, or practical support for your family throughout your foster care or adoption journey?
- ✓ **Are we prepared emotionally?** Foster parenting is emotionally demanding. Families should be in a place where they can manage stress, cope with strong emotions, and seek support when needed.

## Looking at your home and lifestyle



- ✓ **Do I have a safe, comfortable space for a child to sleep?** This is a requirement for foster/adoptive parents that will be assessed in your home study.
- ✓ **How flexible is my schedule?** Just like having a baby, welcoming a child of any age will bring significant disruption and interruption to your lifestyle. Look at your daily and weekly commitments, and think about what might happen if you were not able to meet all of them. Are you able to pare back at all in preparation?

## Looking at your preparation and expectations



- ✓ **Have I learned everything I can about childhood trauma?** Parenting children from hard places is not the same as parenting biological children. Prepare yourself by becoming educated about the realities of childhood trauma and how best to support the children in your home.
- ✓ **What are my motivations for fostering or adopting?** It is important for foster and adoptive parents to understand the reason they are beginning this journey. Certain motivations - such as wanting to help a child or invest in the community - have been correlated with more successful foster care or adoption placements.
- ✓ **Are there any areas that I need to seek personal healing for myself?** If you have experienced trauma in your own life, such as the pain of infertility or child loss, it can be incredibly helpful to work with a therapist, clergy member, or trusted mentor to process your own pain and ensure that you are ready to welcome a child.

## Ready to get started?

There is no “perfect time” to begin your journey, and there will never be a perfect foster or adoptive parent. However, we would love to work with you when you are ready to begin! There will be growth and learning along the way - and hopefully, lots of joy as well!

