



Make A Difference for A Lifetime As A Foster Parent

Foster Care In Alaska There are now more than 2,100 children in Alaska who have had to move away from their own homes into foster care. Typically, it's because a parent or caregiver in their family has abused or neglected them and it's no longer safe for them to live at home. Children needing foster care range in age from newborns to teens. They live in communities of every size, from bush communities and villages to the city. Often, they can be able to live with relatives. When that is not possible, the children move in with a foster family.

Foster homes provide children a temporary, safe place to live until the children can be reunited with their families, or when that is not possible, placed permanently with another family. While some children are in foster care for days or weeks; others are in foster care for years. The love, attention and support foster families provide serves as a foundation for a secure and successful life for hundreds of children in Alaska, at a time when they need it most.

***Alaska has many wonderful foster parents.
But we need many more, in every community.***

If you think you're ready to become a foster parent, or you want to learn more before making this decision, contact the Alaska Foster Parent Training Center 1-800-478-7307. They can provide you with an overview of foster parenting, inform you of orientation meetings in your community and send you information on Alaska's foster care program, including essential information about foster care licensing and the application process required. You can also inquire about becoming involved in offering foster respite care, which gives foster families a temporary break from the responsibilities of caring for the child or children.

Free foster parent training is offered in many communities throughout the state to teach you about the special concerns children in foster care typically encounter and how best to work together with the social workers and professionals who may assist the foster children in your home.

Foster parents are truly remarkable people.

They open their hearts and homes to some of our most vulnerable Alaskan children, offering them the safety, love and nurturing that every child needs.

Foster parents face enormous challenges. Yet, as many foster parents will tell you, the rewards of helping each child, of making a difference that for a lifetime, make it all worthwhile.

For additional information contact the Alaska Foster Parent Training Center

At 1-800-478-7307 or e-mail: AFPTC@mosquitonet.com

On-line at: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/foster/default1.htm>



Make A Difference for A Foster Child In Your Community.

Whether you have time to spare or only want to make a donation, here are some ways to make a difference for a foster child in your community:

- Volunteer to help tutor a foster child, especially in reading.
- Share your music, dance, mask making, story telling or other art talents with foster children, offering them free lessons or mentoring.
- For teens, offer apprenticeships, training and job opportunities.
- Help organize local recreation camps or other activities for foster children, or offer scholarships to existing camps or activities.
- Donate for special occasions such as holidays, birthdays, or graduation. Arrange a scholarship fund for foster children graduating high school.

There are many ways to connect with children in foster care and help give them a head start on a secure and successful life.

Support Foster Families in Your Community

- You don't have to become a foster parent to take in children for a few hours a week, or a weekend. Respite care—which gives foster families a break from the responsibilities of caring for the child—can also be arranged. Have only an afternoon a week? Offer to help transport a child to after school appointments.
- Donate clothing, baby supplies, car seats, high chairs, toys, luggage or school supplies to local foster parents or foster parent associations. Involve your coworkers, church or service organization to organize care packages for children entering foster care.
- If you own a business, offer discounts, specials or free services to local foster families. If you have a special skill – carpentry, handiwork, etc. – offer to donate some time to a local foster family to improve their home for the children.
- Offer to help support and organize local foster parent appreciation events such as banquets, picnics or potlatches. Or begin by simply thanking foster parents you know.
- Get involved with CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) and receive training to help you serve as an advocate for children in the Alaska court system. Contact the Office of Public Advocacy's CASA Program at 907/269-3500.
- Consider becoming a foster parent. Or help recruit people you believe would make good foster parents. Contact the Alaska Foster Parent Training Center at 1-800-478-7307.