

Families for Kids

recruitment resources

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“Mentoring” Model for Foster Family Support

The basic concept is that experienced foster parents or families are recruited become mentors. A “mentor” is defined as a veteran foster parent with a demonstrated knowledge of the area, which the foster parent provides mentoring.

A “mentoring system” is further defined as consisting of at least eight (8) mentors working with groups of foster parents. One parent or family serves as the “mentoring system” facilitator. Mentors are recruited for their experience in a specific type of care, i.e. therapeutic, grade school age, teens, medically fragile, etc.

Support Services:

1. Regular conversation: Meeting for coffee, specialized trainings, going out for lunch, phone conversations, play dates, book clubs, etc. The actual structure will vary from pair to pair. The overall purpose is for experienced foster parents to share their wisdom and experience in a particular area of expertise.
2. Respite: Each mentoring system is responsible for its own respite. Once again, the individual pairs set the actual structure. The respite may be as simple as “Jeff goes to play at Alex’s house on Thursday’s so Jeff’s foster mom can run errands or go to lunch without kids”. It also could be much more structured where one family is designated as the respite family for the group.
3. Shared resources: The mentors are organized by the type of care so cribs, books, car seats, etc. can be passed back and forth as children ebb and flow from homes.

Mentoring System Facilitator:

1. Receives a small monthly stipend to help cover expenses.
2. Provides a monthly report to the Regional Coordinator.
3. Is an experienced foster parent with an expertise in a particular type of care.
4. Ensures that “mentors” maintain regular contact

Goal:

The overall goal of a mentor system is to provide families with an expertise in a particular type of care. Our purpose is to provide support, encouragement and accountability. However, the “mentors” really need to operate as autonomously as possible. They will be more successful if they drive their destiny.

toll free

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