

Explore your options—Different types of foster care

Making the decision to become a foster parent takes time for many families. It is important to educate yourself on foster care programs to determine what level of care your family is comfortable providing, and then find the agency that will provide you with the support you need to open your heart and home to a child in need.

All children and youth in foster care have experienced trauma, and each child has specific emotional, behavioral, medical, or educational needs related to the abuse and neglect they have endured. If a child or youth is determined to have significant special needs, treatment foster care (also referred to as therapeutic foster care) is a type of foster care that provides individualized support to the child and foster family. Treatment foster care is designed to provide safe and nurturing care to a child or youth in a more structured home environment than traditional foster care, and foster families receive specialized training in attachment theory principles and trauma informed care to be able to provide support to a child placed in their home.

DePaul provides treatment foster care to children and youth needing additional support and supervision. Our commitment to smaller caseloads allows our staff to provide extra support to our foster families and children in care. Each young person is assigned a caseworker who helps to answer questions, solve problems, and provide guidance to both the child and their foster parents. Foster parents receive specialized training prior to becoming a certified foster parent, as well as in-service training to help promote healing for the foster youth in their care.

Standard Foster Care	Treatment Foster Care (TFC)
Managed by the local department of social services agency	For-profit and nonprofit licensed child-placing agencies contract with local departments of social services to provide TFC
Basic case management is included	An experienced, trained TFC caseworker provides enhanced case management, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular home visits (typically weekly, but at least once a month) and regular check-ins by phone and email • Assistance with managing appointments for children and accessing needed resources • Access to a 24/7 on-call support line staffed by TFC Specialists • Smaller caseloads (6-9 cases) to focus on specific needs of the children being served
The focus is on the behavioral change of the child's caregiver	The focus is on the treatment of the child's specific needs
Basic foster parent training is provided	Specialized foster parent training is provided
The local department of social services is the legal guardian of the child	
The child has a local department of social services caseworker	
The home study process and pre-service training is required to become approved	
Foster parents receive a stipend payment to meet the basic needs of the child.	