Consider the difference you can make in the life of a child.

www.fostercaremn.org

fostercare@lssmn.org

© 2017. Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota.
Thousands of children in Minnesota need a champion. We believe every child needs caring, supportive relationships and safety to thrive. You may have the unique opportunity to give a child another chance to thrive by becoming a foster parent — because every child deserves the care and support of a loving family.

Fostering a child takes love, commitment and support.

What you need to be an LSS foster parent

• A love of children
• Be over 21 years of age
• Be physically able to care for children
• Have flexible enough work schedule to care for a child’s needs
• Have stable housing which can meet licensing requirements, that you own or rent

To protect the health and safety of children, prospective foster parents participate in a background study to ensure that there are no felony convictions or reports of child abuse.

Support for you as an LSS foster parent

LSS Therapeutic foster care is a highly supportive, professional service geared to the best outcomes for foster children and your family. Our comprehensive training and high standards of care mean you can expect the support you need to be successful and children will have the stability and safety they need to thrive.

• An LSS team partners with you for the best outcomes for the child. Understanding that out-of-home placement is inherently traumatic, all foster children are assessed to determine goals that will best serve their needs.
  ◦ A case manager will be assigned to each foster child placement. The case manager will facilitate a shared understanding for all team members, including you as foster parent, of the goals and treatment plan for the foster child in your care.
  ◦ If a foster child has not been provided with an assessment, LSS will provide, or facilitate, the child having an assessment completed.
  ◦ If the assessment supports the need for youth-skills work, an LSS mental health practitioner will work with the foster child to equip them with the skills necessary to deal effectively with their individual circumstances.
  ◦ As part of the team, you will help support goals for the child in your care, which may include personal development, behavioral and communications skills, and educational goals.
  ◦ As part of the team, you will work with the foster child’s biological/adoptive parents towards reunification or permanency goals.

• Training opportunities include:
  ◦ Child development
  ◦ Family systems
  ◦ Children’s mental health and trauma-focused care
  ◦ Providing structure and supervision
  ◦ Home safety
  ◦ Helping youth successfully transition to independence
  ◦ How to access support when you need it

• Monthly foster parent support groups
• Monthly free educational training opportunities
• Respite care on request
• 24/7 crisis support
What it takes for you to become an LSS foster parent

Licensing: typically a 4 to 6 month process which includes:

- Home study
- Home inspection, including
  - Possible inspection by state fire marshal
  - Well water test results, if applicable
  - Smoke alarms
  - First aid kit
  - Fire extinguishers
  - Guns and ammunition locked separately
  - Locked file box for documents
  - Locked box for medications
  - Operable phone in the home
- Personal interviews
- Physical statement. Physical exams are requested in certain circumstances.
- Three references
- Completion of background check
- Verification of auto, liability and home/renters insurance
- Verification of a valid driver’s license
- Verification of pet’s shots
- 30 hours initial training
  - 24 hours of continuing training each year to retain your foster parent license
  - Depending on the level of care a child needs, additional training may be required
- CPR / First Aid certification
- Completion of paperwork

Matching you and your family with a foster child or sibling group.
We strive to make the best match for both your family and the foster child. We work to give every child the best chance at success and that means also making the right match for you.

Foster care options with LSS

- Short-term foster care
  - Emergency foster care
  - Respite foster care
- Therapeutic foster care
- Treatment foster care: for children with greater identified needs

Who are the children

- Over 7,000 children and youth in Minnesota were placed in out-of-home care last year due to abuse, neglect or other family crises.
- Many are groups of siblings who would benefit from being in a foster home together.
- They are children with dreams, talents and potential who need your loving support.
- They range in age from infants to teens.
- Children typically stay 6-9 months, but time in your home can vary greatly depending on the circumstances.
- Youth with therapeutic needs.
Your commitment to the children in your care

• Provide consistent support and a stable structure
• Create a nurturing home environment for children to thrive, including:
  ° Access to educational services
  ° Facilitate community and extracurricular activities
  ° Support child’s overall development, including cultural, spiritual, race/ethnicity, and personal identity
• Support ongoing contact with child’s primary family, including communications with biological/adoptive parents and siblings as needed
• Provide for necessities: room, meals, transportation and access to medical care
• Help child establish positive relationships in the family and in the community
• Serve as school liaison for your foster child
• Participate equally as member of your child’s foster care team
• Keep all information about your foster child and their biological/adoptive family confidential

Other things to know about being a foster parent

• Working outside the home: You may work outside the home. You will need a work schedule and support system flexible enough to allow for adequate supervision of your foster child, and to be available for communication and meetings with your foster child’s team, school and service providers.

• Bedrooms: There must be adequate sleeping spaces that meet licensing requirements for each child in your care. Specific requirements will be reviewed during the licensing process.

• Adoption from foster care: Our goal is safety, stability and permanency for the children in our care. For most foster children, that means working towards reunification with their primary family. For others, permanency may come through being matched with a loving adoptive family. If you are specifically interested in adoption, please speak directly to an LSS Foster Care coordinator.

• Financial: As part of the licensing process, you will need to demonstrate financial stability. Nontaxable reimbursement based on the Minnesota Assessment of Parenting Children and Youth (MAPCY) is provided to offset the cost of supporting a foster child. Medical expenses for foster children in your care are covered by Medicaid.

We are excited to partner with you as you step into embracing your love for children by becoming a foster parent.