

A Family for Every Child

South Carolina has a critical need for people who are willing to be foster parents for children who have been removed from unsafe living conditions. Because we have too few foster homes, abused & neglected children are often moved far from their communities. They are separated from their families, friends, schools, neighborhoods & everything familiar. They lose connection with the people who care about them-- people who are vital to the healing process.

You Can Help.

Foster Parents

Foster parents are special people who recognize the unique needs of children that have experienced abuse or neglect. All these children have experienced trauma & need support to help them heal. Foster parents provide this support, care & advocacy. Foster parents also provide support for birth parents who may struggle with poverty, domestic violence, substance abuse & mental health issues.

With an investment of time, energy, patience, care & guidance, foster parents can make a difference in the lives of children and families in need.



**Be a part of strengthening
our families & communities.**

**Consider answering the
critical need for foster
families in South Carolina.**

**"I think about what
this child can
become!**



*Don't think of the
negative situation they
came from, think of the
future and that chance for you to give
them love & guidance & care.*

*To see that they've grown . . . doing things that
they thought they would never be able to do.*

*It was a great pleasure to me & brought a great
smile & joy within my life to know that I was a
part of that."*

Deborah McKnight
Foster Parent, Effingham, SC

Neither race, color, nor national origin (RCNO) of a child or prospective caregiver may be considered in the placement selection process for a foster child unless an individualized assessment reveals that such consideration is in the child's best interests. Culture may not be used as a proxy for RCNO. Placements may not be delayed or denied on the basis of RCNO of the child or the provider.

DSS SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT of SOCIAL SERVICES

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A Family for Every Child

Become a
Foster Parent



*Consider providing your
commitment, care & compassion
to South Carolina children.*

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DSS Goals for Safe & Thriving Children

- Reunification with birth families when possible
- Placement in homes within their community
- Fewer moves in foster care
- Homes that are the best match for them
- Increased number of foster families for teens
- Siblings kept together

Foster Parents Are Part of

- Child well-being & permanency plans
- Birth parent mentoring
- Family group conferencing & family team meetings
- Court preparation & proceedings
- Foster Care Review Board reviews



"We need your love & concern to heal & truly feel like part of the family. Show us trust so that we can learn to trust you."

-Youth formerly in foster care

The Licensing Process

You should be licensed within four months. You will have the support of DSS staff & the Foster Parent Association during this process & ongoing.

South Carolina needs foster parents who will be committed to what is best for the child.



Requirements Include

- Completed application
- Completed pre-service training
- Criminal background check, finger printing & check of the Central Registry of Abuse & Neglect for all household members 18 years & older
- Completed sex offender registry check for household members 12 years & older
- Enough bedrooms in the home to accommodate children in foster
- Completed home study
- Personal references, financial information & medical reports for family members
- Successful fire, health & sanitation & lead inspections of the home care

How DSS Helps

- Financial assistance to meet the child's basic needs
- Child care assistance
- Connection to counselors
- Child-only public assistance such as Medicaid



Foster Parent Characteristics

- Are single, married, or in a committed relationship
- Achieve healthy emotional bonding
- Use effective parenting skills
- Are willing to work with birth parents
- Are assertive
- Show tolerance, cultural competence & open-mindedness
- Offer stability
- Show commitment & resilience
- Have personal integrity & reliability
- Are motivated
- Invest in their own personal growth & development
- Advocate for their children
- Have a strong social/family support system
- Possess adequate resources
- Help youth make smart decisions
- Use effective & meaningful communication skills
- Show investment in interests, commitments & hobbies of their children

Foster parents may rent their home; they do not have to own it.

**Find more information:
www.dss.sc.gov**