

A Family For Every Child Newsletter

Therapeutic Foster Care

Foster care comes at a time of crisis in a child's life. As a foster parent you can make a difference by providing for a child's physical, emotional and social needs in a supportive family setting.

A typical child served in residential treatment:

- Has been severely abused and/or neglected.
- Is unable to be maintained at home or in family foster care due to uncontrollable behaviors and emotional problems.
- Has not responded to outpatient counseling services provided in the community.
- Has major school problems, has been expelled or refuses to attend school.
- Needs daily training, guidance and supervision in a highly structured living environment.

What is therapeutic foster care?

Therapeutic foster care is a specialized foster care or group home for children, youth and adolescents who are in the juvenile or welfare system. It can also serve as a respite care resource for families.

Features of Therapeutic Foster Care.

Therapeutic foster care is the least restrictive out of home therapeutic placement for children who have severe emotional disorders. Care for children is given in a private home with a specially trained foster parent, who is trained to work with children with special needs. Typically, each home takes one child at a time. Therapeutic foster parents are given a higher stipend than traditional foster parents. They also receive extensive training and in-service supervision.

Features of Therapeutic Group Homes.

Therapeutic group homes are for adolescents with severe emotional disturbances, ranging from suicidal thoughts, depression, anger, and oppositional and defiance problems to name a few. In the therapeutic group homes adolescents learn psychological and social skills. Typically there are 5-10 adolescents living in the group home, and they are also from the juvenile or welfare system. Treatments may vary, but some common ones are behavior modification, psychotherapy, and group therapy.

Other types of foster care.

In addition to therapeutic foster care, there are some other specialized foster cares. One is emergency care, where the child must be removed from his or her current home immediately. A second is long-term care, where a child is kept in their foster home, and never adopted. Pre-adoption care is for infants who, for whatever reason, cannot be adopted right away, whether parent rights are in the process of being terminated or the birth parents need a little more time to make their decision. Short-term care occurs when the child needs to be removed from his or her home for awhile, but is expected to return home soon. Traditional foster care, also known as rehabilitation foster care, is when the child is removed from their home due to neglect or abuse, but returns home once their parents have changed their behaviors, and they are closely monitored. Foster-to-adopt occurs when a child needs a transitional period from temporary care to long-term permanent care.