

DECIDING TO BECOME A FOSTER PARENT

Have you been thinking about becoming a foster parent? There is definitely a need for foster parents, but how do you know if foster parenting is right for you?

Here are some questions to help you decide if becoming a foster parent is right for you and whether now is the right time.

Why do I want to become a foster parent?

- *“What do I have to offer a child in foster care?”*
- *“What do I need to learn about child development and foster parenting to help me make a decision about becoming a foster parent?”*
- *“What is happening in my life right now that is influencing me to consider becoming a foster parent?”*

Do I have the time to commit to foster parenting?

- *“What are the time commitments that currently fill my schedule?”*
- *“Are these time commitments flexible?”*
- *“Could I reduce or put some of them on hold?”*

Consider your lifestyle and spend time visualizing how your life would change with the addition of a child.

Am I emotionally ready to be a foster parent?

- *“What are my strengths? How could I use my strengths as a foster parent?”*
- *“What are my biggest challenges? In what ways could those challenges hinder my ability to be a foster parent?”*
- *“Am I able to communicate my needs effectively?”*



In what ways do I practice good self-care?

Is my environment child friendly?

Do I have enough income to support my household?

Who are the supportive people in my life?

- *“Who are the people in my life that I go to when I need support?”*
- *“Do I feel comfortable reaching out and asking for help when I need it?”*
- *“Are there people in my life that are not good for me or that would not be good for a child for whom I would be caring?”*

Who needs to be involved in the decision to become a foster parent?

Deciding whether to become a foster parent is a decision that requires a lot of thought and collaboration with the people in your life (i.e., your co-parent, other children in your home). Spend time talking about this big decision together.

What other resources do I need to decide?

- Consider reaching out to other foster parents.
- Conduct a search online and visit popular foster parenting websites.
- Educate yourself about child development, foster parenting, and common topics like attachment, trauma, grief, and loss.

**Find foster parent resources
and more by visiting
www.ParentingMontana.org**

