

Seven Serious Myths About Being A Foster Parent

While many people consider becoming a foster parent, these myths can stand in the way of taking the first steps.

Myth: I could never be a foster parent because I'm not married and don't make a lot of money. I don't even own my own house.

Fact: There are no such requirements. You can be married or single, a homeowner or a renter. The only financial requirement is that you have enough of an income to support yourself and your family aside from the money you are reimbursed to care for a child living in foster care.

Myth: Foster parents have to stay at home with the children and I work full-time. I guess that excludes me.

Fact: No, it doesn't. Many foster parents work outside of the home and you can discuss with a licensing agency what options may be available to assist with child care costs.

Myth: My children are grown and out of the house. I'm too old to be a foster parent.

Fact: There is no age requirement (other than you must be at least 21). Many "empty nesters" find foster parenting to be a rewarding experience.

Myth: I don't have any children, and to be a foster parent you need to have parenting experience.

Fact: Not true! Many of our foster parents are childless. They are, however, responsible people who have made a commitment to children and demonstrate an ability to parent or learn.

Myth: Foster children have been abused so much that they're beyond repair. I wouldn't really be making a difference, anyway.

Fact: Children are amazingly resilient. Foster parents can make the difference by providing a structured, nurturing environment. We need to remember that these children will grow up to be adults in our society. How we respond to their needs now will largely determine what kind of citizens they will be in the future.

Myth: Once I take in a foster child, I'm on my own without any help.

Fact: Children need stability and agency staff offer foster parents plenty of support to maintain an even keel. For starters, before you even take in your first child, the agency staff works with you to develop a profile of the type of child best suited to the experience and capabilities of your family. There is respite care for those times you need a break.

Myth: I would have to provide medical insurance for a foster child in my home.

Fact: Foster parents do not pay any of a child's medical expenses, other than over-the-counter medicines and supplies. Each child in foster care has BadgerCare+ that covers their medical, dental, and mental health care needs.

Truth: Being a foster parent is rewarding experience that you and your foster child will remember for the rest of your lives!