

ChildFirst Services, Inc.

With a mission to provide individually based quality services to children and youth and underserved populations, ChildFirst Services, Inc. operates small group residences, supervised independent living residences and treatment foster care for children referred by Pennsylvania County Offices of Children, Youth and Families and the Offices of Juvenile Probation.

Children come to ChildFirst for short periods of time while their family circumstances are readied for their return, or alternative settings are found.



Foster Care

The Ruth Hearn-Williams Treatment Foster Care Program offers foster parents on-going training, technical and emotional support as well as a non-taxable stipend.

If you are interested in becoming a foster parent with ChildFirst Services, Inc., please contact Andria Stewart, Director of Treatment Foster Care, at (570) 643-4620 ext. 3109, or via e-mail at astewart@childfirstservices.org.



ChildFirst Services, Inc.

*"Empowering families and children
to build a brighter tomorrow."*

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FOSTER CARE



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Successful Foster Families...



COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY. Foster parents must be able to have positive interactions with their family members; neighbors and others in the community such as educational, medical, mental health and social service professionals; and especially with children and often with children's birth families.

SHARE PARENTING. Foster parents must share planning and caring for children with the agencies involved, and must support children's feelings for their birth family.

HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP A POSITIVE IDENTITY AND SELF-ESTEEM. Children who have been neglected, physically or sexually abused often blame themselves for their families' problems. Foster parents must demonstrate an ability to help children understand and deal with their family and placement history in a non-judgmental way, and build skills in helping the child to develop a positive identity and self esteem.

HELP CHILDREN LEARN APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS BY USING DISCIPLINE METHODS THAT DO NOT INCLUDE PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT. Children who have been abused often expect that their foster parents will also use physical force with them. It is critical that foster parents use discipline methods that do not include physical contact with the child.

ASSESS THE IMPACT OF FOSTERING ON ONE'S FAMILY. The addition of a new family member affects every other member of the family. Foster families must be able to assess the impact of adding a new family member on current family relationships and resources. They must be able to effectively deal with the changes in their family.



Tonight in Pennsylvania over 20,000 children will go to bed without a pillow to call their own.

Every child has the right to be parented in a safe, stable and loving environment. Unfortunately, for many children their families cannot provide this. For these children ChildFirst Services, Inc., and agencies like it, must step in and work to provide the needed surroundings.

The ideal place for these children is in a foster home; a family who can provide safety, security, nurturing and love - all the things you get from good parenting.

It takes a special person to reach out to kids in crisis and unselfishly give them what they need. Most of the children placed in foster care through ChildFirst Services, Inc. are adolescents and teenagers. The children come from different backgrounds. They are resilient, curious and hopeful. However, some have "special needs". These may include a physical, mental or emotional handicap; a medical condition; developmental delays; behavioral issues; problems in social functioning; a background in sexual abuse; or a need to attend therapy or counseling. Whenever possible, ChildFirst Services prefers to place sibling groups together.



Foster parents can be single, married, divorced, or in a partnership; have other children; be a working parent; live in a house, apartment, condo, or in a mobile home; have children of the same gender share a room; have a modest income; have a disability; be a senior citizen; or have no parenting experience. Foster parents must be 21 years of age or older; pass screening requirements related to child abuse and criminal history clearances; have a valid Pennsylvania driver's license; be responsible; and be able to attend meetings.

If you have the kind of heart that won't let you turn your back on a child please contact ChildFirst Services, inc. to receive more information on becoming a foster parent to a child who needs you. The challenges are many, but the rewards are great.