

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the Catholic Charities Specialized Foster Care Program?**

Catholic Charities Specialized Foster Care is a private foster care provider, matching children who are in the custody of County Children and Youth agencies with our foster families. Our purpose is to provide a temporary, safe, nurturing home for children and teens who have been the victims of abuse or neglect due to their family's inability or unwillingness to care for them.

### **Who are special needs children?**

These are children that are in the custody of County Children and Youth agencies and typically meet at least one of the following criteria:

Children who are older (school aged),  
Children who are from a minority population,  
Children who are together in a sibling group,  
Children who may have a mental health, mental retardation, physical or medical diagnosis.

### **How do I become a Foster Parent?**

Contact Catholic Charities and we will inform you of the next training class. We require 24 hours of pre-service training, Child Abuse/Mandated Reporter Training (on-line course), and training in First Aid and CPR. We provide training in a group format and typically in three hour segments. The state requires Child Abuse, State Police and FBI Fingerprint clearances for all family members living in the home who are 18 yrs. and older. Medical physicals and a home evaluation are also included in writing the Family Profile.

### **How soon can I have a child in my home?**

After your training, clearances, and paperwork are complete, we will write your Family Profile. We try to match referred children's needs with the strengths you have to offer. When we determine an appropriate match, your family profile is submitted to the county agency with custody. From there, they will determine what they have found to be the best matching placement for the situation. It could be from one to 24 months after your certification before you receive a foster placement.

### **What support is available?**

Catholic Charities provides weekly contact with the caseworker, assistance through the placement and monthly training and support group. A per diem is available to assist in meeting the needs of these children.

### **Do most children return to their families?**

In many cases, the children do return home to their parents or other biological family members. Foster Care was designed to be a temporary service with the goal of returning children to biological family members. In the cases where a return home is not possible and no other family members are willing to parent the child, the current foster family is typically considered, if they are willing to provide a permanent home for the child. Adoption is often an appropriate plan for children who cannot be returned home or placed with relatives.

**How do I contact Catholic Charities Specialized Foster Care?**

The Specialized Foster Care staff has proven success in providing matching and support services for our foster families. Persons interested in learning more about becoming foster parents or adoptive parents for special needs children should contact our office at 717-564-7115 or [kbolton@cchbg.org](mailto:kbolton@cchbg.org) or [naponick@cchbg.org](mailto:naponick@cchbg.org).