

### What happens after I apply?

You will be asked to take part in a pre-service program which will give you more information about fostering and help you decide whether you would like to become a foster parent.

All foster homes in Saskatchewan must be approved. Finding good homes for children requires the collection of the same information any parent would want to know if it was necessary to put their child into the care of someone they don't know.

To collect some of this information, a Social Services caseworker will meet with your family several times to complete a home study. This assessment provides Social Services with information about your family, identifying special skills and experience you may have. It also gives your family members a chance to discuss questions or concerns.

The caseworker will then check your history for any record of child abuse or neglect. Your home will be inspected by the caseworker to ensure it meets predetermined safety standards. You will be asked to provide a criminal record check, and to have a medical exam to ensure you have no health problems that would hinder your ability to foster. References from people who know your family will also be required.

### Do foster families receive compensation?

Yes. Foster parents receive a monthly payment to cover the costs associated with raising a child. Rates depend on the age of the child, the level of care provided, the skill level of the foster parents and the needs of the individual child.



### For more information

Call the toll-free provincial inquiry line  
at  
**1-800-667-7002**

Visit our website at  
**[www.socialservices.gov.sk.ca](http://www.socialservices.gov.sk.ca)**

Call the Saskatchewan Foster Families  
Association toll-free  
at  
**1-888-267-2880**

Visit the Saskatchewan Foster  
Families Association website at  
**[www.sffa.ca](http://www.sffa.ca)**

or contact the nearest  
Social Services office



Open your Heart...  
Open your Home 

Foster Families  
are Urgently Needed



Saskatchewan  
Ministry of  
Social  
Services

# FOSTER CARE IN SASKATCHEWAN

## What is foster care?

Foster care provides a warm, safe home environment to children in need of protection due to abuse or neglect. It is imperative that these children receive support, supervision and guidance from their foster families during the time they must live away from home.

Children are best cared for in their own families, and most parents want to care for their children. However, some families experience difficult times that can result in children being placed in foster care. In these situations, the main consideration is the child's safety.

## The goal of foster care

The primary goal of foster care is to provide children with a family environment where positive relationships and healthy child development are encouraged. Keeping siblings together is also a priority.

The ultimate goal is to reunite the children with their families when it is safe to do so. To help make this happen, Social Services provides support and services to the child's entire family to strengthen the family unit and improve parenting skills. The foster family plays an important role in the process of helping the child return home safely.

Alternatively, placement with extended family or within a child's cultural community is preferred.

There is a significant need for Aboriginal and Métis families who can help children maintain their cultural identities.

## Types of foster care

### Emergency

- Provides immediate care to children on short notice at any time of day or night, often with little information. Children may be in poor health or physical condition, and may require care for up to two weeks.

### Short-term

- Provides care and prepares children for transition to their families, extended family, or another permanent home.

### Long-term

- Provides care to children who are unable to return to their natural families. In some cases, this may be until the children move to independent living.

### Therapeutic

- Provides care to children and youth who present a range of behavioral, social, developmental and emotional problems, with possible special education needs. Therapeutic foster families require intensive specialized training.

## The children

Children in foster care often have higher needs than other children. For example, they may need help adjusting to being away from their family, friends and neighbourhoods. They may need help with everyday life skills they have not yet learned. Some children may have behavioural problems as a result of serious abuse or other harmful experiences. Others may need extra care or supervision due to medical problems or conditions such as fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

Homes are needed for infants and preschool children, but most of the children in need of foster placement are school age, including pre-teens and teenagers.

There are a number of reasons why children may be placed with foster parents:

- neglect
- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- exploitation

Our hope is that these children will require foster care for only a short period of time before returning to a safe environment with their natural family, extended family or cultural community.

However short their time may be with a foster family, it is a time of significant importance in the child's development. It is a time when the child will need to feel cared for and protected. For some children who cannot return to their families, a longer stay in foster care may be necessary.

## Do foster families have access to training and support?

Yes. As part of the approval process, all foster parents must complete intensive, specialized training that will prepare them to work with children and their families.

The Ministry is currently implementing PRIDE (Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education), a new model of practice for the development and support of foster families. PRIDE consists of Pre-Service, CORE, Advanced and Specialized training modules that are based on the following five competencies:

1. Protecting and nurturing children.
2. Meeting children's developmental needs and addressing developmental delays.
3. Supporting relationships between children and their families.
4. Connecting children to safe, nurturing relationships intended to last a lifetime.
5. Working as a member of a professional team.

Once a child is placed in their home, foster families receive ongoing support from Social Services and from the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association. Local meetings and support groups give new foster families an opportunity to discuss questions or concerns with experienced foster families.

## Who can apply to be a foster parent?

Foster families come from a diverse range of cultural, educational and economic backgrounds.

You may be:

- single, married or living common-law;
- of any race or ethnicity;
- with or without children of your own;
- a renter or homeowner; and
- experienced with or willing to learn about children with special needs.

You **must** be:

- able to pass a criminal record check (applies to all adults living in the home); and
- able to pass a child protection screening, having no current or recent child protection history.