



Therapeutic Foster Care Program

about

Some children can't live at home because of social, developmental or emotional problems. Often these same children need special attention, care, or education. Saskatchewan's Therapeutic Foster Care Program is an alternative to institutional living for these children.

Therapeutic foster care combines the positive environment of a nurturing family with treatment that is usually found in more controlled residential institutions. Therapeutic foster parents do not need to have a formal education. They do need a genuine commitment to children and the ability to see beyond a child's behaviours and problems. Therapeutic foster parents must be prepared to help the child change his/her behaviour, by observing what leads to unacceptable behaviours, applying interventions developed by the treatment team, and reporting on the effectiveness of the treatment plan. Therapeutic foster parents provide intensive and consistent guidance to help young people in their care cope with troubling issues, and gain the skills necessary to live in the community more successfully.

Because of their high needs, no more than two children may be placed in a therapeutic foster home. Therapeutic foster parents receive a great deal of support to work successfully with the children in their care.

A caseworker is assigned to work with each therapeutic foster family. The caseworker provides regular in-home contact, support and supervision. Therapeutic foster parents can take part in a support group organized by the caseworker. The group may include counsellors, doctors, teachers and other professionals who support the foster family and child. The child's birth or source family may also be part of the team, even though the child may be unable to return to live with his/her family.

For further information about therapeutic foster care call your local regional office. (See page 2.)

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A caseworker will be assigned no more than eight therapeutic foster homes at one time because of the need to work so closely with each foster family. For example, caseworkers:

- set up an individual plan for the foster child and provide help and support to carry out the plan;
- work with the child's birth or source family;
- help to recruit potential therapeutic foster parents;
- provide ongoing training to therapeutic foster parents;
- keep in contact with outside agencies such as Child and Youth Services (Mental Health Services), and schools;
- organize support groups for therapeutic foster parents; and
- provide follow-up services when the child leaves the foster home.

All therapeutic foster parents must successfully complete the required Therapeutic Foster Care training within two

years of becoming a therapeutic home. This is in addition to the regular foster parent pre-service and practitioner level training. The training is more intensive and treatment-oriented than training for a regular foster home. It provides the knowledge and skills therapeutic foster families need to encourage the healthy development of children. The training focuses on positive ways of working with children so that they manage any behavioural, social or emotional problems they have.

Therapeutic foster parents receive higher pay than regular foster homes because they need more knowledge, skills and abilities to deal with the children in their care. This increased payment also recognizes the heavy demands due to planning, assessment, working with other agencies, and the higher level of support these children and their families need.

Therapeutic Foster Care Homes make up about 10 per cent of the province's foster homes across the province.

For further information, please contact your nearest regional office and inquire about therapeutic foster care, or call toll-free: 1-800-667-7002

Northwest (North Battleford)

1-877-993-9911 or 446-7535

Northeast (Prince Albert)

1-800-487-8603 or 953-2422

Centre (Saskatoon)

964-1730

Southwest (Regina)

787-3800

Southeast (Yorkton)

1-877-786-3288 or 786-1300