

LIVINGSTON COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES COLLABORATIVE BODY

Health and Human Service Needs FACT SHEET

Foster Parenting in Livingston County

August 2019

Who are Foster Parents?

Foster parent is the term generally used to refer to adults who are licensed by the state or other designated agency to provide a temporary home for children whose birth parents are unable to care for them. Children may come into foster care due to abuse, neglect, or delinquency. The goal of foster care is to reunify and strengthen families. When efforts to reunify children with their birth parents are unsuccessful, the court makes these children eligible for adoption. Children may be adopted by their foster parents or by other families who wish to adopt. Foster parents are also needed to provide shorter term respite care or emergency placement for children. To become licensed in the State of Michigan, foster parents are required to have minimally a home evaluation including criminal history, social history, home inspection, medical clearances, and pre-service training.



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What is the need in Livingston County for foster homes?

When children are removed from the home, they are in need of foster home placements. Some children return home within a year, while others age out of the system, or remain in foster care until they are adopted. Many foster children are placed with relatives. Foster children require a safe, nurturing, patient, positive home environment while safety concerns are addressed with their family.



As of year-end 2017-18, current foster care data for Livingston County is:

- There are 91 licensed foster homes in Livingston County.
- There were 35 new homes licensed.
- There were 152 children in foster care.
- There were 55 children adopted.
- Children of all ages are placed in foster care, from birth to age 18. There is a voluntary program for older youth called Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care (YAVFC) to remain in care until age 21.
- Approximately 33% of children in foster care are placed with relative/parental caregivers.



What are the Specific Needs for Foster Parents in Livingston County? Livingston County has been very successful recruiting new foster homes over the past several years. Many of these new homes were licensed to only accept infants or young children. **There is always a need for foster homes for older youth, teens with challenging behavior or a history of delinquency, babies and sibling groups.** The goal is to maintain youth in their school district when possible; therefore, homes are needed in each of the school districts in Livingston County. Additional foster homes in Livingston County willing to provide respite, stability and support to these youth are always needed.

What are the Services and Supports in Livingston County to Assist Foster Families?

Foster parents are provided reimbursement for the cost of care as established by the State of Michigan. There are many agencies to assist with foster care and adoption cases. These organizations include:

Dept. of Health and Human Services	(517) 548-0233 – www.mdhhs.gov
Livingston Co. Catholic Charities	(517) 545-5944 - www.livingstoncatholiccharities.org
Orchards Children's Services	(248) 258-0440 - www.orchards.org
Family and Community Services	(517) 615-1275 - facs.fcsserves.org
Growing Hope through Love	(517) 798-4020 - www.facebook.com/ghtl.org
Samaritas	(810) 280-9127 - www.samaritas.org
Ennis Center for Children	(517) 881-0723 – www.enniscenter.org

FAKS

The Livingston County Foster Care, Adoption and Kinship Services Workgroup (FAKS) is made up of foster parents and representatives from local organizations dedicated to offering safe and supportive placements to children that are not living in their family home. FAKS aims to support families involved in foster care and/or adoption in the county. Current supports offered to licensed foster families include:

- Pre-service training for prospective foster parents to learn what to expect
- Family activities and events - including a summer picnic, holiday party and annual appreciation dinner
- Post-licensing retention training to improve skills and maintain placements
- Small uncovered expense reimbursement



For more information or to get involved, please contact:

- *The DHHS Licensing line at 517-548-0233*
- *Visit us at www.livgov.com/hscb/Pages/fosteradoptkinship.aspx*
- *Follow us on Facebook under Livingston County FAKS*

What Can the Community Do to Help?

Foster parents for older youth, babies (especially multiples) and sibling groups are always needed. Please call the FAKS hotline to receive information about foster care. Other ways to assist in this effort include:

- Become a licensed foster parent.
- Not sure you are ready to be a foster parent, consider mentoring a child in foster care.
- Contact Mentor Livingston at (517) 546-1140 or the HUGS program at (810) 991-1116.
- Donate your time to assist foster families and youth develop life skills (budgeting, cooking, basic car repair, etc.), transportation to appointments and services, and general mentoring.
- Sponsor a child to attend a summer camp.
- Donate money to the FAKS fund which is used for immediate needs of foster families and children.
- Join the FAKS workgroup of the Human Services Collaborative Body to assist in planning to meet these needs.