

MAKING A DIFFERENCE AS A FOSTER PARENT

An old man walked up a shore littered with thousands of starfish, beached and dying after a storm. A young man was picking them up and flinging them back into the ocean. “Why do you bother?” the old man scoffed. “You’re not saving enough to make a difference.” The young man picked up another starfish and sent it spinning back to the water. “Made a difference to that one” he said.

**You can make a difference every
day.**

**Consider becoming a Foster Parent
with Goochland County Social
Services.**

If you would like more information about becoming a foster parent, contact our Family Service Specialist, Paige Corpe at (804) 556-5880.

*© Joel Barker’s interpretation of Lauren Eiseley’s Star
Thrower story*



Frequently Asked Questions about Foster Care

Foster parents provide a temporary, safe home for children in crisis. Children who need foster families have been removed from their birth family homes for reasons of neglect, abuse, abandonment, or other issues endangering their health and/or safety. Many of these children are filled with fear, confusion, or a sense of powerlessness at having been removed from the only home they have ever known

- 1. Can I request a specific age range or the gender of the child(ren) I am willing to foster?**
Yes, as a foster parent you can request the age and gender of the child(ren) in your home. If approved as a foster parent, prior to placement of a child, the agency will contact you, provide you with the ages of the child(ren), give a summary of the situation, and you determine if placement can occur in your home.
- 2. How much room do I need in my home to foster a child?**
You must have adequate bedroom space for a foster or adopted child. A foster or adopted child may share a bedroom with another child of the same sex but the child cannot share a bedroom with anyone over the age of 18 years.
- 3. How will I know if my home is suitable for the placement of a foster child?**
It is important that your home is safe and free of hazards. During the home study process, a checklist is completed that includes a safety inspection of your home. You must have working smoke detectors, a fire extinguisher, and an emergency preparedness plan. A fire inspection may be completed by the appropriate authorities.
- 4. I have some health issues, will this prevent me from being approved as a foster parent?**
Being a parent can be demanding. You must be healthy and emotionally stable to care for children who are in foster care or who are available for adoption. Part of the assessment process includes verification of your physical health as well as a check for certain communicable diseases.
- 5. I have a founded case of previous abuse or neglect with an agency, can I still foster a child?**
If you have a founded Child Protection Services case, you may not be able to become a foster or adoptive parent. We will review our records as well as any other state where the applicant(s) resided.
- 6. Is there a salary income requirement to become a foster parent?**
You do not have to be rich to become a foster or adoptive parent; however, you must have enough income to meet your own family's needs. During the assessment process, you will be asked to provide proof of income and to review family expenses.
- 7. I am single, can I still become a foster parent?**
Foster or adoptive parents can be single, married, divorced or widowed.
- 8. A member of my family committed a crime, do we still qualify to become a foster parent?**
If you or any adult residing in your home has been convicted of certain criminal offenses referred to as barrier crimes, you cannot become a foster or adoptive parent. Each household member over the age of 18 will be fingerprinted. To learn more about which crimes are prohibited contact our agency at (804) 556-5880.

Goochland Social Services

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<http://www.co.goochland.va.us/364/Social-Services>