

There are more than 400,000 children in the U.S. in the foster care system—including 18,000 in Illinois. While many of these kids live in foster homes, others as a result of the lack of foster homes, remain in residential facilities after completing treatment—like some of the kids in treatment in Allendale's Residential Care & Treatment Program.

Meanwhile, there are people who have long thought about becoming a foster parent, but never followed through. If you're one of them, now's the time to learn what is involved and find out if it's really for you.

Why? Because there is an urgent need for committed foster parents—and it's the greatest gift you can give a child in need.

***Fostering a child is life-changing!***

## THE FACTS ABOUT OUR ALLENDALE FOSTER KIDS:

Kids are placed in foster care when their family's home is deemed unsafe as a result of abuse or neglect. Their temporary legal guardianship is assumed by the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) who then contracts with private agencies like Allendale Association.

Allendale, a private, not-for-profit, state-licensed child welfare agency, has offered a Specialized Foster Care Program since 1974. It's called "specialized" because our kids need a higher level of care. Often, they've already experienced numerous foster placements and/or received treatment in facilities or hospitals. Some have special medical needs; all have emotional or behavioral issues.

While the children in our program range from 8 to 18 years, it's often older youth who have the greatest need. Although some have come to believe that "nobody wants them," every child deserves to have a place to call home, where they can feel safe and secure to learn, grow and heal.

We are happy to answer any of your questions!

**Call our team at 847-356-3322 or visit us at the  
Bradley Counseling Center  
420 W. Grand Avenue, Lake Villa, IL 60046-1088**



## HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS: 5 FAST FACTS

At Allendale, we have more than 45 years of experience administering our foster program. In a nutshell, here's how it works.

### 1. Most Anyone Can Be a Foster Parent

Foster parents come in all shapes, sizes and colors. They can:

- **Be single or married**
- **Own or rent a house or apartment**
- **Work full time, part-time or not at all**
- **Have biological children**

In addition, foster parents must:

- **Agree to a background check and fingerprints for all family members over 13**
- **Demonstrate financial stability**
- **Pass a health physical exam**
- **Obtain permission from landlord**
- **Be licensed and over 21 (In two-parent homes, both adults must be licensed)**

### 2. The Foster Parent's Role

As a foster parent, you will provide food, clothing, housing, supervision, recreation, plus access to education and transportation to needed services. You will work closely with your foster child's care team. You will provide the structure, consistency, routine and relationship that kids need to understand themselves and fulfill their potential.

Frankly, for a youth who has had inconsistent education, frequent moves, and lack of routine, just having someone care enough to provide the basics with a stable structured environment can start the process of interrupting their trauma cycle. The success for many of our youth is a long-term journey needing commitment and dedication on the part of the foster parents. We have witnessed many foster children overcome adversity, going on to living independently, working and living their lives.

## MORE PROGRAM FACTS CONTINUED:

### 3. The Licensing/Training Process

The process begins when you call us to express your interest in fostering. We'll respond by providing basic information and answer any initial questions you have. If it is then determined to move forward, these are the next steps:

- **We will schedule and conduct an initial interview.**
- **You will receive and need to complete licensing paper work, which can be done via mail or in person.**
- **We will then schedule and conduct a home visit.**
- **At this point, you will then begin the state required certification training and DCFS pre-licensure classes.**
- **We will then schedule and conduct a second home visit.**
- **Once all requirements are met—background checks, physicals, training etc.—your foster parent license will be submitted for finalization.**

Your home will be licensed for kids ages 0-21. You'll be advised once your license becomes active, and DCFS will send you a copy to display in your home. Within 60 days, you'll receive an unannounced visit to ensure your ongoing compliance.

Throughout the time you are licensed, your home will be monitored every six months to ensure compliance with state licensing and safety requirements. Every four years, your license will be renewed, subject to updated documentation and training requirements. Training, support and on-going communication will continue throughout all aspects of the entire process.

### 4. Foster Parents' Rights

Often, you will have the opportunity to choose your foster child from a list of options. Allendale will work with you to determine who will work best with you family.

You will have the opportunity to read that child's confidential file and information.



**Consider fostering and take the next step!**



**Our kids**

**Call us at 847-356-3322**



**Need you!**

**Join our Families & Foster!**

## THE BENEFITS OF FOSTERING YOUTH & CHILDREN:

Once placed in secure, structured, loving foster homes, many kids eventually flourish. However, there are many benefits for foster parents and families, too, including the following, expressed by our own foster parents:

- **Seeing the kids' joy and that they are happy, whether in the home permanently or short-term;**
- **Making an impact in the lives of Youth in Care and watching them grow, succeed, and thrive;**
- **Bringing the foster families closer as a unit, helping them grow, as well, which helps the foster parents and household members be "less judgmental;" giving them a new perspective that lets them learn to have more love for the biological families and learn selflessness, compassion by re-evaluating the motives of others;**
- **Watching their communities rally to help the foster family with things such as supplies, childcare, donations, etc.) - it creates a village!**

## THE TOP 3 MYTHS OF FOSTERING:

Perhaps one of these common misbeliefs have stopped you from exploring fostering in the past. Here's why it's time to dismiss these myths:

- **"I Won't Qualify" – Actually, foster parents come from all walks of life. You don't need to be married or own a house to qualify. It's more about being committed to helping a child overcome trauma.**
- **"It's Expensive" – Actually, foster parents receive monthly board payments to cover food, clothing, allowances, and transportation. Additional funds are often available to cover specific activities as well.**
- **"I'm Not Equipped for This" – Actually, foster parents not only receive extensive training, but ongoing clinical and educational support from a team of experts. You'll have someone to call 24/7. You are never in this alone.**

## MORE PROGRAM FACTS CONTINUED:

If you're interested in meeting the child, we schedule an introduction. After the meeting, you and the child (depending on age) decide if you want to start pre-placement visits.

Pre-placement visits can last as long they need to before proceeding to placement. 30 days after placement, you'll meet with your child's case-work staff and formulate action steps. We walk you through each one, supporting you and your foster child every step of the way.

Some people want to know if their foster child may be adoptable down the road. We'll share your foster child's "permanency plan" with you up front, so you'll know from day one if that's an option.

### 5. Allendale's Support System for Fosters

Each child in specialized foster care has a dedicated care team, which includes trained case workers, therapists, nurses and more. Foster parents become part of that team and receive extensive support, which includes:

- **Weekly telephone consultations with the child's case specialist and clinical supervisor.**
- **Training on our treatment model (RESArT) and other services to help you better understand your foster child and how to work with him/her.**
- **Monthly, in-person clinical consultations and Child and Family Team Meetings**
- **Monthly, dinner/group training sessions where foster families share experiences, support each other, and learn together.**
- **Financial support, including monthly board payments, respite funds, non-recurring funds (for one-time camps and activities) and monthly enrichment funds (for other enrichment activities).**
- **24/7, 365 live support. You will ALWAYS be able to reach a member of your child's foster care team by phone.**

**learn.**

**grow.**

**heal.**

## Allendale Association SPECIALIZED FOSTER CARE PROGRAM



**A QUICK GUIDE TO ONE OF  
THE GREATEST GIFTS YOU CAN  
GIVE A CHILD IN NEED**

**www.Allendale4kids.org**