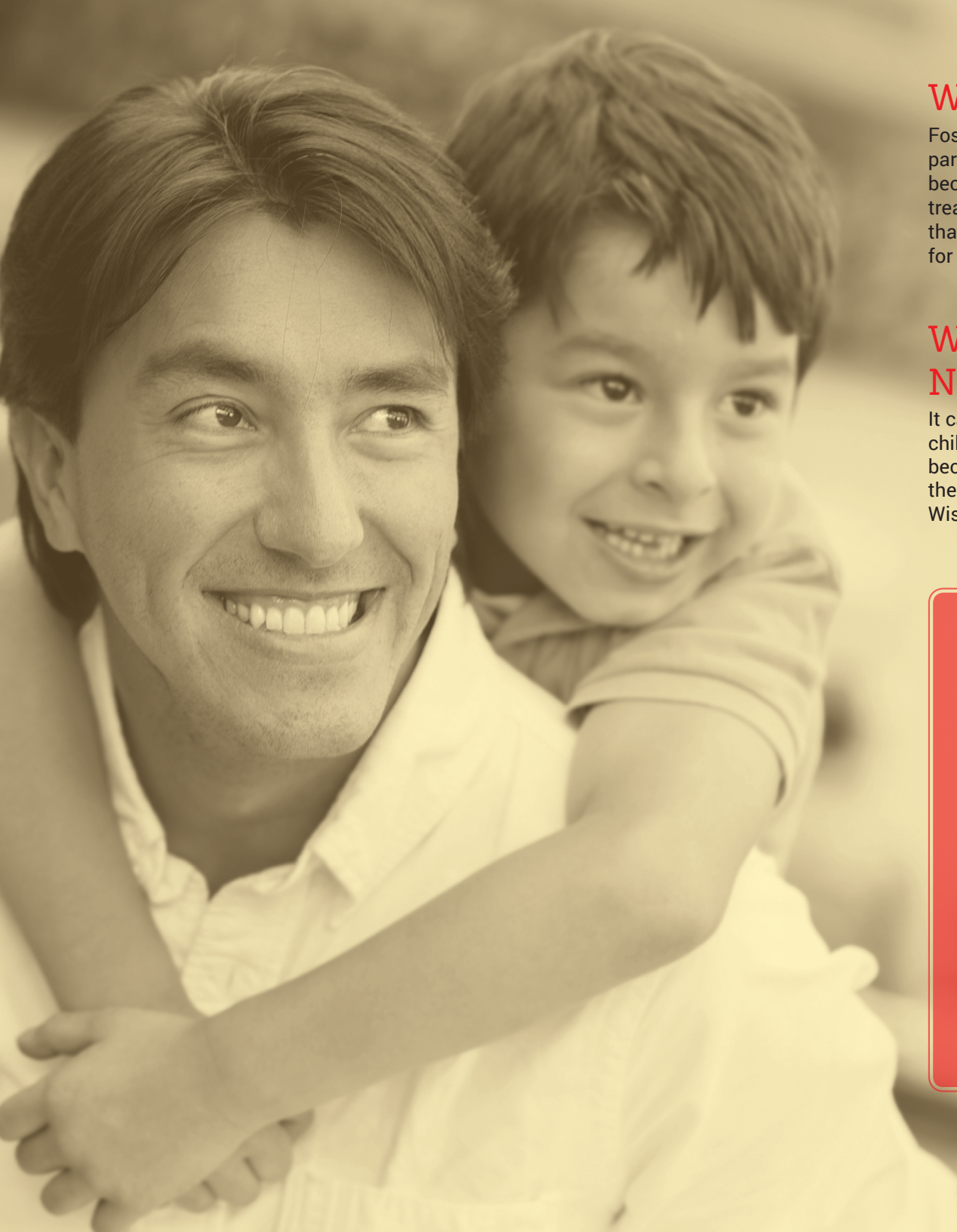


PRESERVING
CULTURE:
HELPING
CHILDREN.



firstnationsfostering.org



What is Foster Care?

Foster care is 24-hour care provided by licensed foster parents for children who cannot live with their parents because it is unsafe, because they have special care or treatment needs, or because other circumstances exist that result in their parents or family being unable to care for them.

Why Are Foster Parents Needed in Wisconsin?

It can be difficult to think about, but every day, there are children who have to be removed from their family homes because of abuse, neglect, and abandonment. Right now there are more than 6,000 children in foster care across Wisconsin.

"...We had a four-year-old for fourteen months.
By the time she left us,
she didn't need counseling any more.
It makes me proud to look back and say,

**I REALLY MADE
A DIFFERENCE
IN THAT
CHILD'S LIFE."**

Preserving culture: Helping children.

Who are the Kids in Foster Care?

The children in Wisconsin's foster care system are between the ages of 0 and 18. However, most often the children in need of homes are not babies or toddlers; they are teenagers, sibling groups, or children with special needs, such as mental health, behavioral, or emotional concerns.

Some of them have been through some pretty tough experiences in their short lives and desperately need stability and attention.

Is it Hard to Become a Foster Parent?

No, but it will take a little time. First you need to contact a licensing agency (county, private, or tribal). The licensing staff will need to get to know you better through interviews and through assessing paper work you fill out. You will also be required to attend training. To learn more about the agencies that license parents, visit the following websites: www.wifostercareandadoption.org or www.dcf.wisconsin.gov OR call 1-800-947-8074. 6,000 children in foster care across Wisconsin.

What Kind of Support is Available for Foster Parents?

As a foster parent, you will receive monthly payments to help cover the costs of food, clothing, personal care and any kind of special assistance a foster child may need. There may be other supports or services that your licensing agency provides for foster parents, such as assistance with day care costs or respite services. Talk to the licensed worker about what's available.

How do I Know if I'm Ready?

It's not a decision you can – or should – make quickly. Take some time to assess your feelings. Also consider the responsibilities of a foster parent, as well as the goals of foster care.

Responsibilities of a foster parent:

- Provide a nurturing environment, as well as limits.
- Have children participate in daily activities, as well as chores around the house.
- Have a routine family life.
- Provide day-to-day care and supervision of a child.
- Arrange and take the children to medical and dental appointments.
- Support a family interaction plan for the children and their birth families.
- Communicate with school and keep up on the child's progress.

These are the basic responsibilities of a foster parent. There are more responsibilities you may take on as you "parent"/care for this child, as there would be with any parenting role.

Foster parents are regular people who care a lot about children. Here's what foster parents say they value about what they do:

- It's rewarding, fulfilling... a sense of accomplishment.
- Very stressful but also very gratifying.
- An adventure – an opportunity to make a difference.
- An opportunity to give and receive love, even if only briefly.
- I enjoy the hubbub.
- I like helping vulnerable children feel loved and nurtured.
- I love the feeling that we make a difference in the lives of these kids.

I Have A Lot of Questions?

That's good! Deciding to be a foster parent is a big decision. Ask as many questions as you need to until you feel ready to take the next step. The Foster Care and Adoption Resource Center is available to help you find the answers to your questions.

Go to www.wifostercareandadoption.org to find more information, or send an e-mail to info@wifostercareandadoption.org. If you prefer, you can call

1-800-947-8074 to talk to a Resource Specialist. They will be happy to talk with you and to send you an informational packet.

If you have a desire to nurture a child who needs a safe place to live, if you feel called to care for children who have lived through difficult experiences, if you think it's the right time to open your home, then you're ready to consider becoming a foster parent.

"Feeling we are making a difference
in the lives of these kids

**ADDS MEANING
TO OUR OWN
LIVES."**





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