

# Debunking Foster Care Myths

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| 01. | <p><b>MYTH: Children in foster care have physical, mental or emotional challenges.</b></p> <p><b>REALITY:</b> Some children do have challenges due to the trauma they have suffered. However, foster parents receive intensive training and support to prepare them in dealing with that trauma. Sometimes, prospective foster parents see the term “special needs” associated with kids in foster care. This term is somewhat misleading because it can simply mean that the child is older, a minority or has siblings that need to be adopted with them.</p> |
| 02. | <p><b>MYTH: Children in foster care have too much “baggage.”</b></p> <p><b>REALITY:</b> This might be the biggest myth of all. Children in foster care have enormous potential to thrive, given love, patience and a stable environment.</p>  |
| 03. | <p><b>MYTH: You have to be wealthy to be a foster parent.</b></p> <p><b>REALITY:</b> It’s true that foster parents must be financially stable, but they don’t have to be wealthy. Enough income to support you and your family each month is all that you need.</p>   |
| 04. | <p><b>MYTH: You have to own a home to be a foster parent.</b></p> <p><b>REALITY:</b> You can be a homeowner or a renter. You just need to make sure there is enough room for a foster child to have their own bed and space for clothing and belongings. A foster child can share a room with another child based on their age and gender.</p>  |
| 05. | <p><b>MYTH: You have to be married to be a foster parent.</b></p> <p><b>REALITY:</b> You can be married, single, partners, an unmarried couple, or divorced. If you are a couple, both of you must attend classes and become licensed.</p>  |
| 06. | <p><b>MYTH: You have to be home with the kids during the day, so you can’t have a full-time job.</b></p> <p><b>REALITY:</b> People work full-time when they have biological children, and it’s no different with foster children. Your licensing agency can advise you on childcare options.</p>  |



**“My wife and I thought there were a lot of limitations to being foster parents. We found out differently when we contacted The Village Network, and I’m so glad we were able to work with the youth we fostered.”** - Ron, *retired foster parent*

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| 07. | <p><b>MYTH: You don’t have control over the types of children who get placed in your home.</b></p> <p><b>REALITY:</b> You do have a choice over which children are placed in your home. However, the broader your parameters are, the more quickly you will receive a placement.</p>   |
| 08. | <p><b>MYTH: My children are grown and gone—I’m too old to be a foster parent.</b></p> <p><b>REALITY:</b> Foster parents must be 21 or older. Empty-nesters often make great foster parents and find it to be rewarding experience.</p>   |
| 09. | <p><b>MYTH: Teens in foster care are there because they are juvenile delinquents.</b></p> <p><b>REALITY:</b> Most teens in foster care are there for the same reason younger children are in foster care: because someone abused or neglected them.</p>  |
| 10. | <p><b>MYTH: The foster care system has enough parents.</b></p> <p><b>REALITY:</b> According to adoptuskids.org, every year, a quarter of a million children come into foster care in the U.S. In Ohio there are more than 16,000 kids, living in out-of-home placement settings. Many of them will be placed in group homes or other group residential settings because there are simply not enough foster families to care for all of the children. No child should have to be removed from a home and spend the night in a facility while they wait for a bed.</p> |
| 11. | <p><b>MYTH: I can’t be a foster parent because I would get too attached.</b></p> <p><b>REALITY:</b> It’s true—you will get attached, and it will be painful when the children you love leave. But these children have suffered through things no child should ever face, and you will take comfort in the fact that you helped them when they needed it most.</p>  |