



## FOSTERING IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY: MYTH VS FACT

Opening up your home to a child—whether temporarily or permanently—can be both rewarding and challenging. As you begin your journey to becoming a resource (foster) parent to a child or children in need, here are some common, debunked myths about fostering in Los Angeles County.

**MYTH:** *To be a resource family, one needs to have parenting experience.*

**FACT:** There are many resource parents that have no biological children of their own that provide a loving home to children in foster care. If you are a responsible person willing to commit to providing a safe, stable, and loving environment for a child in need, you are a perfect fit.

**MYTH:** *I can't be a resource family AND work full-time.*

**FACT:** You don't have to be a stay-at-home parent to foster a child. If the child does require day care, there are programs that can help cover expenses. Your social worker can help connect you with these resources.

**MYTH:** *Being a resource family is too expensive. I can't afford to care for another child.*

**FACT:** When a child is placed in your home, you will begin receiving a monthly stipend to cover the cost of care for that child. Additionally, every child is enrolled in Medi-Cal to ensure they receive appropriate health care at no cost to you. You can learn more about resource family funding and other financial assistance by visiting [www.FosterLAKids.com](http://www.FosterLAKids.com).

**MYTH:** *I need to provide a certain type of household in order to be approved as a caretaker.*

**FACT:** The households that serve children can be as unique as the children themselves. Caretakers should be financially and emotionally stable, but by no means do you have to be perfect. Resource families can include relatives, extended family members, and non-relatives. A resource family or parent can be single, married, divorced, or living with a partner and be of any race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, immigration status or culture.



**MYTH:** *I need to own a house in order to foster a child.*

**FACT:** Resource parents can live in an apartment or house, and either rent or own.

**MYTH:** *I have no control over the child that is placed in my home.*

**FACT:** A DCFS social worker will contact you to request the placement of a child in your home, and this is an opportunity for you to ask questions and find out more about the child or youth. You may say "No" to any placement if you feel you cannot meet the child's individual needs. Additionally, as you go through the resource family process, you will have the opportunity to identify your capacity in serving the diverse needs of children within DCFS.

**MYTH:** *DCFS will take a child away from me that I think should stay longer in my home.*

**FACT:** The ultimate goal of DCFS is to strengthen and reunify families once safety can be assured. If DCFS assesses that it is safe for a child to be reunited with their biological family, DCFS will do so.

**MYTH:** *If I choose to become a resource parent, I will have to figure it out on my own.*

**FACT:** DCFS staff are here to help ensure both children and families are receiving the highest level of care. From best-practice trainings and literature to support groups, there are caring individuals and resources available to help support you on the journey.

**MYTH:** *Becoming a resource parent is a difficult and long process.*

**FACT:** The road to opening up your home to a child in need begins by completing the resource family application process, which can take 90 days to complete. Once your home is licensed, you will be eligible for the placement of a child.

To start the application process, visit [www.FosterLAKids.com](http://www.FosterLAKids.com).