



## Social Services Department

[www.harnett.org](http://www.harnett.org)

Paul Polinski, Director

Harnett County Government Complex

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Lillington, NC 27546

Future Foster Parent:

ph: 910-893-7500

Harnett County appreciates the interest you have expressed in the agency's foster care/adoption program. We are always in need of foster homes to meet the placement needs of the children in our county. Our standard practice in identifying and recruiting foster families is to follow the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994, which prevents discrimination in the placement of children in foster care and adoption on the basis of race, color or national origin. Foster care is designed to be planned and temporary. Foster parents and our agency have the job of working together as a team to meet the needs of the children and their families. We currently provide additional stipends for foster parents that are willing to be "emergency" foster parents that will take placements without refusal for a minimum period of two weeks and a maximum period of until alternative placements can be found.

Enclosed you can find information that may answer some of the questions you have about foster care/adoption. Take time to review the materials. If you are interested in pursuing the training classes, complete the application and return only the application. The licensing workers will contact you by mail when the next available class is scheduled. Should you have further questions, please contact the agency at 910-893-7500 and ask for a licensing worker. For a listing of private adoption agencies contact NC Kids Adoption and Foster Care Network website.

Harnett County foster homes are homes interested in providing care for children as long as out of home care is necessary; even to adopt children, if that becomes their permanent plan. Foster care homes are needed where foster parents will step in and serve as surrogate parents to make sure the child(ren) feel safe, cared for, and loved while their parents are working to put their lives back on track. The primary goal of foster care is family reunification. At times, the Court will determine that such a goal cannot be achieved and it is no longer appropriate to work with parents to reunify their child with them. Once the legal process is completed, these children will need a permanent forever home. When this happens, the foster parents they have been with are given the first opportunity to adopt.

Most of our children in foster care and those legally clear for adoptions have specific special needs. Special needs can be described as children who have been diagnosed by a qualified professional to have a medical, mental and/or emotional disability that limits one or more major life activity. Special needs can also be categorized by age, siblings, and minority status. Due to their special needs, many of our children qualify for various benefits post adoption. These benefits are determined based on the individual needs of each child, and can be available until the child reaches his eighteenth birthday. The child may also be eligible for Medicaid to help with meeting their medical and mental health needs.

Our foster care licensing workers conduct mandatory training twice a year. This training provides families time and opportunity to explore the option of foster care and make an informed decision about whether it is an option they want to consider. Although there are no guarantees you will have an adoptive placement through the foster care program, a number of children are permanently placed with foster parents.

### *Mission Statement*

*To provide services to individuals and families to achieve self-sufficiency, safety, and improve their quality of life.*

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