



Department of
Children's Services

Foster Parent Training Course Catalog

Tennessee Department of Children's Services
Office of Training and Professional Development
Revised October 2018



About

The Foster Parent Training Program offers learning opportunities that support adoptive, foster, and kinship parents in their effort to provide a safe, nurturing, and loving environment for the children in their care.

Training Goals

- to give foster parents the information needed to handle routine matters such as medical and psychological care, clothing needs, education, and visitation with the birth family
- to provide foster parents with the skills needed to handle problems as they arise
- to develop problem-solving and teamwork skills
- to teach foster parents the required ethical and legal standards for compliance
- to assist foster parents in anticipating the negative, critical, or distrustful attitudes that foster children often exhibit
- to identify elements of the foster child's behavior that can be attributed to the experience of being a foster child
- to share with prospective foster parents the experiences of veteran foster parents with particular emphasis on building positive relationships with birth families and DCS staff

Training Requirements

Each year foster parents must complete 15 hours of continuing education. Specific training requirements for each year post-approval are listed in the next section. The requirements make up a portion of the need 15 hours for that year. The remaining hours can be selected from approved elective training options.

Approved Elective Training Options

The Office of Training and Professional Development must approve all other options not in the table below.

Approved Elective Options	Type of Learning	Maximum Annual Hours
DCS Training Division, Central Office, Independent Living or Agency Sponsored Training	Classroom / Individual	No Maximum
DCS Online Courses https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/training/tpd/fpt/t/opportunities/online-training.html	Online	7 hours
Annual Foster Parent Conference	Classroom / General Sessions	20 hours
Approved Community Provider Training Requires Completion of Form CS-1000 https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/training/tpd/fpt/t/opportunities/external-credit.html	Classroom / Individual	No Maximum
Books / Videos https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/training/tpd/fpt/t/opportunities/media.html	Individual Study	Books: 2 hours Videos: 1 hour

Training Requirements

First Year Post-Approval

The following are required during the first year. Parents may select courses from the ***In-Service Courses*** list to complete the full 15 hours of training.

- Working with the Education System (2 hours)
- Creating Normalcy through Prudent Parenting (3 hours)
- What to Know About Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking (2 hours)
- Preserving Kinship Families (***Kinship Families Only***) (3 hours)
- One trauma related course is required for all foster parents

Foster Parents Caring for Youth Adjudicated Delinquent:

Prior to placement of a youth adjudicated Delinquent, foster parents must complete:

- Parenting the Justice Involved Youth (Online) (3 hours)

Within **90 days** of placement, foster parents/caretakers who are serving the child/youth who have been adjudicated Delinquent must complete the following:

- TIPS: Trauma Informed Parenting Strategies (6 hours)

Second Year Post-Approval

The following are required during the second year. Parents may select courses from the ***In-Service Courses*** list to complete the remaining hours.

- CPR & First Aid Refresher (4 hours)
- Medication Administration Refresher (2 hours)

Third Year Post-Approval & Beyond

In the third year following approval and every year thereafter, parents must complete 15 hours of training. Parents may complete any **approved** training of their choosing, including course in the In-Service Course list, online training, media, and other approved training options.

In the fourth year, and every other year thereafter, the following course must be completed (training will be applied to the required annual 15 hours):

- CPR & First Aid Refresher (4 hours)
- Medication Administration Refresher (2 hours)

In-Service Courses

Adoption Support and Preservation (ASAP): 8 hours

ASAP pre-adoption services are required for all DCS foster families serving a DCS custodial child placed in their home for the purpose of adoption. As part of ASAP services, parents will complete Adoption Prep Training. The training and services are offered by Harmony Family Center. Parents needing to participate in these services will be referred by the region at the appropriate time.

Building Strong Brains: 30 minutes to 3 hours

Chronic childhood trauma, or what experts call adverse childhood experiences (ACES), can disrupt a child's brain-building processes. Like building a house in a storm or with below grade materials and tools, ACES are toxic to brain development and can compromise the brain's structural integrity. Left unaddressed, ACES and their effects make it more difficult for a child to succeed in school, live a healthy life and contribute to the state's future prosperity—our communities, our workforce, and our civic life. This course may be tailored by the facilitator to include part or all of the curriculum content. Therefore, the available course credit will vary.

Caring for LGBTQ Youth (online): 1 hour

LGBTQ youth are overrepresented in foster care and are at a higher risk of rejection and harm while in care. This webinar will explain key terms and concepts that all foster/adoptive parents need to know in order to better understand LGBTQ youth. Research on the importance of providing affirming homes for these youth, as well as concrete tips for how to be affirming will be presented.

Access link: https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/hrc_lgbtq

Caring for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma (RPC): 16 hours

Often referred to as the Resource Parent Curriculum, or RPC, this training was developed by over 30 experts at the National Child Traumatic Stress Network and is uniquely designed to help therapeutic, foster, adoptive, and kinship parents (referred to as resource parents) improve their parenting skills. RPC does this by using skilled facilitators who share trauma knowledge and experience and provide parents with practical trauma-informed strategies they can immediately use with children in their home.

Caring for the Child with Sexual Trauma: 3 hours

This course explores the many facets of child sexual abuse in depth with information pertaining to facts and myths of child sex abuse, the grooming process, child disclosures, working with the

Special Investigative Unit (SIU), and addressing high risk sexual behaviors in children. The class is designed to educate parents and assist the foster, kinship, and adoptive parent that cares for the child with sexual trauma.

Child Development: 2 hours

This workshop enables participants to have a better understanding of age-appropriate behaviors for the children they are parenting, as well as helps them identify behaviors that might indicate a problem. Participants also learn the stages of child and adolescent development. Finally, parents are able to explore how some forms of maltreatment affect a child's development.

Parents may also complete a one-hour online version of this course:

https://stateofennessee.formstack.com/forms/child_dev

Child Passenger Safety: 3 hours

Car seats and boosters provide protection for infants and children in a crash, yet car crashes are a leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 13. That's why it's so important to choose and use the right car seat correctly every time your child is in the car. This computer based training will demonstrate the important steps necessary to choose the right seat, install it correctly, and keep your child safe. There are videos demonstrating proper installation as well as a quiz to ensure understanding of the life-saving concepts of child passenger safety.

Access link: https://stateofennessee.formstack.com/forms/child_passenger_cbt

Creating Normalcy through Prudent Parenting: 3 hours

This training introduces and instructs participants on how to create normalcy through reasonable prudent parenting standards which is characterized by careful, thoughtful parental decision making that is intended to maintain a child's health, safety, and best interest, while creating a more normal life.

Creating Teachable Moments: 3 hours

This course was created to address the skills that youth need in order to navigate life in the direction of success. The tools youth need are easily obtained with the help of a significant personal connection who takes an interest in teaching them. This course will discuss the ways we work with our youth, which falls into two categories: teaching tangible skills such as problem solving, planning, decision-making, time management, communication, and interpersonal relations; and teaching intangible skills like cooking, budgeting, or how to get a summer job.

Caregivers can provide these skills by creating teachable moments with youth. This material will

help foster parents have a better understanding of the lasting impact they can have on a youth's future.

CPR & First Aid Refresher: 4 hours

This course, required for all foster parents every two years after approval, instructs participants in basic CPR and first aid skills that can sustain or save a life while professional emergency help is on the way. This training will make the home and work environment safer by preventing illness and injury as well as allowing parents to quickly recognizing and responding to emergencies.

Cultural Awareness: 2 hours

This course allows foster parents to examine their own cultural backgrounds and beliefs about different cultures through self-assessment. The role that culture plays in a person's development and sense of identity will also be explored. Issues regarding communication and culturally-specific needs will also be introduced. By the end of the session, participants will have the opportunity to practice their cultural competence.

De-escalation Techniques (online): 3 hours

De-escalation Techniques training provides foster parents with the tools to not only de-escalate disruptive behavior, but skills to help prevent disruptive behaviors. This course looks at the important task of working with the youth following an incident, to teach coping skills and techniques that will allow them to regulate their own behaviors in the future. It is difficult to support children who have experienced trauma, but impossible to do if the caregiver is not well themselves. Because children can often trigger emotions in foster parents that make it difficult to parent calmly, this course covers self-care techniques to use before a youth is even placed in the home.

Access link: https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/de_esc

Engaging and Parenting Teens: 2 hours

This course will showcase the benefits of being a foster parent for teens and discuss adolescent development in relation to behaviors, identity, peers, and family and the relationship between interdependence and positive youth development.

Fostering from the Single Parent Perspective: 3 hours

This training focuses on the challenges and rewards that many single parents experience while parenting children in the foster care system. Tips, tools, and resources will be provided to help single parents navigate their daily lives.

Helping Children Make Transitions: 3 hours

This course provides participants with information that will help them to work with children who are in transition. Understanding the issues faced by these children and their families as they move from one setting to another is the focus of this course. Techniques to help children through this time of trauma, with emphasis on maintaining significant relationships, are discussed.

Impact of Fostering on Birth Children: 3 hours

This course explores what birth children may feel through all phases of the fostering process and offers tips for helping them cope.

KEEP: Keeping Foster and Kinship Parents Trained and Supported: 24 hours

KEEP is an evidence-based support and skill enhancement education program for foster and kinship parents of children aged 4 to 12. The program supports foster and kinship families by promoting child well-being and preventing placement breakdowns. Additional information on the KEEP program is below.

Kinship to Traditional Foster Care (online): 3 hours

This course is required for all kinship parents transitioning to traditional foster parenting who completed the Condensed Kinship PATH curriculum. The purpose of this training is to assist in the transition from kinship caregiver to foster parent which could present unexpected challenges along the way. While kinship families typically have an established relationship with their kinship child, parenting a child from a traditional foster care setting can pose issues around trust, security, attachment, and discipline. This course will help you understand the child welfare system and the children that come from that system.

Access link: https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/kin_traditional

Loving and Letting Go: 3 hours

This workshop will help foster parents address the grief and loss they experience when children in their homes return to their birth parents or other permanent placements. Techniques will also

be provided on how to manage the stress that accompanies grief during the transition period of a foster child leaving the home.

Managing Crisis: 3 hours

This class prepares participants for the predictable periods of crisis that are a part of being a foster family. It helps the families to think about these difficult periods as opportunities for their families to grow closer and for family members to strengthen their commitment to one another. Participants are also given the opportunity to practice their crisis intervention skills through a team activity. They will develop their first preventive or proactive family plans and sharpen their skills for assessing their own family resources and strengths.

Medication Administration Refresher: 2 hours

This course is required for all DCS foster parents every two years after approval. This refresher course includes an update on medication administration policies and procedures. The course also provides an update on the knowledge to safely and effectively administer medications to children in care. Topics included in this class range from self-storage and disposal of medication to common errors in medication administration.

Medication Administration for Medical Professionals (online): 2-4 hours

This training is specifically designed for foster parents who are medical doctors, nurses, EMTs, respiratory therapists, and other approved medical professionals. All medical professionals are required to submit a copy of their license or certification to the Office of Training and Professional Development for review and approval to receive final credit for this course. This training fulfills the 4 hour PATH requirement as well as the 2 hour refresher requirement every two years following approval.

Access link: <https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/medadmin4prof>

Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome/Safe Sleep for Infants: 3 hours

This course provides foster parents with information about NAS. Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome is a condition in which a baby has withdrawal symptoms after being exposed to certain substances. The kinds of medications that may cause withdrawal and how to parent babies with NAS will also be discussed. In addition, techniques on how to reduce your baby's risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related causes of infant death will be reviewed.

Parenting the Justice Involved Youth (online): 3 hours

This course is required for all foster parents fostering delinquent youth. This class allows foster parents to explore the benefits of fostering a delinquent youth. Participants will gain knowledge helpful in assisting a delinquent youth in addressing challenging behaviors, delinquent behaviors, adolescent development, and transitioning to home or independent living placement. Access link: https://stateofennessee.formstack.com/forms/pjy_cbt

Partnership in Action: 2 hours

This course will examine the meaning of partnership between DCS staff, foster parents, and birth parents as they work together toward the same goal. Participants will also learn how building relationships, respecting one another, and understanding roles can benefit team members.

Positive Discipline 2: 3 hours

This training revisits information on discipline that was discussed during PATH classes. Additional discipline techniques such as rewards, behavior modification, involving the child in behavior replacement, and natural consequences are explored.

Preserving Kinship Families: 3 hours

This course is designed to help kinship families face the unique stressors that may arise when becoming a kinship placement. Family dynamics are constantly shifting based on a number of factors including family members' differing communication styles, traditions, and changes in parental roles, such as the ones required when families become a kinship placement. This workshop allows participants to explore ways to adapt to the changes in the family dynamic, how to work with the birth parents, and address role conflicts within the family.

Professionalism and Ethics: 1.5 hours

The training will allow participants to define professionalism and identify qualities expected of professionals. Participants will be able to recognize how foster parents are professional members of the team and become familiar with the Code of Ethics for Foster Parents.

QPR: Question, Persuade, Refer (Suicide Prevention)

QPR is a national suicide prevention training designed for parents and other professionals working with youth. Key components covered in this training include how to questions, persuade, and refer someone who may be suicidal, common causes of suicidal behavior, warning signs of suicide, and getting help for someone in crisis.

***Respite Care: Short-term Planned Care of a Child while in DCS Custody (online):
1 hour***

The purpose of this course is to define respite care and outline the expectations and guidelines for making respite care arrangements, notifications to staff, and ensuring respite care is appropriate for the child(ren) needing care. The training will also address expectations and notifications regarding outings, overnight stays, and out-of-state/out-of-country authorizations. Topics of discussion include the purpose of respite, types of respite, who may provide respite, notification/reporting/timeframes of respite, authorizations, payment, and documentation. Access link: <https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/respitcare>

Self-Care for Foster Parents (online): 1 hour

This course focuses on key concepts of caring for children from the child welfare system and ways caregivers can support their own self-care. Participants will learn risks and symptoms of helping others who experience trauma and the impact of Secondary Traumatic Stress. Strategies for combatting burnout through caregiver self-care will be learned and practiced. Additionally, caregivers will be able to assess their strengths and needs and create plans for quality self-care through small and large group discussions. Access link: https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/selfcare_cbt

Social Media and Cyber Safety: 2 hours

Cyberbullying happens 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and reaches kids even when they are alone. This workshop will explore ways that parents can help prevent cyberbullying and how to respond if you find out your child has become a victim of cyberbullying. Participants will also learn about the dangers and legal ramifications of sexting. In this workshop, participants will also gain a greater understanding of social media dangers that affect foster children and learn the basics of Internet Safety. Texting abbreviations and the language of social media will be covered. Foster parents will learn ways to help children avoid internet “danger zones” as well as implement parental controls on computers and mobile devices.

Suicide Prevention: Question, Persuade, Refer: 2 hours

Each year in Tennessee, an estimated 900 people die by suicide — more than the number killed by homicide and drunk driving combined. Suicide is the most preventable form of death. Just as people trained in CPR and the Heimlich maneuver save thousands of lives, you can learn how to save lives of those thinking about suicide. Learn the signs of a suicidal crisis and how to intervene.

TIPS: Trauma Informed Parenting Strategies: 6 hours

This course focuses on parenting teens through a trauma informed lens and includes a justice involved module for parents that will be caring for this population. Topics include an overview of trauma informed parenting, adolescent development, teen issues, trauma informed discipline, and working with justice involved youth.

What to Know about Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking: 2 hours

This course will equip foster parents with information and training about Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking. Foster parents will gain insight into the criminality of child exploitation and human trafficking while learning about the physical and psychological impact it has on children. Participants will learn about the importance of protecting and educating children about the dangers of being lured into this fast-growing illegal activity that is considered modern day slavery.

Working with Birth Parents & Visitation: 3 hours

This course helps everyone involved in foster care gain an appreciation for the critical role of birth parents in the lives of children in care and a better understanding of the federal and state mandates on child and family visitation; the importance of the child and family visitation and why supporting this contact is important to a child's developmental and mental well-being; how to identify the reasons for a child's behavior before during and after visitations; and how to strategically minimize these behaviors.

Working with Children Who Have Diabetes (online): 1 hour

Diabetes is a serious medical condition in which the body does not properly process food for use as energy. Diabetes can cause serious health complications including heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, and lower-extremity amputations. Appropriate health care for children and youth in DCS custody who have diabetes is critical. In this training you will learn about the different types of diabetes and your role in ensuring the proper management of the disease. This training is appropriate for foster parents and staff who work with children and youth who have diabetes. Access link: <https://stateoftennessee.formstack.com/forms/diabetes>

Working with the Education System (Online): 2 hours

This training will help foster parents to develop positive relationships with local school systems. Topics include obtaining and sharing the Education Passport (school records), navigating the special education process, consulting your Education Specialist, understanding DCS education policies, and collecting information for use in Child and Family Team Meetings.

Access link: <https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/dcs/program-areas/training/tpd/fpt/t/opportunities/schools-and-families.html>

Your Money, Your Goals: 4 hours

This course is for foster parents and other professionals working with youth in foster care. You will receive an interactive toolkit you can use to empower young people to understand their relationship with money and how to make it work for them to help them achieve their goals. Topics include starting the money conversation; emotions, values, and culture behind money choices; paying bills and other expenses; managing cash flow; setting goals; protecting your money.

Youth Mental Health First Aid: 8 hours

Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed to teach adults assisting young people the risk factors and warning signs of a variety of mental health challenges common among adolescents, including anxiety, depression, psychosis, eating disorders, AD/HD, disruptive behavior disorders, and substance abuse disorder. Participants **do not** learn to diagnose nor how to provide any therapy or counseling. Rather, participants learn to support a youth developing signs and symptoms of a mental illness or in an emotional crisis by applying a core five step action plan.

KEEP: Keeping Foster and Kinship Parents Trained and Supported

Parents in the second year of approval may have the option to participate in the KEEP program. KEEP is an evidence-based support and skill enhancement education program for foster and kinship parents of children aged 4 to 12. The program supports foster and kinship families by promoting child well-being and preventing placement breakdowns.

KEEP Track

Foster parents (traditional or kinship) participating in the KEEP program during the second year of fostering must complete 22 hours of training:

- CPR & First Aid Refresher (4 hours)
- Medication Administration Refresher (2 hours)
- KEEP Completion (16 hours)

KEEP encourages foster and kinship parents to change their child's behavior, teach effective management strategies, and provide their children with support. The aims of KEEP are:

- Increase the parenting skills of foster and kinship parents
- Decrease the number of placement disruptions
- Improve child outcomes
- Increase the number of positive permanency outcomes/options

The objective of KEEP is to provide effective tools for dealing with a child's behavioral and emotional problems, and to support parents in implementing these tools. This is accomplished through KEEP groups. KEEP groups include foster and kinship parents who attend 16 weekly 90 minute sessions based in the local community.

Additionally:

- Curriculum topics include framing the foster and kinship parent's role as that of key agents of change for the children placed with them. Foster and kinship parents are taught methods for encouraging child cooperation, using behavioral contingencies and effective limit setting, and balancing encouragement and limits.

- There are also sessions on dealing with difficult problems behaviors (including covert behaviors), promoting school success, encouraging positive peer relationships, and strategies for managing stress brought on by providing foster care.
- KEEP doesn't use a "one size fits all" curriculum. Each week, the KEEP group leaders gather specific information about the children's current behaviors by Parent Daily Reports (PDR). This information is then incorporated into the weekly sessions to make sure the group is both current and relevant.
- KEEP groups are designed to be flexible and fun. Snacks are served and childcare is provided. Unlike a classroom lecture format, KEEP groups are interactive and participatory. The group blends the real and current experiences of foster and kinship parents with lessons learned from research about the most effective parenting methods.

Incentives are provided to increase participation and engagement of eligible DCS foster parents. Incentives include the following:

- Travel reimbursement;
- Increased board rate of \$1.50 per day per target population child;
- Refreshments;
- Sitter service during the group for foster and biological children; and
- In-service training hours.

KEEP Booster

The KEEP Booster course is intended to reinforce the concepts introduced in the first KEEP group sessions and gives foster parents the opportunity to reflect on implementation of the skills they acquired. Participation in the KEEP Booster allows foster parents to maintain their status as a KEEP Certified Foster Home and is required to continue receiving an increased board rate.

The KEEP Booster is an 8-session course, delivered in a group setting for 90 minutes each week. Foster and kinship parents will be eligible for 12 hours of training credit upon successful completion of the KEEP Booster. Participation and completion of a KEEP Booster course is required one year after completion of the initial KEEP group, and every other year following.

Online Courses

This list contains online courses available at the time of this writing. Additional online courses maybe added at any time. Check the website frequently for new arrivals. Online courses may be accessed on the [Foster Parent Online Training](https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/training/tpd/fpt/t/opportunities/online-training.html) website.¹

Course Title	Credit Hours
10 Ways to Discipline Your Children	.5
Behavior Management Ages 11-13	2.5
Behavioral Challenges in Foster Care	1
Child Development	1
Child Passenger Safety	3
Coping Skills for Children of Drug Addicted and Mentally/Emotionally Challenged Parents	.5
De-escalation Techniques	3
Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking and Our Foster Youth	1
Domestic Violence and its Impact on the Developing Child	1
Hair Care for Black and Multicultural Children	1
Human Trafficking Awareness	.5
Kinship to Traditional Foster Care	3
Parenting the Justice Involved Youth	3
ReMoved	1
Safety Planning for High Risk Behaviors for Children in State Custody (Policy 31.18)	1
Success Beyond 18: Transitioning Youth to Adulthood	1
Trauma Talk: When Children Talk about Their Traumatic Experiences	1.5
Understanding Healthy vs Unhealthy Sexual Behavior in Children and Youth	1
Violence and Trauma: Impact of Child Development, Behavior, and Learning	1
Working with Children Who Have Diabetes	1
Working with the Education System	2

¹ <https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/training/tpd/fpt/t/opportunities/online-training.html>

Approved Media

In addition to classroom opportunities and online learning, parents may also obtain training credit by reading books (2 credit hours) and watching videos (1 credit hour) that have been approved for credit by the Office of Learning and Development. A maximum of three (3) hours of training credit may be awarded annually for approved media.

View the complete list of approved books and videos on the [Foster Parent Training website](#).²

If you would like to receive training credit for a title that is not listed, contact the Office of Training and Professional Development for approval.

External Training

Parents may also receive credit for training offered by external vendors, community partners, conferences, private agencies, and other relevant resources. External trainings must be approved by the Foster Parent Service Worker as well as the Office of Training and Professional Development.

To receive credit for external training, complete the Foster Parent Elective Training Documentation form on the training website: <https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/training/tpd/fpt/t/opportunities/external-credit.html>

NOTE: It is the preference of the Office of Training and Professional Development that DCS foster parents attend training developed by the Department of Children’s Services (i.e., trainings listed in this catalog) with the Department or approved contract trainers.

Shared homes may complete training with DCS or their private agency.

² <https://www.tn.gov/dcs/program-areas/training/tpd/fpt/t/opportunities/media.html>