

What is Foster Care?

Foster Care is the term used to describe a system of care for youth, age 18 years and under, who are placed into protective custody by either Child Welfare Services or Probation Departments. Assembly Bill 12 now also allows for extended foster care, so youth may remain in foster care until age 21 if certain conditions are met.

Although some things may differ from county to county, the laws governing how and why youth are placed into custody are strictly defined by the California Welfare and Institutions Code. The Superior Court system ultimately decides whether youth are in foster care.

Are youth in care placed with their families?

When a youth is taken into care, the social worker or probation officer working with the family must ask the parents/guardians whether there are any relatives of the child to be considered for placement. Priority of placement is always given to relatives to provide the child with the comforts of family while ensuring safety.

Sometimes a parent/guardian does not initially name any blood relatives, but identifies a close family friend who the child considers family, a Non Related Extended Family Member (NREFM). The identified individual must meet state criteria to be considered a NREFM.

Families and family friends seeking placement of foster youth must become an approved Resource Family.

Tuolumne County Foster Care



Foster. Strengthen. Inspire.

Tuolumne County is a special place to live. We have phenomenal foster parents. Our kids need you. Could you be on our team?

Our Kids. Our Community. Our Team.

533-5711

www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov

*Social Services
Resource Family Approval*

Resource Families

While family and friends undergo background checks and assessments for placement, and/or when no friends or family members have been identified for placement, youth are placed with local resource families. The Tuolumne County Resource Family Approval program recognizes that:

- Youth need parenting, not just parents. How a youth is parented will determine who she thinks she is.
- The resource family is the most critical element for success or failure of the youth and the foster care system.
- Not everyone can be a great foster parent. It is far more challenging than being a good parent.
- Many families ARE successful at being phenomenal caregivers, and Tuolumne County needs more of them to meet the needs of our youth!

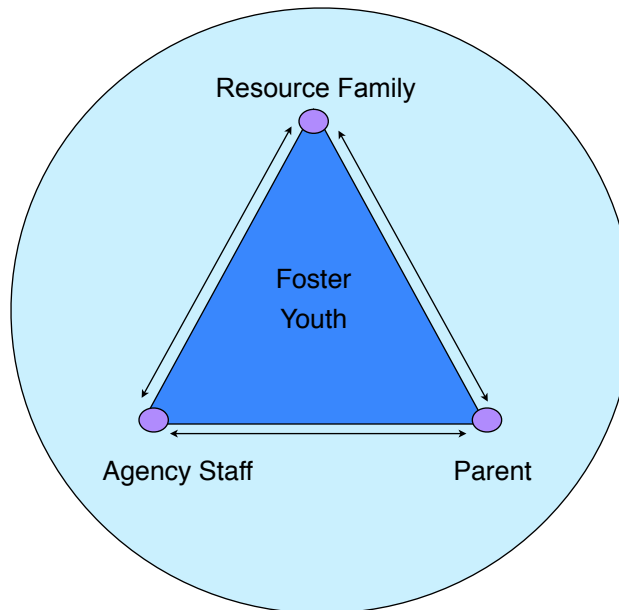
Minimum standards aren't good enough for our youth. Tuolumne County placement workers will only place youth in homes that meet the standards of quality parenting set by the Quality Parent Initiative Team.



What does it mean to be a resource family in Tuolumne County?

It Means...

- Working as part of a team comprised of the resource family, the biological parents, and agency staff to help reunify the youth with his/her family and to meet the needs of the youth.
- Putting the youth's needs first-always.
- Communicating with, and supporting the family, not just the youth.
- Consistently receiving trainings from University of California, Davis and other advanced education institutions to ensure you feel comfortable in your knowledge of child development and parenting skills.
- Being respected as a full partner in the process, and expecting a high level of investment from agency staff.



How Do I Become a Part of the Team?

Attend a Resource Family Approval Orientation. These are informal meetings for you to learn more about the program, and what you can expect from the process. Come prepared to ask any questions you may have. Agency staff will provide you with an application for your review, and there is no commitment required by attending an orientation.

Information on the process of becoming a licensed foster parent is also available on our website: www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov.

We can't do it without you.
Our Youth need You.

Foster. Strengthen. Inspire.