

WHAT IS THE MENTORING & ADVOCACY PROGRAM?

Mentoring and Advocacy is a service offered through the Department of Social Services who has recruited experienced caregivers to mentor prospective and newly licensed resource families to develop supportive relationships by sharing the knowledge and experience of the mentors with the foster care system.

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE MENTORING & ADVOCACY PROGRAM?

The goal of the mentor is to pass on the expertise of the mentors and provide the following services:

- Assist resource families with information that will encourage communication between caregivers and the Department.
- Offer resource families possible solutions to problems that may occur while caring for a child in placement.
- Assist and guide recently certified resource families in day to day activities while caring for a child in placement.
- Encourage recently certified caregivers to attend training sessions in order to maintain their current certification.
- Offer tips on how to navigate the “system”.

WHAT CAN THE MENTORING AND ADVOCACY PROGRAM DO FOR ME?

- The services build upon the strengths of the family.
- Trained mentors work to connect individual families with resources, services, and support.
- Support may come through a monthly “check-in” phone call:
 - To assist with paperwork
 - Help identifying resources
 - To exchange of parenting ideas or other support focused on the specific family needs



WHY CONSIDER A MENTOR?

Welcoming a foster child into your home is vastly different from parenting your own children, or even watching a friend’s children for a short period of time. Foster children come from traumatic experiences which affect their behavior, mental, physical, and emotional health, and learning ability. In addition, foster children have an entire agency attached to them that brings certain requirements and expectations of the resource parent. Experienced resource families have lived the experience of providing care for a needy child. They have unique knowledge and experience that they can pass on to ease the learning curve of new resource families.

