

## Resource Family Approval (RFA)

### Program and Service Options

There are many ways members of our community can positively influence the lives of children in foster care.

**Resource Family:** Certification is the process through which community members apply, receive education and training, complete background clearances and meet state requirements to care for children and youth in foster care. Most frequently, the children's biological parents receive reunification services; the primary goal is to support families in becoming healthy and safe so children can reunify with their parents. If it is determined that the children cannot safely reunify with their parents, Resource Families may be asked to become the youth's forever family through adoption or guardianship.

**Respite Care Provider:** Respite care is a crucial support to existing Resource Families. Providing respite care is an option for those who are interested in a short term experience of providing care. Some families try this prior to pursuing full certification. Respite providers are trained similarly to Resource Families and complete the same background checks.

**Emergency Foster Care (Shelter):** Resource families committed to emergency shelter are typically on-call and available on short notice to provide immediate, temporary, short term care for children entering the foster care system or waiting on availability for more permanent placement.

**Options for Recovery (OFR):** Resource families designated as "OFR" are specially trained to support the needs of our youngest children, newborn through age five, as well as focused on taking an active role in the reunification process through mentorship of birth families.

**Home is the Goal:** Home is the Goal was created to develop an emergency network of pre-approved families in each school or district (dependent on the Resource family's preferences), willing and available to care for students who enter foster care when needed. Home is the Goal will allow children to remain with their classmates, teachers, and school counselors by keeping students in their same school.

**Faith in Motion:** This collaborative effort engages local faith communities throughout the County of San Luis Obispo to meet the needs of youth and families who have been impacted by abuse and neglect. All faith communities are unique and many communities feel called to provide care and support to children and families impacted by foster care. Faith in Motion recruits potential resource/adoptive homes for children and youth in the foster care system and also builds a tremendous support network for the families caring for these children.

**Mentoring and Tutoring:** There are several local agencies with whom we partner which provide training, volunteer management and support to individuals who are interested in providing mentoring or tutoring services to youth in foster care. Ask us for more information.

**Local Business Awareness and Support:** Local businesses have a unique and valuable connection to the members of our county community and can often be a strong ally in helping raise awareness regarding the need for more resource family homes. Local businesses can also support youth in foster care with discounts for resource families, providing window space for awareness materials, or even job opportunities for older youth.

**Becoming an Awareness Advocate:** A recent survey suggested that only 40 percent of local respondents are aware of the critical shortage of loving and caring Resource families. Raising awareness through social media, distribution/posting of printed materials, and word of mouth can help immensely in sharing the need for Resource families, as well as the myriad of ways everyone can be involved.



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