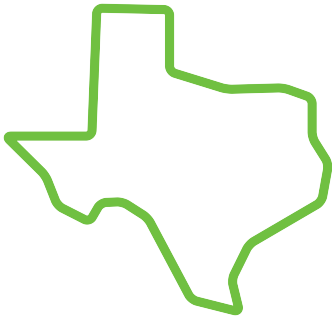




Educational Resources and Fact Sheets

What's Foster Care Like in Texas?



Foster youth in Texas are safe in care



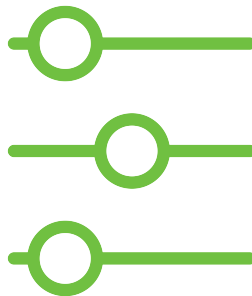
A team of people ensures foster youth are safe



Foster youth live in 2-3 homes on average while in care



Youth exiting care in 2017 spent less than 2 years in care



There are different levels of services based on the needs of each foster youth



Less than 1% of youth exiting national care from 2011-2015 left as a result of running away

What's Foster Care Like in Texas?

- In 2017, 99.9% of foster youth were safe in care.
- Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworker and supervisor, a Child Placing Agency (CPA) caseworker and supervisor, an Attorney Ad Litem, A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), a foster parent or parents, and a doctor or doctors, as well as therapists, nurses, and a psychiatrist or psychologist when appropriate all work with foster youth.
- Foster youth have the right to live in a safe home, be treated fairly, and not be treated differently when asking for help. The Texas Ombudsman makes sure Texas foster youth have a voice and can report any mistreatment if it happens.
- More than half the placements in Texas foster care are in Kinship Homes (living with relatives).
- For the 2017 fiscal year, on average, children exiting the system spent 19.8 months in care.

There are 4 levels of foster care:

- The Basic Service Level consists of a supportive setting, preferably in a family, that is designed to maintain or improve the child's functioning
 - The Moderate Service Level consists of a structured supportive setting, preferably in a family, in which most activities are designed to improve the child's functioning
 - The Specialized Service Level consists of a treatment setting, preferably in a family, in which caregivers have specialized training to provide therapeutic, habilitative, and medical support and interventions
 - The Intense Service Level consists of a high degree of structure, preferably in a family, to limit the child's access to environments as necessary to protect the child. The caregivers have specialized training to provide intense therapeutic and habilitative supports and interventions with limited outside access
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- Of the children exiting the national foster care system between 2011 and 2015, 1%, or less, exited foster care as a result of running away. In those same years, 50% of youth exiting care were reunified with their parent or primary caretaker.

Helpful Resources



- The [Motherlode Blog](#) in the New York Times chronicles a mom's experiences with the joys and difficulties of the nuances of foster care. A great resource for foster parents, friends of foster parents, and anyone who wants a better understanding of foster care!
- We think it is important to understand the perspectives and values of all parties involved in foster care, including biological parents. That's why we suggest utilizing [Rise Magazine](#) as a resource! Rise Magazine's goal is to, "Reduce unnecessary family separations and increase the likelihood that children who are placed in foster care quickly and safely return home."
- Child abuse is defined as any intentional harm or mistreatment to a child. This includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, medical abuse, and neglect. In the state of Texas, over 60% of the youth in foster care are removed from their homes because of neglect. We encourage you to use [The Mayo Clinic](#) as a helpful resource to educate yourself on what signs of child abuse and neglect look like.
- Interested in learning more about Texas foster care statistics? Use the [Department of Family and Protective Services annual data book and report](#). The DFPS annually updates their data on foster care. This is a great resource available to the public!
- Texas Ombudsman is a resource for all foster youth in the state. The Foster Care Ombudsman can answer questions or help you resolve a complaint about your foster care. Anything you share with them is confidential. Visit [here](#) to learn more about Ombudsman in foster care.

Talking With Your Foster Youth



We believe that the media (television, movies, news stories, books, etc.) often times don't provide an accurate view of what foster care is.

We encourage all foster parents to engage in conversations with their foster youth when foster care comes up on television, at school, or on the news!

Don't know how to start those conversations? Here are some things we suggest:

- Ask how their experiences are different or similar to what they might see in movies, on tv, or what they even read in books at school.
- Emphasize that they are loved and safe in your home.
- Ask how you can best be there for them.
- Ask what their favorite traditions are (holidays, birthdays, or other special occasions), and implement them into your home.
- Talk to them about trusted adults (outside the family unit) they can talk to and ask for help when needed.