

What Foster Children "Look Like"

- Foster children have their own individual and unique personalities.
- Foster children may take a long time to trust in a new family.
 - They may be afraid to like you.
 - They may be afraid not to like you.
 - They may be afraid that they cannot meet your expectations.
 - They may be afraid that you won't be able to understand them.
- All have experienced one or more of the following: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, and/or deprivation of a primary caregiver.
- Foster children may try to be "perfect" for you.
- Foster children may use negative behaviors to test and push others away.
 - They may do this to "prove" that they are not loveable.
 - They may do this to keep from liking you (and then getting hurt).
 - They may do this because they're terribly anxious.
 - They may do this to keep a connection to their birth family (the behaviors may be what they saw or who they were when they were with their birth family).
- Foster children may act out in the hopes that if they are "bad enough" that they'll be sent home.
- Foster children are sweet, and smart, and mischievous, and loveable.

What Foster Parents "Look Like"

- Single parents are welcome to become foster parents.
- Foster parents come from all income levels. Many rent rather than own their homes.
- Foster parents need to be 21 and older.
- DSS will check foster parents':
 - Criminal records
 - References
 - CPS history
- Foster parents are human! You will be offered support, training, and a mentor.

What Children Need

- Every child needs a family to meet his/her special needs – a family that can see through the behavior to the child inside.
- All children need a loving, patient, permanent family.
- All children need parents who can provide:
 - Age appropriate rules & expectations,
 - Structure & Stability,
 - Guidance & Support

Lots of patience and a sense of humor are essential in helping children learn about being part of a new family – and about learning to trust again.