

Our Promise to our Foster Families:

- **We're here for you.** *Our door is always open and help with your foster child is just a phone call away, day or night.*
- **We will find the best possible match between foster child and foster parent.** *It may take longer to find the right match between your home and a foster child, but the result will be a better experience and more successful outcome.*
- **We will work with you.** *We will offer the tools, advice, and support you need to help your foster child succeed.*

The Process:

- 1) Individual Assessments:** *Cunningham Foster care staff will meet with you to learn more about your interest in foster parenting. To ensure the safety of all of our foster children, prospective foster parents are also screened through criminal background checks, fingerprints, medical assessments, and child abuse/neglect databases and other fostering assessments.*
- 2) Home Assessment:** *Foster parents must provide a safe, smoke-free home in compliance with Illinois law. Foster children must have their own bed but can share a room with another child if appropriate. The assessment process identifies special considerations such as pets in the home that might influence the best match between foster child and foster home.*
- 3) Licensing Application Paperwork:** *We will assist foster families in understanding and completing all required paperwork to apply for a license from the state of Illinois.*
- 4) Training:** *Prospective foster families must complete 27 hours of pre-service training plus additional specialized foster parent training. Each year, an additional 8 hours of continuing education is required.*
- 5) Matching:** *We carefully match foster children with foster parents. Potential foster families spend time getting to know one another to ensure that the fit feels right for everyone involved.*

SPECIALIZED FOSTER CARE PROGRAM



Whose life will you change today?



CUNNINGHAM
Children's Home



www.cunninghamhome.org



Please contact me with more information about being a Specialized Foster Parent:

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Telephone #

Email Address

Is Specialized Foster Parenting Right For You?



Cunningham's Specialized Foster Care program serves youth with emotional and behavioral issues. Many young people enter our Specialized Foster Care after leaving an intensive and structured therapeutic residential treatment setting.

Cunningham's Specialized Foster Care youth receive psychiatric and other mental health services above and beyond the support offered in traditional foster care.

Specialized foster families receive extensive training, continuing education, and support. Foster families must provide a safe and therapeutic living environment while serving as an advocate for their foster child with schools, doctors, and service providers. To offset costs, foster parents are provided with room and board and clothing reimbursement and the child's allowance.

Being a foster parent is rewarding and very challenging. Cunningham's specialized foster care program serves young people with emotional and behavioral issues. Most of our youth have already lived in multiple placements. It is our first priority to carefully match each child to a family who offers the stability they truly need. We offer foster families a supportive experience aimed at continued growth and healing. Our therapists and skilled case workers are always just a phone call away.

Minimum Requirements:

- Care and concern for young people
- 21+ years of age
- Available 24/7 to meet child's needs
- Able to meet State of Illinois Foster Home licensing standards
- Able to participate in a total of 27 hours of PRIDE training plus additional specialty training prior to child placement
- Live within 45 miles of Urbana, Illinois



What is Specialized Foster Care?

Successful Specialized Foster Parents:

- Are self-aware, with healthy boundaries.
- Can offer a healing environment within a stable, caring home
- Understand and forgive the challenging behaviors of emotionally disturbed youth.



- Recognize that foster children may be healing from invisible wounds
- Have knowledge of child welfare
- Willing to work as a team with Cunningham staff
- Offer unconditional love



Learn More About Specialized Foster Parenting

For more information about becoming a foster parent, contact Ellen D. Baxter at **217-337-9323** or email: ebaxter@cunninghamhome.org.

Or clip this out, complete the reverse, and mail to:

Cunningham Children's Home
Attn: Specialized Foster Care
1301 North Cunningham Avenue
Urbana, IL 61802