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Wilmington, DE 19809
(302)746-7265 Phone
(302)746-7343 Fax

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JOIN OUR FAMILY!

Becoming an Adoptive Parent with A Better Chance for Our Children

We are delighted that you are considering opening your family and your heart to our children! The very fact that you contacted our program puts you in a special and valuable group of people - those who care about the millions of children in need of adoptive families. These waiting children need safe, loving families in which they can thrive. Yours might just be the family a child is waiting for!

The foster care and adoption programs at A Better Chance for Our Children (ABCFOC) are unique in many ways. At the heart of our unique approach is that we work almost exclusively with children who have significant needs, which often fall into a specific category of “special needs”. This simply refers to children who qualify for adoption assistance due to specific factors or conditions. These include being an older child, having a particular racial or ethnic background, being part of a sibling group needing to join a family as one unit, medical conditions, and physical, mental, or emotional disabilities. Although we are able to connect families with healthy infants, we rarely do. We believe that there are many other agencies that are doing that work very well and therefore we focus instead on the children who are harder to connect to families.

The children we work with have often been neglected and/or abused before coming into foster care. Because of their experiences, these children are fearful of connecting to people and many times their behaviors keep them from finding a stable living situation. These are children who were formerly (and unfortunately) labeled “hard to place.” Since it is often more difficult to find and retain families for children with special needs, we work diligently with families both before and after placement to assist with the transition of a child into his/her new family. Furthermore, we provide numerous ongoing support services to the families we work with.

Thank you for considering opening your home and your heart to children who need the love and stability that a safe, permanent family provides. We know that this is a very important decision. Please read through this packet and call our office if you have any questions or concerns. We would be very happy to speak with you. Every child deserves to have a safe and stable family. A Better Chance for Our Children is very serious about finding families for as many children as we can. We sincerely believe we can change the world one child at a time. Thank you for helping us as we continue to work towards our goal!

Meg Garey
Executive Director
A Better Chance for Our Children

Because every waiting child deserves a chance!

About A Better Chance for Our Children

Our Mission:

Our mission is to provide training and support to foster and adoptive families and their children in the State of Delaware.

Our Goals:

- To find permanent, loving families for waiting children.
- To provide education about our waiting children, all who have special needs.
- To nurture and support our resource families.
- To increase community awareness about waiting children, as well as adoption and foster care in general.

We serve as the connection between waiting children and loving families. We provide foster care services to children in the Delaware Foster Care System. We represent prospective adoptive families to agencies who are caring for waiting children.

Our Values:

We celebrate and welcome all interested applicants as precious potential family resources for the children who wait.

We acknowledge the dignity of the individual—the strength and power within each of us—the potential of the applicant to provide stability and nurturance to a child. We practice acceptance of differences. We are respectful of and committed to our families. We presume health and wholeness in our applicants.

We see our role as being supportive in nature. We enter into an alliance with our families as opposed to an unequal, adversarial relationship. We do not “play God”. We do not make decisions for our families.

We are humble in the face of the tremendous privilege we are given to help create families and acknowledge the duty to nurture these families, as needed, over time. Our availability to our families has no end point.

We are risk-takers on behalf of the children. We know the pain of a foster care or adoptive placement that doesn't work out, but we also know the tremendous reward of the majority which are successful. We agree to continue to risk even in the face of the hurt the children bring and the despair parents can experience as a result. We invest ourselves in our families.

We work hard at maintaining and sharing a sense of humor.

We believe we act as a conduit whereby children and parents come together. We acknowledge, with humility, the compelling and powerful nature of our work. The successful adoptive placement for a child has profound effects over generations and has a positive impact on society as a whole.

We believe parents find the children they are meant to raise. The children will challenge families and us, as well as teach all of us about ourselves. This can be very difficult at times.

We provide visibility for the children who are waiting and help give these children a voice by providing them with family of their own.

We practice honesty in our relationships with our families and count on the same in return. We are truthful. We provide full disclosure to our families.

We continually learn from our adoptive parents and their children about how to better serve our families.

A Better Chance for Our Children welcomes ALL interested applicants as prospective resources for children waiting for a family. We acknowledge and respect the dignity and difference of each individual and the potential of each applicant to nurture and provide for a child.

Our Services:

- Resource Family Preparation Classes
- Family Counseling focused on foster care and adoption
- Our nationally recognized Rec-N-Respite Program for adopted children
- Specialized parenting education classes
- Monthly Support Groups
- Ongoing support for any family touched by adoption

Getting Started

The first step is completion of the “Interest Registration Form” included in this packet. Once you submit of the registration form, we will invite you to participate in the next cycle of Resource Parent Training. This training includes four informal group sessions held on alternate Saturdays, 9:00am – 4:00pm, for a total 28 hours of training. The group sessions typically include 20 – 30 people who are contemplating foster care, adoption, or respite. During these group sessions, applicants share feelings, experiences, expectations, and fears. Participants are also given the opportunity to hear from families who already have children similar to those that they are contemplating fostering or adopting. The foster, adoptive, and respite parents are as frank and open as possible. They acknowledge the challenges of caring for these children and aid group participants in determining if foster care, adoption, and/or respite is right for them.

During these sessions, we present our families with a great deal of information regarding the challenges our children often bring to families. We strongly believe in the importance of educating our families as the education provides a more solid family foundation. This education, like our support, continues over the life cycle of foster care, adoption or respite. The children waiting for homes now

need strong, prepared resource parents. At the core of our program is a focus on preparing and supporting the parents who come to us; however, the priority of foster care is on ministering to the needs of children.

The group sessions are also an opportunity for prospective parents to study the agency and the staff as representatives of the agency. We want you to be comfortable with our staff. At A Better Chance for Our Children we believe that it is imperative that people coming to us are honest and open about their experiences. The relationship we build with you is the basis of all the work we do together. We must be comfortable with one another if we are to do this most important work together. We believe you will enjoy working with the staff at A Better Chance for Our Children and want you to know that we look forward to working with you!

Next Steps

Once you have completed the Resource Parent Training, we will ask you to complete some paperwork:

1. Application
2. Questionnaire
3. Autobiography
4. Medical Forms: A medical form must be completed for each member of the household.
5. State of DE Criminal History Check Application Form: Each adult member (18 years old and older) of the household must be fingerprinted.
6. Consents to Obtain/Release Information
7. Family Financial Report
8. Emergency Contact Form

Once you've completed this paperwork, we will assign one of our Case Managers to prepare the Resource Family Profile ("home study"). They will meet with you to discuss your individual needs and interest, and to help you with any questions. This meeting will include other children (birth, foster, adopted) in your home. That Profile will be reviewed by you as the preparation process draws to a close. Then, the fun part begins.

Although these steps may sound overwhelming, our staff will be there to help guide you through the process.

FEES FOR SERVICES

Adoptions from State of Delaware Foster Care System

| | |
|---|--------|
| Training Group | \$ 500 |
| Family Profile | \$1500 |
| (All other fees are covered by State of Delaware) | |

If an adoption does not finalize within one year of completion of the initial Family Profile, the following fees may apply:

| | |
|--|---------|
| Family Profile Update (required one year after the initial) | \$ 750 |
| Family Profile Update (required two years after the initial) | \$ 750 |
| New Family Profile Update (required three years after the initial) | \$ 1500 |

Adoptions from Foster Care System in Other States

| | |
|--|--|
| Training Group | \$ 500 |
| Family Profile | \$ 1500 |
| Purchase of Service (sending state pays this fee)* | \$ 8500 (for one child) \$15000 (for two children) \$ 5000 (each additional child) |

*If the sending state does not pay Purchase of Service (POS), the adoptive family may be responsible for the remainder of the payment. POS covers placement, monthly supervision, and all costs incurred at finalization.

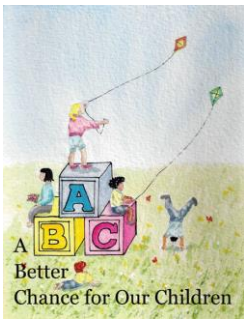
Social Reports: Privately Filed TPR and Adoption or Permanent Guardianship Petitions Permanent Guardianship Reports and Court Appearance*

| | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Voluntary/Uncontested | \$ 1500 |
| Involuntary/Contested | \$2000 |

Adoption (Second Parent/Relative/Guardian) Reports and Court Appearance*

| | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Voluntary/Uncontested | \$ 1500 |
| Involuntary/Contested | \$2000 |

*Additional fees may be charged for these private cases depending on the level of work required. This is decided on a case-by-case basis and will be discussed with you by your assigned Case Manager. The fees above include a maximum of two (2) court appearances by the Case Manager; if additional appearances are necessary, additional fees may apply.



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Interest Registration Form

Please return completed form via mail/e-mail or return it to our office. Upon receipt of your completed form, information about the next scheduled Resource Parenting Training class will be sent to you. Feel free to contact our Executive Director, Meg Garey, with any questions at mgarey@abcfoc.org or 302-746-7265.

Date: _____

Applicant 1: First Name _____ Last Name _____
Cell Phone _____ Email _____

Applicant 2: First Name _____ Last Name _____
Cell Phone _____ Email _____

Applicant Address _____

How did you hear about our agency? _____

I/We would like to become a/an: Foster Parent Adoptive Parent

Please provide the following preliminary information about the type of child/children you are considering. We understand and expect that this information may change throughout the process.

Please indicate all that you are willing to consider:

Number of Children: _____ **Age Range:** _____ **Gender:** Male Female

Sibling Group: Yes No **Medical/Physical Needs:** Yes No

Social/Emotional Needs: Yes No **Cognitive Needs:** Yes No

Racial Preferences _____ No Racial Preference