

NORTH TEXAS REGIONAL PLACEMENT COLLABORATION

Foster Care and Adoption Agencies working together to find homes for children in need.

Why Not You?

Children Never Outgrow the Need for Parents

817.792.4409 www.adoptchildren.org www.dfps.state.tx.us



Thank you for joining us to learn more about Foster Care and Adoption. There are many children waiting for safe, loving, nurturing homes... and you can help fill that need!

The information presented in this session and provided within this packet is put together by the North Texas Regional Placement Collaboration. We are a collaboration of partner agencies that work together for the purpose of recruiting, training, and retaining foster families. Each agency holds a license & contract with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, and all agencies represented have access to ALL of the children in the custody of the state. Because every agency has a unique mission and vision, you should carefully consider each agency to find which is the best fit for your family.

Inside this packet you will find:

1. Basic Requirements for Foster/Adoptive Families
2. Information about the needs of children in care (Levels of Care Service System)
3. Information about Foster Care Redesign
4. A guide to the verification process (Where do I go from here?)
5. Child Placing Agency Profiles Grid
6. Helpful suggestions for selecting the agency that is right for you
7. Partner Agency Profiles
8. Agency Selection Form

Thank you, again, for joining us. We are here to help you! If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact an agency that seems like a good fit for your family.

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BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR FOSTER/ADOPTIVE FAMILIES

The prospective foster/adoptive parents may be single or married and must

- be at least 21 years of age, financially stable, and responsible, mature adults;
- complete an application (staff assistance is available);
- share information regarding their background and lifestyle;
- provide relative and non-relative references;
- show proof of marriage and/or divorce;
- agree to a home study (which includes visits with all household members);
- allow staff to complete a criminal history background check and an abuse/neglect check on all household members 14 years of age and older;
- and attend free training to learn about issues of abused and neglected children. This training provides an opportunity for the family and the agency to assess whether foster care or adoption is best for the family. The family may withdraw from the meetings at any time. Foster/adoptive parents generally train together.

SOME ADDITIONAL FOSTER CARE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the basic requirements, foster parents must

- have adequate sleeping space;
- not provide foster care or day care for more than six children in your home;
- agree to a non-physical discipline policy;
- permit fire, health, and safety inspections of the home;
- vaccinate all pets according to state and agency standards;
- obtain and maintain CPR/First Aid Certification;
- obtain TB testing as required by the local health department for household members; and
- attend 20 hours or more of training each year.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF FOSTER PARENTS

- provide daily care and nurturing of children in foster care.
- advocate for children in their schools and communities.
- inform the children's caseworkers about adjustments to the home, school and community, as well as any problems that may arise, including any serious illness, accidents or serious occurrences involving the foster children or their own families.
- make efforts as team members with the children's caseworkers towards reunifying children with their birth families.
- provide a positive role model to birth families.
- help children learn life skills.

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FOSTER CARE REIMBURSEMENTS

The monthly reimbursement is provided to foster families for child-care-related costs, such as food, clothing, recreation, transportation and housing.

Responsibilities of Adoptive Parents

- provide permanent homes and a lifelong commitment to children into adulthood.
- provide for the short-term and long-term needs of children.
- provide for children's emotional, mental, physical, social, educational and cultural needs, according to each child's developmental age and growth.
- may become certified as a foster family and accept children who are not legally free for adoption but whose permanency plan is adoption.

ADOPTION ASSISTANCE

Adoption assistance is available to families that adopt children with special needs. Adoption assistance must be applied for and the adoption assistance agreement negotiated and entered before the adoption is consummated. Otherwise, the child may not qualify for assistance.

Adoption assistance provides the child with Medicaid coverage and often a monthly monetary payment. The payment may be used to buy the child goods and services not covered by the Medicaid program. If the adoptive family needs help with the costs of the child's food, clothing, shelter and childcare, the payment can include funds for that purpose. The amount of assistance a child receives is based upon the child's needs, the family's circumstances and other available resources such as public education and community-based services.

The non-recurring adoption expenses program reimburses families for adoption-related costs such as travel required to complete the adoptive placement process, court costs and attorney fees. The adoptive family must submit receipts showing they have paid these expenses. Upon consummation of the adoption by the court, the state will reimburse the family for all allowable expenditures not to exceed \$1,200 per adoption. Tax credits are also available for families that adopt special-needs children.

A Tuition and Fees Waiver for state colleges, universities, and some vocational/ technical schools may also be available as part of the adoption subsidy package and is contingent upon funding from the legislature.

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LEVELS OF CARE SERVICE SYSTEM

The Levels of Care Service System supports four levels of residential services available to children. More detailed information may be found on Youth for Tomorrow's website: www.yft.org.

Basic Services – Family-like environment with routine guidance and supervision; structured activities

Moderate Services – Specialized program in structured supportive setting; structured daily routines and activities; structured therapeutic intervention; access to therapeutic or medical support

Specialized Services – Treatment setting with limits on outside access; continuous monitoring and limit setting; therapeutic activities; regularly scheduled professional therapeutic support

Intense Services – Highly structured treatment setting with limited outside access; frequent one to one supervision; constant attention and limit setting; professional therapeutic support including frequent intervention

Note: Review the Youth for Tomorrow website for levels of care definitions regarding mental retardation, chemical dependency, medically fragile and developmentally delayed.

FOSTER CARE RE-DESIGN

Foster Care Re-design is a new way of providing foster care services with the goal of improving the overall well-being of children in foster care and keeping them closer to home and connected with their communities and siblings.

A portion of the North Texas Region (Region 3) has been carved out into Region 3B. This area includes the following counties: **Erath, Hood, Johnson, Palo Pinto, Parker, Tarrant and Somervell.**

Families that live within Region 3B should proceed with all of the instructions provided for other families, but it is important that these families choose an agency that verifies families in Region 3B as noted on the Partner Agency Grid.

To read more about foster care re-design visit:

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/adoption_and_foster_care/about_foster_care/redesign.asp or
<http://www.ourcommunity-ourkids.org/>.

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WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

- Step 1:** Review the Child Placing Agencies Grid to narrow down a “short list” of agencies that would be a good fit for your family
- Step 2:** Review the detailed profiles in this packet.
- Step 3:** Contact the agency or agencies that appear to be the best match for your family
- Step 4:** Choose 1 agency!
- Step 5:** Complete the Agency Selection Form (mark the 1 agency you chose) and mail it to the address listed on the form. We use this to gather data and statistics.
- Step 6:** Make sure that the agency you’ve chosen knows that you have chosen them! If you’re not sure, just give them another call. They’d love to hear from you!
- Step 7:** Your agency will let you know what’s next!

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CHILD PLACING AGENCIES

		Benevolent House Child Placing Agency	Buckner International	Texas Department of Family & Protective Services	CK Family Services	Hope Cottage
License Types	Foster Care	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Adoption	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Dual Licensing	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Works with...	Married Couples	YES	YES	YES *	YES	YES
	Singles	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Unmarried Couples	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO
	Same Gender Couples	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES
Levels of Care...	Basic	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Moderate	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Specialized	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
	Intensive	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
	Primary Medical Needs	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Bilingual Training Available		NO	NO	Upon Request	NO	NO
Multiple Offices in Texas		NO	YES	YES	YES	NO
Will license outside Region 3		NO	YES	NO**	YES	YES
Is this a faith-based agency		NO	YES	YES	YES	NO
Statement of Faith required		NO	NO	NO	YES	NO
Ongoing Training Required		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Volunteer Opportunities		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Verify families in Region 3b		NO	YES	NO	YES	NO

* CPS - married but not separated

**CPS - Licenses in Collin, Cooke, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Fannin, Grayson, Hunt, Kaufman, Navarro, Rockwall & Wise counties.

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HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS FOR SELECTING THE RIGHT AGENCY FOR YOU

We recommend you contact each agency that appears to be a good match for your family to find out which agency best suits your needs.

Examples of questions to ask:

- What are your continuing education requirements?
- What support services do you provide for foster parents?
- Generally, how long is the process of becoming a foster/adoptive parent with this agency? When could I realistically expect to have a child placed in my home?
- When will I be able to start taking pre-service training?
- After I complete the pre-service training, how long does it take for a Home Study?
- What is unique about your agency in contrast to the other agencies?
- Do you verify families for foster care and adoption?
- Do you license homes in my geographic region?
- Are you a faith-based agency? If so, do I need to be a member of that denomination?
- What costs are associated with becoming licensed with your agency?
- If applicable – do you consider people who have a criminal history (DWI, felony, etc.?)
- If applicable – what special measures are required if there is a swimming pool or body of water on my property?

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PARTNER AGENCY PROFILES

The North Texas Regional Placement Collaboration is a public/private initiative to develop and implement a coordinated plan to address the continuum of placement needs to find ample safe and loving families for the children who are in the court system due to child abuse or neglect. This partnership is open to any child placing or associated agencies that wish to participate in this initiative and are willing to commit support to the initiative as outlined.

Our mission is to collaborate for the purpose of recruiting, training, and retaining foster families and child-placement staff in an efficient and effective manner. After attending an Information Meeting, a family will choose from among the partner agencies and continue the process of training and licensing through their chosen agency. Each agency has a unique mission in the foster/adopt area, so families interested in fostering and/or adopting should carefully consider their agency choice.

The members of this collaboration include the following child placing agencies:

Benevolent House Child Placing Agency
Buckner International
Texas Department of Family & Protective
Services
CK Family Services
Hope Cottage

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CHILD PLACING AGENCY PARTNERS

BENEVOLENT HOUSE CHILD PLACING AGENCY

Address: 300 Sunrise Lane, Red Oak, TX 75154
Telephone: (214) 774-4871
Website: www.benevolenthouse.org

Benevolent House Child Placing Agency is a non-profit organization with a vision of strengthening and empowering our most vulnerable children who have suffered from neglect and abuse. We aim to ensure we verify foster and adoptive families who can provide both the nurturing support and enduring dedication our children deserve. Our agency's mission strives to bring thoughtfulness, perspective and a tireless work ethic to continuously build strong foundations for the children in our care through the advocacy and therapeutic services we provide. Benevolent House endeavors to assist the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services in the effort to achieve the goals of permanency planning for children between the ages of 0-18 years old.

BUCKNER CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES, INC.

Address: 5310 S. Buckner Blvd., Dallas, TX 75227
Telephone: Foster Care and Adoption: 214-319-3455
Website: www.buckner.org

Buckner Children and Family Services, a non-profit, faith-based organization, has been dedicated to the healing and restoring of families since 1879. Buckner offers a variety of programs, including Foster Care, Kinship Foster Care, Therapeutic Foster Care, Adoption services and Post-Adoption Services. Buckner desires to walk alongside our families by offering wrap-around care which includes the following: paid respite, competitive compensation, therapy services (individual, family, and behavioral), advanced trauma training, caring and competent support staff, 24-hour crisis intervention, and mentorship. At the heart of our ministry, Buckner strives to bring hope and support to the vulnerable children of our community and the families we serve. To find out more about Buckner, please visit www.buckner.org/foster-care-adoption or contact us at 1-855-264-8783.

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TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Address: 1712 W. Frankford Rd. Ste. 100 Carrollton, TX 75007
Telephone: 817-304-1272 or 940-368-0819
Website: www.dfps.state.tx.us

Child Protective Services, CPS, an Agency of the Department of Family and Protective Services, is mandated by state and federal law to provide services to strengthen families and protect children under the age of 18 from abuse and neglect by a person responsible for the child's care, custody or welfare. As a part of this mandate, CPS trains, licenses and supports foster and adopt homes to protect children and provide for permanency. Our foster care and adoption program primarily serve children ages 0-17. CPS licenses Basic homes for foster care and adoption. Recruitment efforts will focus heavily on families who are interested in adopting CPS children listed on the TARE website (Texas Adoption Resource Exchange): AdoptChildren.org.

To learn more about becoming a foster parent, please visit:

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption_and_Foster_Care/Get_Started/steps.asp

Due to Foster Care Redesign, CPS is no longer licensing any homes in Tarrant, Parker, Palo Pinto, Hood, Erath, Somervell, and Johnson Counties.

DFPS has a Faith Based Program. While DFPS works to ensure children are protected, the need for permanency and connection is equally as important. The child welfare system alone cannot meet the needs of children and families. As part of the Texas Faith-Based Model, DFPS provides information to local congregations and ministries about the needs of children and families in their area. The local congregation then decides what type of ministry to develop. DFPS assists with information, attending meetings, and answering questions about the children and families needing help. Congregations assist in many ways, such as day care, parties for special occasions, transportation, becoming respite care providers, babysitters, foster parents, or adoptive homes. The services range from prevention to permanency. To find more information about the Faith Based Program or find your local faith-based specialist please click the following link:

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Faith-Based/default.asp

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CK FAMILY SERVICES, INC.

Mailing Address:	P.O. Box 173038, Arlington, TX 76003-3038
Physical Addresses:	320 Westway Place, Suite 530, Arlington, TX 76018 2550 Beckleymeade Avenue, Suite 100, Dallas, TX 75237 710 E. Park Blvd, Suite 100, Plano, TX 75074
Telephone:	817-516-9100 or 866-516-9100
Website:	www.covenantkids.org

CK Family Services is a ministry-focused Christian agency serving all 19 counties of North Texas from our offices in Arlington, Dallas and Plano. Our belief that some promises should never be broken fuels our passion for providing foster care and adoption services for at-risk children. Our families provide both basic and therapeutic care and we are always seeking to grow our partnership with Christian families that can provide a stable and nurturing environment in which children can experience the love of Christ. At CK Family Services, we offer individualized support for our families and children through regular contact with experienced clinical staff, consultation with our staff psychologist, and through on-going prayer support and we have the ability to meet all of your needs for training, case management, and support. We deliver high quality, innovative training to prepare and equip families with the best parenting strategies and interventions for children who have experienced trauma. CK Family Services works closely with CPS to reunify children with their birth family, when possible, and we are also proud to have helped more than 750 children who needed a forever family find adoptive homes.

In addition, CK Family Services is honored to be able to partner with relatives and kinship caregivers who have the consent of CPS to pursue foster care and adoption. CK Family Services is excited to be able to guide these families to complete the licensing process in order to finalize adoption.

"For in you the fatherless find compassion," Hosea 14:3.

HOPE COTTAGE PREGNANCY AND ADOPTION CENTER

Address:	609 Texas Street, Dallas, TX 75204
Telephone:	214-526-8721 or 800-944-4460
Website:	www.hopcottage.org

Hope Cottage, founded in 1918, is a non-sectarian, non-profit, United Way affiliated child placing agency. Our mission is to nurture and build families through education, counseling, and adoption services. Hope Cottage has partnered with the Texas Department of Family and Protective services to find loving foster and adoptive homes for children who have experienced abuse or neglect. Our Foster Care Services Program seeks motivated families and individuals who are willing to provide homes for children for as long as needed. Families licensed with the Foster Care Services Program may be dual licensed for foster care and adoption. Our program serves children from birth to 17 years of age and their siblings (if placed together as a sibling set).

The experienced staff of Hope Cottage can provide individuals and families with the necessary pre-service training and preparation, home studies, and the ongoing support services necessary to create dedicated, loving homes for children.

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AGENCY SELECTION FORM

Please fill out this form completely and mail, fax, scan or email to Foster/Adopt Recruitment at the address or fax number below.

Meeting Date: _____ / _____ / _____ Meeting Location: _____

Family Name: _____ Today's Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Below is a listing of the agencies that currently hold membership in the North Texas Regional Placement Collaboration. **Please use this form to indicate the AGENCY (the ONE agency) your family has selected to partner with.** Please also contact that one agency and notify them that you have chosen their agency and will be completing this Agency Selection Form.

If you have any questions regarding your agency choices, please feel free to call and gather information to help you make a quality decision. Please understand that each agency has different guidelines and criteria standards which they follow in accepting a family. **Please note:** *This form does not ensure that you meet all requirements of the agency you have chosen. Each agency reserves the right to accept and deny families at any time during the training and licensing process.*

- Benevolent House Child Placing Agency
- Buckner
- Children's Hope Residential Services
- Covenant Kids
- Hope Cottage

Foster/Adopt Recruitment

1712 W. Frankford Rd. Ste. 100 Carrollton, TX 75007 • 512-927-5900 (Fax)

Scan/Email: JENNIFER.TATUM@DFPS.STATE.TX.US

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

HARMONY COUNSELING CENTER

Harmony Community Development Corporation (Harmony CDC) was established as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in 2001 by Concord Church. Harmony organized to stimulate the development of affordable housing, business ownership and employment, and to combat crime, increase social services and provide other charitable and educational services to the community.

Harmony CDC's Counseling Center is a professional counseling center that offers individual, marriage and family counseling. Harmony Counseling Center also offers biblically based, Christian counseling. Harmony Counseling Center coordinates collaboration of numerous foster care and adoption agencies to help interested individuals and families learn how to help those who are adopted or in the foster care system. Foster parent and adoptive parent support groups are offered year-round.

- Office – (214) 751-3932 • www.harmonycdc.org • Facebook.com/HarmonyCDC

HARMONY COUNSELING CENTER'S FOSTER AND ADOPT MINISTRY PARENT LEADERS- Deborah Green • (214) 334-6618 kd.green@sbcglobal.net • Zarin and Erin Gracey (214) 404-7494

DALLAS CASA:

CASA was founded in 1977, when a Seattle superior court judge, amidst an overwhelmed child welfare system, grew concerned about making decisions on behalf of abused and neglected children in his court without enough information. He felt that more individualized attention and time for gathering important facts would produce better outcomes for the children. He decided to appoint community volunteers to work on behalf of the children in his court.

Judges appoint Dallas CASA volunteers to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children, helping these children gain safe, permanent homes as quickly as possible. Dallas CASA exists so that abused and neglected children in protective care have the chance to become successful adults. With the help of caring advocates, the cycle of abuse and neglect will be broken.

- www.dallascasa.org • (469) 547-9467

OHANA MINISTRIES:

Ohana Ministries passion is strengthening existing families and homes to vulnerable children and youth, offering trauma informed care, supporting the parents and professionals that surround kids in care, helping youth transition to successful adulthood, and advocating for systemic and structural community based change.

- www.ohanaministries.org • Facebook.com/Ohana.Ministries Office • (972) 338-0004
- Ohana_Ministries@hotmail.com