

### Qualifications

ACPs must be at least 18 years of age and pass background checks. If providing care in their home, they must have an approved walkthrough. An ACP can provide care for no more than 12 hours a day until approved by TFI and the Department of Human Services (DHS).

### Foster parents as ACPs

Foster parents may be used as ACPs if they have sufficient bed space in their home. They must be approved by DHS to act as an ACP, even though they are an approved foster home.

### Sharing information

Foster parents should only share information the ACP needs to know to keep the child safe and their needs met during the time of care. TFI's Respite Foster Care Information Sheet should be used to share this information and is required for overnight stays. The foster parent will provide this form at the time of respite placement.



FOSTER  
*hope*  
FOSTER  
*love*  
FOSTER  
*care*

FOSTER  
*hope*  
FOSTER  
*love*  
FOSTER  
*care*



You can provide the loving home and family a child needs and deserves.



Learn how you can make a difference in the life of a child as a TFI alternate care provider by calling us today.

866-543-9810



Family Connections  
[tffamilyconnections.org](http://tffamilyconnections.org)

TFI Family Connections is a private, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization that provides experience, compassion, quality services and care for the children and families we serve.



ALTERNATE CARE  
*provider*



An alternate care provider, or ACP, is an approved adult or family who is willing to provide temporary care of foster children for a foster parent. ACPs choose when they are able to take children and can provide care in the foster parent's home or in their own home if all adults in the home are approved. Foster parents may have up to three ACPs – these people are always the first source of respite for foster parents.

The ACP plays an important role in preventing foster parent burnout and reducing stress levels. They provide support to foster parents and help protect children by providing a safe place to stay when foster parents need a break. ACPs provide an informal type of respite care, which is very helpful when foster children have difficult to manage behaviors or when foster parents are going through a very stressful time. This also provides foster children with an additional supportive adult in their lives.

TFI Family Connections 

## ACP approval requirements

- Alternate Care Provider application
- Background check form
- Department of Public Safety form
- Out of state background checks if lived outside of Oklahoma in the past five years
- Name and phone number of one personal reference
- Sign Verification of DHS Rules, Confidentiality Agreement and Discipline Agreement
- House assessment
- Copy of driver's license
- Copy of social security card



## Tips for a successful respite weekend

**Get to know the foster child.** Try to arrange a visit with the child ahead of time to avoid further trauma. Even a phone call can help a child feel more comfortable with going to a respite home. While sometimes this is not possible, notably in emergency cases, it is strongly encouraged, especially for children with attachment issues.

**Contact the foster family.** Discuss each of the following:

- Clarify drop off and pick up dates and times to prevent misunderstandings about the schedule.
- Identify any appointments, including visits. If you are unable to make these appointments, the home may need to choose another provider or speak with

the child's DHS worker about rescheduling the appointments. If conflicting schedules mean visits may be missed, it's in the birth family's best interest for another provider to be considered. If this is impossible, the foster family will contact the child's DHS worker to reschedule immediately.

- Discuss the child's needs and routines. This includes information regarding medical needs, like prescriptions and known allergies.

**When the child arrives,** ensure you have the child's respite care packet and double check if there are any last minute updates before the foster parents leave.

- Place the child's medication in a secured location.
- As age appropriate, tell the child about the family rules and what the weekend (or daily) schedule looks like.
- Review the Respite Foster Care Information Sheet in the child's packet.



**Ensure the child's safety and provide for their needs.** Notify the foster parents if the child experiences an accident, health problem or changes in appearance or behavior.

- Contact emergency services as needed.
- In the event there is concern for the child's safety or the child experiences a serious incident, call the foster care worker or TFI hotline at 877-921-4114 to report the incident or concern and obtain support.
- If abuse or neglect is suspected, call the Oklahoma DHS abuse hotline at 800-522-3511, write down the report ID number and then call the TFI hotline at 877-921-4114. Then notify the foster parent, unless you have concern the foster parent injured or neglected the child; this ensures a clean investigation by DHS and TFI.
- Only release a child to his or her foster parents, other people approved by the foster parents or DHS.

**When the child leaves,** ensure all of the child's belongings are packed.

- Place all of the child's medication in the respite packet.
- Complete page 2 of the Respite Foster Care Information Sheet. TFI policy indicates this form must be completed for overnight stays.
- Return the respite packet to the foster parent.