



## Code of Ethics for Foster Parents

The Code of Ethics is a public statement by the National Foster Parent Association that sets clear expectations and principles to articulate basic values and to guide practice. Family foster care is a public trust that requires foster parents, with essential supports from their agencies, to be dedicated to service for the welfare of the children in their care. Each foster parent has an obligation to maintain and improve the practice of fostering, constantly to examine, use and increase the knowledge upon which fostering is based, and to perform the service of fostering with dignity, integrity, and competence.

### Principles

Successful family foster parenting includes competencies in the following domains:

**Principle 1:** Providing a safe and secure environment

**Principle 2:** Providing a loving, nurturing, stable family care environment.

**Principle 3:** Modeling healthy family living to help children, youth, and families learn and practice skills for safe and supportive relationships.

**Principle 4:** Providing positive guidance that promotes self-respect while respecting culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and agency policy.

**Principle 5:** Promoting and supporting positive relationships among children, youth, and their families to the fullest possible extent.

**Principle 6:** Meeting physical and mental health care needs.

**Principle 7:** Promoting educational attainment and success

**Principle 8:** Promoting social and emotional development

**Principle 9:** Supporting permanency plans

**Principle 10:** Growing as a foster parent - skill development and role clarification; participation in training, professional or skill development, and foster parent support organizations and associations.

**Principle 11:** Arranging activities to meet the child's individual recreational, cultural, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and agency policy.

**Principle 12:** Preparing children and youth for self-sufficient and responsible adult lives.

**Principle 13:** Meeting and maintaining all licensing or approval requirements.

**Principle 14:** Advocating for resources to meet the unique needs of the children and youth in their care

**Principle 15:** Collaborating with other foster parents and the child welfare team, building trust and respecting confidentiality.

**Principle 16:** Promoting decisions that are in the best interest of the child/youth, promoting safety, well-being, and permanence.

**Principle 17:** Supporting relationships between children and youth and their families

**Principle 18:** Working as a team member.



**MISSION** - The mission of the Louisiana Foster & Adoptive Parent Association is to empower foster and adoptive parents and the children in their care by providing communication, support, training and advocacy services. The Code of Ethics for Foster Parents begins by emphasizing that family foster care is an integral component of the child welfare system which seeks to:

- Recognize the rights of children and youth to safe, nurturing relationships, intended to last a lifetime.
- Assists parents to regain custody or make alternative plans, intended to be permanent, for their children and youth.
- Emphasize the developmental needs of children and youth.
- Provide all children with foster parents and agency representatives who have the skills to support the children's safety, developmental, and permanency needs, and provides those foster parents and agency staff with the supports necessary to develop and use these skills.
- Recognize family foster care as a part of a comprehensive, coordinated, inter-disciplinary service delivery system.
- Provide legal representation to ensure timely and skillful responses to case plans involving court proceedings.
- Collect, analyze, and disseminate accurate and relevant data about children, youth, and their families leading to informed policies, programs, and practices;
- Support family foster care – and all child welfare services – with effective and accountable leadership in city halls, governors' offices, national organizations, the judiciary, the federal government, Congress, and the White House.

#### **HISTORIAL PERSPECTIVE**

The Code of Ethics for Foster Parents is based on the definition of family foster care established by the 1991 National Commission on Family Foster Care, convened by the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) and the National Foster Parent Association (NFPA). The Commission reframed the historical term, "foster family care" to "family foster care," to emphasize the importance of family. This builds on the premise established by the White House Conference on Children in 1909 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1997 that children have the right to a family life.

The Louisiana Foster & Adoptive Parent Association is proud to introduce the Code of Ethics. We have partnered with the National Foster Parent Association and the Department of Children and Family Services in this endeavor.

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