

# Foster Parent Training and Support Assessment

## Survey Results

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# AGENCY/CASEWORKER SURVEY

# ***FOSTER PARENT TRAINING AND SUPPORT ASSESSMENT***

**AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2003**

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## **AGENCY/FOSTER CARE CASEWORKER SURVEY RESULTS**

### *Part 1 – Foster Care Agency Survey*

Number of Responses: 93 (10 agencies returned survey to indicate they did not provide foster care services – leaving 83 completed surveys)

Response rate: 53% (93 of 175)

### *Part 2 - Foster Care Caseworker Survey*

Number of Responses: 542

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Note - Open-ended questions (Q16, Q21) are not listed

**CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
SUNY RESEARCH FOUNDATION  
BUFFALO STATE COLLEGE**

*Part 1 - Agency Demographics*

1. Number of certified foster families:

83 agencies	Foster families	# of agencies	%
Range: 4-1443	4-25	18	22
Mean: 152	26-50	18	22
Std. Deviation: 232	51-100	20	24
Median: 65	101-200	8	10
	201-300	9	11
	301-500	3	4
	501-863	6	7
	>1440	1	1

2. Number of children in family foster care:

82 agencies	Children	# of agencies	%
Range: 1-1287	1-25	20	24
Mean: 189	26-50	13	16
Std. Deviation: 268	51-75	8	10
Median: 76	76-100	9	11
	101-200	9	11
	201-300	5	6
	301-600	11	13
	601-807	5	6
	>1100	2	2

3. Number of children in kinship care:

48 agencies	Children	# of agencies	%
Range: 1-463	1-10	19	40
Mean: 96	11-20	6	13
Std. Deviation: 125	21-40	0	0
Median: 18.5	41-100	5	10
	101-150	7	15
	151-200	4	8
	285-350	5	10
	>440	2	4

4. Average caseload size (foster children per caseworker):

81 agencies	Caseload size	# of agencies	%
Range: 2-30	2-9	22	27
Mean: 15	10-15	21	26
Std. Deviation: 6.9	16-20	19	23
Median: 15	21-25	16	20
	>25	3	4

**AGENCY DEMOGRAPHICS continued****Question 5 In regard to the Foster Parent Manual (September 2002 version):**


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<u>Text of Question</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>
<b>A Did you receive hard copies for distribution?</b>		
Yes	76%	65
No	24%	20
<b>B Did you receive a CD of the manual?</b>		
Yes	37%	30
No	63%	52
<b>C Have you used the CD to reproduce copies of the manual?</b>		
Yes	8%	6
No	92%	69
<b>D Have you used the CD to post the manual to an agency web site?</b>		
Yes	1%	1
No	99%	75

**PART 2 - FOSTER CARE CASEWORKER SURVEY**

Question 1 through 3

**N=542**


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<u>Text of Question</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>
<b>1 Does your agency provide foster parents with a written job description?</b>		
Yes	66%	351
No	8%	41
Unsure	26%	137
<b>2 Have you been given a copy of the foster parent job description?</b>		
Yes	52%	276
No	48%	257
<b>3a Does your agency provide foster parents a written description of: Their roles/responsibilities</b>		
Yes	96%	483
No	4%	22
<b>3b Their legal rights</b>		
Yes	93%	456
No	7%	35
<b>3c The legal rights of children in care</b>		
Yes	92%	450
No	8%	41

## FOSTER CARE CASEWORKER SURVEY

### Question 4 Foster parent roles/responsibilities (ranked by response percentage)

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<b>What are the five most important foster parent roles/responsibilities?</b>	<b><u>% (N)</u></b>
1 Providing safety for a child	94% (508)
10 Providing support, guidance and discipline	71% (382)
6 Loving and nurturing a child	66% (362)
7 Helping a child progress in his development	42% (228)
2 Helping a child with loss and separation	33% (180)
5 Helping a child develop or maintain contact/attachment with birth family	31% (169)
4 Participating in permanency planning	24% (130)
9 Being a role model for a child	24% (129)
14 Preparing a child to return home or be adopted	24% (129)
13 Being an advocate for a child	21% (115)
11 Teaching the child daily living skills	17% (91)
8 Helping a child obtain necessary services (e.g. transporting)	16% (88)
12 Modeling parenting skills	08% (42)
17 Adopting a child if reunification is not possible	08% (42)
3 Being a mentor to birth parents	07% (37)
15 Being a continuing resource to a child & birth family following reunification or adoption	06% (32)
16 Preparing youth for self-sufficiency	04% (23)

## FOSTER CARE CASEWORKER SURVEY

### Question 5 through 8

<u>Text of Question</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>
<b>5 Do the agency and foster parents generally agree on foster parent responsibilities?</b>		
Yes	76%	404
No	13%	68
Unsure	12%	63
<b>6a Do you provide foster parents with information regarding their legal rights as they pertain to: Service plan reviews</b>		
Yes	93%	479
No	7%	37
<b>6b Court hearings/appearances</b>		
Yes	93%	477
No	7%	38
<b>6c Child removals from their home</b>		
Yes	90%	461
No	10%	51
<b>6d Adoptions</b>		
Yes	92%	471
No	8%	41
<b>6e Fair hearings</b>		
Yes	82%	412
No	18%	90
<b>7 Does your agency have a copy of the NYS Foster Parent Manual (September 2002 version)?</b>		
Yes	55%	291
No	2%	12
Unsure	43%	226
<b>8a Do the foster parents in your cases have a copy of: NYS Foster Parent Manual (September 2002 version)</b>		
Yes	31%	162
No	10%	50
Unsure	59%	311
<b>8b Your own agency foster parent manual</b>		
Yes	58%	303
No	8%	44
Unsure	34%	176

## FOSTER CARE CASEWORKER SURVEY

### Question 9 through 12

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<u>Text of Question</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>
<b>9 What pre-certification preparation does your agency provide to prepare foster parents for their role and responsibilities?</b>		
GPS/MAPP	61%	320
Deciding Together	2%	9
Mini MAPP	5%	28
Unsure	13%	66
Other (majority response: both GPS/MAPP and Mini MAPP; lesser number: Deciding Together in combination with GPS/MAPP; also a number of ABC responses)	19%	101
<b>10 How many hours of pre-certification preparation does your agency provide to foster parents?</b>		
0-15	7%	37
16-30	40%	214
31+	21%	109
Unsure	32%	168
<b>11 Who conducts pre-certification foster parent training? (select all that apply)</b>		
Agency staff	92%	500
Foster parents	28%	152
Community agencies	7%	39
State sponsored (e.g. CDHS, PDP)	11%	58
Other	6%	32
<b>12 Who conducts in-service foster parent training? (select all that apply)</b>		
Agency staff	86%	464
Foster parents	20%	107
Community agencies	35%	190
State sponsored (e.g. CDHS, PDP)	29%	158
Other	9%	51

**FOSTER CARE CASEWORKER SURVEY**

## Question 13 and 14

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<u>Text of Question</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>
<b>13 How does your agency provide on-going training? (select all that apply)</b>		
Annual regional foster/adoptive parent training seminar	45%	291
Directly provides in-service training	62%	336
Videos or teleconferences	29%	157
Community based workshops	41%	220
No training is offered		2
Unsure	17%	92
Other	7%	35
<b>14 What can the agency do to improve training attendance? (select all that apply)</b>		
Use foster parent input to determine training topics	65%	351
Offer child care	59%	320
Offer refreshments/meals	30%	162
Use foster parents as co-trainers	43%	231
Reimburse travel expenses	30%	162
Make it practical & useful	56%	301
Link board rate increases to training attendance	33%	176

## FOSTER CARE CASEWORKER SURVEY

### Question 15 Service/Support Availability (ranked by percentage of Yes responses)

Are the following services/supports available to foster parents?	1	2	3
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Unsure</u>
1 Caseworker contact in person	100% (537)	0% (1)	
2 Caseworker contact by phone	100% (537)		
19 Information on adoption	97% (519)		3% (17)
10 Involvement with permanency planning	96% (514)	1% (7)	2% (13)
17 Referrals to appropriate services	96% (515)	1% (8)	3% (15)
3 Guidance on working with families	92% (486)	1% (4)	7% (37)
6 24 hour crisis services	88% (464)	4% (20)	9% (45)
5 Day care for foster child	83% (441)	9% (48)	8% (40)
15 Timely evaluations for child service needs	83% (442)	6% (33)	11% (57)
16 Child's full history (e.g. emotional, medical)	82% (434)	9% (50)	9% (45)
4 Respite care	81% (424)	8% (40)	11% (58)
14 Transportation	72% (376)	19% (98)	10% (50)
7 Foster parent support group	50% (265)	25% (132)	25% (134)
9 Ongoing recognition in community	45% (235)	22% (115)	33% (175)
8 Newsletter for foster parents	40% (211)	29% (156)	31% (163)
12 Counseling services for foster parents	37% (195)	27% (141)	36% (192)
13 Mentoring or buddy system	35% (186)	28% (149)	37% (193)
18 Access to NYS/OCFS regional office staff	33% (175)	13% (69)	54% (282)
11 Liability insurance	08% (42)	29% (152)	63% (327)

## FOSTER CARE CASEWORKER SURVEY

### Question 17 Reimbursement (ranked by percentage of Yes responses)

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Does your agency provide reimbursement to foster parents for the following?	1	2	3
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Unsure</u>
3 Summer camp expenses for child in care	86% (459)	7% (37)	7% (36)
2 Transportation to agency, office, schools, clinics, visitation	77% (403)	19% (97)	5% (24)
6 Expenses related to foster child's school graduation	67% (354)	17% (89)	17% (89)
1 Child care	66% (348)	22% (117)	11% (60)
7 Expenses related to foster child's recreational activities	54% (279)	29% (150)	18% (92)
5 Expenses related to foster child's school field trips	53% (283)	30% (161)	16% (85)
4 Expenses for foster child's school supplies	47% (245)	41% (218)	12% (63)
8 Foster parent conferences/related training expenses	41% (214)	21% (111)	38% (203)
9 Consultant fee for foster parents who assist in training	20% (103)	25% (130)	56% (291)

**FOSTER CARE CASEWORKER SURVEY****Question 18 Reasons for removal requests (ranked by response percentage)**

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<b>What reasons have foster parents given for requesting that a child be removed from their homes (within the last 2 years)?</b>	<b><u>% (N)</u></b>
4 Severe behavior problems	83% (448)
12 Destructive behavior	59% (319)
3 Inappropriate sexual behavior	56% (303)
1 Foster family illness/crisis	51% (277)
10 Allegations of abuse or neglect	38% (207)
5 Mental health issues	38% (203)
6 Criminal activity	36% (196)
2 Foster family move	31% (166)
17 Birth parent threat to family safety	23% (126)
7 Substance abuse	21% (116)
8 Child's medical needs	14% (75)
11 Fire safety	11% (61)
20 Pregnancy of foster child	07% (36)
19 Pregnancy of foster family member	06% (32)
15 Delays in board payment or other reimbursements	05% (25)
9 Cross cultural placement issues	04% (24)
13 Lack of caseworker contact & support	04% (24)
22 Unsure	04% (24)
18 Lack of appropriate or timely services	04% (23)
14 Caseworker attitude/behavior	03% (18)
16 Lack of respite	03% (18)
21 NA no request for removal	02% (8)

**FOSTER CARE CASEWORKER SURVEY****Question 19 Reasons for requesting a voluntary closing (ranked by response percentage)**

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<b>What reasons have foster parents given for requesting a voluntary closing of their certified home (within the past 2 years)?</b>	<b><u>% (N)</u></b>
1 Adoption of foster children	48% (258)
4 Foster family move	35% (192)
3 Family illness/death	25% (134)
2 Age-related retirement	22% (117)
6 End of foster child placement	19% (102)
13 Unsure	19% (101)
7 Difficulty of children	18% (98)
10 Dissatisfaction with agency	15% (84)
9 Allegations of abuse or neglect	15% (80)
12 No requests	11% (60)
5 Foster parent going to work full-time	11% (58)
8 Problems working with birth family	08% (43)
11 Liability issues	02% (9)

**FOSTER CARE CASEWORKER SURVEY****Question 20 (ranked by response percentage)**

**For what population of children is it most difficult to retain foster parents? (select four choices)**

	<u>% (N)</u>
4 Sexual offenders	59% (321)
11 Adolescents	57% (310)
10 Destructive children	54% (292)
5 Arson prone children	47% (254)
14 Sibling groups	25% (136)
15 Pregnant or parenting teenagers	23% (127)
1 Emotionally disabled	22% (118)
9 Substance abusing children	12% (67)
6 Children sexually abused prior to placement	11% (57)
7 Children with HIV/AIDS	10% (54)
3 Physically disabled	09% (48)
16 Unsure	09% (47)
2 Developmentally delayed	08% (43)
8 Children with positive drug toxicology	03% (16)
12 Children from substance abusing families	01% (7)
13 Infants/pre-school	00% (1)

## APPENDIX

### SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

## Foster Parent Training and Support Assessment

Please **COMPLETELY DARKEN** the circle corresponding to your answer. A dark pen will produce the most accurate results. **FILL IN** the bubble. **DO NOT** staple the form. **Return by September 15th**. Thank you!

### Agency Demographics - To be completed by Commissioners, Executive Directors, or Directors of Services

Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following:

1. Number of certified foster families:
2. Number of children in family foster care:
3. Number of children in kinship care:
4. Average caseload size (foster children per caseworker):
5. In regard to the Foster Parent Manual (September 2002 version):  
Did you receive hard copies for distribution?  
 Yes    No  
Did you receive a CD of the manual?  
 Yes    No  
Have you used the CD to reproduce copies of the manual?  
 Yes    No  
Have you used the CD to post the manual to an agency web site?  
 Yes    No

Thank you



## Foster Parent Training and Support Assessment

Please **COMPLETELY DARKEN** the circle corresponding to your answer. A dark pen will produce the most accurate results. **FILL IN** the bubble. **DO NOT** staple the forms. **Return by September 15th.** Thank you!

### Agency Survey - To be completed by Foster Care Caseworkers

Please complete this survey individually - based on your personal experience.

1. Does your agency provide foster parents with a written job description?

Yes    No    Unsure

2. Have you been given a copy of the foster parent job description?

Yes    No

3. Does your agency provide foster parents a written description of:

Their roles/responsibilities    Yes    No

Their legal rights    Yes    No

The legal rights of children in care    Yes    No

4. What are the five most important foster parent roles/responsibilities? (select five choices)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Providing safety for a child   | <input type="radio"/> Being a role model for a child  |
| <input type="radio"/> Helping a child with loss and separation                                 | <input type="radio"/> Providing support, guidance and discipline  |
| <input type="radio"/> Being a mentor to birth parents  | <input type="radio"/> Teaching the child daily living skills  |
| <input type="radio"/> Participating in permanency planning                                     | <input type="radio"/> Modeling parenting skills   |
| <input type="radio"/> Helping a child develop or maintain contact/attachment with birth family | <input type="radio"/> Being an advocate for a child   |
| <input type="radio"/> Loving and nurturing a child   | <input type="radio"/> Preparing a child to return home or be adopted  |
| <input type="radio"/> Helping a child progress in his development                              | <input type="radio"/> Being a continuing resource to a child & birth family following reunification or adoption |
| <input type="radio"/> Helping a child obtain necessary services (e.g. transporting)            | <input type="radio"/> Preparing youth for self-sufficiency  |
|  | <input type="radio"/> Adopting a child if reunification is not possible   |
|  | Other (specify) _____   |

5. Do the agency and foster parents generally agree on foster parent responsibilities?

Yes    No    Unsure

If no, what are the areas of disagreement? (print in space below)

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6. Do you provide foster parents with information regarding their legal rights as they pertain to:

- Service plan reviews             Yes     No
- Court hearings/appearances     Yes     No
- Child removals from their home  Yes     No
- Adoptions                         Yes     No
- Fair hearings                     Yes     No

7. Does your agency have a copy of the NYS Foster Parent Manual (September 2002 version)?

- Yes     No     Unsure

8. Do the foster parents in your cases have a copy of:

- The NYS Foster Parent Manual (September 2002 version)?     Yes     No     Unsure
- Your own agency foster parent manual                     Yes     No     Unsure

9. What pre-certification preparation does your agency provide to prepare foster parents for their role and responsibilities?

- GPS/MAPP                     Unsure
- Deciding Together     Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Mini MAPP

10. How many hours of pre-certification preparation does your agency provide to foster parents?

- 0-15     31+
- 16 -30     Unsure

11. Who conducts pre-certification foster parent training? (select all that apply)

- Agency staff             State sponsored (e.g., CDHS, PDP)
- Foster parents             Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Community agencies

12. Who conducts in-service foster parent training? (select all that apply)

- Agency staff             State sponsored (e.g., CDHS, PDP)
- Foster parents             Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Community agencies

13. How does your agency provide on-going training? (select all that apply)

- Annual regional foster/adoptive parent training seminar     Community based workshops
- Directly provides in-service training     No training is offered
- Videos or teleconferences     Unsure
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_



14. What can the agency do to improve training attendance? (select all that apply)

- Use foster parent input to determine training topics
- Use foster parents as co-trainers
- Link board rate increases to training attendance
- Offer child care
- Reimburse travel expenses
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Offer refreshments/meals
- Make it practical & useful

15. Are the following services/supports available to foster parents?

- Caseworker contact in person  Yes  No  Unsure
- Caseworker contact by phone  Yes  No  Unsure
- Guidance on working with families  Yes  No  Unsure
- Respite care  Yes  No  Unsure
- Day care for foster child  Yes  No  Unsure
- 24 hour crisis services  Yes  No  Unsure
- Foster parent support group  Yes  No  Unsure
- Newsletter for foster parents  Yes  No  Unsure
- Ongoing recognition in the community  Yes  No  Unsure
- Involvement with permanency planning  Yes  No  Unsure
- Liability insurance  Yes  No  Unsure
- Counseling services for foster parents  Yes  No  Unsure
- Mentoring or buddy system  Yes  No  Unsure
- Transportation  Yes  No  Unsure
- Timely evaluations for child service needs  Yes  No  Unsure
- Child's full history (e.g. emotional, medical etc.)  Yes  No  Unsure
- Referrals to appropriate services  Yes  No  Unsure
- Access to NYS/OCFS Regional Office staff  Yes  No  Unsure
- Information on adoption  Yes  No  Unsure

16. What services and supports could be improved or added? (print in space below)

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17. Does your agency provide reimbursement to foster parents for the following?

- Child Care  Yes  No  Unsure
- Transportation to agency, office, schools, clinics, visitation  Yes  No  Unsure
- Summer camp expenses for child in care  Yes  No  Unsure
- Expenses for foster child's school supplies  Yes  No  Unsure
- Expenses related to foster child's school field trips  Yes  No  Unsure
- Expenses related to foster child's school graduation  Yes  No  Unsure
- Expenses related to foster child's recreational activities  Yes  No  Unsure
- Foster parent conferences/related training expenses  Yes  No  Unsure
- Consultant fee for foster parents who assist in training  Yes  No  Unsure

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_



18. What reasons have foster parents given for requesting that a child be removed from their homes (within the past two years)? (select all that apply)

- Foster family illness/crisis
- Foster family move
- Inappropriate sexual behavior
- Severe behavior problems
- Mental health issues
- Criminal activity
- Substance abuse
- Child's medical needs
- Cross cultural placement issues
- Allegations of abuse or neglect
- Fire safety
- Destructive behavior
- Lack of caseworker contact & support
- Caseworker attitude/behavior
- Delays in board payment or other reimbursements
- Lack of respite
- Birth parent threat to family safety
- Lack of appropriate or timely services
- Pregnancy of foster family member
- Pregnancy of foster child
- NA/no request for removal
- Unsure
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

19. What reasons have foster parents given for requesting a voluntary closing of their certified home (within the past two years)? (select all that apply)

- Adoption of foster children
- Age-related retirement
- Family illness/death
- Foster family move
- Foster parent going to work full-time
- End of foster child placement
- Difficulty of children
- Problems working with birth family
- Allegations of abuse or neglect
- Dissatisfaction with agency
- Liability issues
- No requests
- Unsure
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

20. For what population of children is it most difficult to retain foster parents?  
(select four choices)

- Emotionally disabled
- Developmentally delayed
- Physically disabled
- Sexual offenders
- Arson prone children
- Children sexually abused prior to placement
- Children with HIV/AIDS
- Children with positive drug toxicology
- Substance abusing children
- Destructive children
- Adolescents
- Children from substance abusing families
- Infants/pre-school
- Sibling groups
- Pregnant or parenting teenagers
- Unsure
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

21. What would help you support foster parents in their role of promoting safety, permanency, and well being for children in care? (print in space below)

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Thank you

