

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Dec. 26, 2024

**RESIDENTS INVITED TO LEARN ABOUT THE FOSTER PARENT EXPERIENCE,  
ATTEND AN INFORMATION MEETING IN 2025**

**Canton, Ohio** - Stark County Job & Family Services invites residents who are interested in learning more about the foster parent experience to attend one of its monthly information meetings in 2025, hosted by staff from the Division of Children Services. Meetings will take place on the first Tuesday of each month from 6 to 7 p.m. and offer in-person and virtual options.

Attendees will have the opportunity to talk with a licensing specialist, ask questions about the foster care and adoption process, and connect with other families. All are welcome to attend; however, registration is required. To register, please contact Jennifer Loomis at 330-451-8789 or [Jennifer.Loomis@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Loomis@jfs.ohio.gov).

**The Need in Our Community**

Foster parents make a difference by providing support and stability during a challenging time in a child's life. Our community needs families like yours to open their hearts and homes to a child in need.

In Stark County, there are nearly 500 children living in the foster care system, with approximately 140 licensed foster homes available to care for them. There is always an effort to place children in homes close to their school and neighborhood, so they can maintain connections with friends, teachers, coaches, neighbors, and other familiar people in their life. However, with limited local foster homes available, children may be placed outside Stark County or in an alternative setting such as a group home or residential facility.

**Who Are the Children in Foster Care?**

Children living in the foster care system have experienced events that jeopardized their safety and well-being. They are in need of safe and nurturing homes. Many are part of a sibling group that would benefit from staying together.

**The Process to Become a Foster Parent and Eligibility**

Upon initial contact with the Division of Children Services, you will be registered for an information meeting and a foster care packet will be mailed to you. From that point on, a licensing specialist will guide you through the process and help you meet your licensing and training requirements.

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Foster parents must be at least 18 years of age, provide proof of income to meet the needs of the household, and successfully pass required background checks.

### **Foster Parent Information Meeting Schedule for 2025**

In-person information meetings will take place at the Division of Children Services located at 402 2<sup>nd</sup> St. SE, Canton, OH 44702. Virtual meetings will be hosted via ZOOM.

- Jan. 7, 2025: in-person
- Feb. 4, 2025: virtual
- March 4, 2025: in-person
- April 1, 2025: virtual
- May 6, 2025: in-person
- June 3, 2025: virtual
- July 1, 2025: in-person
- Aug. 5, 2025: virtual
- Sept. 2, 2025: in-person
- Oct. 7, 2025: virtual
- Nov. 4, 2025: in-person
- Dec. 2, 2025: virtual

To learn more about foster care and adoption in Stark County, please call 330-451-8789 or visit [StarkJFS.org](http://StarkJFS.org).

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