

Are you up to the challenge?
Ready to foster success?

Children and adolescents of all ages deserve a safe, nurturing and stable family to care for them. KidsPeace is looking for AFFC families who are willing to offer a strong foundation to youth with autism.

Complete this handy checklist to see if YOU meet the minimum requirements to join our KidsPeace Autism Focused Foster Care family!!

- ☐ I am 21 years of age or older.
- ☐ I have some knowledge or experience with children who have autism (you don't need to have children of your own).
- ☐ I have a background free of violent or abusive crimes.
- ☐ I am able to pass a medical appraisal.
- ☐ I can financially support my household
- ☐ I have adequate space for a child in my home.
- ☐ My home is insured, has safe drinking water and meets physical requirements and safety standards established by my state.
- ☐ I have a valid driver's license and insured car
- ☐ I am able to provide a safe physical environment for my foster child.
- ☐ I am open-minded, tolerant and motivated to help children.
- ☐ I have a flexible schedule, and I can be available to my foster child when they need me. (e.g., for supervision, Therapies and doctors' appointments, visits with family, extracurricular activities, school and treatment team meetings, etc.)

If you checked off all of the above requirements, you might be just who we're looking for. Please contact us or visit www.fostercare.com today, and we'll help you determine if foster parenting is right for you.



Making a difference



fostercare.com/autism



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GIVE A CHILD WITH AUTISM A CHANCE



KIDSPACE
Autism Focused
Foster Care



Be the calm for a child who needs it!
Foster their success!

There are too many kids in foster care who are in great need of an adult's unconditional support and a safe place to live and grow. Foster Success. Become a foster parent for a youth with autism.



KIDSPACE
Autism Focused Foster Care

Contact

For additional information or to make a referral for foster care placement in Pennsylvania, please contact our Temple office.

610-921-0130

704 Hay Road Temple, PA 19560

Thank you

for your interest in KidsPeace Foster Care and Community Program’s Autism Focused Foster Care (AFFC). This brochure provides a brief overview of our programming and services and offers answers to some frequently asked questions. We hope this information is helpful as you consider foster parenting youth who are in desperate need.

We realize the decision to care for foster children is an important one, so please don’t hesitate to call us with any question, big or small. At KidsPeace, we pride ourselves on finding just the right match between foster families and children. Let us help you decide if foster parenting this unique group of children and adolescents is truly right for you.

If you need further information or are ready to begin the home study process, we’d be happy to meet with you and your family at a convenient time. Contact our office or find us at Fostercare.com.

Thanks again for your interest and consideration of this important service. We hope to hear from you soon!



Q. How do I become a KidsPeace AFFC parent?

A. The application process involves a number of scheduled visits to your home over several months. Staff members gather paperwork, interview all family members, inspect the home for safety, provide training, and fully explain the responsibilities of foster parenting. Our meetings help determine if foster parenting is right for you. If the answer is yes, the process helps us match the right child for your home.

Q. What qualities should I possess to become an AFFC parent?

A. Generally, our most successful foster parents have had personal or professional experiences interacting with or caring for with youth who have an Autism-related diagnosis. All are open-minded, dependable, patient, sensitive to the child’s past, open to their culture, and willing to learn new parenting skills for children with different needs. Having a stable home environment, flexible schedule, being tolerant of change and demonstrating the ability to follow guidelines and work in partnership with those who are involved, are all important qualities for success. We and our foster families are diverse and inclusive!

Q. Do I need any special training?

A. Yes. We’ll provide everything you will need including: orientation to the program, pre-service trainings, ongoing training, support groups, and other tools to help you learn and develop your skills along the way. Training may be provided in your home, online or in a group meeting.

Q. How long will a child stay in my home?

A. This varies depending on the needs of the child and the circumstances of their placement. Some children are returned home after only a few months; others after a year or so. Sometimes, children who can’t go home become eligible for adoption; others remain in foster care until age 21 and sometime longer.

Q. Where are these children now?

A. Children are placed with KidsPeace AFFC via Children and Youth Services, and/or Family Court action. They may enter your home directly from their family of origin’s home, another foster home or from a more restrictive setting such as a residential facility.

Q. Why do these children and youth need foster care?

A. Children of all ages are in the foster care system for many different reasons. The most common reasons include physical abuse, sexual abuse, food/medical neglect, or parental issues such as abandonment, illness (physical or emotional), incarceration (jail), alcohol/drug abuse and death. Youth with autism often have unique behavioral needs that require additional services in the home and community. It won’t be easy to help a child who has known such pain and upheaval, but we’ll train you extensively on how to meet the specific needs of your foster child.

Q. Must I take any child you refer?

A. No. Once you’re approved as an AFFC parent, KidsPeace will present you with available information about the child we believe “matches” your household. You may request additional information, and you may always accept or reject a child’s placement. Saying “no” does not affect our willingness to call you about other children in the future. We respect your right to do what you think is best for your family.

Q. Will I get to meet the child before he or she moves in with me?

A. Sometimes. If the situation and time allows, we try to arrange pre-placement visits so you can meet ahead of time. In many cases, however, a child’s need for a foster home is urgent, and you won’t be able to meet your foster child until he or she arrives at your home.

Q. Do you offer financial compensation?

A. Yes, KidsPeace provides a daily stipend that is intended to financially support one stay at home parent, while covering room and board costs of foster children. Your local office can explain the current rate structure and payment system. This non-taxable reimbursement is provided to cover such expenses as food, clothing, shelter, transportation, recreation and allowance. You will not be responsible for your foster child’s medical costs when children are seen by the child’s insurance-approved providers. Your income will need to be determined as sufficient to meet the financial needs of your family.

Q. How will my own children be affected by foster children?

A. All children are influenced by the behaviors and attitudes of other people, whether these individuals are friends at school, neighbors or foster children. Foster care requires an adjustment period for everyone in the home, including the foster child. KidsPeace helps to prepare the family and support this process so that the impact is minimal.

Q. Do foster children need their own bedrooms?

A. Not necessarily. Children of the same sex are permitted to share bedrooms provided that the foster child has space for personal belongings and opportunities for privacy. Children are not allowed to share the same bed. The bedroom designated for the foster child must have a door for privacy and a window to allow for ventilation and a second means of escape in case of emergency.

Q. Where and when do children visit with their families of origin?

A. When the goal is to reunite the family, visits are crucial to help the child maintain a sense of belonging and identity. Visitation schedules vary and could occur several times per month or per week. You’ll be asked to transport the child to visits, which are generally held in a supervised office setting.

Q. What kind of help and support will I get?

A. KidsPeace has an impeccable reputation for the support we provide our foster children and families. We maintain frequent, consistent contact, and we’re available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year to support and guide you. AFFC youth have access to the KidsPeace Continuum of Care, which includes Intensive Behavioral Health Services (IBHS), Afterschool, and Sarah’s Smile Summer Programs. In addition, youth may receive home or community based Occupational Therapy (OT), Speech Therapy (ST) and Physical Therapy (PT).

Q. What if I can’t meet my foster child’s needs?

A. So that you don’t get overwhelmed, we provide respite care according to the needs of the child and family. Placement disruptions are distressing to all involved, and we work in partnership to prevent this from happening whenever possible. We believe that training, the matching process, collaboration, and ongoing supports are keys to success.

Q. What forms of discipline am I allowed to enforce?

A. Your current parenting style will determine how much of an adjustment you will need to make to follow our guidelines that are designed to protect both you and your foster children. We only allow appropriate, non-physical methods of discipline, such as offering privileges, giving “time ins” and using rewards, encouragement and praise for good behavior. Some of our discipline rules:

- NO physical punishment
- NO withholding meals, clothing, shelter or visitation
- NO verbal abuse or name-calling
- NO threats to have a child removed
- NO physically strenuous work or exercise solely for punishment
- NO allowing other children to punish the foster child

Q. Do children ever become available for adoption?

A. Yes. Sometimes, for various reasons, children are unable to return home and may have a court-ordered goal of adoption. Foster families are always given adoption consideration when a child in their home needs a permanent family.

