

Fostering or adopting a child or youth

Last updated: May 21, 2024

Q: What are the ways I can help children and youth?

- A:**
- **Kinship** is when a relative or someone with a close relationship to a child/youth cares for them (temporarily or permanently) when their parent(s) cannot. *Examples of kinship providers are grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, teachers, neighbours, coaches, etc.* If you are considering kinship care visit the [Kinship Care](#) page for more information.
 - A **foster home** is when an individual or family provides full-time care for a foster child/youth. Visit the [Fostering a Child or Youth page](#) for more information and to apply.
 - **Respite or relief care** is when an individual or family provides short-term care for a foster child/youth such as on weekends or holidays. Visit the [Supporting Caregivers, Children and Youth Through Respite/Relief Care page](#) for more information and to apply.
 - **Adoption** is when an individual or family legally adopts a child/youth. There are multiple types of adoption, each with their own application process. Visit the [Adopting a Child or Youth page](#) for more information and to apply.

Q: What are the requirements to foster or adopt children or youth?

- A: Fostering or adoption may be right for you if you:**
- Are 19 years of age or older (professional care homes require you to be 21),
 - Are a Canadian citizen or permanent resident,
 - Live in New Brunswick,
 - Have a living space that provides a secure and [healthy environment for children/ youth](#), and
 - Complete the application, training, and review process.

To complete your application, you must be willing to:

- Share **personal information** (ex: relationship status, name(s), gender, date of birth, etc.),
- Share basic **financial and medical information**,
- Provide all the **supporting documents** required by Social Development at any time in the process,
- Authorize a **Social Development record check**,
- Participate in a **family assessment**,
- Participate in [PRIDE \(Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education\)](#) Virtual Training (required for all applicants),
- Provide names and contact details of **three references**, and
- Provide a **Criminal and Vulnerable Sector Record Check** (for all adults 19 years of age or older living in the household, and any immediate family members with a criminal history).

Q: What is the process of becoming a foster or adoptive parent?

A: The application process to become a foster or adoptive parent consists of 3 key phases:

Phase 1 - Information gathering/eligibility criteria.

Phase 2 - [PRIDE \(Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education\)](#) Virtual Training.

Phase 3 - SAFE Home Study: an assessment of your skills and strengths as a potential parent.

Q: Does being a single applicant affect my eligibility to adopt or foster?

A: No, being a single applicant does not impact your eligibility. A social worker will explore your support network and resources to ensure that you have the supports needed.

Q: Are there income requirements for adoption or fostering?

A: No, there is no set income requirement to adopt or foster. Prospective adoptive and foster parents will need to be financially stable and have enough money to support and raise a child or youth. As part of the application process, you will be asked to share some basic financial information. This includes things like your employment, annual income, and average monthly expenses.

Q: After I am approved, when will I be matched with a child or youth?

A: The time it takes to be matched with a child or youth can be different for each family. The matching process depends on what the children/youth need, your abilities, and your preferences for your family. We'll work hard to make the right match, but it may take some time.

Q: What kinds of supports will I receive as an adoptive or foster parent?

A: As a foster parent you will receive:

- Ongoing support from your own social worker.
- Ongoing training.
- Financial compensation.
- Your family or the children/youth that you foster may have additional or unique needs. Your social worker will work with you to provide additional resources and tailored support where needed.

As an adoptive family you may be eligible for a:

- One-time grant of \$1,000 to offset the costs associated with adoption. The grant is automatic for qualifying families who adopt through New Brunswick's Department of Social Development. Families who choose international or private adoptions can [apply for the grant](#).
- Financial benefit and/or service subsidy to help a child or youth with exceptional needs. These services may include counselling, special services for children/youth, equipment necessary to meet the child/youth's special needs, and adoption support and information.

Q: Can I still apply to become a foster or adoptive parent if my partner and/or myself have a criminal record and/or have had previous involvement with child protection services?

A: Yes. It depends on the nature of the criminal activity and previous child protection involvement. It is best to go through the application process and your suitability as a foster or adoptive parent will be assessed.

Q: Who can provide a reference letter?

A: A reference can be any person outside of your family who knows you well enough to answer questions about you and your family.

Q: What training is required and how long does it take?

A: All applicants are required to participate in PRIDE (Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education) Virtual Training as part of the application process.

PRIDE training is a 9-week online training program meant to provide you with important information to help you decide if fostering or adoption is right for your family.

Q: If applying as a couple, are we both required to participate in PRIDE training and the SAFE Home Study?

A: Yes! PRIDE Training and the SAFE Home Study are mandatory for both applicants.

Q: If I'm applying to provide short term services such as relief care on weekends, am I required to take the same training as a full-time foster parent?

A: Yes, the application process is the same for everyone.

Q: Is there a specific age group for whom there is a greater need for foster or adoptive families?

A: There is an ongoing need for foster and adoptive parents for children and youth of all ages.

Q: Can I be a foster or adoptive parent and work full time?

A: Yes.

Q: Will I have access to childcare?

A: The Department of Social Development pays for childcare expenses at a licensed day care for children in foster care.

Q: Do I need to have previous child caregiver experience to become a foster or adoptive parent?

A: No, children and youth have different needs, experiences, and interests. We are looking for caring people with diverse backgrounds. You don't have to be married, wealthy, or have a specific educational background to become a foster or adoptive parent.

Our top priority is to find safe and caring homes for children and youth.

Q: Are there other things I need to know about fostering or adoption?

A: Fostering is flexible!

- The level of commitment may vary (e.g., full-time, short-term, respite or relief for other foster parents, or emergency, etc.).
- You can adjust your level of commitment anytime you want.
- You have a say about what ages, behaviours, and challenges you're willing to work with - or not!
- You can foster children who may eventually return to their families or those who are in permanent care.

For more information about fostering, visit Social Support NB's [Fostering a Child or Youth page](#).

For more information about adoption, please visit Social Support NB's [Adopting a Child or Youth page](#), or the [New Brunswick Adoption Foundation's website](#).

Still have questions?

Contact us

If you have questions or would like to speak with someone about fostering or adoption, you can contact us **Monday-Friday between 8:15am and 4:30pm**, excluding holidays.

Phone: 1-506-259-0232

Email: fosterfamilies_famillesdaccueil@gnb.ca or adoption@gnb.ca