

## Foster/Adopt

Foster-adopt families are those primarily interested in becoming adoptive parents, and are willing to become foster-licensed in order to take a child who is not yet legally free, but for whom termination of parental rights has been started or is planned. In these cases, DFPS (Department of Family and Protective Services) and Refuge House are working on two concurrent plans: reunification with the birth parents while pursuing another permanent placement should reunification efforts fail.

Because parental rights have not yet been terminated, these placements carry with them some legal risk for the foster/adopt family. The court may decide not to grant the DFPS' petition to terminate parental rights and order the return of the child to the birth parent(s); or it may give the birth parents additional time to correct deficiencies.

Different cases involve different degrees of legal risk. The prospective foster/adopt family should always ask the child's caseworker to carefully explain the circumstances of the child's legal situation to them. Foster/adopt families may also be called upon to have some degree of contact with the child's birth parents or extended family. Some children may still be involved in court ordered visits with their birth parent(s). To get started email [mgorman@refugehouse.org](mailto:mgorman@refugehouse.org).