

Foster Parent Stories

Everyone comes to foster care with a different story. Each story tells us something more about what it takes to be such a parent, the hardships and the rewards. Tell us your story. **410.810.7600** or **1.877.5Foster.**



Helen Nicholson, Foster Parent



The best way to provide a home for every child is through our "PLACE MATTERS" initiative... an approach that promotes safety, family functioning, permanency and community-based placement for foster care children.

Helen Nicholson

"If your heart is open, you'll find the room."

"In the all the years growing up, I don't ever remember hearing about Foster Children or for that matter Foster Parents. I had classmates who did not live with their parents but if they did not live with a relative they were sent to live in what we called an Orphanage.

Later in life when my oldest child started telling us things about one of her classmates that sounded as though the child was having problems at home, no one ever mentioned Foster care but instead sent her to live in again what we called Orphanages. They were run by Catholic Nuns, and the children were sent to school and also expected to do certain chores.

This child would have been about in the 8 to 10 age group. She would always ask my daughter if she could come and live with us and my daughter would of course beg us to bring her friend to live with us. At the time my husband and I felt that this was not a good idea. We had her on some weekends but after a while this also stopped. We heard from her from time to time but as with most children the older they got they started to grow apart.

Over the years the term Foster Care was referred to as an answer for bad children, a punishment or the children were in trouble with the law.

After my husband died and I retired, my children were grown, I decided that maybe it was time for me to help some of these children, I suppose to make up for not helping that child so many years ago. Foster care is not easy but if you keep telling yourself these children need you, you make it through another day and then another."

note: Helen Nicholson is the President of the Kent County Resource Parent Association. To contact Helen: imajunebug1937@yahoo.com

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(cont.)



Cheryl Hartmetz, Foster Parent

Cheryl Hartmetz

"All you need is love, a bed and a dresser."

"When I was growing up my parents taught me to care for others... because if you don't care who will? Kids who come into foster care don't know what caring is and so they may seem bad because they haven't learned to care...People have the wrong impression of foster care...it's not about kids who are thrown away from their parents it's about providing a secure and loving place for kids whose parents can't take care of them.

My life can get tough but just when I think its really bad, I think about all the kids who don't have a home to go to and I think what the heck... I have a home - it might not be clean, it might not be organized but I can give a hug, some advice and some caring words to a child that needs a place."

Walter and Nancy Ellison

"We are thinking about adoption so foster care is a good intermediate step that we can take."

"This is an eye opening process to see a child on its own...it is a necessary role that we have to do anything we can to care for a child and hope that this brings closer perfection to the parent/child relationship. Even for the short time of providing respite care you develop an emotional attachment to the child but you know and hope that what you're doing is the best for them and their parents."



Walter & Nancy Ellison, Foster Parents



Kent County Foster Parent Program
Give your home. Find your heart.