



Questions to Ask a Foster Care Agency

1. Level of Care

- What are the ages and/or special needs of the children that the agency places the most?
- To learn more about care levels in foster care, go to:
http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption_and_Foster_Care/About_Foster_Care/Care_Levels.asp
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2. Training Requirements

- How long does the training and home study process take on average? How often, when and where are these trainings offered?
- How many hours of training are devoted to trauma-informed care of the children out of the total number of hours? Does the agency believe this is enough or will I need to find additional training to best care for the children?
- Do they suggest or offer ways to prepare biological or adopted children for fostering or adoption?
- Does the agency approve of other organizations or churches educational ops to be counted toward training hours?

3. On-going Support

- How often is the agency in contact with you?
- Do they have support groups or ways of connecting with other parents in the agency?
- How does the agency help you find service providers if the children needs additional services counseling, medical appointments, etc)?
- How does the agency help you find respite care foster families if needed? What are the requirements for respite care parents?
- Is the agency able to support a foster family if they are in a position to mentor the biological family towards reunification? Does the agency have experience doing this?

4. General agency questions

- Does the agency have any additional requirements of a family outside of the State's requirements?
http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Adoption_and_Foster_Care/Get_Started/requirements.asp
- How long has the agency been licensed? How many caseworkers work at the agency and what is their caseload?
- The average turnover rate for Texas CPS caseworkers is between 25%-37% per year (2013). How does that rate compare to the caseworkers at the agency?





- Has the agency had any experience with foster families mentoring biological families and is the agency open to that depending upon the situation?

Important considerations:

- Did you find others to talk to who also used this agency? What was their experience?
- Were you comfortable with their response time when you contacted them?
- Are you comfortable with their faith-based connection or non-profit/for-profit status?
- Was your general impression favorable after meeting or talking on the phone?
- Do they have a track record or reputation for supporting their families with training, resources, moral support?
- Were they able to explain the steps to you so that they were clear and easy to follow? Do they have a website or system in place to support you in the various steps to fostering or adopting?
- Did they have a response to helping biological families that was supportive of the fostering families involvement (as possible with each situation) or a system to care for bio families in other ways?

