

VISTA MARIA

FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION



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Vista Maria believes deeply in the power that family has in our endeavor to help children in foster care heal, grow and reach their potential. Sometimes the power of family is found with supportive and compassionate foster and adoptive families. Vista Maria helps young people and families find each other so that all children will know that they are worthy of love and healing. You could be that family.



**VISTA
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THERE ARE OVER 10,000 CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE IN MICHIGAN

The need for foster parents for these children is tremendous, as there are simply not enough foster homes. Even with each successful match, there are many other children waiting for their chance to feel safe, cared for and inspired. You might be the difference in that young person's life.

Vista Maria's foster care programs serve children between the ages of 0 and 20 who have entered the foster care system due to abuse and neglect. The characteristics and needs of the children we serve vary based on their individual circumstances, experiences and level of functioning. In some cases a child may return to their parents or a relative after initial placement. In other cases, foster families care for the child until the child can live independently or be adopted.

We are looking for foster families that can share their lives with children. We encourage diversity among our foster families, as we help children from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Foster parents may be single, married or in a partnership, and of any faith, gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation. Every child has unique needs, and every family has the potential to be just the right match.

Being a foster parent can be rewarding as well as challenging. Joining an experienced and dedicated agency like Vista Maria, with clear values, and a strong devotion to our children and families, makes the challenges a little easier and the successes all the more celebrated.



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ABOUT ADOPTION

OVER 200 OF MICHIGAN'S FOSTER CHILDREN ARE WAITING TO BE ADOPTED



Every child comes from a unique set of circumstances and experiences. Our goal for some children is to reunify them with their biological families. In some instances it may be in the best interest of the child not to return to their parents. In this situation the court has terminated the parents' rights to the child and the child may be adopted.

We believe deeply in the power of families and supportive people are found with empathetic foster and adoptive families. Our adoption program allows foster parents to decide if they want to adopt a child as a permanent part of their family. In some instances this may be a possibility as soon as the child enters your home or it may occur after they have been living with you for a period of time.

Whether you are already interested in adoption or not, providing a permanent home for a foster child is something to consider and Vista Maria will work with you through every step of that journey.



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FOSTER CARE PROGRAMS

VISTA MARIA OFFERS SEVERAL DIFFERENT FOSTER CARE PROGRAMS BASED ON THE NEEDS AND BACKGROUND OF THE CHILDREN WE SERVE



General Foster Care

Foster parents licensed for general foster care take kids with low to moderate needs.



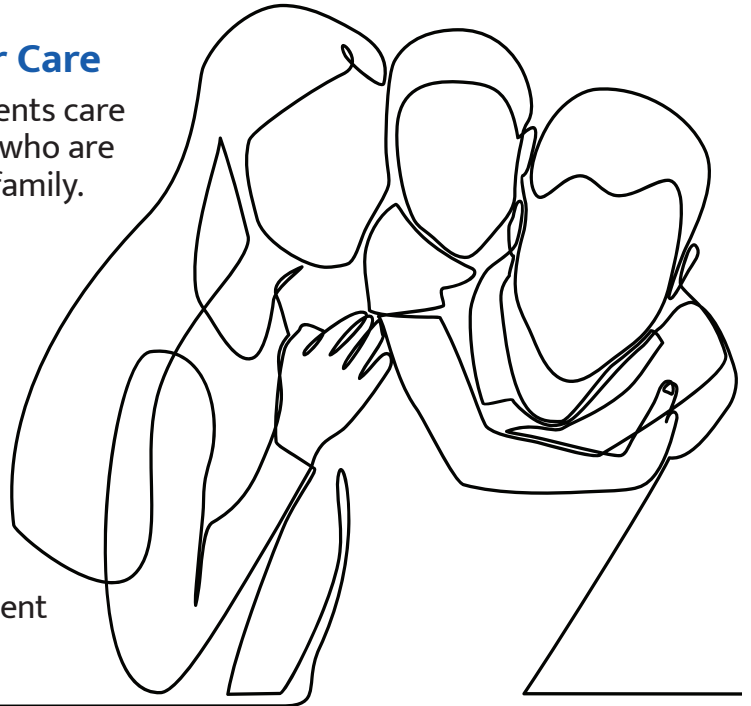
Relative Foster Care

Relative foster parents care for foster children who are members of their family.



Treatment Foster Care

Foster parents licensed for Treatment Foster Care.



FOSTER CARE PROGRAMS

GENERAL FOSTER CARE

Most of Vista Maria's children are in the General Foster Care Program.

Children in the General Foster Care Program range in age from birth to 18 years old. Although most, if not all, the children in this program have experienced some level of trauma, their needs are moderate. Every child handles being in foster care differently. Therefore, some children may need some extra help with their emotional, social and physical development; however, their needs and behaviors are not severe.

RELATIVE FOSTER CARE

Sometimes children who are in foster care have relatives that have agreed to step in and care for them in order to keep them close to their family.

Relative caregivers may be licensed or unlicensed; however, when relatives get licensed they have the same expectations and requirements as foster parents who are licensed to care for children in the General Foster Care Program.

TREATMENT FOSTER CARE

A small percentage of Vista Maria's children are in the Treatment Foster Care Program.

Children in the Treatment Foster Care Program are aged 3-17 and have behavioral, emotional and/or physical needs that require more intensive care. In some cases this is a result of these kids having a greater difficulty handling the trauma that they have experienced. Children in this program may be coming from a more restrictive setting or even another foster home. This program is designed to stabilize a child's mental health and behaviors in order to maintain their placement in the community.



REQUIREMENTS



BASIC REQUIREMENTS

Income:

Foster parents must have sufficient income to pay bills and cover family needs; therefore, proof of income is required.

Housing:

Foster parents may live in a house or an apartment. Home ownership is not required. Each person in the home must have a sufficient amount of sleeping space, and a bed.

Health:

Medical statements or examinations are required for all household members.

Substitute Care Providers:

Foster parents are required to identify at least one substitute care provider who will be able to assist in caring for foster children on a regular and emergency basis.

Marital Status:

Foster parents can be single, married, living with a partner or two adults sharing the home. However, any adult in the home who will be responsible for caring for a foster child must be on the license.



DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

Certain documents are required from all household members and substitute care providers.

Foster Parents:

- Driver's License with current address
- Social Security card
- Birth Certificate
- Proof of income
- Pass a Criminal background check
- Livescan Fingerprinting
- Most recent bill statements

Other Household Members:

- Social Security card
- Submit background checks
- Detailed Individual Summary
- ID or Driver's License
- Birth Certificate

Substitute Care Providers:

- Driver's License with current address
- DHHS Central Registry Clearance
- Phone Number

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

All foster parents must attend training before becoming licensed.

Orientation

- Orientation is a single class.
- Orientation classes are on weekdays and weekends.

GROW

- GROW is held through the Judson Center once a month in each county.
- GROW classes are held during the week and on weekends.

CPR/First Aid

- CPR and First Aid is a single class.
- CPR and First Aid can also be completed online



REGISTRATION

ORIENTATION

Orientation is the first step!

Orientation is a class in which we will go over all the steps it takes to become a foster parent. This is where all your questions will be answered and you will receive all the information you need to make a decision.

If you have ever thought about being a foster parent, attending an orientation class is the best way to find out if foster parenting is right for you. At the end of the class you can choose to continue or you may want to take more time. No matter what your decision is, Vista Maria is here for you!

GROW

GROW Stands for Grow culturally responsive relationships. Recognize children's developmental needs & impact of trauma. Obtain information & resources. Work in partnership with families to support healthy relationships.

GROW is designed to prepare foster parents for the realities of having a child placed in the home. The information covered will help to equip foster parents understand and handle a child's unique needs and behaviors. This class will cover topics such as childhood development, grief, loss and discipline techniques.

TRAINING

Register for training.

Orientation, GROW and CPR/First Aid training are held frequently. We understand that everyone has a different schedule so we can be very flexible with when we give training in order to accommodate everyone. Trainings are valid for up to a year so we can work with you at your own pace. The entire training process can take as little as one month to complete. Call us today to register for an orientation class and start the process to become a licensed foster parent.



**TO SET UP AND
ORIENTATION CONTACT:**
fosterparents@vistamaria.org



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REGISTRATION

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FAQ

Are there both boys and girls in Vista Maria’s foster care program?

Yes, Vista Maria serves both male and female children in our foster care program.

How old do I need to be in order to foster children in General Foster Care?

Foster parents for children in General Foster Care must be 18 years or older.

How old do I need to be in order to foster children in Specialized Foster Care?

Foster parents for children in Treatment Foster Care need to be 25 years or older.

How long will it take to get licensed?

While this information packet is a brief overview of what is needed, more may be required based on your individual circumstances. However, the process does not take long and your licensing worker will be there to guide you at every step. Our goal is to license homes in 90 days if at all possible.

How long will it take to finish?

While Orientation is the first class that must be taken, GROW and CPR/First Aid can be taken in any order. Every class is scheduled at least once a month, so it is possible to complete all trainings within one month.

How long will it take to finish training?

All trainings are given for free by a certified instructor. Vista Maria offers Orientation, while GROW is offered through the Judson Center, and CPR/First Aid is offered through a separate third party. You must take Orientation with Vista Maria.



THANK YOU FROM THE VISTA MARIA TEAM

Be fearless in your compassion. See every person’s worth.

It is your courage, vision, love and unwavering support that ignites a life of possibilities.

04/2021

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