



Services Available:

1. **Care 4 Kids** - Care 4 Kids helps low to moderate income families in Connecticut pay for child care costs. This program is sponsored by the Department of Social Services. DCF relative care providers must meet certain Care 4 Kids eligibility requirements before assistance is granted. For example, the Care 4 Kids program will request verification of the employment schedule of the foster care parent. Foster care parents must be working and provide proof of employment in order to meet the "need for care" eligibility requirement. The Care 4 Kids program excludes the income of foster care parents and only counts the income of the foster child, including the DCF stipend, to determine eligibility status.
2. **Respite** - DCF licensed foster parents are entitled to fourteen days of respite per year. The respite provider is often a licensed foster parent or respite provider.
3. **Education** - Children under the care of DCF are entitled to a free and appropriate education (FAPE) as is every other child in our state. DCF has educational consultants in each Area Office who can provide educational advocacy for children in DCF care. Children in DCF care may be eligible for a Surrogate Parent.
4. **Transportation** - DCF may be able to assist with transporting a child under DCF's custody.
5. **Health Services** - We have Health Advocates who can assist with insurance problems and identifying medical and dental resources for children in DCF's care. Children in DCF care can be referred for many services including: individual counseling, medication management, psychological evaluations, emergency mobile psychiatric services, therapeutic mentor, respite, and extended day services. Referrals are usually made by the Social Worker assigned to the child. In addition, DCF-licensed relative foster parents may be eligible for Foster and Adoptive Parent Support Team to help deal with specific behaviors of a foster child in their home.
6. **Support Groups for Caregivers** - DCF offers regular support groups for licensed foster parents. Some Area Offices offer specific support groups for licensed relative caregivers.
7. **Legal Assistance** - All children under DCF custody or guardianship are appointed an attorney for representation at Juvenile Court.
8. **DCF-licensed foster parents are also notified of court dates regarding the Juvenile Court proceedings.** Foster parents are not appointed attorneys to represent them in these proceedings.
9. **Foster Parents who are interested in receiving legal advice** regarding open adoption may be referred to the Connecticut Association of Foster and Adoptive Families (CAFAP). CAFAP contracts with several attorneys who will advise you as to the pros and cons of open adoption; negotiate an open adoption agreement and draft an agreement, if this is agreed upon. There is no cost to you for a CAFAP attorney to provide you legal advice in the area of open adoption.
10. **Bi-Lingual Programs** - Many of DCF's services are offered in Spanish, including foster care licensing training, support groups, post-licensing training. DCF also contracts with several interpreter and translation agencies to assist DCF in providing services to non-English speaking individuals.
11. **Visitation** - DCF is obligated to facilitate visitation between children in DCF care and their parents. Visitation could be supervised or unsupervised, supervised by DCF or the foster parent or a visitation center. As a licensed foster parent, you are an integral part of the visitation process.
12. **Financial Assistance** - DCF-licensed relative foster parents are entitled to reimbursement for caring for the child(ren) who are in DCF's custody or guardianship. Depending on the age of the child, foster care reimbursement rates range between approximately \$25-\$28 per day.