

Foster Parenting: It IS what you signed up for!

Consider this scenario ...

You've grown up fairly sheltered from the grim realities of living in a broken home. Yours was a happy, safe, non-chaotic childhood that involved family vacations, neighborhood barbecues, and yearly visits to summer camp. Unknown to you were the realities of alcoholism, domestic violence, food stamps, or homelessness. Life has treated you well and now you have decided to "give back."

Reading the local paper, you find an interesting article about becoming a foster parent. You are so intrigued by the idea of helping a child in need that you contacted the number at the end of the article and decide to begin your journey into the wonderful world of foster parenting. You soon find yourself attending trainings and following through with all of the steps that are necessary to become a foster parent.

A few weeks later, you receive a call notifying you that there is a child in need of foster care. After a short conversation with the agency worker on the other end, you and your spouse agree to care for the child.

Your doorbell rings the next day. You answer it enthusiastically and cordially greet your new foster child. She is a 9 year old girl that has a history of physical and sexual abuse, not to mention some behavioral issues that are of concern. She is an attractive little girl that appears to be in desperate need of a bath, a haircut, and some new clothes. She appears apprehensive at first but warms up quickly once she settles in.

The first few days go by without incident.

As the "honeymoon" ends, this adorable little girl starts to change. She becomes more moody, more needy, and less cooperative. Her true colors are beginning to shine through. She is now an angry and defiant girl that knows how to push your buttons. She's very good at it, in fact.

"This isn't what I signed up for," you think to yourself.

The once peaceful home that you occupy has suddenly transformed into a house of chaos. Screaming, yelling, and crying are now filling your once quiet residence. Bedtimes are now a catastrophe and never mind getting this child to take a bath.

"I hate you" and "You're not my mommy," now echo throughout the house on a regular basis. Peace and quiet are a thing of the past.

You may not have signed up for this, but believe it or not, many foster parents do sign up for this. They know exactly what they are getting themselves into and they still unselfishly welcome these children into their homes and lives with open arms.

Caring for these children takes an unimaginable amount of patience, compassion, and emotional strength. Foster parenting is not just for anyone.

Many of the children that are in foster care are placed there because of the unfortunate decisions that were made by one or both of their own biological parents. Abuse, neglect, domestic violence, abandonment, and constant household chaos are just some of the many issues that these children have been confronted with during their short lives. Without foster parents, these children would most likely be returned to unsafe homes or might unnecessarily be placed in treatment facilities. The burden to Social Services would be tremendous.

ParentCoachPlan.com wants to acknowledge and thank the compassionate and hard-working foster parents out there who unselfishly care for our nation's foster children. Give yourself a pat on the back. You truly deserve it.

Foster parents must have the right experience, attitude, and tools to be successful. Interested in a unique and helpful foster parenting tool? Try checking out The Parent Coach Plan . Once again, thanks for all that you do!

Please note: I am in no way trying to discourage individuals from becoming foster parents. I am simply acknowledging the level of commitment and hard work that is involved and I am thanking those that take on the challenge and persevere.