Welcome

When children or youth cannot remain safely at home with their birth families, they are most often placed temporarily in the homes of relatives—kin—or licensed foster parents. You, the "resource families," as you have come to be called, have some of the most challenging and emotionally draining roles in the entire child welfare system.

You must be prepared to welcome children into your home at any hour of the day or night, manage the wide array of behaviors children present, and cope with agency regulations, policies, and paperwork. You are expected to provide mentoring, support, and aid to birth families while at the same time attaching to the children and youth in your care, preparing simultaneously for their reunification with their family, or for the possibility of making a lifelong commitment to them through adoption or legal custodianship.

In your home, you serve as parent, counselor, healer, mentor, role model, and disciplinarian. Beyond your doors, you are expected to attend meetings and classes at the Agency, school and medical appointments, case reviews, and court hearings.

Many children in the foster care system have lived through traumatic experiences. Understanding how trauma affects children can help you to make sense of your child's sometimes baffling behavior, feelings, and attitudes. Once you understand why your child behaves the way he or she does, you'll be better prepared to help him or her cope with the effects of trauma. In this workshop, you'll improve your ability to communicate with your child, learn skills and techniques to influence your child's behavior and attitudes, and learn ways to reduce the stress of parenting a traumatized child. The goal of this workshop is to make you a more effective resource parent, and to enable you to have more of the positive experiences that make being a resource parent so worthwhile.