

Course Introduction

1. Course Introduction

1.1 Foster Care Overview



Notes:

Hi, and welcome to the foster parent pre-placement training. Over the past 10 years, my husband and I have provided a safe and nurturing home for 14 different foster children. While the job has never been easy, I can honestly say that the decision to become a foster parent was the most important, life changing decision I've ever made.

10 years ago, I was in the same situation that you are in today, and if you're anything like me you are experiencing a lot of emotions and questions. Can I handle this? Is this the right decision for me? What is expected of me? How will becoming a foster parent affect my relationships with my family, friends, and biological children? Do any of these questions sound familiar? If so, don't worry. This training is meant to help you find some answers.

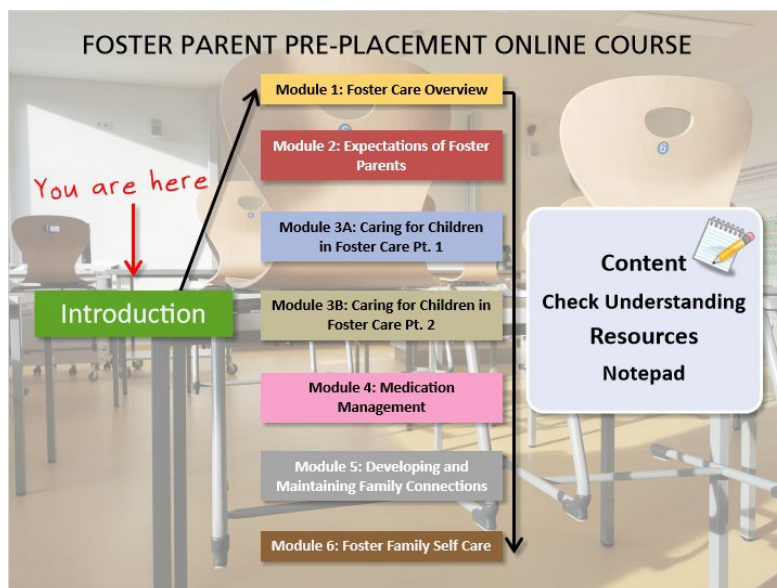
On the next few slides, we are going to give you a quick tour of how this training is put together. We'll share some tips that will allow you to get the

most out of your time. You'll also be asked to watch a video that will get you thinking about what it means to be a foster parent.

While this training is meant for new foster parents, it is also a valuable learning tool for experienced foster parents who want a refresher.

To find your way around this course, here are a few tips. You can use the controls along the bottom of the window to play, pause, rewind, and move to the next or previous page. On the left side of the window, the Menu bar lists all the course pages. You can also view the Notes tab to read the script and the Resources tab for all the documents and links covered in the course. If you close the course and return to it later, you'll have the option to continue where you left off or start again. There are several quiz questions along the way to help check your understanding. After the final quiz be sure to print your results to document that you completed the course. When you're ready, click the forward arrow to go to the next slide.

1.2 Organization of the Course



Notes:

I am going to give you a quick preview of how this training works. Each module has been designed to walk you through the information that is required for becoming licensed as a foster parent. Some modules are longer than others, but each has important information that you'll want and need to know. The training includes a mixture of stories, statistics, legal requirements, interactive activities, questions, and more. You'll be asked to answer some questions along the way to see how you're doing (these questions are not tests; they're intended to help you learn). You will be prompted to download some extra resources and you can find these links on the main course page too. Be sure to download the notepad document before starting module 1 so you can write down your questions and thoughts to share with your licenser. You'll find a link to the notepad on the table of contents page.

Now, let's take a look at how you'll move around in these modules.

1.3 Tips for Success**Notes:**

This training is going to cover a lot of information. Here are 4 things you can do to get the most out of it:

Number 1: Write down thoughts or questions as they come up. Write them ALL down. Sometimes the answer to a question is, "It depends." Your licensor is there to answer these questions and to discuss any concerns you have. To help with this, each module includes a notepad document for you to download and use to write down your thoughts. You can type in your questions and save it to your computer, or just print it and write down questions as you go through the module. You'll be glad you took the time to write down these questions as you thought of them.

Number 2: Take your time. Trying to understand too much information in a short amount of time will only put you to sleep and try your patience. Pace yourself as you work through the modules. Take breaks when you feel your mind wandering. Come back to where you left off when you can focus on the information.

Number 3: Don't worry, you will probably feel a lot of different emotions as you go through this training. You might doubt your ability to be a foster parent. This is normal. Talk with your licensor about these feelings. You're not alone and help is available to you.

And number 4: Complete the whole training and keep an open mind until you have all of the information; this will help you take the next steps and make decisions about becoming a foster parent.

So remember: ask questions, take your time, don't worry, and please complete all of the modules.

1.4 Before You Move On



Notes:

The video you're about to see is heartbreaking and serious. It may be painful to watch or to think about. We aren't trying to scare you - we want you to see how the decision to become a foster parent can make a life-changing, positive difference in the life of a child.

When you're ready, please watch the video on the next slide.

1.5 One Child's Story



Notes:

"There are an estimated 437,283 children in this country that need a home; this is one child's story..."

"I am a cute 12 year old boy. Everyone tells me how beautiful my dimples are. Everyone tells me how beautiful my smile is. Nobody took the time to see me on the inside, Nobody really cares. I was 4 when the cops came and took me away . Mommy couldn't wake up. And daddy fought the cops trying to get me back. I was taken to a stranger's house. They told me it was going to be temporary. They told me it was going to be OK. They didn't tell me when Mommy and Daddy were going to come take me home. I cried for them. For Days. For Months. For Years. They didn't come to save me. At my new home there are many children. Some don't like me. When we are alone the older boy beats me. Nobody notices. Or maybe nobody cares. So I start to break stuff around the house. When there is nothing to break I start to pee on the walls. I am taken away from the house because I am causing too many problems. So I go to the next house. And the next house. And the next. And the next. Until I finally make it to your door 8 years later. You tell me what everyone else told me. This is my final move. This will be my home. How do I know that you're not going to beat me? Or touch me? But I know better now. I will fight your kids. Maybe I'll burn your wedding pictures. I'll

never give you the chance to love me. Just to have you take me back like everyone else.

But do remember. Every time you roll your eyes. And every time you smile. I'm watching. I need your support. I need you to be my role model. I might not tell you. And I might have a weird way of showing it. But if you don't give up on me. Some day when you least expect it. I will thank you."

Retrieved in 2010 from YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzNvAJQZ7xU&feature=related>

0/18 Child Welfare Gateway annual report:

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/foster.pdf>

1.6 Video Debrief



Notes:

What are you feeling right now? Sad? Scared? Hopeful?

Maybe a little of each? The truth is, we debated about whether or not to

show you this video so early in the training - but we felt that it was important to be real with you up front.

Providing for the safety and stability needed by children who come into care is not an easy job - but for the right people, it is the most important and rewarding job they'll ever have.

Please take a moment to write down the reaction you had to this video and talk with your licenser about it, including any questions that came up for you.

When you're ready, continue to the next slide to hear others' reactions to this video.

1.7 Others' Responses



Notes:

Steve: "From my experience this is very realistic, not only as a foster child, which I have that experience too, but as a working professional of 22 years in this business. That's about as on-target as anything I've ever seen, and the

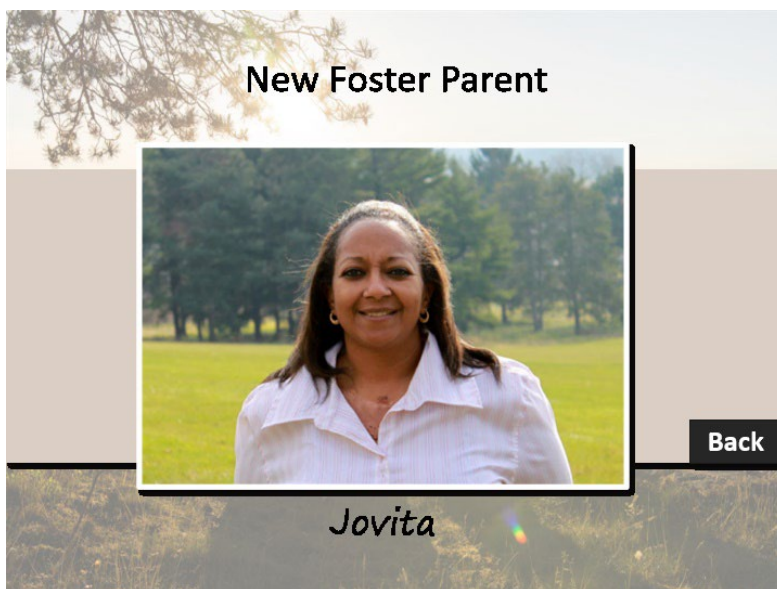
message is very, very real. It's powerful, and I've experienced and heard those same things many, many, many times. I think the most important thing to keep in mind from this video is to remember these children are human beings. Much of what you've seen there can happen, does happen, and being a foster parent these are things that you might or might not be aware of but have to commit yourself to protect. Part of the commitment is to protect and to teach and to prevent this from being someone that you might foster. And if I could say one other thing, if you have a child you foster that's already been through here is to be patient, because this child is just as scared and damaged at this point, and I caution the word 'damaged' because that's temporary. This does not mean permanent. It means with the right person, the right family, with the right qualities, the right ability, you can change that."

Jovita: "After watching the video, the new questions I would have is just how much information would I get on the foster child; information on their background, how they reacted in a foster home, if they've already been placed in a foster home or if it's a brand new child that's just getting placed, if there's information that is known about the child and the situation - and just what kind of information I can get so I'll know what to expect from a foster child. "

Peg: "The part that inspired me most out of the video were the needs of the children. The part that scared me was just how much the children have been through and how hurt they've been and what an awesome responsibility that it is to help them heal from what they've been through. The new questions that I'd have about foster care after watching this video would be, probably I'd want more answers about the children coming into my home and what they've been through so that I could better help them. What surprised me I think is probably how deeply I felt by watching it, of what the children have been through and how hard, and just that responsibility of being able to help them. With the scary things that you see in the video, what really helps me is to keep focused on that I'm there to help the child, that the whole purpose of foster care is to help the child and help them in a lot of ways, one of which would be their connections with their birth families, making sense of what has happened to them in whatever way they can understand that. The video is very realistic from my experience. We've been in foster care quite a long time and it's sad but it is very realistic. I'd like to share with other foster parents that are seeing this

video for the first time that although it's scary it's well worth every minute that you put into it, to see a child grow and heal. It's worth every, I can't say it strongly enough, that it's worth every minute to help them."

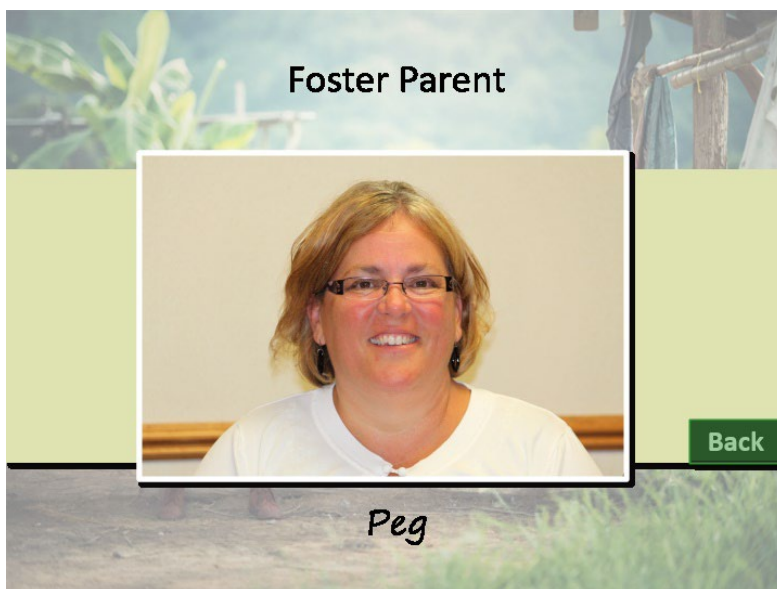
Jovita (Slide Layer)



Steve (Slide Layer)



Peg (Slide Layer)



1.8 Review



Notes:

That brings us close to the end of this introduction module. We covered an overview of the course, and shared a few strategies for getting the most out of the training.

Lastly, we started the process of asking what it would really mean to become a foster parent and positively impact the life of a child. You are now ready to move into Module:1 Foster Care Overview.

1.9 Results Slide

(Results Slide, 0 points, 1 attempt permitted)