



YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

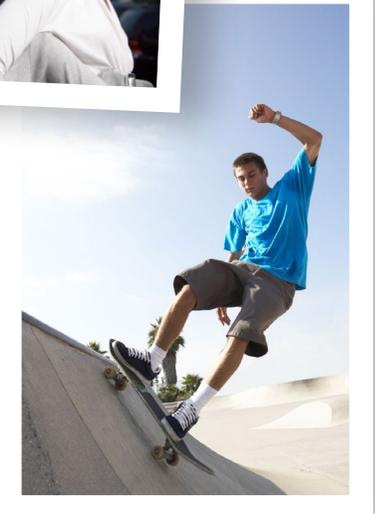
Cheering for teens at their high school sporting events. Having real conversations about real life stuff. Eating dinner together as a family. You might be surprised at how much you have to offer a teen in foster care — just by being yourself!



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Make a Difference By Fostering Teens!



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TOP 10 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD FOSTER A TEEN

1. You can provide family dinners for a teen who has never had them.
2. Teens sleep through the night. And sometimes half the morning.
3. You can provide a home to come back to, after teens go to college.
4. Teens will let you know when your old clothes are back in style.
5. You get to make a difference and see the impact you've made as your teen grows and matures.
6. Less time on the phone with tech support; your teens can help with your I.T. issues.
7. Great reason to go to all the high school football and basketball games again.
8. You won't have to read teens the same book fifteen times every night.
9. You can practice your patience, kindness and empathy.
10. Everyone deserves to be special to someone.

TEENS NEED PARENTS TOO!

IT'S TRUE that some of the items on this list are tongue-in-cheek. But having a great sense of humor is one of the best indicators of whether or not a person has what it takes to foster teens. Here's what teens have said they want from foster parents:

"PARENTS WHO WELCOME ME AS PART OF THE FAMILY."

Foster parents of teens can impact change by welcoming them into their families, treating them the same as other youth in the home. Foster children benefit from being included in your typical family routine and activities.

"PARENTS WHO SET RULES, BUT AREN'T OBSESSIVE ABOUT THEM."

Teens need stability and boundaries, but they also need to understand *the why* behind it. They are developing moral reasoning skills, and you can help them understand the rules while modeling respect and love.

"PARENTS WHO ARE GOOD LISTENERS."

When you welcome a teen in foster care into your home, you will likely be excited and look for ways to relate. But for teens in foster care, your best intentions may be overwhelming or may not connect. Foster parents have the opportunity to make a difference by building relationships with teens, listening to them, and making them feel valued and special.

“ When you choose to foster a teen, you won't just change their life...They'll change yours **FOREVER.** ”

"PARENTS WHO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING ME, AS A TEEN PARENT."

When you mentor a teen parent, you guide and support them as they learn parenting skills. Your support in increasing their knowledge and confidence as a parent can reduce the possibility their child will come into care.

"PARENTS WHO SHOW THEY CARE ABOUT MY FEELINGS, WHO TREAT ME WITH RESPECT AND KINDNESS."

Teens in foster care need nurturing adults to show them love they may have never experienced before. Your genuine caring and concern will help them develop self-esteem. It can be life-changing for a foster child to feel respected, listened to and loved.

"PARENTS WHO HOLD OUT HOPE THAT I WILL REACH MY FULL POTENTIAL."

Everyone needs a supportive adult in their lives. Teens in foster care need to know that there is an adult in their corner who will be there for them and will help them not only face, but overcome some of their challenges. They need parents who will celebrate their little successes and remind them they are not alone.

YOU are capable of inspiring foster teens and giving them hope for a bright future!

