



NATIONAL FOSTER CARE AWARENESS MONTH



Connecticut
Foster / Adopt
we all have love to give.

In collaboration with the state Department of Children and Families (DCF), I am pleased to remind all state employees that May is National Foster Care Awareness Month!

My spouse, Charles, and I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to open our home to foster children.

The experiences we've had will stay with us forever. In each instance, our home became a burst of activity – filled with laughter, tears, play time, and story time – and the rollercoaster of emotions that come with the uncertainty and excitement of each arrival and the quiet sadness of each departure.

I am so proud of fellow state employees who have opened their own homes and hearts to the experience of being foster parents, including Sarah DeMerchant. Read more about her story here: [Sarah's story](#).

To recognize National Foster Care Awareness Month, consider this:

- Fostering and adopting is a **wonderful journey**.
 - At times, it will be hard work -- but it also will be joyful.
 - The emotional reward comes from a caring, loving relationship with a child.
- The reward comes from giving a **life-changing experience and relationship** to the child and to yourself.
 - You are making a difference that matters.
 - As beneficial as it is for the child, it is also emotionally enriching for you.
- Foster and adoptive parents do it **because they love their child**.
 - Ask a foster or adoptive parent why they do it – there are nearly 2,500 families in CT – and it won't take long before that foster parent says, "I do it because I love my child."
 - Or, "I do it because it is the greatest experience in the world. My kids mean the world to me."
 - Or, "As much as I give to my child, I get even more back."
 - Simply put, it is a labor of love – or better yet, a relationship of love.
- **The state Department of Children and Families are here to support you** through licensing and, longer term, through caring for your child. They offer a subsidy to pay for the costs of caring for the child, medical insurance, respite, counseling, and even support for the costs of college or other post-high school education necessary to enable your child to grow into a successful adult. The CT Association of Foster and Adoptive Families – CAFAF – also provides steady support throughout your "foster adopt" journey.
- **What it takes:** You don't have to own your own home. Renting is fine. You just have to be financially stable and in good health. You don't have to be married, and DCF values all types of families including LGBTQ individuals. You do have to be at least 21 years old.

Once you have told DCF that you want to get licensed as a foster or adoptive parent, they start a process that involves training, background checks and a home visit to make sure you are prepared to succeed at providing a safe and loving home for a child who deserves it.

To learn more and start a wonderful journey, please call **888-KID-HERO** or visit ctfosteradopt.com.

Sincerely,

Kevin Lembo
State Comptroller