



2250 South Oneida St. Suite 200 Denver, CO 80224 ● Ph.: 303-433-1975 ● Fax: 303-433-1980  
1465 N. Union Blvd. #102 Colorado Springs, CO 80909 ● Ph: 719-344-2140 ● Fax: 445-0841  
565 N. Cleveland Ave. Loveland, CO 80537 ● Ph: 970-324-4435  
807 N. Greenwood St. Pueblo, CO 81003 ● Ph: 719-344-2140

## Dear Future Life Changer,

Thank you for your interest in becoming a foster or adoptive care provider. We at Maple Star applaud your desire to strengthen families and build brighter futures for children in our community. You can make a difference in children's lives by providing them with a caring and safe family environment. While foster care is a big commitment, the rewards are real—for the foster child and for your own family.

Maple Star is a specialized agency that provides safe, stable, and healing homes for abused and neglected children. We continually need foster parents that will care for and equip these children to live healthy and productive lives. The primary distinction between Maple Star and other agencies can be found in Maple Star's foundational emphasis on physical and emotional healing. Paramount to the healing process is an understanding of the impact of trauma. With this understanding, foster parents can create healing environments that focus on the mind-body connection and the role of the brain in trauma.

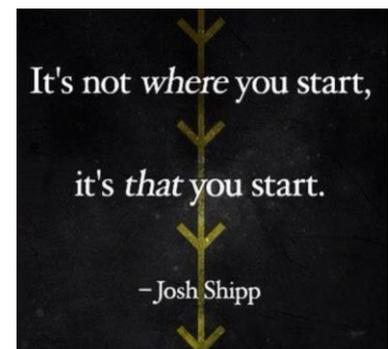
Maple Star is unique in that the entire agency approach is Trauma Informed Care. This approach aims to engage people with histories of trauma, recognize the presence of trauma symptoms, and acknowledge the role that trauma has played in their lives. As an agency our techniques and interventions are immersed in the approach of connection to promote healing. Trauma Informed Care is a person-centered response focused on improving an individuals' all around wellness rather than simply using isolation or behavioural modification techniques. The agency encourages connection during correction of misbehaviour.

Through Maple Star's educational services, potential and seasoned foster parents will receive professional training before and during the foster parenting process. Additionally, foster parents will have opportunities to meet and connect with other foster and or adoptive families. Maple Star also provides support by connecting each family with a qualified home supervisor, as well as a 24-hour available staff member for crisis assistance.

Please review the attached information and contact the Recruitment Specialist for your region with questions you may have using the contact information below

- **Northern Region** (North of Westminster): **Ronda Carlson** 970-324-4435 [ronda.carlson@pathways.com](mailto:ronda.carlson@pathways.com)
- **Central Region** (Denver Metro): **Christi Beach** 720-891-2625 [christi.beach@pathways.com](mailto:christi.beach@pathways.com)
- **Southern Region** (Castle Rock South): **Patricia Dirkson** 719-344-2140 [patricia.dirkson@pathways.com](mailto:patricia.dirkson@pathways.com)

You may also visit [www.maplestar.net](http://www.maplestar.net) to learn more. Thank you for your willingness to help children in foster care!





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## MAPLE STAR'S MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

### A RELATIONSHIP BASED MODEL

#### MISSION

We deliver exceptional value by creating healthy communities through exceptional people working side by side.

#### VISION

Maple Star's *trauma-specific* approach provides individualized and holistic services that promote wellness, durability, and healing through the context of relationship.

#### How Do We Accomplish Our Mission?

- ▶ Educational Services help potential and seasoned foster parents obtain professional training before and during the foster parenting process.
- ▶ Understanding and teaching the impact of trauma & healing so Foster Parents can create healing environments that focus on the mind-body connection and the role of the brain in trauma.
- ▶ By providing ongoing support by connecting each family with a qualified home supervisor, as well as a 24 hour available staff member for crisis assistance.
- ▶ By providing opportunities for foster families to meet and connect with other foster and/or adoptive families

Maple Star uses a strengths-based model, finding strengths in everyone. This includes birth parents, children, foster parents, staff, and other professionals. We recognize individual resources as well as abilities, skills, knowledge, and potential within our families and foster children- working with them to utilize these strengths to build a solid foundation for healing and growth.

Maple Star strives to assist young people to achieve social integration and prepare them to live in a democratic society by serving as an alternative to institutional care and providing opportunities to live in family settings.

This will be accomplished to the extent that we can assist young people in our care to move towards the following outcome goals necessary for adult living in a democratic society. As an adult the person will:

1. Work and be self-supporting.
2. Actively participate in the community, including voluntary associations, recreational interest groups, religious organizations, or other community organizations, and includes contributing to the benefit of the overall community.
3. Respect the rights of other, appreciate difference, and avoid victimizing others through illegal behavior.
4. Live in a family or other intimate relationship where one gives and takes emotional support.
5. Manage personal and household matters including budgets, cleaning, shopping, cooking, and laundry.
6. Accept responsibility for one's own behavior including taking steps to make amends for mistakes and omissions.



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These are long term outcome goals. Maple Star services will contribute to assisting young people to accomplish these goals. Youths who emancipate from Maple Star programs into interdependent adult living will be relatively skillful in all of these areas. Youth who are discharged to some permanency plan other than emancipation should be further along towards accomplishing these outcomes than when they came into the Maple Star program but they cannot be expected to have sufficient skills to fully accomplish the goals.

**Maple Star holds two intermediate goals for serving youth placed in Maple Star families.**

1. Enhancing the probability of a stable placement  
&
2. Enhancing the probability of personal growth.

These goals can best be accomplished by focusing on the integration of young persons into families, neighborhoods, and networks of social relationships in the larger community. Young people should not be segregated and isolated from communities. They should not be dealt with as passive and dependent but, instead, as active and responsible members of the service team. Surrounding young people with professionals paid to provide various services to them could have the effect of isolating the young people from peers, neighbors, families, and the social networks making up communities.

**As previously mentioned Maple Star builds on strengths rather than segregating and isolating young people and emphasizes:**

- Increasing strengths by identifying interests and skills and assisting youths to develop these.
- Increasing opportunities for social relationships by helping young people make connections through families, neighbors, fellow students and workers, and by participating in recreational, interest, and cultural groups.
- Increasing the variety of social connections so that young people have opportunities to interact in a variety of different types of groups, including peers, family members, neighbors, interest group participants, and so on.
- Increasing the continuity of relationships. Many of the young people placed in treatment foster care have experienced several disruptions of relationships over many years. Placement stability is a major focus for Maple Star work. This is accomplished by bringing necessary resources to bear on placements and emphasizing the importance of young people becoming more socially integrated with families, neighbors, and other members of their communities.
- Increasing closeness of relationships. Maple Star emphasized the importance of assisting young people to have feelings of being close to others, of warmth, and of intimacy.
- Increasing opportunities for young people to make active, positive contributions to their communities and expecting young people to contribute to community betterment.

## PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

Social integration is accomplished with these practices and principles:

**Service Teams:** Individual service teams are responsible for developing and monitoring service plans for each youth. Each service team consists of the youth, family care providers, Maple Star social worker, relatives and family members of the youth, a worker from the agency with legal responsibility for the youth and, as appropriate, representatives of other community service organizations providing services to the youth. The service teams meet at least quarterly. Each meeting results in a written plan outlining the service arrangements for the next three months and clearly specifies responsibilities of all members of the service team for carrying out the service plan.

**Normalization:** Service plans are directed towards creating environments in which youths may live as normally as possible, develop new skills, and meet developmental tasks appropriate to age and ability. This includes providing training and support to family care providers so they may react to inappropriate behaviors in ways designed to decrease these behaviors.

**Community Support Networks:** Youths are involved in activities designed to develop and strengthen networks of community support. These will include recreational and community activities as well as activities by which youths contribute to the good of the community.

**Reducing Stigma:** Activities that label or stigmatize youths are avoided; efforts are made to reduce the harmful effects of past labeling and stigmatization practices.

**Inclusive Care:** Inclusive care refers to practices to bring about the inclusion of family members of youths, including birth parents, as active participants in the process of providing care. Regular communication and participation will occur among youths, birth parents, and family care providers.

**Continuity of Care and Relationships:** Changes in placement are disruptive and harmful for human development. Efforts are made to prevent changes in placement and to assure continuity of care and relationships. When disruptions do occur, the preference is to maintain communications between the youth and family care providers and to return the youth to the care provider's home whenever possible.

**Commitment and Responsibility:** All participants are expected to engage in open communications with each other, to commit themselves to the service plan, to take responsibility for following through on their commitments, and to develop skills to confront participants who do not follow through on their commitments. Confronting is non-assaultive and without rejection.



## Is Specialized Foster Parenting and Adoption for Me?



1. What are the reasons why I want to foster or adopt?
2. Can you love freely and easily?
3. Are you secure in yourself and in your parenting abilities?
4. Can you set clear expectations and be firm, yet understanding in your discipline?
5. Are you willing to seek help when the “right” answers to a problem are not obvious?
6. Can you love the child who, because of an overwhelming fear of rejection, cannot love you back?
7. Can you tolerate major failures and glory in small successes?
8. Can you maintain a positive attitude toward a foster child’s parents even though many of the problems the child is experiencing relate to their actions?
9. Can you help the child to develop a sense of belonging in your home even though the stay may be temporary?
10. Can you function as a team member along with the case manager and possibly the child’s biological parent(s) with the constant focus of what is best for the child?
11. Are you interested in learning on a continuing basis all you can about being a foster parent or adoptive parent?
12. Can you love with all your heart, and then let go?
13. Do you have an active support system willing to learn with you?
14. Is adoption more about me or the child I will welcome into my family?
15. How will I respond if things don’t turn out as I have planned after I bring my child home?
16. Are there issues in my past such as unresolved grief, loss, abuse, or trauma that I have not adequately dealt with? If so, how do I plan to address and deal with those issues?
17. What are you hoping to receive as becoming a foster or adoptive parent?

### What we're looking for...

- Stability
  - Healthy and safe physical environment
  - Emotionally and physically healthy
  - **FLEXIBILITY**
  - Enjoys challenging experiences
  - Good sense of humor
  - **PATIENT and NURTURING**
  - Willingness to continue learning and growing, attending on-going training

### Flexibility and Foster Parents...

- Must be willing to transport children to doctor visits, birth parent visits, school conferences, etc.
- Willingness to work as a member of a team with caseworkers, Maple Star staff, GALs, and open your home to other service team professionals working in the best interest of the child.

### Behaviors Seen in Foster Children...

- Physical, emotional, behavioral, academic delays
- Eating disorders
- Night terrors/Sleeping disorders
- Sexually acting out
- No boundaries
- Aggression/Destructive behaviors
- Anger/Defiance
- Severe Temper Tantrums
- Hyper-vigilant: overly friendly or withdrawn

### Choices and Decisions Foster Parents Make...

- What age, gender, ethnicity, and number of children
- What behaviors you can handle and what you can't
- **REMEMBER:** A lot of times we don't know a lot of information about children coming into foster care and foster parents have to be prepared to handle the unknown

### Maple Star Supports/Resources for foster parents...

- 24/7 on-call Maple Star staff
- Online Maple Star Foster Family Network
- Support Group/Training
- Free Sam's Club Membership
- Community Resource List





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## Who Would I Be Working With & Why?

Again, we thank you for your interest in becoming a Foster Parent with Maple Star Colorado! We would like to take a moment of your time to introduce you the stages of the licensing process and who you would be working with through each step of your journey with us!

### **Stage 1: Recruitment**

Your first contact with Maple Star will be with one of our **recruitment staff members**. Their role with you will be to:

- Provide you with all of your initial paperwork, including:
  - This introduction packet (what you are reviewing right now)
  - The application packet (provided at first visit)
  - The licensing packet (provided/reviewed at trainings)
- Provide/complete the trainings required prior to licensure
- Complete a Home Inspection (final visit)
- Request Home Study

### **Stage 2: Home Study**

The next person you will be involved with will be the individual assigned to complete your Home Study, aka the **Home Study Practitioner**.

- Once your Home Study is completed it will be sent to a **Maple Star Supervisor** who will then approve it.
- Once your Home Study is approved, all licensing paperwork will be submitted to the State of Colorado & you will be issued a Provider Number.
- The **Foster Care Director** will contact you to congratulate your certification, discuss future placement preferences, and inform you what Home Supervisor has been assigned to your home.

### **Stage 3: Being a Foster Parent!**

As a Foster Parent you will have a **Home Supervisor**, who is a social worker assigned to work with your home on an on-going basis. Their role will be to support you in any way possible, and to conduct regular home visits with you and any children placed in your home.

- Once certified, your **Home Supervisor** will contact you to set up an introductory meeting to get to know each other and to familiarize you with all other paperwork.
- Once you are ready to begin getting placements, you will be in regular contact with the **Foster Care Director**, who also has the responsibility of finding children who are the right fit for your home. The **Foster Care Director** will discuss possible placements for you to consider, and finalize all placements for your home.

### **In Addition to working with *Maple Star* Team Members:**

The team of people involved in your child's life can include:

- Birth parents and other members of the birth family such as relatives & siblings.

- Educators, medical professionals, caseworkers, therapists, physicians, daycare workers
- Members of the legal system including judges, legal guardians/GALs, and court appointed special advocates. (CASA volunteers)

*Ideally*, every member of the team should be striving for the same goals: your child’s safety & well-being, and the development and maintenance of a positive and stable home.

Each member of the team has distinct roles and responsibilities in the system, which can come across as them all having a different “agenda”.

Some members of the team may have close, positive relationships with your child. Others may not be very active or engaged with your child. Others may be a source of conflict and stress.

It is unlikely that many members of your child’s team will be trauma-informed. Many professionals working with the child welfare system (and even the mental health system) are not trained to understand trauma or view your child through a “trauma lens”- that is one of the things that makes Maple Star so great and effective with these kids!!

**Thank you again, and welcome to Foster Parenting!**





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## Am I Willing and Prepared to Foster or Foster to Adopt?

At Maple Star we believe it is **critically important** that parents who are preparing to adopt or foster a child must be **honest** and **realistic** about the journey and the **challenges** that lie ahead. Those willing to embark on this journey must realistically consider the **changes** and **sacrifice** that lay ahead in order to provide a safe haven of security for healing. (Empowered to Connect, 2010)

The following questions are designed to help caregivers begin to honestly assess the journey ahead...and what it will require. We encourage you to thoughtfully consider these questions. They are not meant to scare you or in any way discourage you from continuing on this amazing path. Instead, our desire is simply that these questions will point you toward the hope and help that you need to form a strong and lasting connection with a child as you follow the call of your heart. (Empowered to Connect, 2010)

1. Are you willing to acknowledge and fully embrace the child's history, including that which you know and that which you will likely never know?
2. Are you willing to accept that the child has been affected by his/her history, possibly in profound ways, and as a result that you will need to parent this child in a way that exhibits true compassion and promotes connection and healing?
3. Are you willing to parent differently than how you were parented, how you have parented in the past, or how your friends parent their children? Are you willing to "un-learn" certain parenting strategies and approaches that may not be effective with a child, even if you have used these strategies and approaches successfully with your or other children in the past?
4. Are you willing to educate yourself, your family and friends on an ongoing basis in order to promote understanding of the child's needs and how best to meet those needs?
5. Are you willing to be misunderstood, criticized and even judged by others who do not understand the child's history, the impacts of that history and how you have been called to love and connect with a child in order to help him/her heal and become a person who identifies as worthy, esteemed, capable, and loved?
6. Are you prepared to advocate for your child's needs, including at school, church, in extracurricular settings and otherwise, in order to create predictability and promote environments that enable the child to feel safe and allow him/her to succeed?
7. Are you willing to sacrifice your own convenience, expectations and desires in order to connect with a child and help him/her heal, even if that process is measured in years, not months?
8. Are you willing to fully embrace your child's holistic needs, including his/her physical, emotional, relational and spiritual needs?
9. Are you willing to seek ongoing support and maintain long-term connection with others who understand your journey and the challenges that you face? Are you willing to intentionally seek and accept help when you encounter challenges with a child that you are not equipped to adequately deal with?



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10. Are you willing to acknowledge that you as a parent bring a great deal to the equation when it comes to how a child will attach and connect? Are you willing to honestly examine (on an ongoing basis) your motivations and expectations relating to your foster or adoptions journey? Are you willing to look at your own past (including your past losses and trauma, both big and small) and consider how your past may impact your interactions with your child? Are you willing to consistently examine your role as parent as you experience challenges and difficulties along the journey?

As you read through the previous questions, you may have concluded that some of the questions didn't apply to you and your situation? That may be the case to some extent, as every adoption and foster care experience is unique. However, we encourage you to spend some time reading and talking with other experienced adoptive and foster parents about what you should realistically expect as you travel this journey. We find that parents sometimes start with less than accurate assumptions about how the adoption or foster care journey will unfold, and as a result they are more likely to form unrealistic expectations. We believe that these questions are helpful and instructive for *all* parents considering or pursuing adoption and foster care, and we hope that as you work through them they will lead you toward greater insight and understanding. (Empowered to Connect, 2010)

While the last set of questions lead you to reflect on willingness and preparedness on a deeper level, these additional food for thought questions to help determine if this journey is the right fit for your life.

## Is Specialized Foster Parenting RIGHT for Me?

18. What are the reasons why I want to foster or adopt?
19. Can you love freely and easily?
20. Are you secure in yourself and in your parenting abilities?
21. Can you set clear expectations and be firm, yet understanding in your discipline?
22. Are you willing to seek help when the “right” answers to a problem are not obvious?
23. Can you love the child who, because of an overwhelming fear of rejection, cannot love you back?
24. Can you tolerate major failures and glory in small successes?
25. Can you maintain a positive attitude toward a foster child’s parents even though many of the problems the child is experiencing relate to their actions?
26. Can you help the child to develop a sense of belonging in your home even though the stay may be temporary?
27. Can you function as a team member along with the case manager and possibly the child’s biological parent(s) with the constant focus of what is best for the child?
28. Are you interested in learning on a continuing basis all you can about being a foster parent or adoptive parent?
29. Can you love with all your heart, and then let go?
30. Do you have an active support system willing to learn with you?
31. Is your work able or willing to grant you more flexibility in your schedule to accommodate needs of a foster child?
32. Is adoption more about me or the child I will welcome into my family?
33. How will I respond if things don’t turn out as I have planned after I bring my child home?
34. Are there issues in my past such as unresolved grief, loss, abuse, or trauma that I have not adequately dealt with? If so, how do I plan to address and deal with those issues?
35. What are you hoping to receive as becoming a foster or adoptive parent?



## Feelings, Behaviors, and Relationships

By: Heather T. Forbes, LCSW author of “Beyond Consequences, Logic, and Control”

[www.BeyondConsequences.com](http://www.BeyondConsequences.com)

Children need unconditional love and unconditional acceptance from their parents; we all know this and believe this. However, do we ever stop to consider how so many of the traditional parenting techniques accepted in our culture work contrary to this primal goal? Traditional parenting techniques that involve consequences, controlling directives, and punishment are fear-based and fear-driven. They have the ability to undermine the parent-child relationship and because they are tied into behavior, children easily interpret these actions to mean, “If I’m not good, I am not lovable.” Thus, children often build a subconscious foundation that says that love and approval is based off of performance.

Parenting from a love-based paradigm means going beyond our children’s behavior and beyond consequences to first see that negative behavior is a form of communication and that negative behavior is a response to stress. If we see the kicking and screaming child as one who is having difficulty regulating due to an overflow of feelings, we can learn to stay present with the child in order to help him modulate these feelings and thus, help him to build his emotional regulatory system. A child kicking and screaming or in a rage is a child who has been “emotionally hijacked”. Emotions are not logical or rational; this hitting and kicking is the body's natural fear reaction gone awry.

Allowing a child emotional space to safely dissipate this energy will then allow him to calm down. As we provide reassurance, unconditional love, and emotional presence for our children, the need to kick and scream will disappear. Many times our children kick and scream simply because they do not feel that they are being listened to nor do they feel as if they have been heard. Staying present and reassuring a child that you really are listening to him, can be enough to help them begin to regulate. The life lesson that kicking and screaming is inappropriate does indeed need to be reinforced. But, this life lesson can only happen once the child is fully regulated (when the child is calm) and his cognitive thinking is intact. This is also the time to present alternatives to kicking and screaming. This is a way of teaching our children instead of punishing them. The definition of discipline is to teach. The more we can stay focused on the relationship with our child and strengthening this relationship instead of controlling it through consequences, the more we will be helping our child learn to work through their stress appropriately. Below are four pointers to help you stay in a loving and emotionally open place for your children:

Just Be Happy!—But I’m not! Did anyone ever tell you, “Just think happy thoughts and it will be okay.”? Did it really work? Probably not. Emotions do not simply disappear. If feelings are not released and acknowledged, they are stored and become part of our physical make-up. Research has convincingly shown that being able to express feelings like anger and grief can improve survival rates in cancer patients. With our children, feelings that become stored and “stuffed” become activators for negative behaviors.

## Feelings, Behaviors, and Relationships continued

ALL Feelings are Good Feelings - As parents, it is important for us to understand the necessity of emotional expression, both in teaching it to our children and in modeling it to our children. Blocked feelings can inhibit growth, learning, and the building of a trusting relationship between the parent and child. The first step to take is to recognize that ALL emotions are healthy. In our culture, feelings such as joy, peace, and courage are seen as good feelings, yet feelings such as sad, mad, and scared are seen as bad feelings. Let's rethink this to understand that it is not the feeling itself that creates negativity; it is the lack of expression of the feeling that creates negativity. And in children, this negativity is often expressed through poor behaviors.

Getting to the Core of the Behavior – When children are acting out and being defiant, we need to begin to understand that their behaviors are simply a communication of an emotional state that is driving these behaviors. If we simply address the behavior, we miss the opportunity to help children express and understand themselves from a deeper level. Start by modeling basic feeling words to your child. Keep it simple and teach the five basic feeling words: sad, mad, bad, scared, and happy. Even the youngest of children can learn to say, “I’m mad!” When the toddler is throwing his toys or the teenager is throwing his backpack across the room, encourage him at that moment to get to the core of the behavior through emotional expression. Remember...it really isn't about the toys or the backpack; and they really do know better than to do the negative behaviors.

Responding vs. Reacting – So the next time your child becomes defiant, talks back, or is simply “ugly” to you, work to be in a place not to react to the behavior, but respond to your child. Respond to your child in an open way—open to meeting him in his heart and helping him understand the overload of feelings that are driving the behaviors. He doesn't need a consequence or another parental directive at that moment; he just needs you to be present with him. As your children learn to respond back to you through the parent-child relationship, they won't have the need to communicate through negative behaviors anymore. You'll both have more energy for each other, building a relationship that will last a lifetime.

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(This article is based off the book “Beyond Consequences, Logic, and Control.”

Visit our website at [www.beyondconsequences.com](http://www.beyondconsequences.com))

### **About the Author:**

Heather T. Forbes, LCSW

Heather Forbes, LCSW, is the co-founder of the Beyond Consequences Institute, LLC. Ms. Forbes has been training in the field of trauma and attachment with nationally recognized, first-generation attachment therapists since 1999. She has been active in the field of adoption with experience ranging from pre-adoption to post-adoption clinical work. Ms. Forbes is an internationally published author, with her most recent book titled, *Beyond Consequences, Logic, and Control: A Love-based Approach for Helping Attachment-Challenged Children with Severe Behaviors*, endorsed by Sir Richard Bowlby, son of John Bowlby. As a speaker, her passion for families is known throughout the nation. Ms. Forbes consults and coaches both nationally and internationally with families struggling with children with severe behaviors. Much of her experience and insight on understanding trauma, disruptive behaviors, and attachment related issues has come from her direct mothering experience of her two adopted children.



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## COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT BECOMING A SPECIALIZED FOSTER PARENT

- Question:** What type of youth is likely to be referred to Maple Star for placement in specialized foster care?

**Answer:** Many youth are placed in foster care because of abuse and neglect. In addition, a wide variety of youth who have experienced difficulties in living in a responsible manner within the community will be referred to Maple Star. These youth will require guidance, supervision, and direction in learning more appropriate ways to cope with life. We accept referrals for children and youth between the ages of birth and 18 years.
- Question:** Can foster children share a bedroom with my own child?

**Answer:** Yes; however, it is preferred that foster children have their own bedroom. There must be 40 square feet of floor space for foster children in the bedroom. If two children are in the room, then the room must measure 80 sq. ft., three children 120 sq. ft., and so on. We prefer to have a maximum of two children per room.
- Question:** How many foster children can be in the home?

**Answer:** There can be four foster children placed in the home, and the maximum number of children in each home is eight, to include biological and adopted children. Exceptions are made for sibling groups.
- Question:** What characteristics regarding the child placements does the agency allow families to specify (e.g., gender, age, etc.)?

**Answer:** Specifications include age, gender, number of children, sibling size, race, religious preference, behaviors and special needs.
- Question:** What role do foster parents play in deciding which children will come to live in their homes?

**Answer:** Specialized foster parents will have the opportunity to receive all information about the children being considered for placement in their home. The final decision about whether a particular child comes to live with a family is a joint decision agreed upon by the child (in some cases), the foster family, and the Maple Star Placement Supervisor.
- Question:** What is your highest need?

**Answer:** Ages 6-18, sibling groups, and high need populations such as medically fragile.
- Question:** I am with another agency. How would it work if I wanted to switch to Maple Star?

**Answer:** The Licensing Specialist would contact your current agency, with your permission, to request information on your experience as a foster parent. Background checks would have to be redone, as they are agency specific. Pre-service training is valid as long as a certificate is provided. Previous first aid and CPR certification will be accepted if it is up-to-date.
- Question:** I am with another agency and want to come to Maple Star and maintain the foster children that are currently in my home.

**Answer:** Maple Star will discuss the foster parent's situation as a team. The foster parent has to leave their agency on amicable terms, and even if the agency is not in support, the county caseworker must



2250 South Oneida St. Suite 200 Denver, CO 80224 ● Ph.: 303-433-1975 ● Fax: 303-433-1980  
1465 N. Union Blvd. #102 Colorado Springs, CO 80909 ● Ph: 719-344-2140 ● Fax: 445-0841  
565 N. Cleveland Ave. Loveland, CO 80537 ● Ph: 970-324-4435  
807 N. Greenwood St. Pueblo, CO 81003 ● Ph: 719-344-2140

give unanimous support. An appeal will have to be filed by Maple Star, and the previous agency must be willing to maintain the family until the family has completely transferred to Maple Star.

9. **Question:** Does Maple Star do adoptions?

**Answer:** Yes, however adoptions done through Maple Star are from the foster care system. Applicants have to be willing to adopt from foster care, as we do not do private adoptions.

10. **Question:** Does Maple Star have respite homes?

**Answer:** Maple Star does not license homes to do respite care only. Our providers exchange services or have family and friends who have already committed to doing respite for them.

11. **Question:** What kind of support is available from Maple Star for families doing this work?

**Answer:** A Maple Star Home Supervisor with a Bachelor's or Master's degree in social work is available to provide monitoring and consultation services to family care providers. There is a staff member available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for on-call crisis support. Maple Star also facilitates monthly support group meetings which care providers are expected to attend. The primary purpose for these group meetings is to give and receive emotional support, guidance and training.

12. **Question:** What compensation will I receive for providing care through Maple Star?

**Answer:** Maple Star families are compensated based on the level of care that the child requires. This compensation averages \$500-\$700 per month per child. In addition, families are provided with respite pay amounting to one day of respite for every 15 days of care provided per month. Maple Star also provides each foster family with a free membership to Sam's Club.

13. **Question:** What if I have a DUI or DWAI?

**Answer:** If the charges are recent, within the year, more than likely you would not be approved for foster care. If the charges are more than two years old, then it will be considered on a case by case basis. If the charges are shown on the fingerprint background check, you will need to produce a disposition of charges from the county court and write a letter of explanation. The decision to license will be discussed by the entire Maple Star team.

14. **Question:** My partner or spouse has a criminal record. Can I still do foster care?

**Answer:** If your spouse has been convicted of a felony, it is more than likely they will be unable to do foster care. Misdemeanors are examined on a case by case basis.

15. **Question:** What are the main steps involved in becoming licensed with Maple Star as a family care provider?

**Answer:** The main steps include:

- Complete a Maple Star application to become a family care provider
- Complete a fingerprint-based criminal record check for each adult who will have regular contact with children placed in the foster family home
- Complete a child abuse registry check with the state
- Family members meet with a Maple Star Licensing Specialist who will inspect the home using a Home Health and Safety Checklist
- In order to be licensed with Maple Star, each prospective family care provider must complete 9.5 hours of State Core Training, 18 hours of Maple Star specific training, as well as become Infant, Child and Adult, CPR/First Aid certified.