



Offering a full continuum of services for children, adolescents, adults and families

- Outpatient Individual, Family and Group Therapy
- Intensive Outpatient Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services
- Special Education and Evaluation
- In-home and Community-Based Services
- Crisis Intervention and Stabilization
- Specialized Foster Care Programs
- Home-like Residential Care
- Community Justice and Court Diversion Education Programs
- Connecticut Clearinghouse
- Employee Assistance Program
- Prevent Child Abuse Connecticut
- Early Childhood Programs
- Prevention, Education and Training Programs



Wheeler Clinic A non-profit, multi-service behavioral health agency serving children, adolescents, adults and families throughout Connecticut

Funded By the Department of Children and Families

Accredited by The Joint Commission

Program Contact Wheeler Clinic's Foster Care Program can be reached by calling **860.793.4461** or **toll-free at 888.793.3500**.

91 Northwest Drive
Plainville, Connecticut 06062
1.888.793.3500
Fax: 1.860.793.4468
www.wheelerclinic.org

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Foster Care Program



You Can Make a Difference
in the Life of a Child.



Our Goal

Wheeler Clinic's foster care program is designed to meet the needs of children who have been placed in the care of the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF). These children, ages 5 and up, are under state care for a variety of reasons including neglect, abuse or abandonment. Children removed from their homes have special needs; their lives have been disrupted. Foster parents are needed to help them feel safe, understand their unique strengths and personalities and heal from trauma. Our team of experts coordinates services for children of all age groups and backgrounds. It is our goal to provide a safe, nurturing home and a structured environment for children.

The Importance of Foster Families

Foster parents are people who open their hearts and homes. They are families helping families by providing physical, emotional, and social needs to special children in a substitute family setting. Foster parents represent different ages, backgrounds, races, religions, and income levels. They may be single or married, employed or at home. Foster families make a difference in the life of a child by helping them build a brighter future.

Expectations of Foster Parents

Foster parents are part of a therapeutic team of providers including Wheeler Clinic and DCF. Parents are expected to undertake certain responsibilities, including:

- Complying with the child's treatment plan
- Making a commitment to the child
- Advocating for the child's special needs with the school system
- Participating in therapeutic services when needed
- Participating in training sessions
- Monitoring medications as needed
- Integrating the child into community events



How Do I Become A Foster Parent?

Families interested in becoming foster parents are required to attend an initial screening. It is at this time that the foster care program learns more about potential foster families and families learn more about the therapeutic foster care program. Families able to make a commitment to children with behavioral, emotional or social impairments will be invited to begin the process to join the treatment team.

What are the Requirements?

The assessment process includes attendance at pre-service training classes, interviews and a home study. The meetings also offer an opportunity to learn more about the program, ask questions and discuss specific issues. These sessions prepare a family for situations that may arise during placement.

Additionally, families need to submit references, health records, financial information, and background checks including information from state and local police and the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Other reports may also be required.

How Long is the Approval Process?

An applicant can be approved in as little as two months provided all paperwork, home study and training is complete.



How are Children Matched to Foster Families?

Once the assessment is complete and the requirements are met, the Foster Care Team takes care to thoughtfully match families and children. During the interview process, we discuss what type of child would best fit into your home. Once a child and family have been matched, a visitation/transition period begins. Visits gradually increase until full-time placement occurs.

What Types of Support are Offered?

The Connecticut Department of Children and Families covers medical, dental, and therapeutic services and other necessary expenses. Foster families receive a monthly stipend for care and board provided.

Wheeler Clinic appoints a case manager to each family to help with the unique needs of the child. We also provide on-call support services 24 hours a day, as well as support groups and trainings to help parents effectively deal with challenging behaviors.

What is the Time Commitment?

Most children stay with their foster families for a period of six months to two years. This is determined by the team and agreed upon by the foster parents. This offers the children an opportunity to achieve emotional and behavioral stability before returning to their biological families or moving into permanent homes. Should the child become available for adoption and the placement is stable, foster parents are given the opportunity to adopt the child.

For More Information

Call the Wheeler Clinic Foster Care Program at (860) 793-4461 or log on to the website at www.wheelerclinic.org.