



Zorg en Jeugd Caribisch Nederland  
Ministerie van Volksgezondheid,  
Welzijn en Sport

# Every child deserves a safe home

Become a foster parent!



Every child should grow up in a healthy and safe environment with love and structure. Unfortunately this is not the case for all children. For those children we are looking for foster parents; caring, patient and warm people who can take care of someone else's child for a certain period of time. Sometimes for a weekend or even a month. In some cases a foster home may be needed for a longer period.

Would you like to contribute to making a child feel safe and appreciated? If you become a foster parent, you can make a difference in a person's life.



## You can become a foster parent too

As a foster parent you can provide a home to children who currently live in difficult circumstances. Sometimes for a short time, sometimes for a few months or longer. Anyone from the age of 21 can become a foster parent. Most important is that you can offer structure, warmth and safety to a child, but also respect his parents. Together with them, and supervised by Youth Care (Jeugdzorg), you're helping in building a child's future together.

## What is foster care?

Every child has the right to grow up in a family. Sometimes the situation at home is complicated, which makes it temporarily impossible for a child to live at home. Initially, Youth Care will look at the possibilities within the family's network first. If there is no alternative within the family, the child will be placed in a foster family. This form of care is called foster care and is most similar to a natural family situation which is the most comfortable for a child. Foster parents then take over the care for the child for a short or longer period of time.

**“ I'm a foster parent because I strongly felt that I wanted to take care of a child. The biggest challenge is to understand the traumas that foster children have experienced. That requires patience. But when I see his self-confidence grow, and my foster child feels better about himself, then that is a great reward for me. ”**



## Why is foster care needed?

Deciding to place a child in foster care doesn't just happen overnight. Often the family gets help if the child still lives with the parents. If this does not work sufficiently and the development and/or safety of the child is in danger, foster care could be an option.

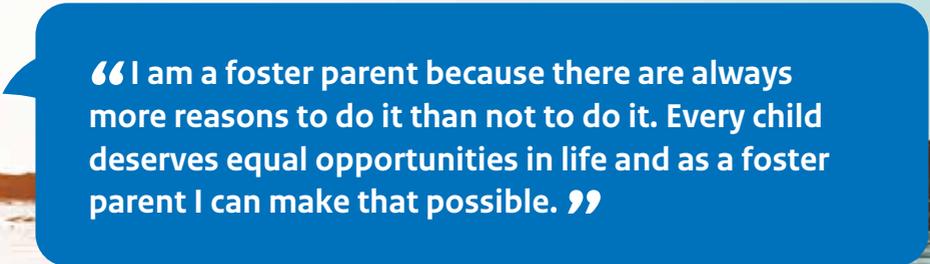
Foster care can be used for many different reasons. For example, because the parents can't cope with the upbringing for a while or because of illness. Then it is better for the child - and often also for the parents - when the child temporarily lives with another family.

## Types of foster care

There are various types of foster care: for short or longer periods of time, for seven days a week or one day or part of a week, for weekends and holidays or during crisis situations. Which type of foster care is used depends on the situation of the child and of their family's needs.

Youth Care will always look for a solution that is best for the child. Contact with the biological parents will be maintained, if possible.

As a foster parent, you decide which type of care you choose: weekends, holidays, short or long-term foster care. This makes it possible to combine foster care with your personal situation.



**“I am a foster parent because there are always more reasons to do it than not to do it. Every child deserves equal opportunities in life and as a foster parent I can make that possible. ”**

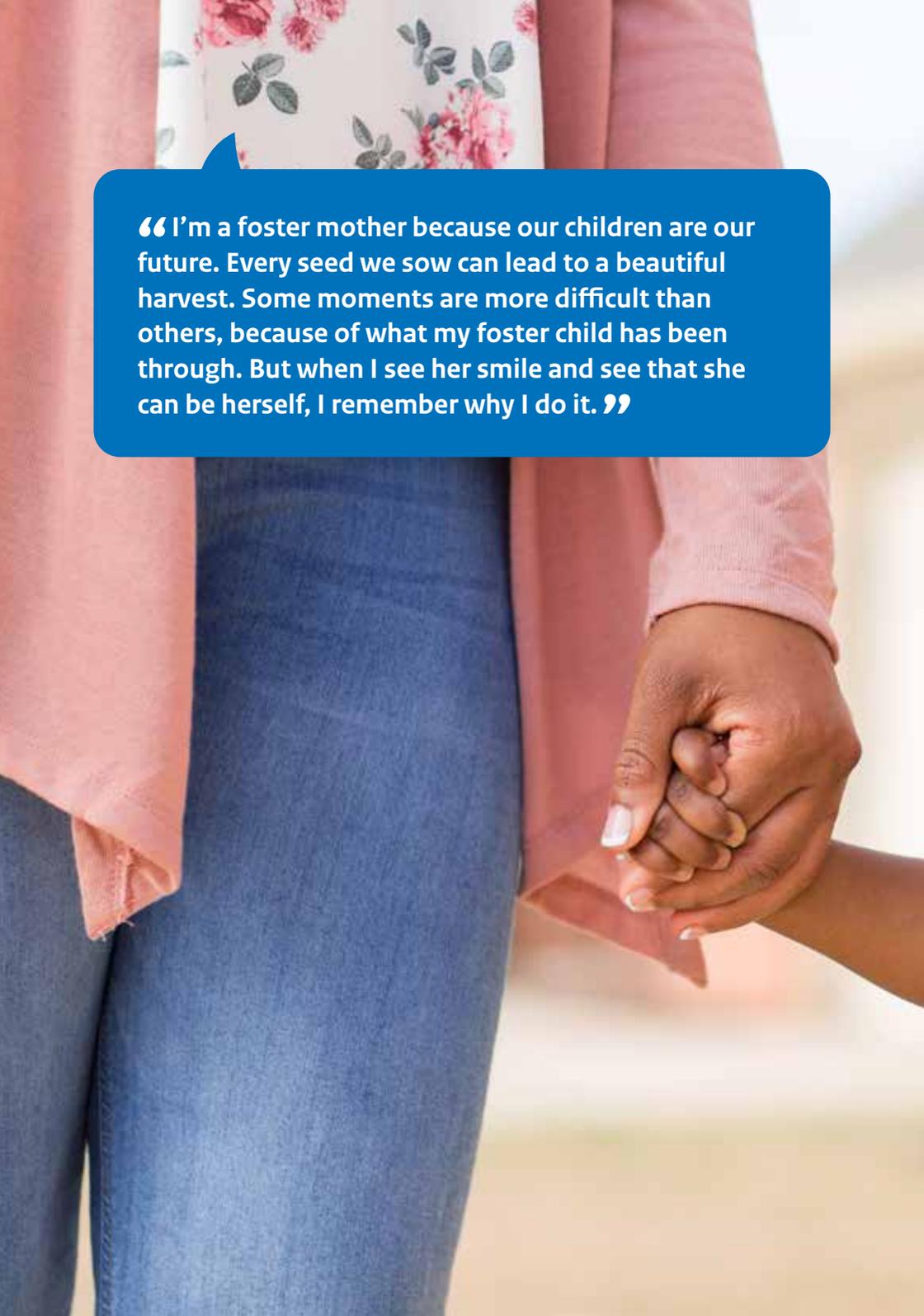
## **Foster parents are not alone**

Youth Care supports you in foster parenting. Together with you and the biological family, we draw up a plan of action for the child. The professional of Youth Care is also the point of contact for questions and will support you in practical matters. In case of specific problems, a child psychologist or psychiatrist can offer specialized guidance.

Furthermore, Youth Care organizes training courses and thematic meetings about current topics especially for foster parents. Three times a year there is the ‘Pleegzorgcafé’ (Foster Care Café) where foster parents share their experiences and gain new knowledge.

## **Foster care allowance**

As a foster parent you have extra costs. That is why you will receive a compensation for the costs of caring for the foster child. With this allowance, you can pay for all the costs of the foster child, for example school supplies, food and drinks, sports contribution, pocket money and maybe even going on holidays. The height of the allowance depends on the age of the foster child.



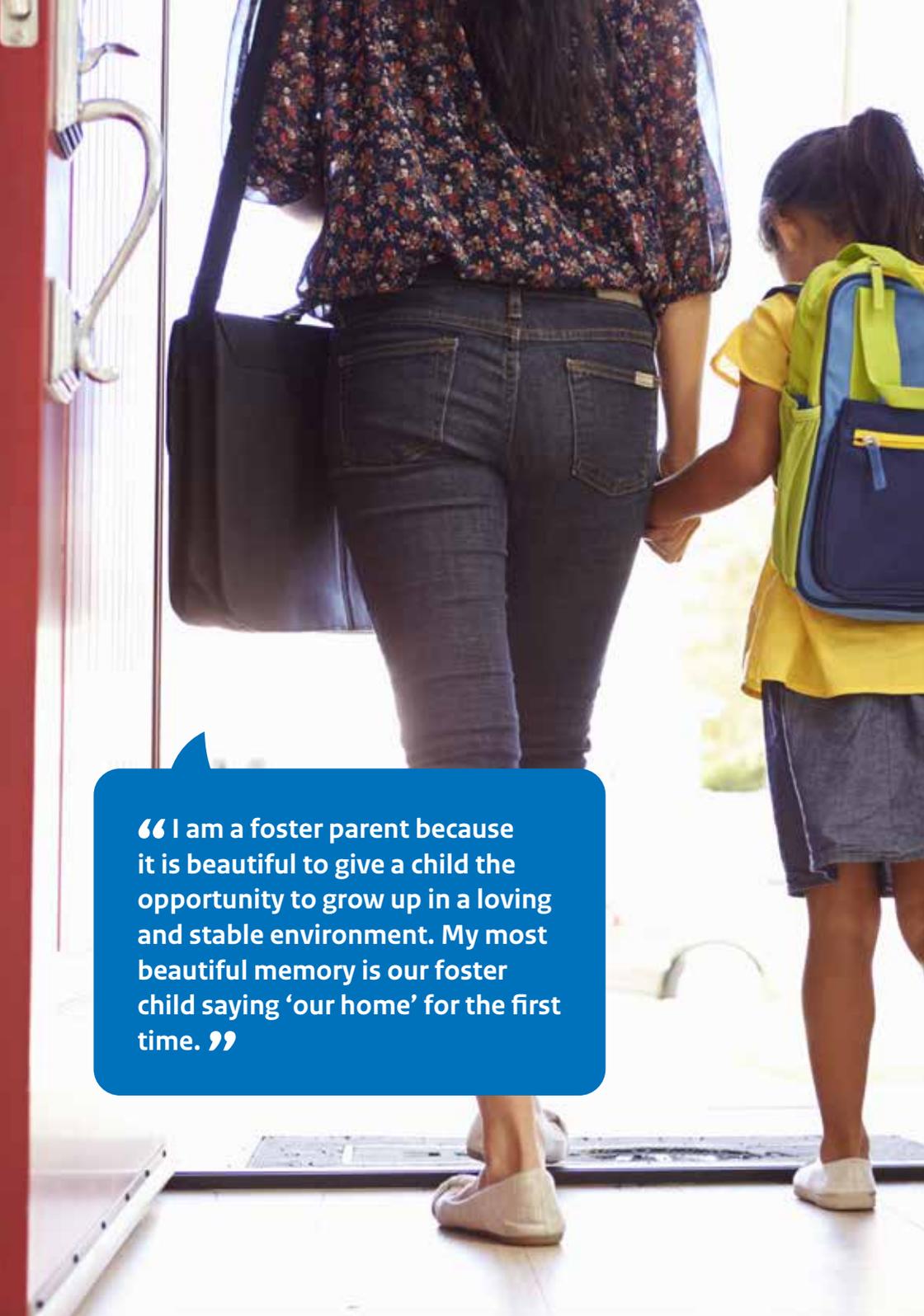
“ I’m a foster mother because our children are our future. Every seed we sow can lead to a beautiful harvest. Some moments are more difficult than others, because of what my foster child has been through. But when I see her smile and see that she can be herself, I remember why I do it. ”



## How can I become a foster parent?

If you want to become a foster parent, the following conditions apply:

- You are at least 21 years of age;
- You are able to submit a Certificate of Good Behaviour (Verklaring Omtrent Gedrag, VOG) every year;
- Youth Care requests a Declaration of No Objection (Verklaring van Geen Bezwaar, VGB) at the Guardianship Council;
- You must participate in a screening organized by Youth Care, consisting of informative conversations, interviews and a home visit;
- You can indicate to whom references can be requested, for instance, from the school if you already have a child at (primary) school, or from family, friends, employer and so on. The information provided by references will always be discussed with you;
- You must participate in the preparation training for aspiring foster parents, organized by Youth Care. This training will take three half days. In this training you will learn about various themes related to foster care, such as backgrounds and development of foster children, bonding, behavior problems and contact with biological parents;
- You are willing to cooperate with Youth Care and offer support in the implementation of the action plan for your foster child.



**“ I am a foster parent because it is beautiful to give a child the opportunity to grow up in a loving and stable environment. My most beautiful memory is our foster child saying ‘our home’ for the first time. ”**

# When can I become

## **You offer a child a stable and safe environment**

A foster placement can be drastic for a child. In addition, foster children often have experienced tensions or difficult situations and often are far behind in school. It is therefore important to provide a stable and safe living environment, so that the child feels safe and protected. You raise without expecting anything in return.

## **You raise a child without hurting him or her**

It is essential that you do not use physical or mental violence. You give the child attention and love, and often you help the child to change his behavior. Foster children have often been harmed due to difficult events in their lives. It is very important to break this cycle and ensure that foster children regain confidence in adults and learn to resolve conflicts without verbal or physical violence.

## **You help a child to develop a positive self-image**

Children who can no longer live at home are going to ask themselves questions. Who am I? Where do I belong to? They experience feelings of loss and mourning. Children also often blame themselves for the problems in their family or the move out. You must be able to deal with this and help the child to feel good about themselves. Youth Care helps you with this challenging task, by offering training and guidance.

# Be a foster parent?

## **You are open, positive minded and clear in your contact with people**

As a foster parent, you will maintain contact with parents, family, teachers and other persons in the foster child's environment. Sometimes these people have different views, because of their life experience, culture, values and norms. It is important that you are able to deal with these differences smoothly.

## **You cooperate with others and you can share parenthood**

As a foster parent, you often share the upbringing with the parents and family. You often share the care and planning around children with a Youth Care professional and sometimes with other care providers. For the child, it is important that you know how to work well with all parties involved.

## **You estimate well what is the effect of foster parenting in your personal situation**

Caring for a foster child affects every member of your family. For instance, if you already have children, you should divide your time and attention between your own children and the foster child.

***Every child deserves a safe home. Become a foster parent!***

**Are you considering becoming a foster parent or do you have questions after reading the information brochure?  
Then contact us.**

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