

# Therapeutic Foster Care Program at Kennedy Krieger Institute

## Who We Are

**You don't have to be a hero to help one.**

A safe haven, a loving space, a home; this is what every child deserves. For those with special needs, this is particularly true, but sometimes families just aren't able to provide the care and support children need. That's where Therapeutic Foster Care at Kennedy Krieger Institute can help.

Kennedy Krieger is in an excellent position to provide specialized foster, respite and adoptive services, because it has been helping children and young adults with disorders of the brain, spinal cord and musculoskeletal system for more than 80 years. Since 1986, we have partnered with state and local child welfare agencies to match children and young adults with families that offer them stability and love until they can be returned to their families, adopted or transitioned to independent living. Families in the program have access to specialized training and support-group meetings, social work services, respite care and financial assistance.

With the 24-hour guidance and support of our Therapeutic Foster Care team, you don't have to be a hero to help one.

## Who We Serve

We serve children and young adults, from birth to 21 years old, with a range of special needs, including medically fragile conditions, developmental disabilities, and physically- and emotionally-handicapping conditions. Funded primarily through Maryland's Developmental Disabilities Administration, Therapeutic Foster Care serves more than 100 children and young adults each year. We serve children diagnosed with any of the following conditions and/or disabilities:

### Medically fragile conditions:

- AIDS/HIV positive
- Diabetes
- Exposure or addiction to drugs at birth/in infancy
- Failure to thrive
- Feeding problems
- Genetic disorders
- Respiratory problems
- Seizure disorders
- Spina bifida
- Traumatic brain injury

### Developmental disabilities:

- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Autism spectrum disorders (ASD)
- Cerebral palsy
- Down syndrome
- Fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS)
- Hearing, speech and visual impairments
- Intellectual disabilities
- Learning disabilities



### Emotional and behavioral difficulties:

- Attachment disorders
- Conduct disorders
- Depression, anxiety and other mood disorders
- Disorders from abuse and neglect
- Impulsive behavior
- Oppositional defiant disorder
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- School problems such as truancy and learning difficulties

We are all born with great potential.  
Shouldn't we all have the chance to achieve it?



Kennedy Krieger Institute  
UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

## How You Can Help

There are a variety of ways in which you can get involved, and each has its own tailored level of training and support. Opportunities are available in these areas:

**Foster care:** Every child deserves a stable and loving home. Becoming a therapeutic foster parent means making a commitment to provide a home and care for a child or young adult with special needs until he or she has been returned to his or her biological family, placed with a relative or adopted, or transitioned to independent living. Through our program, you will have around-the-clock clinical support to help the child or young adult for whom you are caring negotiate life's ups and downs.

**Adoption:** The Therapeutic Foster Care program is also a licensed adoption agency, with services designed to meet the needs of children with special needs and the families who decide to adopt them.

**Respite care:** If you're interested in helping a child with special needs, but aren't able to make the time commitment required to become a full-time foster parent, then working as a respite care provider may be perfect for you. You provide care for short periods of time—a few hours during the day, on a weekend, or even for a week. You will receive specialized training, financial compensation, and 24-hour support from our licensed staff members.

## Who Is Eligible?

Like the children we serve, our foster and adoptive parents come from diverse cultural, social and financial backgrounds.

### Prospective parents:

- Must be at least 21 years old
- Can be single or married
- Must be self-supporting
- Can either rent or own their own home
- Must have experience with children

You do not need experience with children with disabilities to become a respite care provider or volunteer. All you need is a desire and willingness to be involved in a child's life.

## The Support You'll Receive

Raising a child is never easy, and we recognize that, as a foster or adoptive parent for a child with special needs, there may be challenges you can't face alone. We are dedicated to helping our families, and we offer a variety of support services and benefits.

### Foster parent support services:

- Specialized training
- 24-hour clinical support
- Monthly support and training groups
- Monthly, non-taxable income
- Respite care

### Adoptive parent support services:

- Adoption home studies for prospective parents
- Adoption preparation training
- Six months of social work consultation
- Consultation about subsidy benefits
- Information and referral for adoption-related matters

## Our Success

Over the course of its more than 30 years of service, Therapeutic Foster Care at Kennedy Krieger has helped thousands of children to:

- Achieve permanency through reunification with family and adoption
- Attend college
- Obtain jobs
- Transition to independent living
- Receive recognition awards for scholastic and leadership accomplishments

## Contact Information

### Therapeutic Foster Care Program at Kennedy Krieger Institute

**Program Location**  
7000 Tudsbury Road  
Baltimore, MD 21244

**443-923-3811**

**[KennedyKrieger.org/TFC](http://KennedyKrieger.org/TFC)**

Kennedy Krieger Institute recognizes and respects the rights of patients and their families and treats them with courtesy and dignity. Kennedy Krieger Institute provides care that preserves cultural, psychosocial, spiritual and personal values, beliefs and preferences. Care is free from discrimination based on age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression, including transgender. We encourage patients and families to become active partners in their care by asking questions, seeking resources and advocating for the services and support they need. © 2018 Kennedy Krieger Institute 2/2018

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