

## Preparing for the homestudy: What you need to know

Whether you are preparing to become a foster parent, an adoptive parent or respite provider, you will complete a homestudy. This sheet explains what the homestudy is and will offer some tips to prepare for and make your homestudy move smoothly.

### What is a homestudy?

The homestudy is a detailed report about your family, your home and your preparations to become a foster and/or adoptive parent. An assessor will prepare the homestudy with information compiled from a variety of sources. The final report is used to recommend you for licensure as a foster parent with the State of Ohio and/or for approval as an adoptive parent.

### What is the purpose of the homestudy?

The homestudy helps you focus on what children will fit best into your family. The final product also helps workers to place children into your home who would best fit into your family.

### When is the homestudy started?

An assessor is assigned to begin the homestudy process when you turn in your application to become a foster and/or adoptive parent. You will receive the application during pre-service training and you can turn it in at any time during your pre-service training process.

### How long does it take to complete a homestudy?

By law, assessors have 180 days, or six months, to complete the homestudy. If you are prepared, keep your interview appointments with assessors, and have all the needed documents and references, you could complete your homestudy in as little as four to six months.

### What goes into the homestudy?

The homestudy requires the prospective foster and/or adoptive family to gather different documents, answer several questions, and explore their reasons for adopting. Through a series of visits and interviews with you and others in your

home, the assessor will get a complete picture of who you are and what life is like in your family. The homestudy is a part of the decision making process for both the prospective family and the workers.

### How do I prepare for my homestudy?

You can do several things between now and the time you turn in your application to become a foster and/or adoptive parent:

- Ensure you have a separate bedroom with a bed and a dresser to accommodate the child and his/her belongings.
- Secure a car seat if you are planning to open your home to fostering infants.
- Develop a care plan that you will use when a foster child comes to your home. Some things to think about:
  - What happens if the child gets sick and needs to stay home from school?
  - Who can help care for the child when I'm sick?
- If you think you have a legal issue that could prevent you from becoming a foster or adoptive parent, contact your local Clerk of Courts to ask about checking your record.
- *Check your credit.* You can get a free copy of your credit report once a year from any of the three major firms: Equifax, Experian or TransUnion.

### Still have questions?

Recruitment staff and Assessment staff can answer your questions, or work to find the answer if they aren't sure. Call us at (513) 632-6366.