

# FOSTERING MEANS *Helping Families*

*May is Foster Care Awareness Month*

## **The Need**

- Over 400,000 children are in foster care in the U.S. with over 7,600 in Kansas.
- There are approximately 2,000 licensed foster homes in Kansas.
- The average age of a child needing placement in Kansas is 9.3 years old. (4% <1 year, 30% 1-5 yrs, 20% 6-10 yrs, 24% 11-15 yrs, 21% 16-18 yrs, <1% 19+)
- The biggest need is parents willing to take kids ages 6-18 years old and sibling sets.
- Nationally, upon aging out of foster care without a family, 1/3 of youth will become homeless, 1/5 will become incarcerated and a large percentage will become victims of child trafficking.

## *For More Information*

Visit the Archdiocesan Foster Ministry  
Website: [www.archkcks.com/foster](http://www.archkcks.com/foster)

Or connect with the Archdiocesan  
Pro-Life Office: [archkck.org/prolife](http://archkck.org/prolife)  
913-647-0350

[prolife@archkck.org](mailto:prolife@archkck.org)

Facebook: Pro-Life Office Archdiocese of  
Kansas City in Kansas

## **How Our Parish Can Help**

Every day in Kansas, children from every background and community are removed from their homes for a variety of reasons and through no fault of their own. Many have experienced trauma. Foster parents open their homes and hearts – helping children heal, trust, and hope again. Everyone can help – either by becoming a foster family or by supporting the families in our parishes who do foster.

- Youth in foster care often lack the necessities and supplies they need. Host a drive to collect clothing, personal hygiene items, toys, and school supplies for the children.
- Collect gift cards for foster families to help offset unexpected costs.
- Ask prayer groups and ministries to pray for foster children and families.
- Invite a speaker to educate on the need for foster families, and the support these families need.
- Connect individuals to CarePortal ([careportal.org](http://careportal.org)). CarePortal's online platform is designed to connect children and families in crisis in our communities to churches and people who want to help. Caseworkers uncover the needs and CarePortal makes local churches aware. Beds and cribs are often their #1 need.

# May is Foster Care Awareness Month

## Become a Foster Family

Is your family called to be a foster family to children in need?

Even if you are not sure, you can learn more, find real answers, and hear other foster/adoptive families talk about their experiences. Families who learn about the children in need, and the support resources available, are far more likely to say yes to fostering!

### **Kansas Foster Care Resources:**

*For a list of Foster Agencies in our area, visit: [archkcks.com/foster](http://archkcks.com/foster)*

*CASA - Court Appointed Special Advocates for children.  
[casajwc.org](http://casajwc.org)*

*Care Portal - to provide material support to foster & bio families.  
[careportal.org](http://careportal.org)*

*YouTHRIVE - Supporting teens into adulthood.  
[youthrive.org](http://youthrive.org)*

## Families and Individuals Helping Children & Families

If your family does not feel called to foster, you can support foster youth in other ways:

- Bring meals and material needs to families who foster. Consider forming a Care Community that provides wrap around support to foster families. Visit [fosteringjoy.org](http://fosteringjoy.org) to learn more about this successful model of support.
- Provide Respite Care - Respite care providers give foster parents a break for one night or a weekend. It's similar to foster parenting but much shorter in length and a great way to see if foster parenting is right for you. Connect with a foster agency for respite training & licensing.
- Mentor a Teen – As many as 20,000 youth age out of foster care in the U.S. every year without a permanent family or home. 1/3 becomes homeless, only 4% attend college and some end up in jail. Mentors can provide extra support and guidance to teenage youth as they transition into adulthood. These teens need to know that they are important and that someone cares about their wellbeing.
- Become a CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) for a child. CASAs are trained volunteers who represent and advocate for youth in the dependency court system. Each CASA represents the best interests of the child and makes a life-changing difference. ([Casajwc.org](http://Casajwc.org))
- Meet the tangible needs of vulnerable children and families through CarePortal's online platform. Child welfare professionals identify the unmet needs of children and families and CarePortal connects these needs to parishes and individuals who care and want to respond. CarePortal is based in KCMO!



*And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me. Matthew 18:5*