

PROVIDE PERMANENCY

On any given day in Vermont, there are about 80 children waiting in foster care for families to adopt them. Most are school-aged, many have special needs and some are part of a sibling group who want to stay together.

You can give children what we all want: a sense of belonging, a place to call home and lifelong family connections.

How to adopt a waiting child

1. Call 1-800-746-7000 to get the process started.
2. Register with/apply to Project Family.

If you live in Vermont, you can:

- Register your current, approved adoption homestudy or foster care license with Project Family. *OR*
- Apply to have an adoption homestudy completed for free. *It will remain the property of Project Family and be restricted to the adoption of a child in Vermont foster care.*

If you live out of state, you must:

- Have an adoption homestudy completed by an agency licensed in your state and then register it with Project Family.
3. Complete adoptive parent training.
 4. Wait for a match. Once it feels right, the Project Family worker gives the child your profile and arranges for visits to start.
 5. Talk to the worker about the adoption assistance that might be available and options for post-permanency services.
 6. Sign an *Intent to Adopt* before the child moves into your home.
 7. Finalize the adoption. *Vermont law requires the child to live with you for at least 6 months before the adoption can become legal.* Your worker will help you gather the paperwork, file it in court for you and schedule the finalization hearing.



To adopt a child in DCF custody, you:

- ✓ Must be at least 21
- ✓ Can be single, married, living with a partner or joined through civil union
- ✓ Must have a valid adoption home study or Vermont foster care license

Applications are considered regardless of disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity/expression, race, religion or sexual orientation.



PROJECT FAMILY

Project Family is a partnership between the Vermont Department for Children and Families and Lund (Vermont's largest and oldest nonprofit adoption agency).

1-800-746-7000



THE SUPPORT THAT'S AVAILABLE

Adoption Services

There is no fee to adopt a child in Vermont foster care. What's more, Project Family provides adoption services for free. This can include pre- and post-adoption counseling, finalization services and post-placement visits.

Financial Support

If you adopt a child with special needs, you may be eligible to:

- ➔ Claim a federal tax credit.
- ➔ Get adoption assistance to help you meet the child's special needs until age 18.



You must apply for, negotiate and sign an adoption assistance agreement before the adoption is completed and, sometimes, before the child moves into your home.

Child Care

You may be eligible for help paying for child care if you:

1. Live in Vermont AND
2. Have an accepted need for it (e.g., you work outside the home or are attending school) or it's authorized based on the child's needs.

Medical Benefits

Most of the waiting children qualify for medical benefits through Vermont Medicaid, which helps cover the cost of doctor's visits, prescriptions, hospital care, mental health services, dental care, eye care, speech therapy and more. *If you live or move out of state, medical benefits may be provided by the other state.*

Post-Permanency Family Support

Services are available to help families deal with issues that come up after adoption/guardianship. This includes parent education, help with school issues, referral to community resources, treatment team consultation, support groups, training opportunities and more.

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ONGOING SUPPORT

DCF Adoptive Parent Page
dcf.vt.gov/resources/adopt

Vermont Child Welfare
Training Partnership
vermontcwt.org

Vermont Consortium for
Adoption & Guardianship
vtadoption.org

Vermont Foster & Adoptive
Family Association (VFAFA)
www.vfafaconference.org

Voices at the Table
Blog & Website
voicesatthetable.wordpress.com

