

# Families for Kids

recruitment resources

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## “Buddy System” Model for Foster Family Support

The basic concept is that foster families are organized in pairs of a veteran (two years or more) foster parent or family with a new foster parent or family.

One parent or family serves as the facilitator. A buddy system consists of at least eight (8) two-person teams of foster parents.

Each pair is grouped by type of care, i.e. therapeutic, grade school age, teens, medically fragile, etc.

### Support Services:

1. Regular conversation: Meeting for coffee, going out for lunch, phone conversations, play dates, book clubs, etc. The actual structure will vary from pair to pair. The overall purpose is for experienced foster parents to share their wisdom and experience with new families.
2. Respite: Each pair is responsible for their own respite. Once again, the individual pairs set the actual structure. The respite may be as simple as “Jeff goes to play at Alex’s house on Thursday’s so Jeff’s foster mom can run errands or go to lunch without kids”. It also could be much more structured as having scheduled monthly respite.
3. Shared resources: The pairs are organized by the type of care so cribs, books, car seats, etc. can be passed back and forth as children ebb and flow from homes.

### Buddy Facilitator:

1. Receives a small monthly stipend to cover expenses.
2. Provides a monthly report to the Regional Coordinator.
3. Is an experienced foster parent.
4. Helps pair up foster families.
5. Ensures that “buddies” maintain regular contact

### Goal:

The over all goal of a buddy system is to build a self-supporting group of foster parents. Our purpose is to provide support, encouragement and accountability. However, the “buddies” really need to operate as autonomous as possible. They will be more successful if they drive their destiny.

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toll free

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