



Dear Prospective Foster and/or Adoptive Parent,

Thank you for contacting Little City Foundation (LCF) about our foster care and/or adoption programs! We hope the enclosed information answers your basic questions. If you want to learn more, we invite you to attend an informational meeting offered on the third Wednesday of each month. Please see the following orientation flyer for details and more information.

Who is Little City Foundation?

Little City was created from the dream of a group of committed parents, who wanted to provide help, hope, dignity and love for children with disabilities. As a non-profit, no-sectarian organization, LCF has continued to grow and now includes an array of services for individuals with disabilities, including specialized foster care and adoption programs.

The LCF foster care and adoption programs serve children with special needs from birth through age 21. **The greatest level of need for foster and adoptive parents exists for children between the ages of eight and 16 with moderate to severe developmental delays and/or emotional behavior issues.** To give you a better idea of the types of children we serve, please read the enclosed “*Children We Can Help Together*” document.

Would I qualify to become a Foster or Adoptive Parent?

To become a foster or adoptive parent through LCF, you must:

- Be at least 21 years of age
- Hold a valid Driver’s License
- Pass a background check
- Have a safe home and a separate bedroom for the child/children

Little City is looking for loving families regardless of age, race, creed, gender, sexual orientation, gender-identification, income or education level.

How long is the intake process?

Becoming licensed with LCF typically takes between **three months to a year**. For more specific requirements, please see the following “*Little City Foundation Licensing Process.*”

Please visit our website at www.littlecity.org/foster. For additional questions please contact me at tmiller@littlecity.org or at (773) 265-1539. Thank you for your interest in Little City’s foster care and adoption opportunities.

Sincerely,

Tricia Miller, MSW
Family Development Specialist

SHAWN E. JEFFERS, *Executive Director, Little City Foundation*



Children we can Help Together

Little City Foundation foster care and adoption programs seek to find families and homes who will be advocates for children with disabilities. While families are in need for all children we serve, homes are particularly needed for children between the ages of eight and 16 with moderate to severe developmental delays and/or emotional/behavioral issues.

What are developmental delays and disabilities?

Developmental delays and disabilities are a diverse group of severe chronic conditions due to mental or physical impairment. Conditions can begin anytime during development up to 22 years of age, and typically last throughout a person's life.

Children suffering from developmental delays have problems with major life activities, including language, mobility, learning, self help and independent living.

Examples of developmental delays and disabilities include: Cerebral Palsy, hearing loss, learning disabilities, cognitive delays, physical and sensory impairments and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs).

What falls under emotional and behavioral issues?

Emotional and behavioral issues encompass a wide spectrum and are defined as one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time:

- An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers
- Inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or health factors
- Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances
- A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
- A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems

Examples of emotional and behavioral issues include: disruptive behavior, anxiety, depression, ADHD, mental illness, physical or sexual aggression, drug or alcohol exposure or usage, bed wetting/sleeping issues, verbal outbursts or gang involvement.

Each condition and child is unique. Many of the children we help have dealt with complex issues and dire living conditions. Many children are victims of past circumstances that were out of their control, including sexual abuse, fetal alcohol syndrome, abuse, neglect and drug usage. The majority of children have been in the foster care system for a large part of their life and many have experienced multiple home placements.

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What tools & services does LCF provide to help you become a successful foster or adoptive parent?

- Extensive, specialized training
- Specialized case manager assigned to your home to help with the child's needs
- Clinical consultation twice a month on issues relating to foster/adoptive children
- Behavioral assessment and clinical interventions as needed
- Support and guidance for the entire family
- Links to community resources
- Advocacy in schools and community
- Ongoing education and training for family members in the areas important for the growth, development and well-being of the entire family
- Access to Little City therapists for individual and family intervention
- Monthly stipend

What can I expect to receive during my time as a foster or adoptive parent?

While you will undoubtedly encounter questions and challenges during your time as a foster or adoptive parent with Little City, most families find the experience enriching, rewarding and life-changing. Below are quotes from current and past Little City Foundation foster and adoptive parents:

- "I am honored to say that I have been a foster parent for four years. I have fostered three teenage boys."
- "I feel rewarded for seeing that I have brought joy to a child, even if only temporarily; having received unconditional love and mentally knowing that I am doing right for this child."
- "Receiving love from the children and watching their accomplishments, growth and gestures of love is a great reward."

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Clients Served by Little City

(Below are fictional but typical profiles)

Eva and Jimena are a 16 and 12 year-old Hispanic/Caucasian sister set. Eva, 16, suffers from moderate mental retardation and has a history of physical aggression. She has been attending regular therapy and has shown improvement and reduced aggression. She is an animal lover, and is particularly fond of horseback riding. Eva is friendly, and requires no medication or medical considerations, but does need close supervision. Jimena, 12, has been diagnosed with a learning disability and requires weekly tutoring and specialized classroom attention. She is social, outgoing and a member of her local Girl Scout troop. Jimena looks up to her older sister and often helps Eva calm down my making silly faces at her.

Julian is a nin year-old African American boy who exhibits General Anxiety Disorder and Reactive Attachment disorder. He has a tendency to be disruptive, but is learning to control these issues through medication and ongoing counseling. Julian sometimes has trouble sleeping and exhibits a history of bedwetting. Julian loves playing and watching all sports and claims to be the Chicago Bull's "biggest fan." He is in search for a long term home with lots of boys and girls to play a variety of sports and board games with.

Sixteen year-old **Latonia** is a bright-eyed African American teenager. Latonia can be verbally aggressive and exhibit defiant and disruptive behaviors at home, but is very well behaved in school and in public. Latonia dreams of being a professional chef. She continues to progress in addressing her issues and desires to be in a home where she can prepare meals for her family.

Maya is an eight year-old Caucasian/Hispanic girl. Smart and artistic, she exhibits anxiety and lack of awareness of social clues. She has difficulty forming peer relationships, and is non-discriminate with her attachments to other individuals. Maya loves to paint, play with dolls and watch Disney movies.

11 month-old African American **Matthew** suffers from several medical conditions regarding his breathing abilities. Matthew loves to be cuddled and rarely cries. He loves being around children of all ages. Careful observation is required for Matthew, particularly during feedings.

Tyler is a 15 year-old Caucasian male with multi-diagnosis including ADHD, moderate retardation and autism. Tyler's daily routine requires a combination of medication and therapeutic schooling, which allows him to not suffer from any medical conditions. Tyler is engaging, humorous and respectful of elders, but his curiosity can get the best of him from time to time. Tyler loves engines and dreams of being a race car driver or engineer in the future. He often engages in solitary activities and requires a home with structure, routine and constant supervision.

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Little City Foundation Licensing Process (Outline Form)

1. Attend Orientation (2 hours)
2. Initial Procedures
 - a. Complete Application
 - i. General Information
 - ii. Child Supervision Plan
 - iii. Evacuation Plan
 - iv. Budget
 - b. Background check (13 and older)
 - c. Fingerprinting (17 and older)
 - d. Send in completed medical forms/TB tests (everyone in the house)
3. Initial Home Visit
 - a. Make sure home will meet DCFS Standards
 - b. Pick training dates and fill out DCFS Pride Training Application
4. Attend Trainings
 - a. DCFS PRIDE Training (27 hours)
 - b. DCFS Educational Advocacy (6 hours)
 - c. DCFS Childhood Trauma (4 hours)
 - d. LCF Training (28 hours)
 - i. CPR/First Aid (8 hours)
 - ii. CPI (8 hours)
 - iii. Pre-Service (12 hours)
 - e. Volunteer hours with LCF children (10 hours)
5. Home Study (three-five visits to your home – 10 hours total)
 - a. Family interview and background completed
 - b. Home checked for licensing standards
6. Receive License
7. Placement Process
 - a. Start meeting children reflecting your specific interests
 - b. Child is placed
8. Annual Training Required (12 hours)

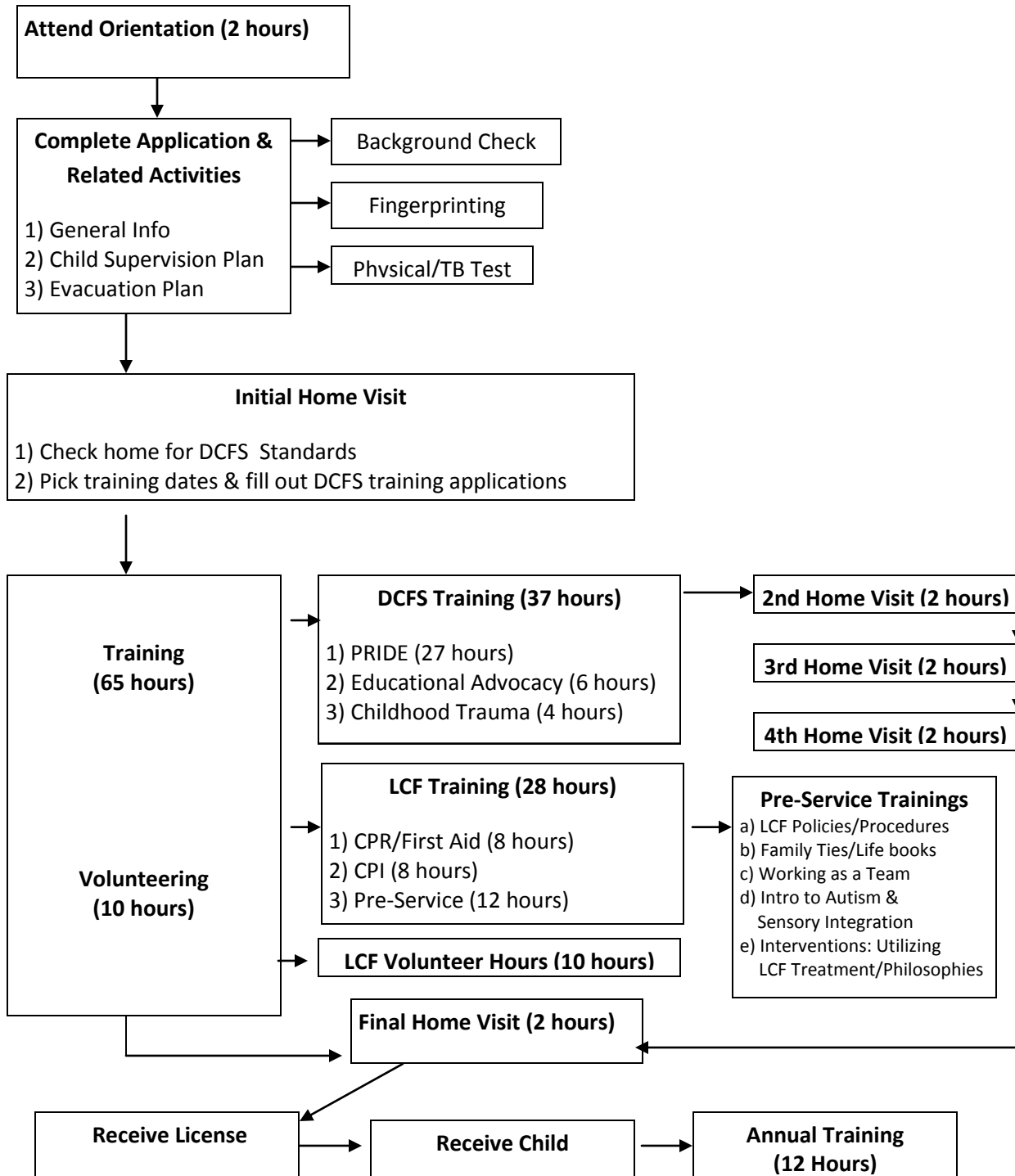
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Little City Foundation

Licensing Process (Flow Chart)



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Interested in Adoption?

These children are currently available for adoption and are awaiting placement into a loving home!

African American Male, age 9 “J.R.B.”

JRB is a loving, playful and active child. JRB likes to play with trucks and enjoys basketball, coloring and most outdoor activities. JRB has a very close relationship with his brother and is desirous of living in an adoptive home with him. JRB hopes for a family that is a single-parent or two-parent household. JRB and his brother require a lot of attention, supervision and structure to promote their safety and well-being.

JRB is diagnosed with Pervasive Developmental Disorder, speech delay (severe), regulation disorder of sensory processing-sensory stimulation seeking/impulsive, reactive attachment disorder of infancy or early childhood and deprivation/maltreatment disorder of infancy. JRB currently receives individual in-home therapy on a weekly basis. He is making steady progress in therapy. JRB also receives medication management to address his diagnoses and active/impulsive behaviors. JRB receives full-time special education services in school that includes speech therapy.

African American Male, age 6 “J.J.B.”

JJB is JRB’s younger brother. He is very sweet, engaging and playful. JJB enjoys coloring, basketball and Legos. He likes school and has close relationships with his brother, caregivers and extended family members.

JJB is diagnosed with Pervasive Developmental Disorder, speech delay, and reactive attachment disorder. He is making steady progress in therapy. JJB also receives medication management to address his diagnoses and active/impulsive behaviors. JJB receives full-time special education services in school that include speech and occupational therapies.

Caucasian Male, age 9 “J.S.”

JS is a very sweet little boy. He is small in stature, but takes growth hormones to promote his development. JS loves reading, watching movies and engaging in imaginative play. JS also enjoys imitating others.

JS is diagnosed with autism, impulse control disorder and a mild developmental disability. He takes daily medication to address his impulsive/active behaviors and a growth hormone to stimulate his development. He participates in weekly therapy.

JS requires a home that can provide him with a lot of attention and supervision. JS is desirous of being adopted within a two-parent household and would love siblings who are older than him.

African American Male, age 7, “R.C.”

RC is a happy, energetic and playful little boy. He loves to play with cars and trains and enjoys going to the playground. RC has a lot of friends and loves to hug.

RC is small in stature and is being considered for growth hormones to promote his development. RC is diagnosed with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and developmental disability. He also displays some sexually reactive behaviors. RC receives weekly therapy to address his sexualized behaviors and developmental delays. He also receives specialized instruction in school.

RC requires a home that can provide him with a lot of attention and supervision. JS is desirous of being adopted within a single- or two-parent household and would love siblings.

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