

make a difference

become a
Teenage Foster Carer

Stretch-A-Family 9569-6933
www.stretch-a-family.com.au



stretch-a-family, inc.

Foster a Teenager, Foster the Future

STRETCH-A-FAMILY, INC.



Foster Care

Why not become a foster carer for a teenager?



Make a Difference....

Offer a young person a secure and caring place in your family, to help them prepare for independence.

www.stretchfamily.com.au

What Is Foster Care

Foster care is where a young person is looked after by an individual, couple or family other than their own parents. Stretch-A-Family needs carers who can look after a teenager until they are old enough to live independently. (or at least until 18 years)

There are many reasons why young people are not able to live with their own parents. This may include family breakdown, parent's drug and alcohol problems, abuse and neglect, physical and mental illness and breakdown in relationships between teenagers and their parents who may be having difficulty coping with the young person's behaviour.



Young people in Need of Care

Young people who need fostering have often experienced a lot of emotional upheaval and the move from a familiar environment into an

What Happens Next?

Fostering agencies are not looking for perfect carers, but rather for loving and stable people who can provide a young person with a secure and caring environment.

Once SAF visit you at your home & you complete an application form, you (& your partner) will be invited to attend an introductory training course about fostering. The foster care assessment will then involve several visits to the applicant's home by 2 trained Foster Care Caseworkers to assess their suitability to foster and to develop a clear picture of their family in order to match them with the right young person.

Criminal record checks are conducted on all adult household members plus the applicant/s need to consent to a medical check & to provide SAF with two personal references.

If you are interested to find out more, please telephone a Caseworker at Stretch-A-Family on **9569 6933**. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

7/198-204 Marrickville Rd,
Marrickville 2204
saf@stretchfamily.com.au



What Foster Carers Can Expect to Receive

Approved Foster Carers for Stretch-A-Family can expect to receive the following:

- The weekly foster care allowance (based on the needs of the young person).
- Preparation and training to become a foster carer.
- Ongoing support from a trained Foster Care Caseworker who specialises in work with teenagers.
- Contact number for emergencies or crises that occur outside of office hours.
- Personal rewards for having a positive impact on a young person's life.
- You and your family may develop a close relationship with the young person which may last throughout their life.
- An opportunity to meet up with existing Stretch-A-Family carers at regular support groups & at the foster carer's annual thank you meal.



unknown one may not be easy, they may also have lost trust in adults or family life generally. The young people may have low self esteem and display other problems or behaviours as a result of previous experiences.

Foster carers therefore need to be patient, perceptive, flexible, resourceful and able to set firm boundaries in order to help young people placed in their care.

Fostering can be challenging at times, However, it can also be a very rewarding experience to offer a young person a place in your family knowing that you are providing a stable and secure environment for the young person to grow and develop physically and emotionally.

What is Stretch-A-Family

Stretch-A-Family is an Adolescent and Community Placement program that is run by a non-government, non-denominational community organisation. It is a registered Inc



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voluntary Management Committee elected at an Annual General Meeting. Membership is open to all interested members of the community.

Caring for teenagers

Stretch-A-Family specialise in providing long term foster care and supported boarding for young people from 12 years of age until they are old enough to live independently. Supported boarding differs from foster care in that it provides a young person approaching independence the opportunity to become part of a functional household without the emotional ties of foster care.



Fostering teenagers involves quite different skills to that of fostering younger children. Due to their age, teenagers are often more firmly established in their ways of behaving, and are consequently less adaptable than young children. They are also approaching a time in their lives when they are learning to develop their independence and therefore require more support and less direct supervision.

As the majority of young people have formed strong bonds with their natural family, it is therefore necessary for foster carer's to support young people with these relationships. It is important that foster carers encourage contact, and refrain from criticising natural family.

Who Can Apply to Foster?

In order to apply to foster, the following basic criteria need to be met:

- You must be 25 years of age or older.
- Have experience of caring for teenagers
- You can be single or if in a relationship, it should be stable and unchanged over the past 12 months.
- You should be physically, emotionally and financially stable.
- You should not have had a major illness or trauma during the past 12 months.
- You should be able to provide the young person with their own room.

