



Epworth Foster Care Program

The Epworth Difference

A faith based organization, affiliated with the United Methodist Church

Epworth Children's Home has existed to help children and families for 125 years. As the laws and landscape of Child Welfare continue to change, Epworth has also continued to change in order to best serve the children of South Carolina. It was through the desire to help as many children and families as possible that the Foster Care program began. Today—The Epworth Foster Care program serves children and families across the state of South Carolina by being more than just a Child Placing Agency, but also an advocate for the vulnerable children in care. Epworth licenses both Family Foster Care and Therapeutic Foster Care homes.

EPWORTHCHILDRENHOME.ORG

UPSTATE • MIDLANDS • LOWCOUNTRY • PEE DEE



@epworthfosterfamilies



ech_fosterhomeprogram

Why Epworth?

What can I expect from Epworth?

Our mission is “to serve children, youth, and families through a caring, accepting and safe Christian Community where hurts are healed; hope is nurtured; and faith in God, self, and others is nurtured.” We are committed to helping you be the best foster family you can be. To that end, Epworth promises:

- To engage in a mutually respectful relationship
- To license qualified married or single adults
- To maintain your confidentiality
- To follow up with concerns or requests promptly
- To be available to you by phone or in person in times of need
- To advocate on your behalf
- To be honest in sharing information
- To keep you informed of trainings & services available to you
- To provide reasonable access, in many cases, to our on-campus health center & counseling services
- To be a constant source of support & encouragement to your family
- To offer a safe space for you to connect with other foster parents through Circle of Parents



Support Services

Foster Care Support Network



Churches

Epworth works with United Methodist Churches throughout the state to develop networks of support for our foster families. From resource closets, meals, items needed for new placements, parents night out

programs, prayers and help with birthdays and Christmas, churches step in to help ease the process in any way possible for the foster family experience.

An example of the Foster Care Support Network : During the month of May, local churches adopted foster families. They provided them with a home cooked meal, a week of groceries, diapers and other goodies delivered right to their door to show their appreciation. Epworth Foster Parent Megan says "I was just blown away by the support from the beginning. This is all so new to us and to have that extra layer of support and someone to come out and do that for you is so nice and makes you feel appreciated in what you are doing."

The Resource Closets

The resource closets were created to support Foster Parents and Kinship families across the state of South Carolina. Through generous donations from the community, the resource closet is stocked with household and seasonal items, as well as necessities and toys! We want to help any foster parent overcome barriers to the licensing process and are able to do so through the generous donations of others!



Foster Parent Support Groups

Foster parents support groups create a safe space for foster parents to meet together to share the joys and challenges of the fostering experience. Groups are parent-driven, which means that the parents can set the topics for conversation. Epworth staff facilitate the meetings and childcare is provided.



Foster Care Referral Bonus

We believe that good foster parents know good foster parents! When you are a foster parent with Epworth, and you refer a new foster parent or foster family to us, you will receive a bonus when that family gets their first placement! The bonus is a small token of our appreciation for helping us connect with and serve the vulnerable children of South Carolina.

Tutoring Services

Epworth also works with our network of local churches to provide tutors for foster children. This service is provided at no cost for the foster families.

The Epworth Center for Counseling

The Center for Counseling is a great resource for Foster Families! With locations in the Midlands and Pee Dee regions, the Center for Counseling serves the foster children in a variety of ways. Children may receive individual counseling, play therapy, family counseling with their biological family, or even counseling with their foster families. This is a great resource, because biological families have the option to continue family counseling after reunification as well! If you are not located in the Midlands or Pee Dee, your local Clinical Coordinator will find you an equivalent resource right in your own community!

“Working with individuals who have a heart to serve is so inspiring. Helping people put their passion into action is what we do!”
- Erinne Rodgers, Foster Care Director



The Epworth Early Intervention Center

Epworth also has in-home Early Intervention Specialists that can be contracted to help with developmental delays and disabilities if the foster child qualifies for BabyNet. For Upstate and Lowcountry families, your Clinical Coordinator will find an Early Intervention Specialist in your area as well.

Midlands

Erinne Rodgers, Director of Foster Care

Haley Huff, Recruitment Coordinator

Adrianna Peppers, Administrative Assistant

Artellia Shaw, Intake Coordinator

Jordan Floyd, Intake Coordinator

Christy Barrett, Clinical Care Coordinator

Olya Harlan, Clinical Care Coordinator



Office Location

**3201 Trenholm Road
Columbia, SC 29204**

803-828-7724

Mailing Address

**2900 Millwood Ave
Columbia, SC 29205**

hhuff@epworthsc.org

Meet Our Teams

Upstate

Office Location

7 Shannon Drive
Greenville, SC 29605

864-704-7863
tmelson@epworthsc.org

Dawn Salvesson
Director of Foster Care
and Clinical Services

Jennifer Gilmer
Intake Coordinator

Keri Chavis
Intake Coordinator



Office Location

303 Central Ave
Summerville, SC 29483

843-670-4733
mhartoin@epworthsc.org

Lowcountry

Amanda Winnen,
Intake Coordinator

Melinda Hartoin
Intake Coordinator

Allison Carte
Clinical Care Coordinator

Nicole Irwin
Clinical Care Coordinator



What our foster parents have to say

If Shannon and Justin Carter could tell you one thing about being foster parents, it is that it is hard—but so worth it. And they would do it again in a heartbeat. The couple, who have three biological children, felt called to open their home to foster children and have welcomed multiple children into their home through Epworth's program.

With each new placement in their home, some weeks pass until daily life has reached a new normal where all of the children act like siblings and do not differentiate between biological and foster child. As they nurture the children in their care, they see the foster children grow in leaps and bounds. "It's like they have been given permission to be children again. It is a beautiful reward."

Recently, the Carter family helped one of their foster children celebrate a birthday. "We had the privilege of celebrating another little foster birthday yesterday. It is an honor to be able to celebrate a little girl who calls me 'Mommy' for a season. My heart hurts for her 'Other Mommy' who wasn't there to celebrate. This world is so broken. I can't imagine the mixed feelings these babies have, because I can't even understand my own. I loved walking out this morning to see them gathered around, enjoying one of the birthday gifts, celebrating again."

Why Epworth? From an Epworth Foster Parent

"Epworth has been great. It's been great to have your own case worker in addition to the child's case worker. Throughout this time there has been some bumps in the road with our current foster child. I've been very upset some days and I've been able to call my caseworker and say this is what's going on. And just hearing her say "I hear you" and letting me vent and being there. I was just blown away by the support."



We look forward to hearing from you!

www.epworthchildrenshome.org/what/foster-care-program/