

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 be fosters and have since welcomed multiple children into their home through Epworth's program. Each time a new child is placed with them, a few weeks pass until daily life reaches 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, the Carters see the foster children grow by leaps and bounds.

"It's like they have been given permission to be children again," Shannon said. "It is a beautiful reward. We had the privilege of celebrating another 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 the children gathered around, enjoying one of the birthday gifts, celebrating again."

"Epworth has been great. It's been great to have your own case worker in addition to the child's case worker. There have 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/](http://www.epworthchildrenshome.org/what/foster-care-program/)**



@epworthfosterfamilies



ech_fosterhomeprogram



Epworth Foster Care Program

The Epworth Difference

A faith based organization affiliated with the United Methodist Church, Epworth Children's Home was founded more than 125 years ago to help children and families. As our laws and understanding of child welfare have evolved, Epworth has also changed to best serve the children of South Carolina. The desire to help as many children and families as possible led Epworth to begin a foster care program. Today, the program serves children and families across South Carolina by being more than just a child placing agency; we're also an advocate for vulnerable children in care. Epworth licenses both Family Foster Care and Therapeutic Foster Care homes.

EPWORTHCHILDRENHOME.ORG

HILTON HEAD, LOWCOUNTRY, MIDLANDS, PEE DEE, ROCK HILL, UPSTATE

Why 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 developed.” 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 and 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***



Office Locations

Midlands

Office Location
3201 Trenholm Road
Columbia, SC 29204

Mailing Address
2900 Millwood Ave
Columbia, SC 29205

803-828-7724

Rock Hill

321 S Oakland Ave
Rock Hill, SC 29730

803-540-5800

Pee Dee

1325 Rutledge Ave
Florence, SC 29505

843-609-0335

Foster Parent Support Groups

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



Foster Care Referral Bonus

We believe that good foster parents know good foster parents. If you are an Epworth foster parent and refer a new foster parent or foster family to us, you will receive a bonus when that family gets their first child placement! The bonus is a small token of our appreciation for helping us make essential connections that help us serve vulnerable children across South Carolina.

Tutoring Services

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

The Epworth Center for Counseling

Our Center for Counseling is a great resource for foster families. With locations in the Midlands and Upstate regions, the Center serves 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. Biological families even have the option to continue family counseling after reunification. If you are not located in the Midlands or Upstate, your local clinical coordinator will find you an equivalent resource in your community.



Epworth Early Intervention Center

Epworth has in-home early intervention specialists who can help a foster child with developmental delays and disabilities if he or she qualifies for BabyNet. In areas of the state where we do not have early intervention specialists on staff, your clinical coordinator will arrange for those services in your local area.

Office Locations

Upstate

Greenville
7 Shannon Drive
Greenville, SC 29605

Spartanburg
778 John B While Sr. Blvd
Spartanburg, SC 29306

864-704-7863

Lowcountry

303 Central Ave
Summerville, SC 29483

843-670-4733

Hilton Head

18-A Pope Avenue
Hilton Head Island, SC 29928

843-460-2773

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 for foster families.

An example of the Foster Care Support Network:

Local churches often show their appreciation for the work performed by foster families by providing them with a home cooked meal or a week of groceries, diapers and other goodies delivered right to the family's door. Megan, an Epworth foster parent 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."

Epworth Resource Closets

Our resource closets were created to support foster parents and kinship families across South Carolina and to help foster parents overcome barriers to the licensing process. Thanks to generous donations from the community, the resource closet is stocked with clothing, household and seasonal items, as well as necessities and toys.

