

## **WOLVERINE HUMAN SERVICES**

### **FOSTER HOME LICENSING PROGRAM STATEMENT**

Wolverine Human Services Foster Care Program is designed for a variety of children that are placed in the foster care system. Services are specific and individualized in order to meet the needs of each child and their family. Wolverine Human Services offers a state wide foster care program for children that have been removed from their parents' home due to abuse or neglect. Due to the environment they lived in and the dysfunction they were exposed to, the children may display moderate to severe emotional, psychological and behavioral concerns. They may also have medical needs due to the neglect and abuse they suffered. In addition to the child requiring special services, Wolverine Human Services also accepts and serves children that have little or no special needs. Children and their families are referred to Wolverine Human Services through a collaborative effort between the Michigan Court System, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Wolverine Human Services (WHS). Currently the agency places children statewide.

Wolverine Human Services Foster Care Program accepts male and female children, of all races and cultures, from newborn to the age of 17, who are in need of a foster home placement. The Agency prides itself in servicing children with a variety of needs and does not shy away from caring for those that have been identified as difficult to serve, such as the school age child with a delinquent background or the child who has been abused and neglected. Our intent is to assist and service as many referred children as possible. This includes children coming out of residential care and emergency shelters. Children are accepted statewide regardless of race, culture, nationality, color, sexual orientation or religious preference. Children served by the Agency may exhibit one or more issues such as anxiety, depression, inappropriate coping skills, separation anxiety, antisocial behaviors, anger management issues, low self-esteem, post-traumatic stress, poor academic performance, and sexual abuse related issues. Newborns may be exposed to drugs or alcohol prior to their birth.

The initial goal of the Foster Care Program is to provide a safe environment where the possibility of returning the child to their birth family can be explored. We believe that all children should be placed in the least restrictive environment in which they can flourish and be safely managed and served. Towards this end, a concerted effort will be made to place children in foster homes that provide acceptance and support of racial and cultural issues, as well as those that support family and sibling group needs.

The agency has a special focus on placing children in homes where the siblings can remain together. Family reunification and the maintenance of family ties are desired goals for every child in an out-of-home placement at Wolverine Human Services. Every effort will be made to locate and work with the children's family or relatives who can care for them. A family assessment will be completed to identify strengths and resources within the children's own family, including placement of the child with relatives. The staff in the foster care program will provide and arrange family treatment goals, whenever feasible, to facilitate reunification. Visits between the children and the children's family shall be in accordance with the overall treatment plan and the court orders. When reunification of the children and the family is not possible, another permanency plan such as adoption, guardianship, independent living,

kinship/relative placements, a permanent foster parent agreement, or long term foster care will be developed for the child.

Foster parents are viewed as vital members of the foster care treatment team and, therefore, must demonstrate the ability to effectively deal with children having some problems adjusting to the foster home and possibly displaying emotional and behavioral difficulties. As the number of children entering the system grows, so does the need for new foster parents. Foster parents licensed through Wolverine Human Service's Foster Care Program will receive ongoing training, support and resources to enhance the foster parents coping skills and ultimately their ability to succeed with the child placed in their home. Providing care for the child involved in Wolverine Human Service's Foster Care Program requires a greater than average amount of time and attention to manage the child's behavior and to obtain the services needed by the child. To provide support to the foster parents and to insure an optimal therapeutic environment of the child, a system of short term care will be provided, whenever possible. 24 hour on-call services and crisis intervention services are also available to resolve conflicts as they arise within the foster care placement.

There are other tasks involved in providing foster care services, which will be carried out by the programs, clinical staff and licensing/recruitment specialists. These include intake/assessments, therapy, service/treatment plans, goal achievement, case management services, special investigations, annual evaluations of each foster family, licensing renewal, recruitment of foster parents, training and licensing of new families for foster care, and conducting on-going group training and ultimately discharge planning.