

Treatment Foster Care Program

Helping children reach their full
potential in a caring, family environment.



Ranch Ehrlo Society

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ABOUT

Treatment Foster Care Program

Program philosophy

The philosophy of the Ranch Ehrlo Society is one of “social nourishment” and looks at the young person’s social, psychological and physical well-being within a culturally sensitive environment.

The Ranch’s residential programs are community-based wherever possible; they are designed to address the specific needs of the young people living within one of the many homes. The program uses relationship and therapeutic supports as part of the nurturing process. The programs build on a balanced perspective that includes work, education, recreation and therapy.

The Ranch acknowledges and protects the rights of the young people to their own culture, including the customs, beliefs and practices that make up that culture; we make every effort to design programs and services to make the young people living with us feel comfortable.

Overview

The Treatment Foster Care Program is a specialized family-based service that will provide individualized assessment and treatment for children, youth and their families. Treatment will include an integrated range of services delivered by a multidisciplinary team with core interventions and care provided by foster parents. Clinical assessment, treatment and educational services will be provided as required. Treatment foster parents will receive training, supervision and support from qualified program staff including respite services, in-home supports, and 24 hour on-call support if necessary.

The Treatment Foster Care Program will provide the Ministry of Social Services with an important resource along the continuum of care for children and families. The program will service children and youth, between the ages of 6 to 15, whose special needs require individualized treatment within a family environment.

Referrals may include children requiring out of home care or children transitioning from more intensive levels of group or residential living. The program will also serve the families of children and will seek their involvement in planning and decision making.

A key program outcome will be to facilitate family reunification whenever possible. In-home family reunification services at Ranch Ehrlo Society may be accessed to assist with this process. If reunification is not an option, the treatment team will work towards developing another permanent living arrangement for children or youth. However, the ultimate goal of the program is to provide a supportive and loving family environment in which children and youth may develop to their full potential.

Service agreement

A legal service contract will be signed between the Ranch Ehrlo Society and the foster parents detailing expectations about how the home will be managed - including the quality of the environment, food, clothing, recreation, and related areas. Further, the contract will detail what the agency is prepared to provide relative to respite, crisis support services, on-call procedures, and other considerations.

Recruitment process

The employees of Ranch Ehrlo Society are natural candidates for this position due to the agency's commitment to training, professional development, and on-going support. Some employees may be interested in pursuing this type of arrangement, while other employees may be aware of individuals who might be interested in entering into such a contract. All interested candidates, whether internal or external, are welcome and will participate in the following process:

An initial interview will be arranged for all interested candidates. At that time, a formal application will be provided, along with the fire safety standards and housing guidelines. Each candidate will be required to submit the names of five individuals to act as references. A reference form will be sent to each individual. Once completed it will be returned to the agency.

Other documentation includes:

- Driver's abstract
- Criminal record check (on each applicant and every individual over the age of 18 residing in the home)
- A medical report from a qualified physician

Ranch Ehrlo Society is excited about the opportunity to work cooperatively with the Ministry of Social Services in order to have Treatment Foster Parents receive PRIDE

pre-service training as a part of their home assessment and approval as a foster home resource.

The home study will assess a number of areas including:

- Suitability of applicant to care for children
- Safety and suitability of space in the home
- Parenting skills/child management strategies
- Family and marital functioning

Once the pre-service training and home study has been completed, a report will be completed and discussed with the program supervisor. If the applicant is approved, a copy of the report is mailed to the family along with a letter formalizing the approval of the home. A Treatment Foster Care Program agreement will be signed at that time.

Foster parents are selected based on their past training and natural abilities to work with children as demonstrated by their personal enthusiasm, interaction with their natural family, and their references. Both parents must be willing to undertake training and supervision.

Successful candidates accept and are committed to carrying out in principle the program philosophy on a daily basis. They accept the high level of involvement and supervision provided by the Treatment Foster Care Program and the impact that it will have on their family. They must possess a positive attitude, flexibility, tolerance and a commitment to the child's treatment plan. Foster parents must view the commitment of working with children as a family commitment. Family members must be part of the process and be involved in the decision making that occurs. Foster parents must also be aware of the support systems in place for them.

Responsibilities

Foster parents provide a safe and caring home for the children placed in their care. In order for children to meet their full potential, emotionally, socially, physically, mentally, culturally, and spiritually, it is imperative that they clearly understand the responsibilities of their role.

1. Foster parents gather and observe important information on the youth, in the home, in the community, and from other family members. It is essential that the foster parents actively participate with the caseworker and any other members of the team in sharing this information for the purpose of developing a treatment plan for the youth in their care.
2. The foster parents will be responsible to implement the treatment plan within their home utilizing the strategies put forward by the team.
3. The foster parents will work as part of a team under the leadership of the caseworker and attend all meetings, training sessions, etc, that would be required as part of the youth treatment plan.
4. The foster parents will be responsible for the recording of all information pertaining to the youth in their care. This will include the youth's behaviour, medical appointments, and daily/weekly journal entries.
5. The foster parents will assist the youth in maintaining contact and enhancing a healthy relationship with his/her birth family unless contra-indicated in the treatment plan.
6. Foster parents will build a strong working relationship with community based agencies such as the Ministry of Social Services, school personnel, and mental health professionals.
7. The foster parents, in collaboration with all professionals connected to the youth, will provide advocacy for the youth and ensure that access to all the services needed to fulfill the youths goals are fulfilled (vocational educational, medical legal).
8. The foster parents will be responsible for developing a relationship with the teachers and school administration associated with the youth. Attendance, homework and appropriate extra-curricular activities will be promoted and supported.
9. The foster parents will ensure that the child receives all regular medical, dental and optical services.
10. The foster parents will ensure that the child is engaged in appropriate community activities that are geared towards social development.
11. The foster parents will ensure that appropriate behaviour management and support techniques are practiced.
12. The foster parents will notify the caseworker of vacation plans two weeks in advance.
13. The foster parents will inform the caseworker of any changes to the occupancy of the residence.
14. The foster parents will report and document any incidents deemed to be of a critical nature to the caseworker and/or program director.
15. The foster parents will maintain a clean environment and ensure that all safety procedures and standards are met.



Team approach

The foster parents will work collaboratively with a number of professionals including the caseworker, natural family, social services agencies, school personnel, mental health professionals, and any other service providers involved with the child's care. The care givers will participate in all planning meetings pertaining to the child in their care. They will effectively communicate to the team a review of the child's progress.

Living environment

In keeping with Ranch Ehrlo standards, the Treatment Foster Care Program will ensure that all foster parents are providing a nurturing and safe home for the children that are placed in their care. They will ensure that a well maintained and clean environment is routinely met. Each youth will have their own bedroom with a window that opens and a door to provide the child with some privacy. Bedrooms will not be located more than one floor above or

below the exit. Smoke alarms need to be located on every floor, as well as in the child's bedroom. Fire extinguishers are to be located on each floor and situated near potential hazards. Both are mandatory. Each home will participate in an annual home safety check to ensure that all standards are being maintained.

Referral process

All referrals to the Treatment Foster Care Program will be screened to examine the child's ability to participate in a family setting without posing any risk to themselves, other children in the home or the community. If it is determined that the child will benefit from this program, the assessment process will begin.

All family members will be encouraged to participate in the referral assessment process. This process may involve meetings with the child, the child's family and with the potential Treatment Foster Parents. The information gathered will identify child and family strengths, impact of maltreatment on the child, medical issues and family resources for the child and the parents. All the information will be reviewed by the Intake Committee in determining acceptance. Referring agencies will be notified of referral status

in a timely manner. When services cannot be provided in a timely manner, alternative resources may be recommended.

After the child is accepted into the Treatment Foster Care program, a pre-placement assessment is completed in order to help determine the best possible family placement. Once a family is selected, a number of pre-placement visits may occur with the child. Following the completion of the pre-placement assessment, a final admission date will be set.

Support

A caseworker will meet separately with the child and the parents at least twice per month to review the child's progress and the overall service delivery. Regular and consistent contact will be maintained with the treatment foster parents on a monthly

basis not only to evaluate safety needs and well being of the child, but also to provide support for the foster parents. A minimum of two home visits will occur each month.

Training

Ranch Ehrlo Society will work cooperatively with the Ministry of Social Services in order to have the foster parents receive PRIDE pre-service training as part of their home assessment and approval as a foster home resource. They will include a series of in home consultations as well as competency-base training sessions to allow prospective families the opportunity to learn and practice the knowledge and skills they will need as new foster parent. In addition, Treatment Foster Parents will also be required to complete PRIDE CORE Training modules 1 and 2 within the first year of fostering.



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