**Nightlight Christian Adoptions**

**Foster to Adopt Program Overview**

Thank you for inquiring about Nightlight Christian Adoptions’ Foster to Adopt Program. Nightlight Christian Adoptions is a licensed full service adoption agency that provides families several options for adopting. These include international, domestic, foster to adopt, embryo adoption programs and home study services. It is important to research all the options to determine which one best fits your family.

Nightlight’s Foster to Adopt Program offers services for couples and individuals looking to adopt through the foster care system. We have licensed offices in nine states. Our California office is located in Orange County and works in cooperation with Orange County SSA and Riverside County DDS. We are also able to help facilitate foster to adopt matches with other states.

**The Children Nightlight’s Fost/Adopt Program serves:**

Did you know that less than 20% of children entering the foster care system will be in need of an adoptive home? Of the approximately 3,800 children entering the foster care system in Riverside County, CA and 3,000 in Orange County, CA every year, over 50% of the children are reunified with their parents, 11% are sent to live with a relative or guardian and around 15% age out of the system. If you are desiring to adopt a child under 10 years of age, please be prepared that a child placed in your home may be reunited with their family. You may be fostering one, two or three children before a child placed in your home is in need of permanency. Although this may seem discouraging or frightening, remember that the positive impact you have on a child’s life, whether it’s for a few weeks or forever, is invaluable to that child.

If you are hoping to adopt an older child, there is a large population of pre-adolescents & adolescents needing adoptive families. These children desire a family and hope to become a part of a family before they become or legal age. Every year nearly 15% of children in foster care “age out” of care, left to navigate early adulthood without the support, guidance or love of a stable family.

Lastly, the children, no matter what age, have experienced a tremendous amount of trauma and loss, at no fault of their own, and may present with challenging behaviors. They deserve and require a loving and stable family who understands the message behind their behaviors, provides them with unconditional love, honors their need to have connections to their past and parents them with the therapeutic parenting skills that will allow them to heal.

**The Individuals and Couples Nightlight’s Fost/Adopt Program serves:**

* Individuals or couples hoping to adopt an older child, sibling sets or a child with special needs.
* Individuals or couples willing to parent a child who has experienced some type of trauma and loss, and are willing to do what it takes to help the child to heal.
* Individuals or couples who have a desire and capacity to parent a child not born to them and may not look like them.
* Individuals or couples who are open to self-exploration and change.
* Individuals or couples who possess commitment, a sense of humor, acceptance and adaptability.

Nightlight’s adoptive parents come from varied backgrounds but there are a few eligibility requirements to become part of Nightlight’s Foster to Adopt Program. The most basic requirement is that you reside within a 50-mile radius of our licensed office located in Santa Ana, CA. If you reside outside of this radius, we’ll be more than happy to connect you to a reputable agency in your area. You may be single or married, with or without children and must be at least 21 years old. All household members over the age of 18 must pass a background check. Two parent families must have been married for a minimum of two years. Single parents may have not gone through a divorce or a death of a spouse in the last year. Families may have not gone through a significant loss or addition (i.e. birth or placement of a child) in their household in the last year.

In order to adopt through the foster care system, you are required to become a Certified Resource Family (formally known as a foster parent). The certification process will provide you with the education, training, and support needed to be a successful foster/adoptive parent. The Nightlight Christian Adoption staff consists of a dedicated team of professional social workers, trained in Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) and Informed Trauma Care, whose job it is to act as a support and resource, to both the families and the children.

At Nightlight, you are not alone in the process. We are available each and every step of the way, providing you one-on-one personalized guidance as you navigate your way through the foster to adoption process or any of our other adoption programs that you have chosen as a means to grow your family.

Thank you for sharing our belief that every child deserves a loving family!

**Foster Care & Foster to Adopt Services**

**Nightlight provide a variety of services to our families and the children in our care. These include:**

* **Home Study:** The home study is a family assessment completed using information you provide to us via questionnaires and interviews. A home study must be completed prior to the placement of children in your home.
* **Social Worker Support:** Nightlight Social Workers provide support, resources, information, guidance, advocacy, regular home visits and training.
* **Financial Assistance:** Every child placed in your home receives a special monthly care payment. These funds are to assist you in covering some of the costs related to the care of the child such as food, clothing, toys, activities, additional mileage, gas, etc.
* **Pre-Certification Training:** Nightlight provides 17.5 hours of training to all of our foster parents. Training topics include protecting and nurturing children, meeting children's developmental needs, and addressing grief, loss and trauma, supporting relationships between children and their families, working as a member of a professional team, lifelong adoption issues, positive discipline, rights and responsibilities, etc.
* **Matching & Placement Services:** Our agency also works with Orange County Social Service Agency and Riverside County Social Service Agency to place children who need temporary homes. Sometimes these children are unable to return home to their birth family and will need a permanent adoptive home.
* **Post-Certification Training Opportunities:** Nightlight provides a variety of training opportunities for families throughout the year.
* **Parent/Child Support Groups:** Several times each year, Nightlight provides our families with the opportunity to come together and share their ideas and experiences.
* **Individualized Child Assessments & Case Planning:** Each child will receive an individualized strength based assessment of his/her needs. You will be an important part of the child’s treatment team.
* **Social/Family Activities:** Several times a year, Nightlight plans and coordinates various family activities; these may include ball games, amusement park tickets, picnics and parties.
* **24/7 Emergency On-Call Social Worker:** We understand emergencies don’t always happen during business hours. Nightlight has a 24/7 emergency pager should you need to speak with someone after hours.
* **Visitation Monitoring:** The majority of the children placed through our agency have some type of visitation, either with parents, siblings or other relatives. At times the visits must be monitored and the agency may decide, depending upon the circumstances, it is in the best interest of the child for a Nightlight Staff to monitor the visit.
* **Transportation Assistance:** Nightlight does provide our families with monthly payments which should be used for additional food and care of the child. We do expect that our families will be able to transport the child to all of necessary visits and appointments. We also understand that this may not always be possible and the agency is able, on a case-by-case basis, to assist with transportation.