



VOICES OF YOUTH

What makes a good Resource Family?

- Taking us places
- Letting us stay out late
- Understanding
- Provide youth wisdom
- Show love – physical, emotional
- Help with education
- True permanence
- Allowance
- Caring
- Concern for youths needs because they want to - not because they have to
- Being a good listener
- Treat as your own
- No abuse!
- Don't do it for the \$ - teens are expensive
- Understand/remember what being a teen is like
- Don't be afraid to tell the truth
- A role model
- Someone who understands what you have been through and won't do the same

What is the only thing you would change about foster care that a Resource Family can do?

- Encourage extra activities and allow more freedom
- Privacy (parent to child)
- Discipline and respect for the foster kids privacy
- Allowance – more \$
- Take kids more places – go out more often
- Co-ed foster homes
- Be more attentive to kids in home
- Access to fridge
- Help with future financial planning
- Show caring and affection

Describe Normalcy

- Cell phone
- Being able to go out and do things with friends
- Being able to do things on our own – wash clothes and cook own food
- Allowance
- Privacy – don't read personal journals
- Treat as part of family / nobody gets preferential treatment
- Allow to spend night with friends / don't background check every time
- Don't threaten to throw out or send to a bad group home
- Being called "son"
- Allow friends to come over and spend time
- Being able to attend Homecoming

What is the best way to help a teen feel comfortable – what do you need (rules, expectations and communication)?

- Talk about feelings
- Give hugs
- Leave us alone if we ask
- Get to know youth
- Have pictures of foster kids just like the bio kids
- Provide youth with personal space
- Include foster child when traveling and doing things
- Take child to work (day at work with resource family)
- Talk to them- ask them questions-let them know they can talk to you
- Accept them for who they are – even when different backgrounds or beliefs exist
- Don't assume that they are Bad or Have Issues
- Give Space and support – cell phone, computer access

Describe some positive things about Resource Families:

- They are not bio parents and cannot put their hands on you
- They give you a house to live in – a safe place
- Aging out
- Someone to listen to, care about you and build self esteem/respect
- Give \$
- Food / drink
- They are nice, provide for our needs, understanding and are bright/ educated
- Caring and loving
- You know you are loved
- Fun to be around
- Can always go back to them
- Great support system
- Reliable

Describe some things you did not enjoy:

- Needed more freedom and responsibility
- More allowance
- Being treated like an outsider
- Being disrespected and treated like an animal
- Not being able to do things that are normal for a teen
- Confidential information was shared (personal information) and personal belongings were went through
- Not being able to leave the house
- Accused of doing drugs
- Lack of freedom / strict curfew
- Did not have a key to the house

- The process for finding and the youth waiting for placement
- Cannot wash my own clothes

How can Resource Families stay motivated to foster – especially teens?

- Help teen in adding a positive lifestyle and thus successful future
- Behavior wise teens are more mature
- Great kids to provide a home for...
- Try connecting
- Doing something fun with them
- Don't make assumptions about the kids/teens
- Great interaction is always the best – create a positive bond/ environment
- Don't accuse them of doing something wrong
- Think of them as your own
- Realize the benefit for you in the end

What do you want Resource Families to know about you?

- What makes me mad so they won't do it
- My needs and wants
- How much I want to age out
- If I like pets or have a bad temper
- That I am often sensitive at heart
- That I like to dress and look good
- That I love communicating rather than arguing or being talked at
- Show love in every aspect
- How much I love my family and want to stay in touch with them
- Communication is the key
- Show that you care – learn what is important to me
- I have no reason to lie
- Learn the kind of food I like
- I need privacy
- Knock on the door before entering