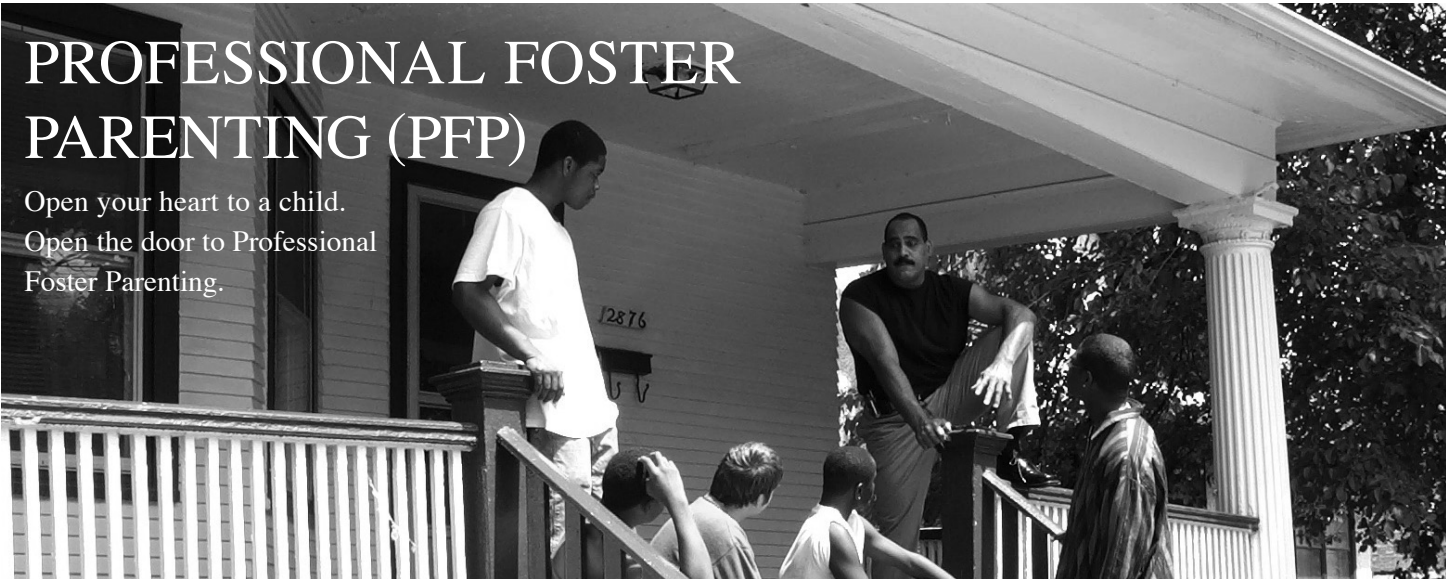


# PROFESSIONAL FOSTER PARENTING (PFP)

Open your heart to a child.  
Open the door to Professional Foster Parenting.



As a foster parent, you can help youth whose worlds have been turned upside down by loss, grief, abuse, or neglect.

Giving kids a chance has motivated Detective Gerald Hamilton to be a foster parent for 70 young men.

A member of PFP, Detective Hamilton illustrates our commitment to Chicago's children. UCAN provides a refuge for those whose lives have been devastated by neglect and abuse. In keeping with this mission, we are seeking individuals and families to become Professional Foster Parents.

***“These children are an untapped resource. I want to give them a chance.”***

Foster parents provide stable, nurturing, and affectionate care for children whose own families have been unable to safely care for them. Foster parents provide the critical support these children need while their families work to overcome the circumstances that made it necessary for children to be placed outside their homes.

The primary goal of foster care is to help restore children safely to their families. Foster parents play an essential role in helping the child and parents maintain their family bond during the period of separation.

Foster parents are especially important for teenagers. Foster parents guide youth through the turbulent adolescent years and help them enter into adult life.

If a child cannot return home, foster parents may provide a permanent home and eventually assume legal responsibility for the child as the guardian or through adoption.

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## **BECOMING A FOSTER PARENT**

The state of Illinois sets basic requirements for individuals or families wishing to become foster parents. In addition, UCAN ensures that all our foster parents are best suited for the children we place in their homes:

- You must be at least 23 years of age.
- Applicants may be single or married.

- You must have sufficient household income to care for a child even though the state will make a stipend available for each placement.
- You must be in good physical and mental health.
- You must be a law-abiding citizen. We do take applicants with convictions provided the crimes were not against persons and the applicant has a recent history of good citizenship.
- Above all, we seek foster parents who can make the commitment to provide quality care to troubled children and youth.

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## **WHAT DOES PFP OFFER?**

UCAN'S Professional Foster Parenting (PFP) Program offers a range of support services.

- We assist with placement and adoption.
- We advocate for foster parents' needs.
- We provide volunteers and mentors.
- We offer therapeutic interventions.
- We offer on-going foster parent training and support groups.
- We offer case management services.



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## FOSTER PARENTING THAT FITS

UCAN offers several opportunities for those interested in fostering.

### Specialized Foster Care

Specialized foster care is a unique program dedicated to providing stability in the lives of children and youth with challenging problems. These may include behavioral, emotional, physical, and mental disabilities. Specialized foster parents provide intensive, individualized therapeutic supervision.

### Traditional Foster Care

Foster parents give children family-centered and supportive care and an opportunity to heal from the trauma of their earlier life. At the same time, foster parents support and encourage biological parents in their efforts to demonstrate that their children can be safely restored to their families. Traditional foster parents care for children with less severe

emotional, physical, or behavioral problems. Foster parents in this program help a child adjust to the foster care system while offering support in various ways and helping them find a little peace in their upside down world.

### Home of Relative Foster Care (HMR)

HMR foster care provides an opportunity for relatives to become caregivers and to provide kinship care in a safe, stable environment for a foster child who is related to them. Relative caregivers perform an essential role in helping the child and parents maintain their family bond during the period of separation.

### Partners in Parenting Program (PIP)

Working with the pregnant or parenting teen population is a challenging yet rewarding opportunity. Mentoring is a big part of the role of foster parents in this program. Opening your home to provide a safe and nurturing environment to a pregnant or parenting teen as well as teaching that teen parent how to be a loving parent brings its own substantial rewards.

### Adolescent Program

UCAN provides care for youth with multiple needs, including serious mental health, developmental, and medical conditions requiring intensive supervision and treatment. These experienced and skilled foster parents are compensated as full-time employees and live in agency-owned or leased homes. These foster parents work closely with a treatment team to provide the most home-like care possible for youth who would otherwise be institutionalized.

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## HOW CAN YOU HELP A CHILD?

To learn more the rewarding world of Professional Foster Parenting, please contact the foster parent recruiter:

### In Cook County

1340 S. Damen, Suite 205  
Chicago, IL 60608  
Phone: (312) 738-5910  
Fax: (312) 666-6978

### In Lake & McHenry County

830 West End Court  
Vernon Hills, IL 60061  
Phone: (847) 362.2111  
Fax: (847) 362.0410

You can also visit our website at [www.ucanchicago.org](http://www.ucanchicago.org)

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