

FOSTER SHARE 3

"Foster Share" is an informational flyer produced by the California Coalition of Foster Family Agencies (CCOFFA) for our California State Legislators

Since the California Coalition of Foster Family Agencies (CCOFFA) was established several years ago, we have received many calls about things that have been going wrong, as well as things that are going right, in the foster care industry in California. Rather than responding to specific, and possibly rare, occurrences, CCOFFA decided to poll the Foster Family Agencies to see what situations are merely circumstantial and which are trends or consistent patterns. Over the last few months, CCOFFA conducted a survey of the close to 300 private Foster Family Agencies (FFAs) in the state of California. We had a total of 76 surveys sent back in, representing approximately one fourth of all the agencies which, in terms of surveys, is a statistically significant representation. To the best of our knowledge, this is the most extensive survey ever conducted of Foster Family Agencies in California.

The percentages listed are derived from the actual number of surveys that addressed each question, so if only 45 surveys answered a question, the percentage is based on 45 as the base. With the questions regarding Community Care Licensing Program Analysts (LPAs), many FFAs have had multiple LPAs and some answered the questions for each LPA they have had, rather than just their current LPA, so even though we had 76 surveys returned, some LPA related questions had more than 76 responses.

- In the past 24 months, what is the longest time it took a Community Care Licensing (CCL) representative to come out to do an investigation?

1 month or less: 40.25%; 2-3 months: 24.67%; 4-6 months: 18.18%; 7-10 months: 11.68%; 1 year: 5.19%

- In your experience with your CCL Licensing Program Analyst(s), which attitude more accurately describes the manner in which they commonly deal with the concerns expressed regarding your agency and/or families:

Supportive/Understanding: 37.97%; Corrective: 24.17%; Punitive: 27.84%

- Do you believe it would be beneficial if CCL Licensing Program Analysts and investigators had at least some required college units of study in psychology, social work, childhood development, and/or sociology?

Yes: 89.18% No: 10.81%

How many units? (There were 11 categories of responses; we are listing the 4 with the highest percentages)

12 units: 18.75%; 60 units: 12.5%; BA degree: 31.25% Masters Degree: 12.5%

- Being as objective and unbiased as possible, in the past 24 months, have any of your foster parents experienced an investigative interview by either CCL or CPS that was handled in a manner that was unprofessional, overtly hostile, obviously biased towards a specific conclusion or finding, and/or condemnatory in presentation?

CCL: Yes: 56% No 44% CPS: Yes: 47.88% No: 52.11%

- Please mark all boxes that apply: What has been the pattern of your experience with CCL's interpretation of the Title 22 Foster Care regulations?

At times they make demands that have nothing to do with the regulations: 56.57%

Seem to make up overly picky, specific demands based on broad terms (e.g. for the safety and well being of the client) 44.73%

My LPAs have been fair, reasonable, and flexible in their interpretations of the Title 22 regulations: 36.84%

Too restrictive in their interpretations: 35.52%

- Have you ever received any sort of information from the California Department of Social Services, CCL, or any of the counties you serve outlining the rights of your foster parents?

Yes: 21.73% No: 78.26%

- Based on your experiences with CCL, when a CCL representative comes out to investigate an allegation against your agency and/or one of your foster families, how confident are you that they will be fair, reasonable, and unbiased in their approach and conclusions?

Very confident: 13.23%
 Somewhat confident: 27.94%
 Neutral: 20.58%
 Not very confident: 20.58%
 Not confident at all: 17.64%

- This question is for agencies that are at least 5 years old: Are you finding it harder each year to find and recruit families that have never done foster care before?

Yes: 89.7% No: 10.29%

If your answer to the above question was “yes”, which factors do you believe might be contributing to a reduction in new families seeking to be foster parents (please mark all that apply):

They fear the risks, such as false allegations against them or their children being hurt or abused: 66.17 %
 The reimbursement rates are too low: 63.23 %
 How challenging the kids are: 58.52 %
 They hear a lot of “bad press” about foster care: 55.88 %
 “The system” (CCL, CPS) is too hostile towards foster parents: 38.23 %
 They simply want younger children, but don’t want to adopt (concurrent planning): 35.29 %
 Their lives are too busy: 30.88 %

Other responses included: rules are too restrictive and/or demanding (7.35 %); it is hard to get exceptions to normalize a foster child’s life; potential foster parents want perfect children; inconsistency in the way CCL deals with different families; and potential families don’t want to work with teens.

If any legislator would be interested in working with the Foster Family Agencies and/or CCOFFA regarding any of the above information that may be of concern, please feel free to contact CCOFFA at:

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88 CCOFFA member FFAs

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| A New Beginning FFA | Daybreak Foster Family Agency | HUGS FFA | Paradise Oaks Youth Services |
| ABC Foster Family Agency | Environmental Alternatives | Independent Options FFA | Parents By Choice |
| Abrazo Foster Family Agency | Evelyn S. Cox FFA | Interim Care FFA | Positive Option Family Services |
| Advantage Foster Family Agency | Families United | Joshua Foster Family Agency | Proteus FFA |
| Alannah Foster Family Agency | Family Life Foundation, Inc. | Kair In-Home Social Services, Inc. | Provisional Care Child & Family Services |
| Alpha Treatment Center | Family Linkage | Kamali’ FFA | Rancho Jireh Foster Homes |
| Angels Foster Family Agency | Family Solutions, Inc. | Karing for Kids FFA | Rainbow Valley Foster Care |
| Arbiter Foster Family Agency | Foster Family Services | Koinonia Family Services | Safe Harbor Family Services |
| Ark Homes Foster Family Agency | Fred Jefferson Memorial FFA | Krista Foster Homes | Secure Transitions |
| Aspiranet (San Bernardino) | Free to Be Programs | La Cuna, Inc. FFA | Sojourner Truth FFA |
| Atkinson Youth Services | Future Families | Litehouse Children & Family Services | Southern California FFA |
| Avant-Garde Foster Family Agency | Futuro Inafantil Hispano FFA | McKinley Children’s Center FFA | Specialized Care FFA |
| Beta Foster Care | Genesis Family Center | Mountain Circle Family Services, Inc | Spectrum Children’s Services |
| Better Choices, Inc./Ready for Life FFA | Greater Hope Foundation for Children | Nepenthean Homes FFA | St. Vincent’s Foster Family Agency |
| Bright Horizons FFA | Greenhouse Family Services | New Dimensions | <i>Sunrise Foster Family Agency</i> |
| California Youth Advocate Program | Growing Alternatives FFA | New Horizons FFA | TJO Fowroe Haven Homes |
| Childhelp Foster Family Agency | Happy Faces FFA | New Mellineum FFA | United Connections FFA |
| Children’s Hope FFA | Help Our People Excel Foster Care | Niños Latinos Unidos FFA | Valley Oaks FFA |
| Children’s Plus FFA | HELPS Foster Family Agency | Nuevo Amancer Latino Children’s Services | Vision Quest Children & Family Services |
| Children’s Way FFA | Hillcrest Springs FFA | Olive Crest | Walden Family Services |
| Covenant Community Services | Homes With Heart FFA | Open Line Foster Family Agency | Welcome Home FFA |
| Dangerfield Institute of Urban Problems | Hosanna Homes | Our Children’s Keeper FFA | WynSpring Family ReSource Center |