WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME A FOSTER PARENT?

To become a foster parent you have to comply with certain requirements. The most important requirements are:

- Minimum age of 24 years.
- Most not have a criminal record.
- Most be in good mental and physical health.
- Participation in the preparation programs: to prepare your task as a foster parent(s).
- Stable home situation: placement of a child changes a lot in the home environment. If the attention of the parents is taken up by drastic events, it is not advis able to take in a child. If the situation is temporary, you could start participating in the preparation programs.
- Most have a stable financial situation, among other things, a fixed income, enough to take adequate care of your family and the foster child.
- Must allow a home inspection to allow minimum placement requirements.
- Willing to maintain a close working relationship with the S.J.I.B./Family Guardianship.

Foundation Judiciary Institutes Windward Islands, Foster Families Central
A family for every child

For more information about the role of and how to become a Foster Parent, please contact the F.J.I.W.I. Foster Families Central at # 542-3449.

Contact information F.J.I.W.I.:
A.Th. Illidge Road Nr. 117. FX Complex, Unit C.
Madame Estate.
Tel.: 542-3449 / Fax: 542-3472
Email: sjib@sintmaarten.net
Website: www.sjib.net

SJIB
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Foundation Judiciary Institutes Windward Islands.

A Family for Every Child.

Sign up at Foster Families Central
Tel: 599 452-3449

Foster Care

According to the Convention of the Rights of Children, every child has the right to a family, care and a proper upbringing. But too many times, children are separated from their parents for one reason or another. Sometimes this separation is necessary because competent authorities after judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interest of the child.

However, a child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State.

In St. Maarten there are a lot of children who need special care, attention and love from persons who are willing to make a difference. In the light of the above, The Foundation Judiciary Institutes Windward Islands (F.J.I.W.I.) / Stichting Justitiele Inrichtingen Bovenwinden (S.J.I.B.), is presently looking for Foster Parents.

What is foster Care and Why is it needed?

Foster care is a safe place to be if a child cannot live with his/her family. Children are placed in foster care because of neglect, abuse, exploitation, abandonment or a family crisis. Foster care is temporary; it is not meant to be forever. Children usually continue to visit their own families until they may reunite. While the child is out of home, F.J.I.W.I. / Family Guardianship is working with the parents to improve the situation at home so that the child can return to his or her parents.

What is the role of a foster parent?

Foster parents provide a supportive and stable family for children who cannot live with their birth parents until problems at home are solved. Parents will have to work with F.J.I.W.I. to reunite the child with birth parents or custodial adults. Foster parents help children grow and feel good again by providing them with stability, affection, consistency, and nurturing. They can provide care to many different children.

What categories of
Foster Parents are needed?

There are different categories of foster parents to fit different situations:

- General or permanent foster parents: these are defined as persons with or without children, who wish to allocate their home to a child for an indefinite period.
- Day foster parents: when parents cannot adequately raise their child, day foster care can work complementary. The child is placed in a foster home for a few days in the week. When the situation at home has stabilized, the day foster care ends.
- Therapeutic foster parents: this concerns persons who can assist a child with its psycho-social problems. From these persons an intensive cooperation with experts is expected.
- Weekend / vacation foster parents: some children in institutes have little contact with their family. For these children it's important to have contact with a family. These persons take care of the children during the weekend or vacation.
- Guest– and emergency foster parents: it concerns persons immediately available and awaiting a final decision on the child to be placed.
- Boarding foster parents: the accent lies on the care-taking aspect. It especially concerns children of 18—21 years of age) who are somehow considered independent. Placement is temporarily. Contact with the natural parents remains. Placement is more of a business nature. Since neither a father nor a mother is sought, young families can often provide a solution.
- Mental foster parents: these may be single parents and / or families who cannot have a child at home, but who are prepared to financially assist a child.

CAN YOU BECOME A VOLUNTEER CASEWORKER OR MENTOR?

To become a volunteer caseworker or mentor you have to comply with certain requirements.

The most important are:

- Affinity in working with foster children and foster parents;
- Willingness to help;
- Being able to deal with children and adults in their situation;
- Being available, sometimes also in acute situations and on weekends;
- Being persistent, that is being able to put up with deceptions;
- Being willing to cooperate with the guiding social worker(s);
- Being willing to cooperate with the Juvenile Court Magistrate.
- Participation in the preparation programs: to prepare your task as a counselor assistant or mentor parent(s).

For more information about the role and tasks of a volunteer caseworkers or mentor, please contact the F.J.I.W.I. Family Guardianship for an appointment at # 542-3449.

Foundation Judiciary Institutes Windward Islands, Foster Families Central
A family for every child

To register to become a volunteer caseworker or mentor call the F.J.I.W.I. Pleeggezinnen Centrale at # 542-3449.

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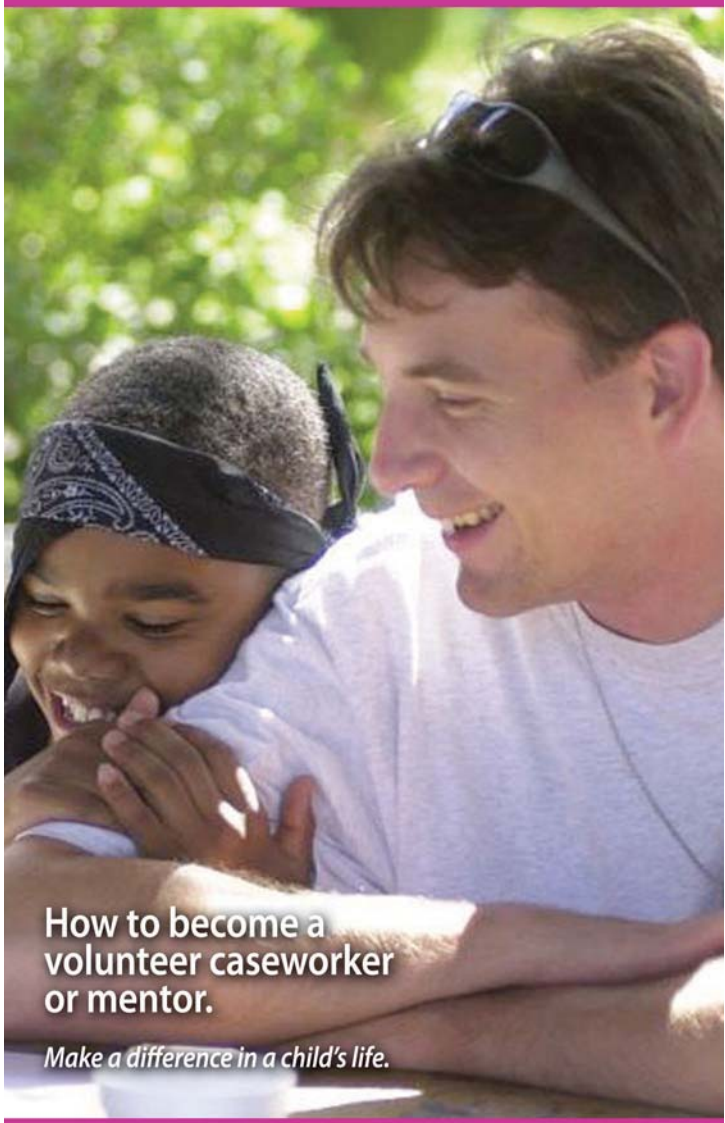

For more information
call Family Guardianship at tel. 542-3449

FAMILY GUARDIAN

"If a child grows up in such a way, that it is threatened by moral and or physical ruination, the Juvenile Court Magistrate can put him or her under Supervision (art. 347, 1st. Paragraph of the Civil Code). With this, one of the most drastic measures of Child Protection is meant. Authority and control over child(ren) or taken away from parents on account of their incapability and or incapacity. When this intervention appears to be too severe, legislator looks for an intermediate form which does not take all from the parents, yet opens the possibility to interfere.

At pronouncing the measure of placement under supervision, the Juvenile Court Magistrate immediately appoints a family guardian who guides the child in the family circle, and if necessary, also out of the family circle in the case of fostering out.

The Court asks the F.J.I.W.I./Family Guardianship to be or introduce a family guardian.

VOLUNTEERS

The word "family guardianship" could be misleading. The authority, "Court of Guardianship", is coupled to the custody and parental power, whereas, "Family Guardianship" does not imply authority, but much more assistance and guidance. Therefore a family guardianship is in the first place an assistance opened up by the law, in educating and caring of one or more children, who find themselves in serious trouble.

In the light of the before mentioned, the F.J.I.W.I./ Family Guardianship is seeking volunteer caseworkers and mentors who will among other things, assist the Family Guardianship in the following tasks:

CASEWORKERS

- Creating a mutual positive pattern of expectation with clients;
- Laying a foundation of trust for the beginning of the process of assistance to the child and it's family;
- Paying of regular home visits to help follow the right way consequently;
- Being on guard for the eventual danger of becoming the errand boy of the family, by always keeping in view the main task of care provider and attendant;
- Taking care of reporting as, among other things, an important means of help to get a clear review of the situation, possibly with the parents, guardians and child;

Passing on or referring to certain problems that ask for professional help.

MENTORS

- Being a role positive model for the foster child.
- Establishing a positive personal relationship with the foster child.
- Assist in developing the foster child life.
- Assists in developing the foster child competencies in specifics fields of interest.
- Undertake social and leisure activities with the foster child.
- Assist in increasing the foster child's ability to interact with other social and cultural groups.