Children's Home Society of North Carolina

Foster Care Reunification & Adoption Pathways

At Children's Home Society of North Carolina (CHS), we believe children thrive when they have safety, stability, and caring adults committed to their wellbeing. When children enter foster care, our work focuses on achieving the best long term outcome for each child — whether that is reunification, guardianship, or adoption.

What is Foster Care

Foster care provides temporary care for children who are unable to remain safely with their families. Foster parents offer stability, encouragement, and nurturing support while families work toward a permanent plan for the child.

Pathway #1 Reunification

Reunification is the primary goal of foster care. Whenever it is safe and possible, children are supported in returning to their parents or primary caregivers.

Reunification services may include:

- Parenting education and family counseling
- Mental health and substance use treatment
- Supportive visitation and relationship building
- Community-based resources to strengthen families

The role of foster parents:

- Supporting family connections when appropriate
- Helping children maintain routines and stability
- Partnering with social workers and birth families
- Encouraging healing and growth for everyone involved

Pathway #2 Guardianship

Guardianship offers stability when adoption or reunification is not the best option. Guardianship provides a permanent, legally supported home, often with a relative or close family friend, while maintaining important family connections.

Guardianship provides:

- Legal authority for caregivers to make decisions for the child
- Stability and consistency without terminating parental rights
- A solution that honors family relationships and cultural connections
- CHS helps families understand the guardianship process and navigate legal, emotional, and supportive needs along the way.

Guardianship may be a good fit when:

- A child needs long-term stability, but ongoing family ties are important
- Relatives or kin are willing to provide permanent care
- Adoption is not desired or appropriate for the child or family

Pathway #3 Adoption Through Foster Care

Adoption provides lifelong permanency and belonging. When reunification or guardianship is not possible, adoption offers children a permanent family relationship that lasts a lifetime.

Children waiting for adoption may include:

- Sibling groups who want to remain together
- Children age 8 and older
- Children with medical, developmental, or emotional needs

Adoptive families provide:

- Long-term commitment, love, and stability
- Support for healing from trauma
- A forever sense of belonging

CHS walks alongside families from preparation and training through placement and post-adoption services.

How CHS Supports Families

- Trauma-informed training and education
- Dedicated family specialists and case support
- 24/7 on call assistance for foster families: 336-223-0480
- Guidance through reunification, guardianship, and adoption
- Ongoing post permanency support
- Online training and support via SkyPrep: chsnc.skyprepapp.com

You Can Make a Difference

Whether you are interested in fostering, providing guardianship, adopting, or simply learning more, CHS is here to support you every step of the way.

CHSNC.ORG