

CAREGIVER SELECTION CRITERIA GUIDELINES

Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD) staff selects participants for Safe Babies training and determines when a training event is needed in a particular community. The training is open to those foster parents who have been selected by the local Resource Team, Kith and Kin (family) caregivers who will be caring for a safe baby, MCFD staff, and community partners who work with Safe Babies. Whenever possible and space is available and with the approval of MCFD, Adoptive Parents may be included in the Safe Babies training. In order for the training to be most useful, foster parents who participate in the training and Safe Babies Foster Parent Training Program should have:

1. Family Structure

- One adult should be a full-time primary caregiver
- Must have a skilled support network or partner who, for regular periods of time, can take the place of the primary caregiver in providing care for the baby in all aspects of care
- Other children in the home should be old enough to understand the demands the infant will make on their parent's time
- All family members are supportive of having the infant within their family

2. Physical Environment

- Infant should have his/her own room
- Appropriate and CSA approved equipment must be used
- Home should be large enough for caregivers to have a quiet place for the baby to ensure, when necessary, that a baby's needs for reduced noise and commotion are being met
- Must meet the Standard of Smoke Free Environment as per BCFD Caregivers Standards
- Pets in the home may hinder your ability to provide for some babies depending on their specific needs

3. Education and Experience

- BCFCE – all training modules should be completed
- Previous experience fostering children including infants and toddlers
- Preferred outside-of-fostering experience with children with special needs, medically fragile or medically complex children
- Preferred to have a minimum of 2 years fostering experience as an approved resource

- Degree or certificate in related field (i.e. nursing, child-care) or equivalent experience is recommended

4. Demonstrated Personal Characteristics

- Previous parenting experience
- Non-judgment and supportive attitude towards families with addiction issues
- Willing to work towards, and assist the family in gaining the skills required caring for their infant when re-unification is the plan
- Ability and commitment to work collaboratively with health care, community service providers, and MCFD staff
- Strong organization and record keeping skills
- Confidential and professional
- Ability to advocate for infant
- Ability to manage stress effectively
- Effective team member with the ability to take direction from team professionals to ensure care plan for infant
- Willingness to ensure self-care is maintain (use of relief, asking for help, breaks etc.)

5. Health Requirements

- Physically fit
- No limitations on physical self for caring for an infant i.e. lifting, holding infant for long periods of time or compromised back health
- Non-smoker
- Capacity to manage stressful situations and lack of sleep

6. Other

- Own reliable transportation suitable for safely transporting infants, equipped with appropriate infant car seat
- Commitment to stay current in the field of substance-exposed infants by reading and attending further training when available
- Availability and willingness to participate in local community support systems to remain connected

7. Final Approval

- A caregiver who has had the training must formally be designated and approved by MCFD as a Safe Babies Approved Home