

# GRODEN CENTER Treatment Foster Care

by Wendy Fachon



Locally, there is a dire need to provide treatment foster care for children and adolescents with developmental, emotional and behavioral challenges, who have been removed from their birth families.

The Groden Network, whose mission for the past 40 years has been to provide a continuum of support for individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities, has dedicated one of its many programs to address this need. Groden Center Treatment Foster Care (GCTFC), licensed since 1993, strives to place children and adolescents in home settings, while working to achieve each individual's full potential. A plan toward permanency, whether that be adoption or reunification with the birth family is the goal.

Currently, there are 20 GCTFC foster families providing treatment foster care, however, there are many children still waiting in hospital settings, group homes or assessment centers. The Groden Center seeks safe, stable and loving foster homes for every child that comes into care. The ideal foster home includes individuals or couples that own or rent their homes and can provide love and stability.

GCTFC Director of Administration, Andrea Neri, explains, "To become a GCTFC foster parent, there is a licensing process which includes obtaining clearances and a home study evaluation. Other characteristics of successful foster parents are maintaining

a good sense of humor, calm demeanor, patience and flexibility."

Each family or individual is well-supported by a dedicated GCTFC clinician and other staff members that are available 365/24/7, so the families do not face the journey alone. It takes a village to support these children, their birth families and foster families, and GCTFC supports families every step of the way.

One member of the GCTFC family is Rosa Gough. After working as a social worker for eight years, Gough came to realize how many children with special needs are waiting for homes, so she and her husband, Clarence, became licensed. The Goughs have been foster parents for 14 years now. They have provided stability and love for nine children, one of whom they have adopted. Rosa says, "Seeing them grow and making progress is so rewarding." Eventually, the birth parents are ready for their child's return, or an adoptive family is identified and approved for permanency.

The Goughs have maintained relationships with many of the foster children and their birth families. Knowing that she helped provide a solid foundation for these children and their future is what drives the Goughs to continue fostering. While Rosa has a clinical background extremely well-suited to treatment foster parenting, experience working with children that have special needs is not a requirement.

GCTFC is hosting two upcoming virtual information sessions from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., December 14, and 10 to 11 a.m., January 16. These sessions provide a forum for prospective families and individuals to learn more about fostering and to ask questions.

To RSVP, please email [Brendan Carty at BCarty@GrodenCenter.org](mailto:BCarty@GrodenCenter.org) or call 401-274-6310 x1229. For more information, visit [GrodenNetwork.org/FosterCare](http://GrodenNetwork.org/FosterCare).

Wendy Fachon is a regular contributor to *Natural Awakenings* and host of *Story Walking Radio Hour* at [StoryWalking.com](http://StoryWalking.com).

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