

Peer Mentor Role

1. Core Responsibilities and Duties:

- Provides one-on-one support for a period of up to one year to newly approved foster parents and/or foster parents who have been fostering for less than two years who request peer support.
- Maintains contact with the foster parent mentee at the agreed times and dates.
- Provides telephone and/or email support to mentored foster parent.
- Supports up to three foster parent mentees at any one time.
- Attends required training sessions for mentors.
- Attends quarterly mentor support meetings.
- Seeks support from the Social Worker and/or Executive Director of the Newfoundland and Labrador Foster Families Association when required.
- Complies with peer mentoring confidentiality statement and recording requirements.
- Positively promotes the peer mentoring program.
- Participates actively in evaluation of the peer mentoring program.

2. Peer Mentoring Expectations

- Professional Involvement: Mentors must be willing and able to attend workshops/training and local meetings in order to network with other families.
- Positive Attitude: Mentors should have positive experiences of working with birth families. Mentors must have a positive attitude toward fostering and while recognizing the challenges, must also have a positive attitude towards working with the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development.
- Organizational knowledge: Mentors should possess the knowledge of the program and its vision and must support that vision.
- Solution focused: Mentors must be solution focussed in their approach to problem solving.

3. Required Personal Qualities

- Assertive
- Self-aware
- Confident
- Reliable
- Enthusiastic
- Encouraging
- Understanding
- Flexible
- Patient
- Empathic
- Warm
- Consistent
- Approachable
- Caring
- Committed

4. Skills and competencies

An effective mentor must have skills and competencies in the following areas:

- Strong interpersonal skills.
- Ability to establish and maintain rapport.
- Active listening and communication skills.
- Ability to maintain a non-judgmental approach.
- Helping people to explore their needs, motivations, skills and thought processes.
- Helping people recognize and draw on their own strengths.
- Helping people focus on the "why" rather than the "what" of events and situations.
- Helping people set appropriate goals and methods of assessing progress in relation to these goals.

- Motivating people to develop new ideas, solutions, and strategies to achieve their goals.
- Taking a non-directive approach.
- Understanding of and respect for confidentiality.
- Effective time management.

5. The Mentor must demonstrate:

- Knowledge of the PRIDE core competencies.
- An ability to recognize when they need to seek consultation.
- A non-judgemental attitude.
- The ability to think outside the box.
- The ability and willingness to work as a team player.
- The ability to be a positive role model.
- An understanding of the placement needs of children and youth in care.
- An understanding of the experience of birth parents and a positive attitude towards working with birth families.
- The ability to listen and communicate effectively (verbally and in writing).
- The ability to form and maintain professional, positive and effective working relationships.
- The ability to analyse and make sense of information shared by foster parents.
- The ability to encourage and motivate others in a non-directive way.
- The ability to balance and prioritize mentoring tasks alongside their own fostering responsibilities.
- A willingness to be flexible in availability, including evenings and weekends.