

# USING FAMILIAR PEOPLE FOR RESPITE CARE...BENEFITS FOR YOU AND YOUR FOSTER CHILD

Why is it a good idea to develop your own network of friends and family who can provide respite and child care?

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## Spending respite time with a familiar adult reduces trauma.

This is the most important reason of all. For children and teens who have a trauma history, every introduction of an unknown caregiver has the potential to add a new layer of traumatic stress and to trigger painful reminders of past separations. Spending time with a known and trusted adult is much less stressful for kids than being left in the care of a stranger. Being comfortable in the respite setting reduces the likelihood of trauma-related behaviors during respite after returning to your home.

## Routines and structure are more consistent.

It's easier to explain and transfer your parenting strategies and household routines when the respite caregiver is your friend, family member, or familiar fellow foster parent. The transition between the two homes is easier both coming and going.

## It's more "Normal"

Spending time with an extended family member or friend is something that all kids do as they are growing up. Your foster child is not singled out and may be able to share the experience with your own children or other foster children in your home.

## More predictability and less worry for you.

Selecting your own respite caregiver allows you to choose an adult that you know is well-matched to the personality and needs of your child or teen. You can be more sure and confident about the care and supervision your child is receiving and better able to focus on relaxation, work or fun during your time away.