



The Faces of Foster Care Engagement

How **Your** Gifts, Personality, and
Experiences Can Help Kids and Families
in Foster Care

HOW DO YOU FIT IN FOSTER CARE?

You have gifts, personality traits, and experiences that make you who you are. The challenge is figuring out how those things fit into the foster care system. We've grouped these gifts, personality traits, and experiences into *7 Faces of Foster Care Engagement*. Chances are that more than one, or even several, will describe facets of who you are. *You won't fit neatly into just one*. However, our hope is that by identifying your natural tendencies within each of these types, you will better understand how you can help kids and families in foster care.

Let's get started!

The 7 Faces of Foster Care Engagement



◀ THE ADMINISTRATOR

The Administrator's eye for detail gives them the ability to take big ideas and make them a reality one small piece at a time.



◀ THE ADVOCATE

The Advocate uses their influence to make sure others' best interests are considered and defended.



◀ THE ALLY

The Ally "walks with" others through difficult circumstances, doing whatever they can to lighten the load.



◀ THE AMBASSADOR

The Ambassador represents God's heart for hurting children to the community and uses their platform to gather key players to get more done together than anyone could do alone.



◀ THE COACH

The Coach earns trust through patient listening and turns their own personal life experience into wise guidance for others.



◀ THE INTERCESSOR

The Intercessor takes the needs of others before God in prayer and knows that true transformation happens as a result of God's work in the hearts and minds of people.



◀ THE RECRUITER

The Recruiter helps others understand how their experiences, personalities and gifts can be used to fill key roles in the life of a child and in the system.

Let's take a closer look and figure out which ones describe you best...



THE ADMINISTRATOR

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. – I Corinthians 12:4-5

The Administrator's eye for detail gives them the ability to take big ideas and make them a reality...piece by piece.

You Might Be an Administrator if...



You have an eye for detail



Breaking things down into manageable steps comes naturally to you



You enjoy coordinating multiple moving pieces, helping others to do their part

Where the Administrator Fits in Foster Care

- Special event planning for recruitments, trainings, and fundraising
- Coordinating the development of a new project or program
- Coordinating multiple people to wrap around and meet the various needs that biological, foster and adoptive families may have

Get to Know One: DAVID

David has a career in the corporate world as a project manager, but uses his free time to create life-changing events for foster and adoptive families through his church. "I'm a very detailed-oriented person. I love organizing tasks, setting goals, and seeing those tasks get accomplished." David works long and hard to make sure these events go well. "We all have to roll up our sleeves - it's a small team!"

But, the hard work pays off for David, because he finds it "thrilling when people come up to me at the event and share that God really moved in their hearts as they pursue His will in their journey of foster care and adoption - my heart is always filled when I hear these stories."



THE ADVOCATE

Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. – Psalm 82:3

An advocate uses their influence to make sure others' best interests are considered and defended.

You Might Be an Advocate if...



You have a strong natural response to injustices you see around you



You are always rooting for the underdog



You enjoy digging deeper to find resources and connections for others where they might not be immediately visible

Where the Advocate Fits in Foster Care

- As a Court Appointed Special Advocate (C.A.S.A.)
- As a foster parent
- As a case worker

Get to Know One: ASHLEY

Ashley has no formal legal training, but she discovered in her late twenties that she could use her voice in court for kids in foster care and this could have a meaningful impact for a child in the community. She wasn't sure she was qualified at first, but she's realized the importance of just showing up and being consistent.

"It was slow to begin. I'll be honest -- it felt awkward at times. Being assigned to a teenager with few words, there's a balance between desiring to know him, but not wanting to pepper him with questions. Over the past 3 years, I've learned to simply be myself and embrace the silent moments. We create masterful ice cream cones from Cold Stone, run errands around town and browse through Costco (his personal favorite!) We often talk about his well-being, but he seems most engaged when we are dreaming about things . . . travel, sports, and his future career. My goal is that he knows someone cares about him, that he's got so much to offer the world, and that he has someone willing to fight for his future dreams."



THE ALLY

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. – Galatians 6:2

The Ally “walks with” others through difficult circumstances, doing whatever they can to lighten the load.

You Might Be an Ally if...



You find it easy to empathize with the difficulties of others



You thrive in the context of relationship



Others have described you as an encourager

Where the Ally Fits in Foster Care

- As a support to biological families working to be reunified with their kids
- As a support to foster and adoptive families
- As an ongoing encourager to child welfare professionals in your community

Get to Know One: ERIN

Erin met a young mom who had lost custody of multiple children. When this mom was given the chance to try and parent again, Erin was able to walk with her through the process, providing encouragement and support. Three years later, this young woman is parenting two of her children and is striving everyday to be the best mom she can be. Erin shares, “She needed a lot of resources and support, but one of the greatest gifts I was able to give her was someone who believed that she could do it.”

Through this gift of encouragement, Erin walks with biological families, foster families and weary child welfare professionals. “I am seeing more and more that people just need to know that someone believes in them & that they are not alone. I don't have to “fix” things for them, but I can breathe life, hope and truth into them in hopes of giving them the encouragement to keep on fighting and not give up.”



THE AMBASSADOR

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves
– Proverbs 31:8

The Ambassador represents God's heart for hurting children to the community and uses their platform to gather key players to get more done together than anyone could do alone.

You Might Be an Ambassador if...



You enjoy talking with others and inspiring them to do big things



You enjoy connecting the right people together to get things accomplished



You have a passion for explaining the scriptures to others as well as sharing your personal experiences

Where the Ambassador Fits in Foster Care

- Speaking to congregations and at events, about God's heart for hurting kids
- Writing blogs and articles to inspire others to action
- Encouraging pastors, child welfare professionals and other key community leaders to work together to make a bigger impact for kids

Get to Know One: AARON

Aaron visited a fellow pastor in the community to talk about foster care. This pastor told Aaron that his congregation was not a good candidate to have a foster care ministry because they were older and already were putting their resources into other compassionate outreaches. Aaron told him "You already have a foster care ministry and don't know it. I challenge you to ask your church how many of them know someone who has been impacted by a child being removed from their home." For the next 6 Sundays this pastor asked his congregation that question and, to his amazement, discovered that 85% of their church had some contact with someone impacted by the foster care system. He then knew they had a role to play. Aaron shares "When I speak to others, my job is to bring information to the head, praying that it transfers to their heart, and then help them to use their hands to make a difference for kids."



THE COACH

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds... – Hebrews 10:24

The coach earns trust through patient listening and turns their own personal life experience into wise guidance for others.

You Might Be a Coach if...



Others would describe you as a good listener and you have a natural curiosity that allows you to ask questions and get to know others well



You have a willingness to transparently share about your own triumphs and failures



You enjoy introducing others to ideas and resources that can help them

Where the Coach Fits in Foster Care

- As a mentor for kids in care or emancipated youth
- As a coach for a biological family working toward reunification
- As a coach for those starting and growing ministries and organizations to help kids in care

Get to Know One: MIKE

Mike first began mentoring others in a professional setting about career choices and saw the impact it could have on people's lives. "My career has been a mix of restaurant management (first 10 years) and business/IT consulting the last 25 years." He has recently taken his heart for mentoring in a new direction and begun mentoring a child in foster care.

Through his personal experience, he has found that being a good mentor requires "the ability to build trust (with) the mentee, so that they will share what is truly going on their life. Without this level of trust, it is difficult to be a mentor." Mike defines a mentor as someone "who is trying to help another human being without any consideration to either recognition or benefiting from the guidance provided." Even though he isn't looking to gain anything, Mike has found that "mentoring is an extremely rewarding process."



THE INTERCESSOR

If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer. – Matthew 21:23

The Intercessor takes the needs of others before God in prayer and knows that true transformation happens as a result of God's work in the hearts and minds of people.

You Might Be an Intercessor if...



You love to pray and are trustworthy with the needs of others



You often find yourself asking others how you can pray for them



You have a sensitivity to the needs of others and to God's leading

Where the Intercessor Fits in Foster Care

- Praying personally for kids, families, child welfare professionals
- Gathering people in person, by phone or online to pray regularly for the foster care system and for the kids and families impacted by it
- Attending recruitment events, conferences, and meetings for the sole purpose of showing up early sitting in the back and praying for attendees, speakers, and the resulting impact of the event

Get to Know One: RHONDA

Rhonda was introduced to a couple who had made the decision to abort their baby after debating between abortion and adoption. Rhonda shares, "I asked if they would postpone the appointment for 24 hours and pray and allow me to gather people to pray. They agreed to wait." After the 24 hours of prayer, Rhonda shares that "They decided to give life to their little boy! The little boy was then adopted by another family." But, the story does not end there. Rhonda shares that "Ultimately, the biological parents accepted Christ." Rhonda has learned through stories like this that she has to have "absolute faith that God is in control of all circumstances," and so she prays with faith for others. Through her work in ministry and through prayer, Rhonda "celebrates the wins even if they seem insignificant to others." As she celebrates, she watches as God brings the stories of children and families full circle.



THE RECRUITER

Then I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem..."

– Nehemiah 2:17

A recruiter is someone who helps others understand how their experiences, passions and gifts can be used to fill key roles in the life of a child and in the system.

You Might Be a Recruiter if...



You find yourself pointing out to others where critical areas of need exist



You enjoy talking transparently with people about your own experiences in the system



Others have told you that you inspire them to do big things

Where the Recruiter Fits in Foster Care

- As a recruiter for foster and adoptive parents, CASA's, respite care providers and mentors
- As foster and adoptive preparation class facilitator
- As a coach that uses tools like this one to help others find their fit in foster care

Get to Know One: CHRISTIE

A couple interested in adopting asked to meet with Christie while passing through Little Rock on their way home. "Of course I met them!", Christie shares. She listened to their desire to adopt a sibling group and then spent time explaining the process for fostering and adopting. Christie described that after the meeting, "I sent them a few photos of some sibling groups that were featured in our Heart Gallery." Both of them were moved by one specific sibling group that consisted of a girl and her two little brothers. At first it looked like the couple might not be matched with these three, but Christie excitedly reports, "After much prayer and God's miraculous intervention, they were selected!" As a recruiter, she is passionate about helping people understand how they can be involved in foster care and adoption. Christie shares, "What a blessing to be part of so many stories like this one."

SO, WHICH OF THE FACES OF FOSTER CARE BEST DESCRIBES YOU?

As we mentioned earlier, more than one of these likely applies to you. After looking at each of the profiles on the previous pages, which 3 most resonate with who God has created you to be (rank from 1 to 3)?

						
						
THE ADMINISTRATOR	THE ADVOCATE	THE ALLY	THE AMBASSADOR	THE COACH	THE INTERCESSOR	THE RECRUITER

It's important to remember that any of these can be involved in any part of system from family preservation, to foster or adoptive parenting to support. But knowing how you're wired helps you plug into these different areas in way that best fits who you are. To learn more about foster care in your state and the organizations that can help you make an impact, visit:

CAFO.org/FosterMovement

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Foster Movement U is a growing collection of powerful short training videos and PDF tools to help you build foster care movement where you live. These tools are created and compiled by the members and partners of the Christian Alliance for Orphans National Foster Care Initiative. To learn more, visit:

CAFO.org/FosterMovementU

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