

**Foster Parent mentor:**

- 51 families said a foster parent mentor would be helpful (41 %)

**Appropriate placements:**

- 35 families reported that they have had a child placed with them for whom they could not provide for the child's basic needs (30 %)

**Being valued as a Foster parent:**

- 53 Regular Foster Parents feel that they and their work are valued (75 %)
- 51 Treatment Foster Parents feel that they and their work is valued (86 %)
- Of the foster parents responding to the question, 60% have been contacted by or have contact with their former foster children.

**Foster parents most commonly identified the following things in the foster care system that are working:**

1. Social worker doing a good job.
2. Removing a child from dangerous situations and providing a safe, stable environment.
3. CASA and CRB volunteers who are real children's advocates.

**Foster parents most commonly identified the following things in the foster care system that they would change if they could:**

1. Higher rate of reimbursement.
2. More foster parent input and respect for foster parents.
3. Better and more detailed disclosures (specific child information) provided earlier in the process.



## Summary and Recommendations

During the course of its 2004 research, the New Mexico Child Abuse and Neglect Citizen Review Board's Statewide Advisory Committee (SAC) found that foster parents most commonly identified three items that they felt needed improvements in New Mexico's foster care system. These items were higher reimbursement rates, more input and respect for foster parents, and better and more detailed information provided to foster parents as early in the process as possible.

In conjunction with its 2004 research study examining the perceptions of foster parents from around New Mexico, and recognizing the most commonly identified areas for improvement according to the foster parents we studied, SAC presents the following recommendations to New Mexico's child protection community.

1. The community (Children, Youth and Families Department, foster parents, the courts, attorneys, volunteer advocates and others) should continue to assess the current rates of reimbursement for foster care providers while considering changes in the costs of providing care over the past ten years. The community should identify appropriate reimbursement increases for foster parents and develop a comprehensive strategy for acquiring the financial resources to implement the increase.
2. New Mexico's child protection community should maximize input from foster parents and demonstrate respect for their work and their status as members of the child's treatment team in the following ways:
  - Improving notification of foster parents for events such as CYFD staffings, court hearings and CRB reviews. Foster parent attendance at these events should increase by ten percent.
  - Increasing the amount of contact between guardian ad litem and foster parents, and CASA volunteers and foster parents. Communication should occur at least monthly.

**Foster Parent attendance at events:**

- 58 Families reported never attending CYFD staffings (46 %)
- 40 Families reported never attending court hearings (30 %)
- 35 Families reported never attending a CRB case review (27 %)



**Information to Foster Parents:**

**Traveling files for each child in Regular Foster Care:**

- 19 Families reported receiving traveling files for each child in their care (25 %)
- 19 Families reported receiving the files sometimes (25 %)
- 39 Families reported having not received a traveling file for each child in their care (50 %)

**Respite files for children in Treatment Foster Care:**

- 41 Families reported receiving respite files for each child in their care (79 %)
- 11 Families reported having not received a respite file for each child in their care (21 %)

**Sufficient pre-placement information:**

- 46 Families reported receiving sufficient information (34 %)
- 37 Families reported not receiving sufficient information (28 %)
- 50 Families reported sometimes receiving sufficient information (38 %)

**Procedural Requirements:**

**Participation in case planning with CYFD:**

- 69 Families reported participating in case planning at least sometimes (54 %)
- 58 Families reported not participating in case planning (45 %)

**CYFD Substitute Care Agreement:**

- 36 Regular Foster Parents reported always having a substitute care agreement at time of placement (48 %)
- 39 Families reported not always having a substitute care agreement (52 %)
- 38 Treatment Foster Care Parents reported always having a substitute care agreement at time of placement (64 %)
- 18 Families reported not always having a substitute care agreement (31 %)

**Notification of children being removed from foster home:**

- 52 families reported having enough notice (48 %)
- 22 families reported not having enough notice (21 %)
- 34 families reported sometimes having enough notice (31 %)



**Foster Parent Support:**

Did children in your care get the services they need?

Type of Service	Yes (percent)	No (percent)	Sometimes (percent)
Medical	90	1	9
Mental Health	68	17	15
Dental	92	4	4
Educational	76	10	14

For families for which reimbursement was appropriate, have you been fairly reimbursed by CYFD for:

Type of Cost	Yes (percent)	No (percent)	Sometimes (percent)
Child care	84	10	6
Special needs	58	21	21
Out-of-pocket	53	23.5	23.5