



“Conscious Parent Academy –
Replacement parents urgently needed!”
(Program Erasmus+ 2020-1-PL01-KA204-
082283)



Foster Care in Portugal: Promoting and Attracting Foster Families

21st September 2022

Initiatives to attract Foster Families

- In Portugal, specifically in the Lisbon district, *Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa* launched the campaign “*LX Acolhe*” (“*Lisbon Fosters*”) in 2019 to promote Foster Care.



**Acolher
uma criança
é devolver-lhe
a infância**

Lisboa precisa de **Famílias de Acolhimento**.
Junte-se a nós e faça a diferença.


Programa de Acolhimento Familiar
Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa

Uma iniciativa

Saiba como em **www.scml.pt**
ou através do **213 263 063**,
910 051 226 ou **910 047 370**

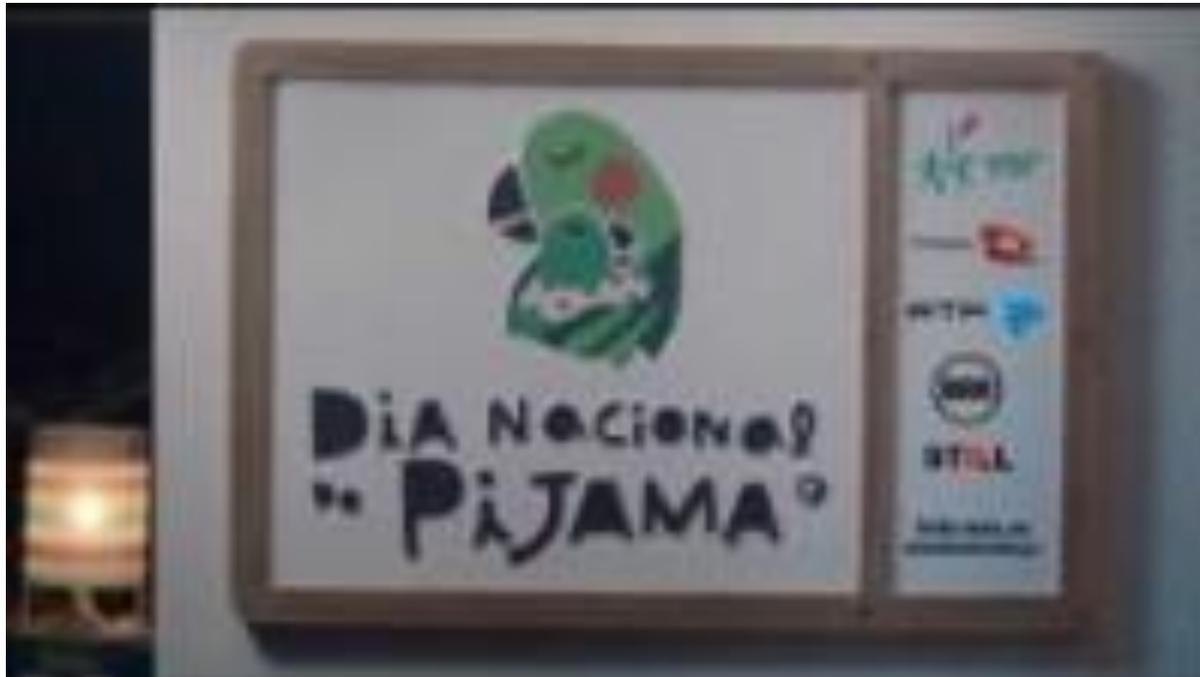
- *Santa Casa* invested in multiple forms of dissemination: brochures, video commercials, bus advertising posters, advertising posters throughout the city, news on the media (television and newspaper), and social networks (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube...).
- This institution also does an informative session every month for people interested in becoming foster families.





Initiatives to attract Foster Families

- The institution *Mundos de Vida* (Translation: “Worlds of Life”) also raises awareness about Foster Care and celebrates National Pajama Day.
- On this day, children from participating institutions and schools, go to their schools dressed in their pajamas and engage in awareness-raising activities regarding the right of every child to grow up in a family.
- **Translation:** 20th of November International Pajama Day. “All children have the right to grow up in a family”.



- *Mundos de Vida* uses several forms of dissemination: brochures, video commercials, news on the media (television and newspaper), and social networks (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube...).
- 2021 Video commercial played on TV.



Foster Care In Portugal: Steps to become a Foster Family

Who Can Be A Foster Family In Portugal?

** In Portugal, there are other promotion and protection measures where the child is placed in the care of other family members (“support to another relative”) or other people related to the family (“confided to a trusted person”).

Foster Families can't:

Be related by family ties to the child.**

Foster Families may be composed by:

One single person.

Couples living together/married.

Two or more people bonded by kinship relations and living in the same household.

Eligibility criteria of the candidates:

- ✓ Have at least 25 years.
- ✓ Have physical and psychological health to foster children or youth.
- ✓ Have an adequate home, with health, hygiene, and safety conditions.
- ✓ Have suitability to foster children.

Exclusion criteria for candidates:

- ✗ Cannot be a candidate to adoption.
- ✗ None of the family members can be indicted, accused, or condemned by crimes against life, physical integrity, personal freedom, or sexual self-determination and freedom.
- ✗ None of the members can be inhibited from performing their parental responsibility, or have their parental exercise limited for constituting a danger to the safety, health, moral, and education of their children.

How to Become a Foster Family in Portugal?

When and if Portuguese families want to be foster families, they can contact the Social Security Institute or SCML (in Lisbon) through e-mail or services in their residential area to manifest their interest.



1. Informative Session



2. Foster Family Candidates Assessment
(Informative Interview;
Psychosocial Assessment; Home Visit)



4. Continuous Training



3. Initial Training

Then, the technical team will contact the person or family to schedule the first session with them.

After this, the process begins, and consists of four stages...



How are the Foster Families Chosen?

1. Informative Session

Provides:

- Information regarding procedures for the application, selection, training, and assessment.

2. Foster Family Candidates Assessment (Informative Interview; Psychosocial Assessment; Home Visit)

Evaluates:

- Family dynamic, structure, and stability.
- Health and economic status.
- Family and social support network.
- Motivation for fostering.
- Availability for contact with biological families.
- Parental competencies and parental styles.
- Housing conditions.

3. Initial Training

****Provided (Freely)** by the Foster Care management institutions.

Intends to:

- Organize and systematize the knowledge of the foster families about foster care.
- Manage the expectations of foster families.
- Clarify the differences between fostering a child/adolescent or a family member.
- Preparing the foster family for providing the services of foster care.

4. Continuous Training

Promotes:

- Specific training necessities of each foster family, that can be identified by the institution or can be solicited by the foster family.
- Specialized competencies related to their role and functions in foster care.

The importance of Training: Growing as a foster family

For foster care to be successful, there is a need to keep up with new information, parenting strategies, and competencies.

Pre-training and in-service training are fundamental in this domain.

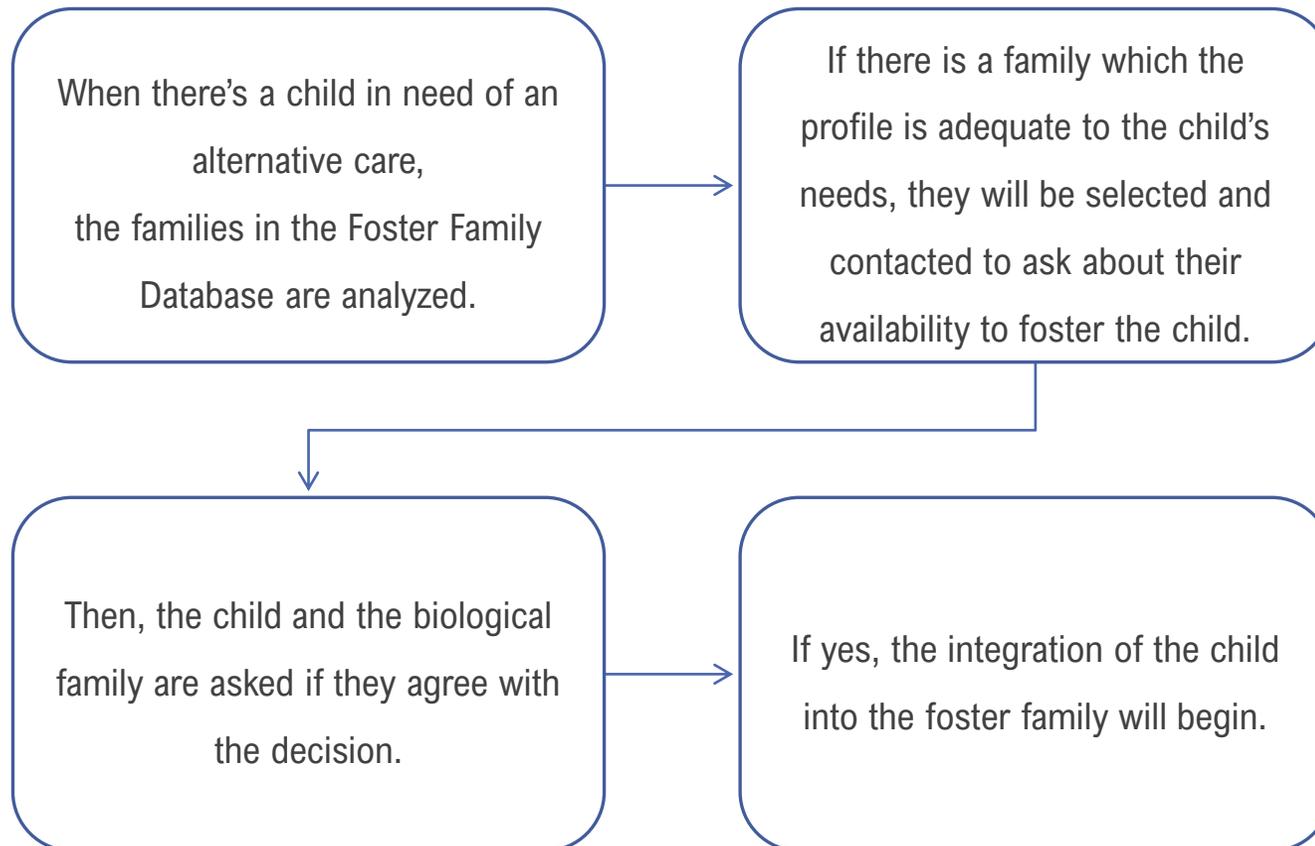
The foster family/caregiver needs to :

- ✓ Demonstrate/maintain interest, motivation, and effort in foster care.
- ✓ Invest and develop new skills that facilitate the fostering process (in-service training).
- ✓ Know the foster family's responsibilities and rights (pre-training).
- ✓ Have a clear view about the expectations of the role of the foster family (role clarification).



Becoming a Foster Family

After the assessment, if the family is considered adequate, will be integrated in the “**Foster Family Database**” and become available to foster children and/or youth.



The rights of the foster family, while fostering

Initial and continuous training by the institution and entity that accompanies them.

Monitoring and support by qualified professionals.

Financial aid to support costs related to the fostering of the child.

€605,56 (2782,38 PLN) for children up to 6 years old.
€526,57 (2414,79 PLN) for older children.
€684,55 (3139,27 PLN) for children up to 6 years old with disabilities

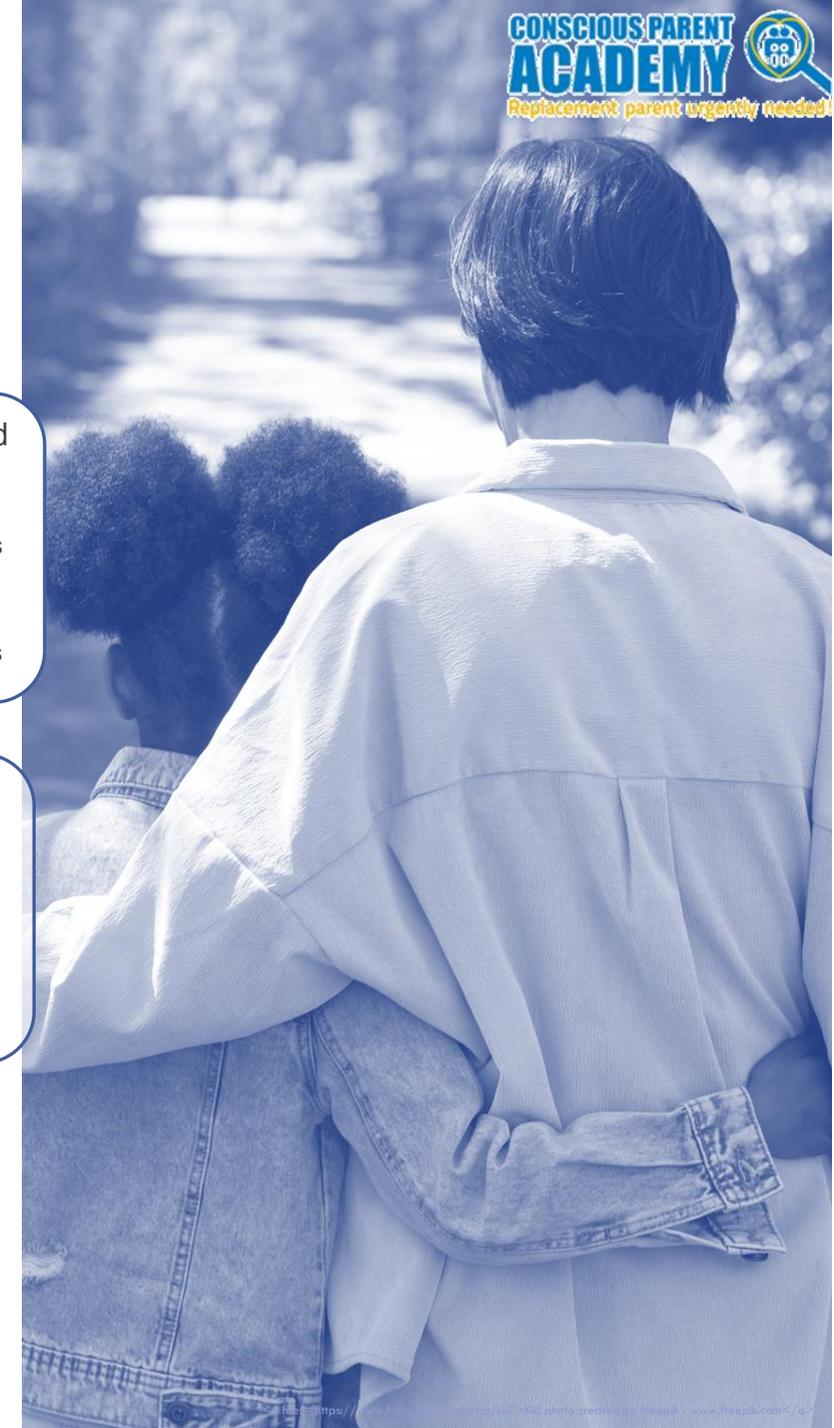
Respect for the family intimacy and privacy.

Information regarding the child they are going to foster.

Financial benefits, such as deductions in taxes.

Support for health, education, and social subsidies (family allowance granted by social security).

Labor rights (e.g., justified absences for child assistance and paid parental leave, for men and women, when fostering children up to 1 year old).



Who are the children being fostered in Portugal?

Until what ages can children be fostered?



Children and youth **from 0 to 18 years old.**



In some situations, **until they are fully autonomous or over 21 years old.**



Foster Care of **children under the age of 6 is prioritized.**

How many children can be fostered in each home?



Each family can **foster up to two children**



When there are **siblings**, it is prioritized that they stay together in the same Foster Family.



The role of the biological family

In Portugal, the Biological Family or Family of Origin is actively involved
in the Foster Care process.

******With the exception for the cases where
the court inhibits their involvement and
contact with the child.

The Biological family has the right to:

- ✓ Contact the Foster Family, ask about and visit the child.
- ✓ Access to the child's information.
- ✓ Participate in the child's education.
- ✓ Receive training to reinforce and promote parental competency.



Thank you for your attention!

Dėkojame uŹ jūsų dėmesį

Dziękuję za uwagę



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