

441—113.12(237) Characteristics of foster parents.**113.12(1) Age.**

- a. Foster parents shall be at least 21 years of age.
- b. The age of foster parents shall be considered as it affects their ability to care for a specific child and function in a parental role.

113.12(2) Income and resources. The foster family shall have sufficient income and resources to provide adequately for the family's own needs.

113.12(3) Religious considerations. The foster parent shall respect the foster child's religious background and affiliation.

113.12(4) Requirements of foster parents. Foster parents shall be stable, responsible, physically able to care for the type of child placed, mature individuals who are not unsuited by reason of substance abuse, lewd or lascivious behavior or other conduct likely to be detrimental to the physical or mental health or morals of the child. They shall exercise good judgment in caring for children and have a capacity to accept agency supervision.

113.12(5) Personal characteristics. The foster parents shall:

- a. Provide evidence of relationship stability.
- b. Have realistic expectations of foster children.
- c. Have time available to parent foster children.
- d. Be able to communicate with the licensing agency and health care and other service providers.
- e. Have functional literacy, a level of reading, writing and calculation skills such as having the ability to read labels on medications in order to properly administer them.
- f. Be able to accept and deal with acting out behavior with realistic expectations and good judgment.
- g. Include foster children in normal family life.
- h. Have the ability to be accepting and loving toward a foster child entering the home.
- i. Be able to support the case permanency plan for the foster child and be willing to cooperate with visits, transportation, or other activities that support the child's connection to and reunification with the child's family.
- j. Ensure that all family members are aware of having foster children in the home.
- k. Articulate their strengths and concerns and limitations which are essential to the department's matching the foster children with foster parents appropriately.

113.12(6) Determination of characteristics. The areas discussed in subrules 113.12(4) and 113.12(5) shall be explored through observation of the family and interviews with family members and documented in a foster home study as described in subrule 113.3(4), or in the foster family record when explored after licensure and prior to renewal. Any additional areas that the family or worker identifies as a possibility for creating problems shall also be documented in the foster family record.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 237.3.

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