

Ideas for Recruiting Foster Parents using *The Cat*

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Introduction

Introduce yourself to the audience. What is your background? What is your connection to fostering? Tell stories about yourself. Ask audience members why they are here. Invite them to tell about their interest in fostering.

Introduce *The Cat*

Jan Hansen and his wife were returning home late after an evening at the theatre. Jan wondered what he could do to thank their friend Cathy who was babysitting their children. He could bake cookies, but Cathy was a better cookie maker. He decided to write a story of Cathy's life as a foster parent. She had adopted one of her foster children, and continued fostering others. When her son's sister needed protection, Cathy fostered and eventually adopted her too. As he drove through the dark, Jan began composing *The Cat*.

Read *The Cat*

The audience will follow along better and get the point if you provide them with books so that they can see the pictures. The books could either be collected at the end of the presentation, or given as a reminder to those who attended.

Get to the Serious Stuff

Engage the audience in a discussion of the joys and challenges of fostering. Remind them that the point of the book is that the foster parent also gets a lot out of the fostering experience. Describe the supports offered by your fostering agency to help foster parents do the best they can (training, literature, time off, discussion groups, financial support). Tell them what they need to do to start the process of becoming approved as foster parents. If possible, have the paperwork with you. Finally, thank them for their time.

Don't lose them at #1

A person will evaluate a presentation based on these questions in this order:

1. Was the environment comfortable, warm enough, snacks good.
2. Did I learn something?
3. Do I know what to do next?
4. Will the system let me do it? (Family, job, fostering agency)
5. Will it help me reach my personal goals?

When planning a presentation, start at #5 and work backwards.