

*“Taking care of a child is like working for God! We cannot express our feelings in words!”*  
 -Foster family, Udaipur, India



Children’s Emergency Relief International, A Family for Every Orphan, Sarah’s Covenant Homes, Bharathiya Sneha Parivar, the Institute for Human Services and Global Capacity Building Network are working to strengthen Non-institutional Alternative Care (NIAC) in India.

**The first national pilot of an competency-based innovative caregiver training was conducted on February 16 & 17 2019, led by Foster Care Society in collaboration with Department of Child Rights and local child protection offices. The training was given for kinship, foster and adoptive parents.**

Udaipur was the perfect place for this first pilot training as the city is home to India’s first foster parents as per the 2016 Central MODEL Foster Care Guidelines in India. These foster carers have been caring for non-biological children for 2+ years.

Topics that will covered over the coming year include:

I. Orientation and Overview of Foster Care, Adoption, & Kinship Care	VII. Cultural Issues in Placement
II. The Parent as Part of the Child Welfare Team	VIII. Primary Families
III. Child Abuse and Neglect	IX. Caring for Children Who Have Been Sexually Abused
IV. The Effects of Abuse and Neglect on Child Development	X. Effects of Caregiving on the Family
V. Attachment and Separation	XI. Permanency Issues for Children
VI. Discipline	XII. Permanency Issues for Families

The trainers explained to the caregivers that a child raised in an orphanage or who has lived on the streets and faced trauma needs informed and supported attention to feel empowered as part of society. They first need to understand that the problem is most often not their fault and society needs to know how to reduce stigmatization. One of Udaipur’s trail-blazing foster parents immediately commented, *“All the parents who are sitting here have already accepted the difficulties of being a foster parent and that’s why we are here. There are many families, who apply for foster care, but when they are briefed about the history of the child, they take a back step and refuse the offer.”* Foster Care Society’s collaborative work with the CWC, DCPU, ICPS, SJ&E and related departments in Udaipur District pave the way for success.

*“The real work starts after the placement”* aptly summarizes the thoughts and experiences shared by the families who attended the Training for Caregivers. Although family-based care options pose challenges, foster families in Udaipur still wish for *“more and more children to become a part of a family, rather than spending their lives in institutions.”*

The training was conducted by certified trainers Mr. Devashish Mishra and Dr. Shilpa Mehta.

