



# FOSTER FRIENDLY LANGUAGE

A huge part of becoming a Foster Friendly® Business is realizing **words have power**. It is critical to understand that the things we say can be healing or hurtful to members of the foster care community. See examples below to become supportive, informed allies.



## DO...

- If needed, use the term "kids in foster care." This denotes their current status and does not define who they are.
- Treat kids in care the same as every other customer that comes to your store
- If separated from adults, ask kids if they need help finding their "grown up"
- Make comments that make them feel included in their current family unit - not any different from other children
- Talk privately to foster parents if there is an issue that needs to be addressed
- Ask for a fist bump or high-five after having a great conversation



## DON'T...

- Refer to youth as "foster kids." Again, being in foster care is not something that defines these children.
- Ask parents/guardians which kids are "real kids" & who is in care
- Use familial terms "mom," "dad," "parent," etc.
- Inquire about personal details of their case or assume biological parents are just bad people, in jail, etc.
- Use harmful or ethnic labels pointing out physical/racial differences
- Make physical contact without explicit permission

