



the
Fostering
Foundation

Laying Foundations for the Future

16th July 2023

TFF NEWS

Fostering Foundation Update

Dear All,

For well over a decade, our wonderful Business Support Officer, Mandy Perry has been in charge of making sure our carers annual reviews are done on time and within statutory guidelines. Her passion for her work and drive for making these reviews as robust and all-encompassing as they deserve to be, has led her to write the poem below. We hope you enjoy it as much as we did. There is an important message in there for you, delivered in Mandy's ever gentle style. - Sakina

Your review happens yearly due to fostering regs
All feedback is vital, it really has legs
Every child that you care for is asked for their views
Even Social workers and schools are asked for their news
Each person involved puts in effort and thought
To make sure the review covers all that it ought

How have things gone, how do you feel
Are you happy with things or just want to keel
Has anything changed, are you keeping well
Can we do things better, let us know, just tell
What have you learnt, what do you need
to continue to care, to continue to lead
Have you enjoyed, or have things just been hard
Are you laughing and playing or just on your guard
What do you think of the support that you get
Have you a need that is not being met
Do you think your terms of approval are apt
If not, let us know - we'll change and adapt
Have you anything else that you want to say
Write it down, send it back, don't cause a delay

Remember when next your review comes around
To include all the things in the year you have found
Your Review is important and solely for you
So return all your feedback and give us a cue
Your continued approval relies on this review
You're both wanted and needed so please help us renew



THE FOSTERING FOUNDATION ALL CARERS SUMMER FORUM

Our Registered Manager Nita Yeowell takes us through the successes of the inaugural All Carers Summer Forum

On Thursday 15 June, we invited foster carers from across the Fostering Foundation's different regions to gather for a day of inspiration, support and connection. Our first ever All Carers Summer Forum was the brainchild of our CEO, Sakina Khan, who wanted to create a way for all our carers across our network to connect.

We spent the day at the Holiday Inn, Taunton, with a programme designed to celebrate and inspire our carers. We started with an introduction from myself and the Fostering Foundation team, making sure that new and experienced carers alike had chance to put faces to familiar names (if they hadn't met us already) and sharing all the new initiatives and progress that we've made in recent months.

We then got to the star of our show – Nick Barwick, founder of Insight Wellbeing. Nick's company specialises in motivational speaking, training, fostering consultancy and mentoring for children, young people and adults who have experienced childhood adversity.

As a child, Nick was raised in foster care and overcame many areas of adversity and stigma. At aged 13, he moved to foster carers who promoted his education and "encouraged him to never give up", but his past trauma meant that he struggled with behaviour

Nick spoke to our carers from the heart for two hours, first sharing his experiences in an inspiring and informative talk, and then spending time with us to answer a range of questions from our carers and provide direct support from the perspective of an adult who has been through it all himself.

"It was an excellent presentation, and Nick was so insightful," said one of our attendees. "It gave me a new insight into the thoughts, feelings and understanding from children's point of view."

Another said: "Thank you, Nick, for sharing your personal experiences and teaching us to enable foster carers to look further into the lives and future of children in care."

We then broke for lunch – catered for by Holiday Inn and including a delicious hot buffet, salad bar and other refreshments – which was a wonderful opportunity for attendees to mingle and chat. Many people chose to chat with carers from across different regions, and share experiences.

We had originally planned to do a formal afternoon session where our attendees could ask the Fostering Foundation questions in a Q&A session, but everyone was enjoying the informal setting so much – and we were all still so energised from Nick's wonderful talk – that we decided to adapt our question time to be more informal, and instead our team went table to table to chat to groups of foster carers and make sure they were fully supported. It was a wonderful moment for our team to catch up with carers in a more meaningful way.

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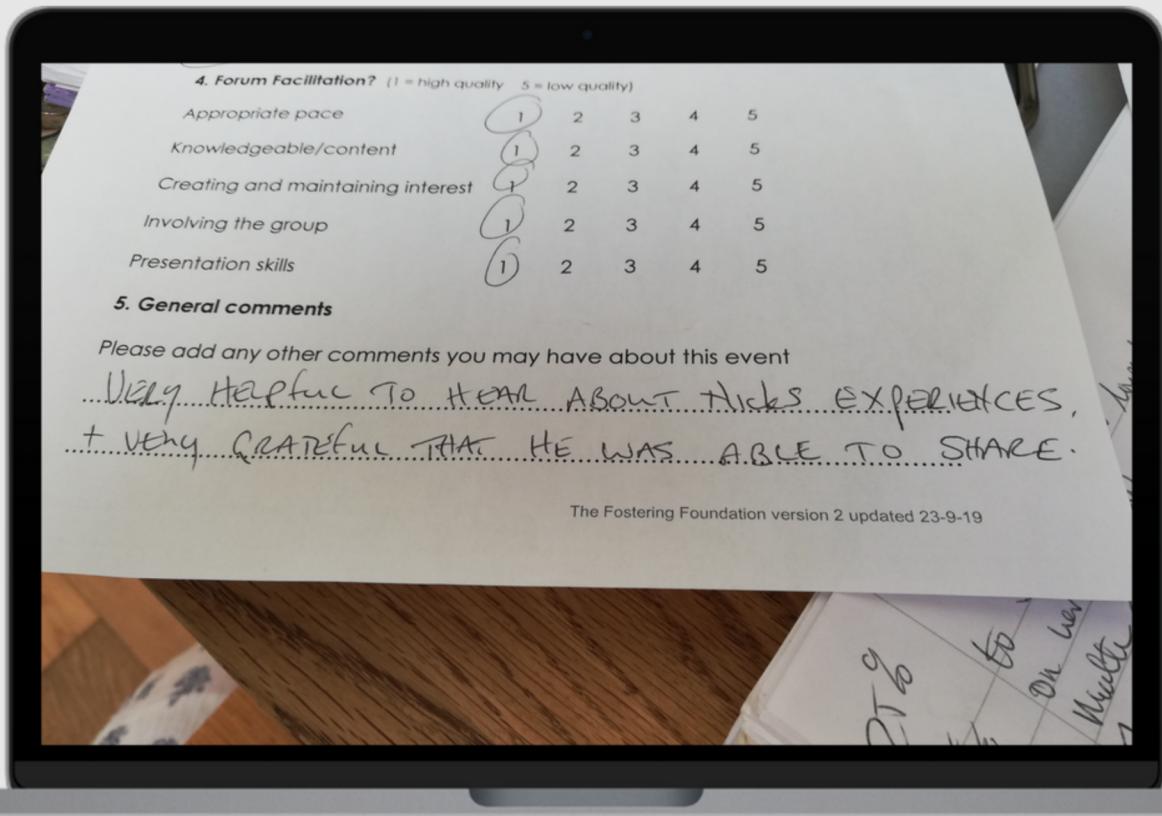
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One carer told us after: "It was very nice to see everyone, and the presentations were excellent."

"We were so pleased with the results of the Summer Forum and are delighted to announce it will become an annual feature of the calendar," Sakina said. "Next year, we plan to hold the Summer Forum in the school summer holidays, and provide fun activities for children (both looked-after and biological) so that everyone involved can relax and enjoy the day while adults and young people alike get to experience a fulfilling support group."

We are already busy planning ways to build on the success of the All Carers Summer Forum, including making sure that more of our carers can attend without the worries of childcare, and creating even more activities for our network to enjoy.

Thank you to all who made the first Summer Forum such a success, including Nick, our brilliant team, and our inspiring attendees.



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Latest News By Region

Exeter Region

The Exeter Team have now started their evening virtual support groups, to enable carers who work, to attend. This has been very much welcomed within the Exeter Region!

Exeter's summer event is coming up on the 11th of August 2023, at the River Dart Country Park, with almost full attendance from all carers! We look forward to welcoming you to come together and have a day of fun and PIZZA!

We are pleased to announce our fantastic Christmas event for all of our young people and carers. This year we will all be coming together to watch the theatre production of ELF the Musical at Westpoint, Exeter! All carer's who are able to attend have RSVP'd and the tickets have been purchased!

Jim Willis, our long standing Bristol Team Manager, is now the team manager for the Exeter region on a short term basis and is looking forward to meeting all of the young people and carers in the coming weeks.

Bristol Region

It has been a really busy few months. Once again I can commend our carers on supporting our young people with so many life changes that they are experiencing. These come in so many different forms that need your compassion and support. Whether it is helping to manage relationships with family, navigating GCSE exams, supporting with health issues in the forms of seizures, diabetes, mental health, panic attacks, PTSD and anxiety, getting a first job and attending therapy for the first time. The challenges that you face with your young people are significant. We cannot be more proud of your commitment and how you advocate for your young people in order to get the most help and support you can.

A few achievements to acknowledge is our young people completing the GCSEs; attending proms (and looking very good doing it!); and getting a first part time job.

We have an Eid themed event on 25th July in Portishead which I hope all will attend. There will be a lot of food, activities and fun for all. We do hope that the sun will start shining again by then! Please come long as this is for ALL OF US and it will be great to see everyone!

Jim is overseeing managing the Exeter team short term but this will not affect his commitment and involvement with the Bristol team. We will be having a new SSW joining the team in the coming months when Danielle moves on but we will have more news on that shortly. We do want to thank Danielle for being a really special support to so many of you during the past four years and a big part of the Bristol team. Thank you, Danielle!

Tavistock Region

It has been a really busy few weeks since joining the Fostering Foundation. I have had the opportunity to meet with many carers within the South West region. It has been a pleasure and delight to meet with so many carers from my region who are dedicated and committed to providing the best care for our children. I would like to personally thank our carers, and look forward to being able to meet those carers I have not yet had the opportunity to meet.

There have been many achievements and successes to acknowledge including our children achieving success in football trials, distinctions from college, completing the Plymouth 5 K, receiving awards in school for random acts of kindness, winning a gold medal in school for a running race, being made an ambassador for English in school.

We have a Sport Themed event on 9th August 2023 in Horrabridge, and a Teddy Bear Dartmoor Zoo trip on the 10th August 2023 which is open to foster children, and birth children which I hope all will attend. Please come along. It will be nice to see everyone.



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YOUNG PEOPLES PARTICIPATION

UPCOMING EVENTS



EXTREME TEAM AND WOLPACK EVENT

OVER 3.5 HOURS OF TAG GAMES, FOOTBALL, DODGEBALL,
HANDBALL, HOCKEY, VOLLYBALL CAPTURE THE FLAG,
ULTIMATE FRISBEE AND SO MUCH MORE

FOLLOWED BY FISH AND CHIPS IN THE PARK

HORRABRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL
WALKHAMPTON RD, HORRABRIDGE, YELVERTON PL20 7SZ

WEDNESDAY 9TH AUGUST 15.45- 8.00PM
PLEASE RSVP BY WEDNESDAY 26TH JULY ALONG WITH THE FOOD CHOICE



**we're going to
the zoo, want
to come too..**

Thursday 10th August 10.30 - 3.00
Dartmoor Zoo - Plymouth PL7 5DG


AirHop

Monday 14th August - 11.00 - 3.00

Bounce across over 140 interconnected trampolines that span right across the floor and up the walls or try the famous Obstacle Course, Wipeout Zone, Dodgeball court, Slam Dunk with Battle Baskets, Battle Beams or the AR Trampolines. Followed by lunch at a near by restaurant.



Unit 5 Britannia Road, Patchway, Bristol, BS34 5TA




The fostering foundation
are pleased to invite you to

Elf *The Musical*

Exeter Westpoint!

Featuring a massive stage and amazing film backdrops on a huge LED screen plus a mobile stage that travels the auditorium, everyone gets a close-up view of the action. It's an interactive show – great for all ages – Santa's flying sleigh, audience snowball fight, an indoor snowstorm, a giant candy cane journey from the North Pole, aerial cirque stars and giant tv screens .

19th of December 2023 at 2pm!



Exeter summer event

River Dart

We are pleased to invite you to The River Dart country park on the 11th August 2023 at 10.30am for a day of water activities, adventures, pizza making and fun!
RSVP by the 30th June 2023 to communications@fosteringfoundation.co.uk

THE FOSTERING FOUNDATION

Eid Al Adha

**Join us in celebrating Eid,
a joyous occasion of togetherness and gratitude**

**25th July 2023 at Lake Grounds from 12noon to 3pm.
Portishead, Bristol, BS20 7JA**

Let's embrace our diverse cultures and share in the festivities, food, and laughter. From diverse backgrounds, we come together, weaving a beautiful tapestry of unity. Come and experience the magic of multiculturalism at our Eid picnic.

You are all welcome!

Remember to bring your picnic chairs and blankets

Remember to bring your favourite outdoor game to share with friends

In case you need help or directions please contact

Sadaat on 07814 440 596 **Jim** on 07512 737 897

RSVP: To communications@fosteringfoundation.co.uk by 21st July 2023

The Fostering Network is the UK's leading fostering charity, bringing together everyone who is involved in the lives of children and young people who are fostered to make foster care the very best it can be.

Welcome and onboarding webinar

Wednesday, 12 July, 2023

This is an opportunity for new members of The Fostering Network to learn about our membership benefits.

Start time: 12:00
End time: 13:00
Location: Zoom
Event type: Membership events

Welcome and onboarding webinar for members

Tuesday, 12 September, 2023

This is an opportunity for new members of The Fostering Network to learn about our membership benefits.

Start time: 12:00
End time: 13:00
Location: Zoom
Region: England
Event type: Membership events

Welcome and onboarding webinar for members

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Start time: 12:00
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Event type: Membership events

MORE INFO



<https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/training-and-events>

Stay safe online

Remember the 5 SMART rules when using the internet and mobile phones.

S

SAFE: Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information – such as your full name, email address, phone number, home address, photos or school name – to people you are chatting with online.

M

MEET: Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parents' or carers' permission and even then only when they can be present.

A

ACCEPTING: Accepting emails, IM messages, or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems – they may contain viruses or nasty messages!

R

RELIABLE: Information you find on the internet may not be true, or someone online may be lying about who they are. Make sure you check information before you believe it.

T

TELL: Tell your parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.



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UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF RESPITE CARE AND SHORT BREAKS AT THE FOSTERING FOUNDATION

As followers of our articles will know, here at The Fostering Foundation we offer training for a range of different types of foster care. From long-term and short-term placements to resilience care, sibling groups and care for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children, we aim to serve as many children in care as possible across our diverse regions of the South West of England.

One of the key areas to make this possible is respite care and short break fostering. Both terms refer to a type of short-term foster care that provides a break to other foster carers or birth families for a specified and limited period of time, usually lasting between a couple of days to a fortnight, and often taking place during a weekend or school holiday in order to provide as little disruption to the child in care as possible.

What is Respite Foster Care?

The purpose of respite care is to provide much-needed support for foster families who are experiencing high levels of stress, and is especially valuable to those fostering children with disabilities and/or additional needs. It is carefully planned around the child's care plan and enables foster carers an opportunity to recharge as well as provide the young person with new experiences.

Wherever possible, if regular respite is considered beneficial for the families, it is recommended that the same respite carer is involved each time, in order to provide minimal disruption for the young person and to create the opportunity to form a meaningful relationship.

What is a Family Based Short Break?

Family based short breaks are a specialist type of respite foster care that is specifically designed to support the needs of disabled young people and children with special, educational, needs and disabilities (SEND), while providing long term carers with a break to recharge.

This type of short break might, for example, include an overnight stay with special activities, provided by registered foster carers. It's crucial that our Short Break Foster Carers are fully trained – as all our foster carers are – and also well equipped to care for children with disabilities and SEND.

Is there training involved?

Our short break foster carers benefit from all the training and skills development as any other foster carers, along with specialist training to ensure they are equipped to care for children with physical disabilities, special educational needs and disabilities, or particular behavioural issues that might require additional care.

Our short break foster carers also receive a generous allowance while the child is in their care and, since The Fostering Foundation matches our respite carers and young people with the same diligence that we do our long term placements, there is often the opportunity to make a long term commitment to families in need of regular respite and build truly life-changing relationships with the young people and families you help.

Although short break care might, on the surface, seem like a small amount of time to commit, it in fact plays a crucial role in support foster families and the most vulnerable children, to ensure they have the best possible care in their young lives.