Children and Young People's Guide to Foster Care

HELLO And Welcome

Welcome to The Fostering Foundation. We have created this guide to help you make sense of some of the people and processes you will come across now that you are in care. It will also tell you how to let us know if things aren't going so well for you too.

When you come into care, everyone wants to make you feel happy and safe. Our job is to make sure that the people who look after do their job well!

Some of our young people have told us that they felt confused and sick when they came into care and that they weren't sure why they were in care, it's ok, they are all normal emotions to feel and I can assure you, you will be ok.

Shh! OMG! OH..

Who's Who

You will have your very own Social Worker who will come to see you from time to time. Their job is to make sure you are safe, well and happy. Their job is to also talk to your family about how you are doing and they will be the person who will make arrangements for you to see your family. If you are worried about anything at all, you can also speak to your Social Worker. You can even tell them about the things that make you happy.

As I said at the beginning, our job is to make sure that the people who look after you, do their job well. These people are called Foster Carers and they have their own Social Workers too!

Our Social Workers help your Foster Carers be the best carers to you that they can possibly be. They will also get to meet you when they visit, and will be happy to sort things out for you too.

Who will be looking after me?

You will have been given a 'welcome book' from your Foster Carers which showed you what they looked like and told you about their home, pets and hobbies etc. Your Foster Carer will be the 'key' person who looks after you; they will make sure you feel like one of the family. They will also help to ensure that you can keep in touch with the people who are important to you.

Living Together

Every household lives differently and some things might seem strange to you at first, but that's ok. Your Foster Carers will have their own ways of doing things to make sure everyone lives together happily. Your Foster Carers will explain everything carefully and it's normal if you don't get it right first time or sometimes forget!

Our young people want you to know that "you must remember your carer cares about you, so even when times are tough, you know they are there".

Everyone is different

Your Foster Carer might look different to you in some way; don't worry, they will be able to care for you and make you feel welcome just the same. If you have already lived with other Foster Carers you might find your new carers do things a little differently. Either way, they all have to learn about their very important job the same way and they will always make you feel happy and safe with them!

What happens next

Now that you have met your Foster Carer and seen your bedroom, the next step is to make sure you have access to a Doctor and Dentist (for if you might ever need them) and to make plans for where you will go to school, if your old school is too far away for you to travel to now. Your Foster Carer will also take you shopping for new clothes if needed.

You might be living with your brother or sister and sharing a bedroom. Your Foster Carer will help you make sure your bedroom feels special to you and that you have everything to hand that is important to you. Sometimes, there might even be other children already living in the house for you to become friends with!

Feeling Safe

Your Foster Carer will be making the 'day to day' decisions about you; like going for tea at a friend's house or for them to come to yours or for you to join a club. Some of the other, bigger decisions, will still need to be made by your Social Worker.

Whilst you are in care there will be adult professionals meetings regularly taking place to make sure you are safe, healthy and doing well at school or college. This group of professionals will be thinking about what decisions are best for you for now and for your future. Your Social Worker will talk more to you about these meetings and will make sure that your views are heard. If you want to, you might even be able to attend some meetings!

Pocket money

Whilst you are in care you will receive weekly pocket money from your Foster Carers. The amount will depend on your age. Your Foster Carer will be able to tell you more. Your Foster Carer will also be putting money aside for you into savings whilst you are with them. If you move from them your savings transfer with you, for when you are an adult.

Using the Phone

You might already have a mobile phone when you come into care or there might be reasons why it's not safe for you to have one. Any decisions regarding you having your own phone will need to be made by your Social Worker and they can tell you more. If you want to phone someone whilst you are in care, your Foster Carer will have to check they are safe people before you can call. This is to ensure your safety.

Seeing your friends and family

Whilst in care, most children are still able to see their friends and family. Our Social Workers and your Social Workers will work together with your Foster Carers to ensure that happens, if it is safe to do so. Remember, your safety is always most important!

When your Social Worker comes to visit you, they will talk to you about 'family time' and they will ask you who you would like to see. They might not be able to make this happen for everyone on your list as there might be reasons why you can't see someone. Either way they will do their very best!

STOP!

Bullying

Bullying is never ok and we take it very seriously. If you are ever bullied, please tell your Foster Carer and your Social Worker. You can always tell your Foster Carer's Social Worker too. The professionals around you will keep you safe and they will ensure that it stops, at an adult level, without you being at potential further risk of harm. It is really important that you know that bullying can also occur online, and so, for that reason, your internet access levels will be set as age appropriate.

Learning – School/College

One of our young people wanted to reassure you that

"when you move home, sometimes it's just not possible to go to the same school, but, if you go to a different school, we will ensure you are happy there".

Your Foster Carer will help you to be able to attend school or college and to support you to do as well as you can whilst you are there. If you are experiencing any issues at school they can also help sort them out. We will make sure your school knows you are staying with our Foster Carers so they can tell them important things about your education.

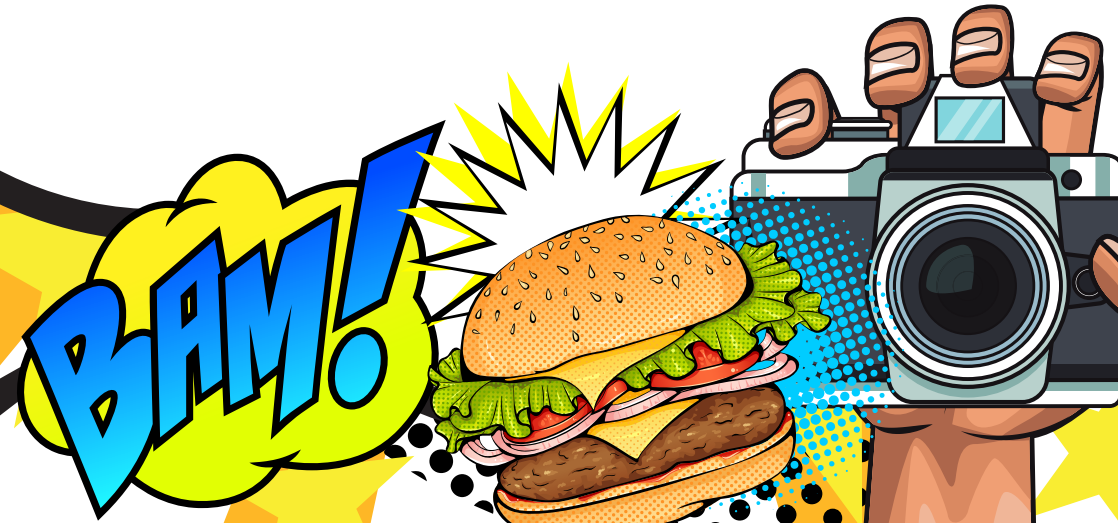
Helping you look after yourself

One of our young people wanted you to know that "when being in care, we offer you the fantastic experience of being healthy. This includes having yearly checking to make sure you are fit and fed!"

Your Foster Carers will always make sure you are kept healthy by giving you good food and taking you to the doctor, dentist and optician whenever you need it so it is very important you tell them if you are ever feeling unwell or in any pain.

Memories

One of our young people suggests "you might like to store good memories of the past; such as when you first rode a bike or when you learnt to swim" use this space to capture happy memories.



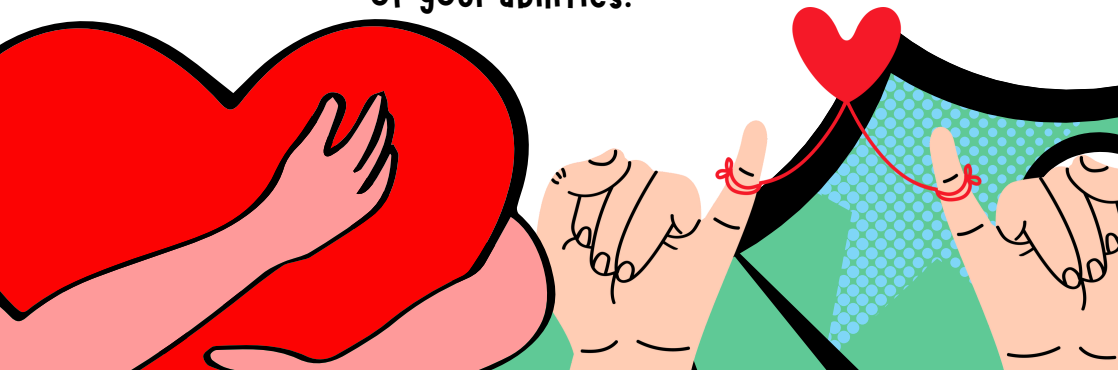
Interests

If you have any interests, be sure to make your Foster Carer aware, you never know, they might even share your interest! They will explore their area to see if you can pursue your interests and, if not, they can make suggestions for you to try something else that they think might interest you.

Our Promises to you

We will always ensure that the carers you live with are fully able to meet all your needs and that, whilst you are living with them, your safety is never compromised. If, at any time, there are any indications that determine this is not the case, we will deal with the problem in whatever way best meets your ongoing needs.

We will always ensure you are happy and healthy and that you are registered with a Doctor, Dentist and school whilst you are with our carers. We will also always ensure you are able to access education and achieve to the best of your abilities.



You have rights. What if nobody listens?

One of our young people want you to know that

" if you are unhappy, people need to know. Tell your Social Worker, or maybe your carer, and they will sort the problem out"

It is very important that you feel able to share your worries and any questions with the adults who can help you. You can always talk to your Foster Carers, they are there to help you. If the problem is about your Foster Carers you can ask to speak to your Social Worker. Remember, you can always speak to your Foster Carer's Social Worker too. You might want to talk to a teacher at school instead and that is ok too.

The most important thing is that you talk to someone!

There are also the names and telephone numbers at the end of this booklet of people who will also do their very best to support you.

Helpful Information

Ofsted – 2 Rivergate, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6EH

Phone – 0300 123 4666

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

You can also speak to:

Children's Commissioner for England

Sanctuary Buildings, 20 Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT

020 7783 8330

info.request@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Bullying UK

For advice and support on dealing with bullying

www.bullying.co.uk

0808 800 2222

BECOME

The charity for children in care and young care leavers

15-18 White Lion Street, London, N1 9PG

0800 023 2033

advice@becomecharity.org.uk

NSPCC

Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London, EC2A 3NH

0808 800 500

help@nspcc.org.uk

Childline

is a service provided by NSPCC

0800 1111

TFF – All accidents, injuries, illnesses, complaints, allegations, suspicions of abuse and neglect can be reported to:

0117 967 3744

communications@fosteringfoundation.co.uk

Complaints

If you are still not happy with any part of the support you receive you are entitled to make a complaint. If the matter is about your Foster Carers you can let your Social Worker or your Foster Carer's Social Worker know. If the matter is about anyone else, you can talk to your Foster Carer and they will talk to us about how best to proceed so we can quickly sort it out for you.

You maybe might have a different adult you would like to make your complaint to instead. You should be able to feel comfortable making your complaint to the adult you feel you have the best relationship with!

If you don't want to talk to any professional you know, we can make arrangements for you to talk to an Advocate. An Advocate is a person who can help you say what you want to say when you make your complaint. If you think you need an Advocate speak to your Foster Carers Social Worker or your own Social Worker about this.

Notes:

Notes:

Need this document summarised
in another language or format.

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