

A guide to fostering

for children and
young people 5 - 10 years



A guide to fostering, **for children and young people 5 - 10 years . . .**

There are lots of reasons why you could be going to live with a foster family. Someone might not be well or your mom and dad might be finding it hard to look after you properly.

You might live with your foster family for just a few weeks, or it might be your home until you leave school.

What is fostering?

Children who can't live with their own families sometimes move to live with a foster family.

Your foster family will:

- **look after you**
- **make sure you're safe and healthy**
- **help you see and speak to your family**
- **help you go to clubs and after school groups**

All families are different. Some adults may have children of their own or might be caring for other children.

All families have rules including times to go to bed and meal times. This will be explained when you move in.

In your foster home you will have:

- **a bedroom on your own or shared with your brothers or sisters**
- **a safe place to keep your things**
- **pocket money**
- **a chance to celebrate your birthday, Christmas, Diwali, Eid etc.**
- **someone to listen to you**
- **help to see and speak to your friends and family**

You will have to:

- **treat everyone how you would want to be treated**
- **look after each other's things**
- **eat with the family**
- **join in with family activities**
- **go to school**
- **stick to the family rules**
- **let them know if you are happy or sad**





Personal belongings

You will have your own toys and clothes and you can bring things from your home with you.

If you have something that is special to you such as toys, photos or clothes let your foster family know. They will help you to look after it.

What is a social worker?

An adult will visit to talk to you and try to work out what is best for you. This person is called a social worker.

They will talk to you about your school, where you live and what you like to do.

They will arrange for you to see your family. You need to tell them who you would like to see such as your mom and dad, grandparents, uncles, aunties, cousins and friends.

Your social worker will visit you every few weeks to check that you are ok.

What is a care plan?

This is a plan says how you will be cared for. Everyone will get together and listen to what you think and decided what is best for you. Your social worker will tell you what has been decided.

What is an independent reviewing officer?

This is the person who is in charge of your review meetings. It is their job to make sure that you are listened to and that everyone is doing their best to help you. They can be contacted on 01384 813061.

Your views

Your social worker and foster family are there to help you. We want to make sure your views are heard and that you feel listened to. Talk to your foster carer about what you like, what you don't like and whether there is anything else that could be done to make things better for you.

It is important that you let us know what you're feeling and thinking as sometimes adults try to guess and they don't always get it right.

If you are unhappy about something, it is really important that you let someone know who can help. You can speak to your foster carer, your social worker, a teacher or anyone else who you trust.

If you don't want to talk about it yourself you can ask someone else to give your views for you.

Useful Information

If you want to make a complaint:

Sometimes we make mistakes or things go wrong. Our aim is to talk over any concerns or worries you may have and work together to solve any problems. There may be times when this does not work and you still feel unhappy.

All carers, children and young people have the right to complain and other adults can also make a complaint for you.

If you would like to make a complaint you can ask your social worker or foster carer to help you. You can call our complaints and compliments section on 01384 814724 who can help you make your complaint.

If you still do not think your complaint has been dealt with fairly you can take your complaint to:

The Local Government Ombudsman

PO Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH
0845 602 1983

Independent visitors and advocates:

All children and young people who are not in regular contact with a parent, or anyone with parental responsibility, should be given the opportunity to obtain the support of an Independent visitor.

Independent Visitors are not connected to the council and will get to know you by visiting you. If you would like an independent visitor, please ask your social worker, or reviewing officer.

Dudley Council provide an advocacy service from the Black Country Advocacy Service who can help children and young people to say what they feel and provide advice independent of Dudley Council. If you want to get some advice, support or information you can contact the Black Country Advocacy Service on the number below.

They can:

- let you know your rights
- give you information
- help with complaints
- help you have your say
- come to meetings with you
- help you sort out what you want

tel: 01902 877563

email: bca.referral@childrenssociety.org.uk



Ofsted

This is the organisation responsible for inspecting fostering services and making sure we are providing the best possible care we can for our children.

As part of their inspection process they will interview some foster carers and children and young people.

Carers, children and young people can also contact Ofsted at any time at:
Royal Exchange Buildings, St Ann's Square, Manchester, M2 7LA
08456 014772 / 404040

Rights4me

Rights4me is part of Ofsted especially designed for children and young people.

They can be called free on: **0800 528 0731**
Office of the children's rights director, Ofsted 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6SE
www.rights4me.org

Children's Commissioner for England

Maggie Atkinson is the Children's Commissioner for England. The role of the Children's Commissioner is to promote the views of children and young people from birth to 18 years (up to 21 for young people in care or with mental health problems).

General enquiries: 0844 800 9113
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/
Office of the Children's Commissioner
33 Greycoat Street, London SW1P 2QF

Children in Care Council

Are you interested in learning more about the Children in Care Council where children and young people in care talk about what matters to them?

01384 817673
email : melanine.fincher@dudley.gov.uk

National Youth Advocacy Service

NYAS provides independent advice and information.
Freephone: 0800 616 101
www.nyas.net

Children's Legal Centre

The CLC will provide you with legal advice.
Telephone: 08088 020008
www.childrenlegalcentre.com

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children - NSPCC

If you are having a bad time at home, being bullied at school, or if you are worried about something, you can ring the NSPCC free on
0800 800 5000
Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

If you require a translation of this booklet into another language or a copy in another format such as large print or audio tape, please call 01384 815833.

