



TIME OUT
fostering

valuing individual needs

A Young Persons Guide to Foster Care

Tel: 01273 467530

Hello!

This is for you. It explains about being in foster care, has useful contacts and you can add your own information.

What is fostering?

Fostering is a way of looking after young people and children who cannot live with their own families. Foster carers take young people and children into their own homes and look after them until they can go back to their own family, or become independent adults.

Sometimes it isn't possible to go back to your family. If this happens plans are made with you for your future. Sometimes this means staying with the foster family you are living with or it may mean moving to a foster family that can offer somewhere you can stay for longer.

We want you to stay somewhere safe while your family is being helped to sort out its problems. Sometimes this might take a long time.

What does it feel like to be fostered?

You may feel home-sick, scared, confused, worried or angry. We are all here to listen to you and help you and your foster family learn to build up trust, friendships and respect for each other.

Who are foster carers?

Foster carers are adults who have been assessed by experts called social workers to see if they are able to care for other people's children. If they are, then a special panel approves them and they become foster carers.

Foster carers can be single people or couples. Most foster carers need to be able to work as part of a team with social workers, teachers, doctors and the children's families.

Foster carers often have children of their own who may still be living at the foster home. They will want to help you. Your foster family may not have fostered before so you will all have to help to care

for each other. You are going to have to let them know what you like and don't like.

The really important thing is that you are in a caring home. Your carers want you to feel safe, looked after and respected. It will take time for you all to get to know each other.

They may also have pets.

Before you go to stay

Normally you will be able to meet the carer and some of their family usually at their house.

You will have a chance to look at the home and your new bed room. You can talk about things you may need in your room.

This is your chance to say what you would like every one to know about you.

Let us know:

- *What food you like*
- *What are your traditions e.g. do you go to church or mosque etc*
- *Your bed time routines*
- *Any worries you may have*
- *What things you like doing*

Make a list of some of the things you might want to ask before you visit

House Guide

When you first move into another family's home it can be hard to know what you can and cannot do. Don't worry about asking your foster carers. Your Time Out Fostering support worker can also talk to them for you.

Home Visits

It can be very hard managing how you feel when you see your family. Some young people feel very upset and sad. You may feel that you are being unkind to your family if you are happy with your foster carers. We all want what is best for you. Your foster carers are there to help you, not replace your family.

Help

Every one needs help some time and we all need to know where to get it on from. No one should have to try to sort everything out on their own. It's not always easy asking for help.

*Make a list of the most likely people you can get help from. Different people can help with different things. Sometimes we do not know to ask at first! You can always ring us and we will help you find the best person for you to talk to. Our number is **01273 467530***

Ofsted

Ofsted is an organisation which looks at what Time Out Fostering does. You can talk to them if you have a problem with us that you cannot talk to us or your caseworker about.

Complaints

*If you feel sad or angry about something that has happened with your carers or Time Out Fostering and you think it was wrong you can complain. If you feel able to you can talk to your carers, Time Out Fostering **01273 467530** or your social worker. If you do not feel able to talk to any of those people you can ring Ofsted on **08456 404040** or ring Clare or Primrose (See back pages). All of these people should help you to complain and will support you.*

Time Out Support Group

We can put you in touch with other foster children who you can discuss problems with, get advice or just go out and have fun with.

Pocket Money

You will get pocket money each week from your foster carers. You will have to talk to them to agree which day you get it, or you may want some of it each day! The amount you get depends on how old you are. Your foster carer will help you to manage your money. They will also help you set up a savings account. They will help you to buy new clothes. If there is anything that you are unsure of or unhappy with please talk to your foster carer or caseworker.

What is a Caseworker?

Time Out Fostering will ask a member of our staff to be your caseworker. The caseworker will come to meet you and get to know you to see if there is anything you or your foster family want help with. They can come to meetings with you.

They can help to get other people to understand what you want and need. If you are not happy about anything, they will listen to you and together we will work to improve things for you.

School

All young people under the age of 16 must go to school...it's the law!!

Sometimes it is not easy to find the right school for you. We work very closely with Springboard Education and the local authorities to find you the right place. This may be a school near to your foster home or it could be in a small group where you can get all the help you need. If you are already at a school we will try to keep you there with people you know. Going to school now will give you a lot more choices about what you can do when you are older.

HEALTHY EATING

Your foster carers and Time Out Fostering would like you to eat healthy food because this makes you feel better and be thinner. You may need to tell your carer if you need a diet that is different from theirs. Some healthy food is;

- Fruit as a snack, instead of biscuits or crisps*
- Low fat, sugar and salt.*
- Brown rice/bread, baked beans.*
- Five types of fresh fruit or vegetables every day.*

What are they talking about?

A care plan: This is when you and every one involved with you, parents, carers and social workers all work out what they think is best for your future. Who you will live with for how long, what might happen next, where you go to school and if you need any help with anything. All that kind of stuff. They will all listen to what you are saying and where possible try to do as you ask.

Guardian: This is the person who listens to you and speaks for you in a court of law. The Guardian has to be involved in sorting out where you are going to live and with whom. They are there to help you.

Advocate: This is an independent person who has nothing to do with Time Out Fostering or social workers. They will help you with your thoughts and feeling and make sure that you're views are heard. They will work with you to help with complaints or other problems. Time Out Fostering can arrange for you to talk to an advocate.

Supervised Contact: *This is when an adult who could be a social worker or one of our team comes with you to meet your family. They stay with you whilst you see them and make sure that nothing is said or done that will upset you or cause you problems. They are there to help you so that the meeting is as safe and pleasant as can be.*

It can often be very hard seeing family when you are not living with them.

Personal Education Plan (PEP): *This form is about your education. It is for children not living at home. We work with you, your foster family and social worker to look at what is going to help you the most with your education and how we can do this.*

Personal File: *This is a file with information about you which is kept in a locked cupboard in Time Out Fostering's office. You can ask to see your file.*

Life Story Work: This is a way of helping you make a collection of information and pictures about you and your family. It will go from when you were born to now. It helps to tell your life story and shows who, what and where has been important to you so far in your life. With the help of your social worker, family and friends we can build up a very special collection that will be very important to you. You may even find out things you did not know or had forgotten that help you to understand who you are.

Local Authority: This is the words used for groups of people who work for the government to support children and adults in the place they live or were born. The name of the team of people looking after you when you are in care (Living away from home) is the social services team.

Medical: This is a quick visit to your doctors to check you are fit and healthy. They will check your height, weight and blood pressure about once a year.

Therapy/counselling: This is going to talk to someone privately to help you think about any problems or worries you may have.

LAC Review (looked after child): This is a meeting that happens a few times a year. Lots of people who are involved with you including your family are invited to see how you are getting on and if anything needs to be changed. There is an independent review officer who is a person who chairs (organises) the meeting.

Useful Numbers

If these people can't help you they will know someone who can. There is nothing you cannot ask.

Time Out Fostering: 01273 467530

Your Social worker:

A National Voice: 0161 2375577

Helpline for and by young people in care

Voice of the child: Free phone 0808 8005792

Free advice for children and carers

Childline: Free phone 0800 11 11

Drugs Helpline (FRANK): 0800 917 8765

Complaints: *Talk to us, your social worker, carer or Ofsted Tel: 08456 404040*

Clare (Person to support you): 07733 222903

Primrose (Person to support you): 01903 718260

Your own useful numbers:

Your own notes:



Children's Guide Received;

Name.....

Sign..... **Date**.....