

7
years old
and Under

SO, WHAT'S THIS FOSTERING THING ALL ABOUT?

U-pack



A Children & Young People's Guide to the Fostering Service.

Hello, my name is Jack. I can't live at home with my family so I live with Julie and Mike and they make sure I am safe, happy and healthy. They are called foster carers.

You might not be able to live at home with your family and you may need to go and live with foster carers like Julie and Mike.

We have made this booklet to help you while you are living with a foster family.

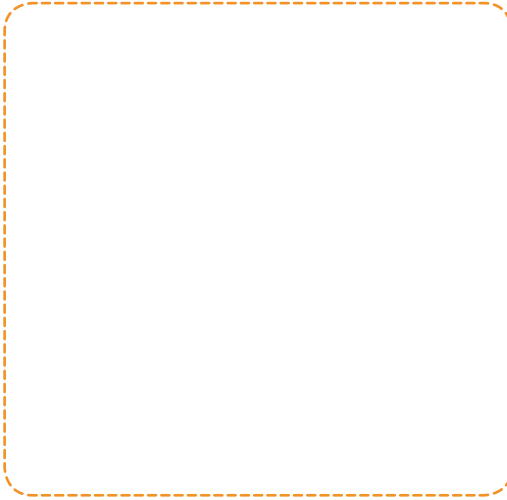
Hi my name is Lucy. I'm here with Jack to help you learn more about fostering.



Some of the words in this booklet may be new to you or hard to read. So don't forget you can ask your foster carer, social worker or someone you trust to help you.



About Me



We have made this page of the booklet for you to tell us all about you. You could ask your foster carer or Social Worker to help you fill the profile in.

You can even draw a picture of yourself in the box.

Have Fun!

My Name is

My Date of Birth

My Carers Names are

My Address is

.....

My Telephone number is

The things I like to do best are

.....

All About Foster Carers:

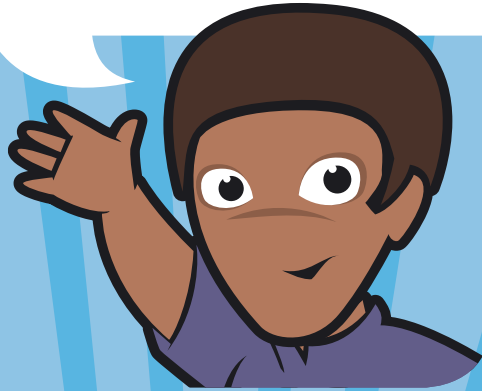
Foster carers are special adults who have been chosen to look after children who can't live at home with their family.

Some foster carers live on their own and others live in large families with other children in care. Some foster carers will have their own children as well.



Your foster carer will look after you and make sure you are happy, healthy and safe. Your foster carer will make sure you feel part of their family.

Not all grown ups can become foster carers. Foster carers are chosen by grown ups who work for Staffordshire County Council. They make sure that the carers will keep you safe and happy if you go and live with them.



Staffordshire County Council has a special team of grown ups who have the job of finding children like you a safe and happy family to live with.



Before they find you a family, your social worker will tell them everything they need to know about you so they can find the right family for you.

What does your home look like?

When you first go to live with your foster carer your social worker or someone who works with them will take you to your new home.

You may be scared but don't worry your social worker and carer will be there to help you as much as they can. So if your worried or upset just talk to them.



When you first go to live with your foster carer they will take you around your new home. They will show you where you will sleep, where you can play and where you will eat your meals.

You will also meet the other grown ups and children who will live in the house with you.

Your Care Plan:

Everyone who is part of your life needs to know what is happening and what plans you have for when you are older. This is called your care plan.

Your foster carer and social worker will make sure you are being looked after properly and will try to help you as much as they can.

I've got a care plan. It tells me and everyone close to me, what is going to happen.

When you are in care there are lots of people who are going to try and make sure you are ok.

They all need to know how they are going to look after you.



Your care plan is all about you. Your social worker and other people who care for you will ask you what you think should be in your plan.

You can find out more about care plans by taking a look at your U-Pack.

When you first go to live with your foster family your foster carer, social worker and if it is ok your parents will sit down with you to talk about how they are going to look after you.

You will talk about lots of things like what food you like, any medicines you have to take, who you will see from your family and when, your school and many more things.

Your social worker will write this onto a special form so that people looking after you know all about you and how you should be looked after. This is called a placement information record.



What will be in my Placement Plan?

All About You

About your family and where you live.

How your foster carer can keep you safe.

What you like doing?

About your health

Who you want to speak to and see.

About Your School

Your Family

You may still want to talk and see your family. If that is ok with your social worker you will be able to see them. "I still go and see my family when I can, but not all children in care can see their families."



About My Family:

Family members name

Telephone number

Address

.....

.....

Family members name

Telephone number

Address

.....

.....

Something Gone Wrong?

It can be very hard moving into a new family and some children can feel upset about leaving their own family. But don't forget everyone wants to help you.



People to talk to:

If you are upset you can talk to anyone who you trust. Here are just a few people I would talk to.

My social worker

My foster carer

My teacher

**A grown up who
I trust**

There may be a time when you may not be happy about being in care or the services trying to help you. This is why Staffordshire County Council has a special team of people who you can tell if something has gone wrong. This is called making a complaint. You can also tell the team if something has gone well.

This is called making a compliment.

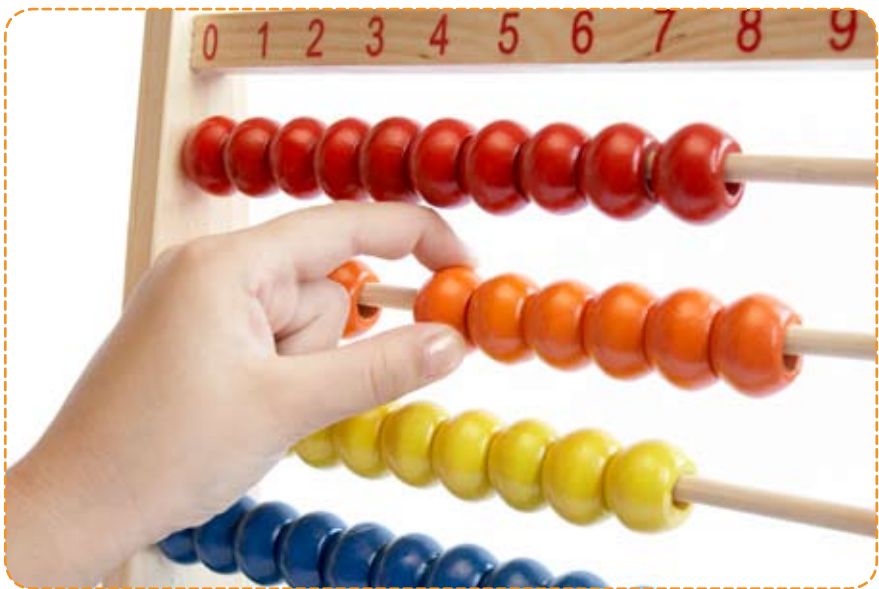
If you are upset and want to speak to this team you can ring: 0800 0837014 or you can speak to your social worker or carer and they will support you to make a complaint.

Staffordshire's Fostering Service will find foster carers who can...

- Make sure you have a safe, warm and clean home with a bedroom of your own if you are over 3 years old. Sometimes, you may share with an older or younger brother or sister.
- Make sure they know what your wishes and feelings are. We will also make sure that they are listening to what you say.
- Check that you feel part of the family and that you feel safe, happy and secure.
- Make sure they tell you what they will do to keep you safe.
- Your foster carer will work hard to get to know you so that you can learn to trust them and say when you are worried, upset or have been hurt.
- They will work with your social worker to keep you safe.
- They will know everything they need to know to keep you safe, happy and healthy.
- They will support you to have fun and try new things like riding a bike.
- Help you to grow up and believe in yourself and be proud of what you have done.

Staffordshire's Fostering Service will find foster carers who can...

- Be a good role model to you and help you to be the best you can.
- They will support you to have a healthy life.
- They will make day to day plans about your care.
- They will support you to have your friends visit and stay with you at home and for you to visit and stay with them.
- Help you to do well at school by listening to how you think things are going and what help you think you need.
- They will support you to keep in touch with your family and friends.
- Help you if you are worried, upset or in trouble.



The Fostering Service will support foster carers to meet your needs.

We will:

- Make sure that we know everything we need to know about you so we can tell your foster carer who will be looking after you.
- Give foster carers some money to help them to support you. You and other members of the family will have a say in how this money is spent.
- Award foster carers who have been looking after children for a long time a fee to reward their special skills and knowledge.
- Every foster carer will be given their own social worker who will support them to look after you.
- They will check every year if your foster carer can carry on fostering children and that they can keep you happy, healthy and safe.
- We will invite your foster carer to take part in training so that they learn new skills and have more knowledge about how to look after children in care.
- We will run support groups and events for your foster family.

This is the end of our Children's Guide to fostering and we hope you enjoyed reading it. If you have any questions don't forget you foster carer and social worker are always happy to help you.

You can find out lots more about being in care by reading your U-Pack.



The Children's Commissioner for England

Makes sure that adults in charge listen to your views.

Contact Them:

The Office of the Children's Commissioner,
33 Greycoat Street,
London,
SW1P 2QF
020 7783 8330

Website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Child Line

This is the free 24-hour helpline for children and young people in the UK. You can call the Helpline on 0800 1111 about any problem, at any time day or night.

Website: www.childline.org.uk

Ofsted

An organisation called Ofsted checks the work of fostering agencies in England and Wales.

Contact Them:

Ofsted Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA
08456 404045

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Children's Rights Director for England

The Children's Rights Director for England spends lots of time listening to what children and young people have to say about how they are looked after.

Contact Them:

Ofsted
Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

Useful Links & Contacts:

Complaints & Compliments: 0800 0837014

CARS: 0800 233 311

Children & Young People's Voice Project: 01785 253878

Emergency Duty Service: 08456 042886

Childline: 0800 1111

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000

This guide was produced by the Children & Young People's Voice Project in partnership with the Fostering Service.

Staffordshire County Council has made every effort to ensure the content of this folder is correct at the time of print.

(October 2011). The Children & Young People's Voice Project would like to thank all the Children, Young People & Professionals who have contributed to the development and creation of this information guide.

