



fostering
therapeutically
SINCE 1987

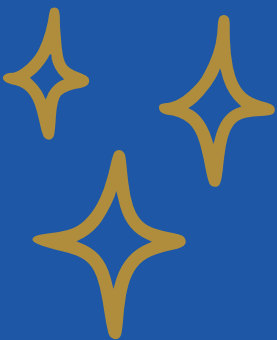


Becoming a Foster Family

A Guide for Children



Contents



| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Welcome | 2 |
| What is fostering? | 3 |
| How it feels to be fostered | 4 |
| What will change? | 5 |
| Learning about each other | 6 |
| Sharing things | 7 |
| Feelings and behaviour | 8 |
| When things feel hard | 9 |
| Keeping secrets | 10 |
| Your questions answered | 12 |



Welcome

Hello!

Did you know your family is doing something really special by fostering?

Fostering means giving another child a safe and happy home when they need it.

And being part of ISP means that:

- You will be part of our children who foster group
- You will make new friends
- You will be invited to our events
- We will ask you how you feel about fostering

This guide will help you understand what fostering is all about and how you can be an amazing helper.

We've also included some fun activities for you to try along the way.

Are you ready?
Let's get started!



What is fostering?

Sometimes, children can't live at home. It's not their fault, but they need a safe and loving place to stay. That's where your family comes in!

A foster family helps take care of these children until things get better for them. They might stay for just a little while, or maybe longer.

Your job is to make them feel welcome and part of your family while they're with you.

Activity

Draw a picture of your home with a big welcome sign, or write what makes your house feel cosy and safe.



How it feels to be fostered



Imagine you had to leave your home and stay with a family you've never met before. How might you feel?

You might feel:

- Nervous
- Scared
- Excited
- Confused
- Sad



That's probably how the child coming to live with your family might feel too.

The best thing you can do is be kind and patient.

Activity

Make a list of ways you can help a child feel welcome in your home. You could:

- Show them around your home
- Find out what they like doing

Can you think of some more?

What will change?

When your family fosters, a few things might be different:

- You'll need to share your parents' time with the new child.
- Your routine may change so your parents can take them to school and other places.
- You'll need to knock before going into their room.
- You'll need to always have clothes or pyjamas on unless you are in the bathroom or your bedroom.
- Social workers might visit your home to meet your parents.

It might feel strange at first, but these changes are all to make sure everyone feels happy and comfortable.

Activity

How do you feel about this?

Learning about each other

The child living with you might have different traditions, foods, or ways of doing things. This is a great chance to learn something new!

- Ask about their favourite foods.
- Share your favourite things with them, like music or games.
- Be open to trying new things, like tasting a food they like or learning a word in their language.



Activity

Make a “Get to Know You” sheet! Write down questions like “What’s your favourite colour?” or “What do you like to do for fun?” Fill it out together.

Sharing things

When fostering, you will share your parents' time with another child in your home. But they will always spend time with you too.

You won't be forced to share your toys, but it might be nice sometimes. They will have their own toys too.

You should always ask before you take something that belongs to them, and they should do the same too.

If there are things you want to keep safe, your parents can find you somewhere to keep them.

Activity

What are you happy to share?

I'm happy to share these things:

I'm not happy to share these things:

Feelings and behaviour

Sometimes, children in foster care might feel sad, upset, or confused.

This can make them act in ways that might seem a bit different, like:

- Telling lies
- Taking things that aren't theirs
- Staying very quiet
- Shouting
- Wetting the bed
- Being unkind

This may upset you or make you angry.



Activity

What can you do when a child makes you feel sad or angry? Circle the ones that might work for you...

Walk away

Go to another room

Talk to your parents

Something else

Any other ideas?

When things feel hard

Fostering can sometimes be tricky. You might feel:

- Jealous if the new child gets more attention.
- Upset if they don't want to play with you.
- Sad when they leave your family.

It's okay to feel these things! Talk to your parents if you're feeling upset. They will listen and try to help.

Activity: Make a feelings chart! Use happy, sad, angry, and calm faces. Each day, mark how you're feeling and talk about it with your parents.



Keeping secrets

A child may tell you something and ask you to keep it a secret.

It's important that you tell an adult what they have said. This could be your mum, dad, or a social worker.

You won't get in any trouble for telling an adult. Telling someone helps keep everyone safe and happy.

It's important to not tell your friends about the secret, or anything you have heard your parents speaking about.



Saying goodbye

When it's time for the child to leave, it might feel sad or strange. It's okay to miss them, but you can also be proud of the help your family gave them.

Sometimes, you might still keep in touch by sending cards or talking on the phone. Your parents will let you know what's possible.

Activity: Make a goodbye card for the child with your favourite memories of them. Add drawings or stickers to make it special.



Your questions answered...



Will I share my bedroom with another child?

No, you will both have your own room. You may be able to play in each other's rooms, but you should ask your parents first.

Can I have friends over?

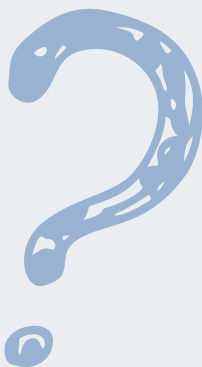
Yes, of course! And the other children living with you can have their friends over too.

Can I play with the children who come to live with me?

Absolutely, if you both want to. But don't try to force them if they don't want to.

Will we still do the things I like to do?

Yes, of course! You will just do these things with another child.



What if I don't like them?

Sometimes, you may argue with a child who's living with you, or they may make you angry, jealous, or sad.

If this happens, walk away and tell your parents. They will help make things better for you.

Will they go to my school?

Sometimes, but not always. Your parents will tell you if they are going to go to the same school as you.

Activity

Write down some questions you have about fostering and then show to your parents.

You are important!



Being part of a fostering family makes you someone very special. You help create a safe, loving home for someone who really needs it.

Don't forget to talk to your parents, teachers, or a social worker if you ever have questions or worries. They're here to help you too!

Activity

Write down one thing you're proud of about being part of a fostering family. Share it with your parents or stick it on the fridge as a reminder.

Who can you talk to?

If you have any questions or need someone to talk to, your family's social worker is always here to help.

Ask your parents to help you contact them if you need to.





fostering
therapeutically
SINCE 1987