



CHILDREN'S GUIDE

What to expect....



Get with it...

HI!

We hope this booklet will help you find out what you can expect while you are in foster care. It tells you who you can talk to if you have any questions.

If there is anything you want to know that is not in this booklet, please ask your Foster Carers, your Social Worker or anyone from AFA Fostering.

WHAT IS FOSTERING?

Fostering is about looking after children and young people who are not able to live with their own families for many different reasons.

If you are unsure about your situation and want to find out about how long you are going to be in foster care, you can ask your Social Worker or call us and we will get you some answers.

WE WILL



- Make sure you have **OPPORTUNITIES** to keep fit and healthy.
- Make sure you are **SAFE AT ALL TIMES** and know how to keep yourself safe.
- Help you with your schooling and **EDUCATION**.
- Make sure you have opportunities to enjoy your life and **HAVE FUN**.
- Where possible help you see the people that are important to you, such as your **FAMILY AND FRIENDS**.
- **ENCOURAGE YOU** to make new friends and get involved in new activities if you would like to.
- Help you to learn how to **LOOK AFTER YOURSELF**.
- **LISTEN TO YOU** and learn about how we might be able to work in better ways to help you.
- Make sure that you know **WHO TO CONTACT** about any of the things that may concern you during the time you are in foster care.

HELP

Placement Manager

YOUR CARERS HAVE A SOCIAL WORKER CALLED A PLACEMENT MANAGER.



The Placement Manager's job is to make sure you are safe and happy. They support your Foster Carer in meeting your needs. The Placement Manager will get to know you and will listen to anything you have to say. They will work with you, your Social Worker and your Foster Carer about the things that are important to you such as your health, education and contact with your birth family and friends.

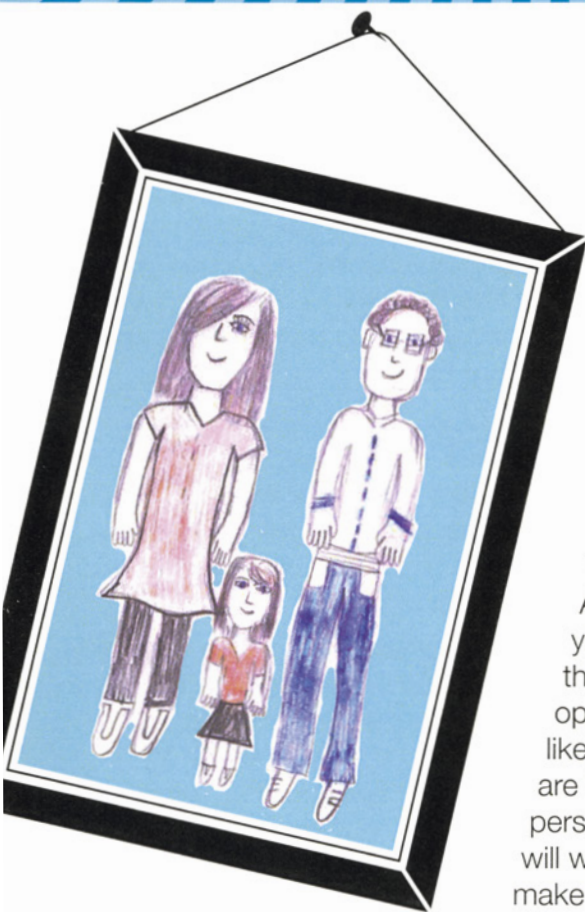
You can talk to the Placement Manager about anything you like. You don't have to wait until they visit, you can phone them at anytime.



If you don't feel comfortable speaking to your carers or their Placement Manager don't forget you can speak to your Social Worker, a teacher or health professionals.

How to contact us
01603 559255
info@afafostering.com

seeing my
family...



It is important
you tell your
social worker about
everybody you would
like to see or keep in
touch with.

Your Foster Carer will help with this as much as possible and will let you phone and visit as often as the Social Worker says you can. You will have a regular 'Looked After Children's (LAC) review' and your Social Worker will tell you about this. Your review will give you the opportunity to say what you would like and to ask for things that you think are important to you. The independent person in charge of the review meeting will work with you and the other adults to make decisions around your future.



house
RULES!

Things you need to know

YOU CANNOT ALWAYS DO WHAT YOU MIGHT WANT TO DO.

You might sometimes think this is not fair but Foster Carers are required to keep you safe. Like everybody else, they will have rules that you are expected to keep to. They will let you and your Social Worker know what the basic rules are, but they will be appropriate to your age and the other people in the house. They will include treating other people with respect, including respecting their own rooms, listening to other people, times you must come in by, the right bed time for your age and the time you have to get up in the morning on school days. Remember, the rules are to keep you safe and well. You can still have lots of fun in your foster home.

You will be treated fairly

Whatever happens, your Foster Carer will be consistent with you and all other members of the household. It is our job to make sure that your Foster Carers are fair and decent at all times. We only accept people as Foster Carers who are able to show us that they care about children and young people and that they want to do their best for them. Doing their best includes helping young people grow up knowing what is acceptable behaviour and what isn't. Everybody needs to know about how to behave, for example, in their family situation, in school and in public places... like when you go shopping.

INFO



Pocket Money

You will get pocket money. The amount you get will be decided between you, your Foster Carer and your Social Worker. If you want to save some of your money you can. Your Foster Carer will also deposit money into a savings account for when you are older.



Activities

Make sure you let your Foster Carer know what you like to do and any hobbies, sports or interests you enjoy as well as your favourite music, films and TV programmes. Your Foster Carers will do all they can to help you continue with your interests and also help if you want to try something new.



Food & Drink

Let your Foster Carer know what you like and what you don't like. Why not go shopping with your carer so you help choose your food and drink?



Bedrooms

You will not be asked to share a bedroom unless you are allowed to share with a brother or sister.

While you are here it is your room and that means you can use it to keep your personal things and to have your own space. It also means it is your responsibility to help keep it clean and tidy! There will be times when your Foster Carers will need to go in your room. They will always knock before they come in. Remember that other people's bedrooms are their own personal space and you should not go into their rooms without knocking first.



Bullying

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in any situation. Bullying can include name-calling, threatening or tormenting behaviour or hitting, pinching, kicking or any violence. It can also include racist or sexual taunts, misuse of email or internet chat rooms and text messages. If you feel you are being bullied please tell your Foster Carer, Social Worker or anyone at AFA.

**IF YOU FEEL UNABLE TO
TALK TO ANYONE YOU KNOW,
YOU CAN CALL CHILDLINE
ON 0800 1111.**

WWW



AFA KIDS WEBSITE: WWW.AFAKIDS.CO.UK

The AFA Kids website is for all children and young people involved with AFA Fostering. We would really like it if you want to get involved. We have blogs written by you, and competitions and reviews. We also have a gallery where you can share things you have done and see photos from AFA events.

As well as being somewhere you can access information and contact AFA workers, you can also find links to homework help and other useful sites.



getting involved with AFA

We would love it if you got involved with our activities and consultation groups. We really want to hear about what you think about the services we provide, and how we could do things better.

WHY NOT JOIN ONE OF OUR CONSULTATION GROUPS? OR COME ALONG TO OUR ACTIVITIES AND JUST HAVE FUN?

Consultation Groups This is an exciting chance for you to share your ideas on how AFA can improve. CCG has helped us with questions we ask new carers and staff and with feedback we give to Social Workers. You can also talk to us about activity days and to decide what you want to see on the AFA Kids Website. If you're aged 10+ and would like the opportunity to **Have Your Say**, we want to hear from you! You can take part by coming along to activity days. If you can't make these days we can still involve you either by visiting you to talk to you about it or through email or Facetime/Video calls

ACTIVITY DAYS!!

We run regular activity days throughout the year for all children and young people. Your foster carers will know when these are or you could ask your foster carers placement manager.

We try to make these suitable for everyone – if you have any ideas or would like to assist with organising the events, please get in touch!

getting in
TOUCH



You can contact us if you have concerns or are unhappy about how you are looked after. Here are some other people you may also contact:

WHO YOU CAN TALK TO ...

There are lots of organisations and people who are there to listen to you and to help you if you have any concerns or worries about your situation. We have provided a list of many of these below to help if you do want to talk to someone.

- **AFA Fostering:**

01603 559255 or email info@afafostering.com

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS:

- **Kidscape: 0207 730 3300**

www.kidscape.org.uk

- **Drinkline: 0300 1231110**

- **Brook Advisory Centre:**

www.brook.org.uk

- **Children's Commissioner:**

0800 528 0731 Rachel Da Souza

www.childrenscommissioner.org.uk

- **Ofsted: General Helpline 0300 123 1231.**

(Ofsted is the government organisation responsible for upholding standards in foster care. They inspect and register fostering agencies like AFA Fostering. Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

- **Childline:**

0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

- **NSPCC:**

0800 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk

- **National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS): 0800 808 1001**

Email: help@nyas.net

- **Minister of Children, Families and Wellbeing:**

Claire Coutinho, MP is the Minister and can be contacted on claire.coutinho.mp@parliament.uk

- **Samaritans: 116 123**

www.samaritans.org

- **RU Thinking: 0800 282 930**

www.ruthinking.co.uk

- **Talk to Frank: 0300 1236600**

www.talktofrank.com

- **Who Cares? Care Advice Line: 020 7017 8901**

www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk

FEED BACK

We always welcome feedback from children and young people in regard to their experience in placement with AFA and also in relation to ideas about how we can improve our services

All young people can and are welcome to call our office 01603 559255. You can also contact us through the HELP link on the AFA Kids website <http://www.afakids.co.uk/help>

If you are unhappy about anything, we can provide you with information and a leaflet on how to complain.

Remember if you are looked after by an AFA carer and wish to view your file you have the right to do this. To make a request to view your file or for further information around this please speak to your carer or ask their Placement Manager.



A big thank you to: Praz, Freddy, Parris, Jessica, Destiny, Curtiz, Jan, Naz, Jan and Sara for your help putting this guide together.



AFA Fostering

01603 559255 www.afakids.co.uk

Childline

0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

NSPCC

0800 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk



Quality. Integrity. Respect.