

The Fostering Process

If you think you could offer a child or young person a safe and secure home through Foster Care or would simply like to find out more about what is involved, please get in touch. You can expect the Fostering Process to involve:

- 1 Personal Preparation**
We'd encourage you to do some research into Foster Care and to consider reading the profiles available on the Foster Care Community section of our website.
- 2 Contact us**
Get in touch with our experienced team who are available to answer all your questions.
- 3 Receive a Call Back**
Within two days of contacting us, a social worker will be in touch.
- 4 Meet with your Foster Care Social Worker**
You can expect this to take place within ten days of your call back.
- 5 Preparation Course**
All enquirers will undertake the Skills To Foster training course.
- 6 Apply**
You should have all the information you need to submit your application.
- 7 Social Work Interviews**
The interview will consider your background, your support network, your lifestyle, your family set up and your skills.
- 8 Foster Care Panel**
Your application will be presented and assessed by the Foster Care Panel.

If you are interested in fostering and think you could make a difference to a child/young person's life, please contact us.



Northern Ireland
Foster Care

Every child/young person
deserves a safe and stable home.

0800 0720 137
adoptionandfostercare.hscni.net

 @HSCAdoptionAndFosterCare
 @HSCAdopt_Foster



Could you give a child / young person a brighter future?

Foster Care supports
children and young
people when they
need it most.





Why Foster Care?

Foster Care provides children and young people who cannot live with their birth families with a safe and loving home where they feel valued, respected and cared for.

Children and young people may rely on Foster Care for many reasons including neglect, abuse, disability, or the ill health of birth parents. Whatever the reason, Foster Carers are ordinary people who make an extraordinary difference by opening up their hearts and homes to care for children / young people.

What types of Foster Care exist?

Each child and young person is unique and their circumstances vary. To respond to this, there are several types of Foster Care. Not all Foster Care requires a full time commitment. It can range from short term emergency support to a longer term placement:

- Short Term
- Long Term
- Emergency
- Short Break
- Kinship Foster Care
- Unaccompanied / Separated Children and Young People
- Children with Disabilities
- Fee Paid
- Parent and Baby



Who can Foster?

There is no such thing as a typical Foster Carer and each application will be assessed individually. We welcome applications from all backgrounds, regardless of marital or employment status, home ownership status, or whether you are already a parent. Applications are considered from any race, religion, language, culture, gender, disability, age, or sexual orientation.

It is important that Foster Carers:

- Enjoy the company of children and young people.
- Can offer a child or young person their own bedroom, or at least their own bed.
- Are available to attend all relevant training to enhance their Foster Care education and development.
- Do not have a police record for violent or sexual offences.
- Are available to meet with all the people involved in the child or young person's life.

Being a Foster Carer

Becoming a Foster Carer is a life-changing decision. It is hugely rewarding and also a challenging and complex commitment.

As a Foster Carer you will undertake ongoing learning and development, working with social workers and relevant individuals in the lives of the children and young people.

Children and young people in the Foster Care system may have unmet emotional or physical needs. They may have experienced neglect or abuse. Foster Carers will need to show understanding and patience to help these children feel safe and secure. Each child/young person, and their family situation, is unique so respect for their experiences and sensitivities is vital.



What support do Foster Carers receive?

We are here to help you during the Foster Care process. We have designed a broad training schedule which covers all aspects of fostering and we hope through this training we can offer constructive and confidence building information to all applicants to ensure you feel informed and supported at all stages.

You will also have an allocated social worker whose role it will be to supervise and support you when children and young people are in your care. You will meet with them regularly and can contact them at any time.

Support groups can offer a much needed opportunity to share concerns, answer questions and make connections with other Foster Carers.

We also have a 'Fostering in a Digital World' safeguarding app which enables Foster Carers to be more comfortable with technology so they can safeguard the children / young people in the online world.

More information about the support available to all Foster Carers can be found on our website.