

Being in fostercare

a guide for younger children



Fostercare

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What is the CAT team?

This stands for 'Care Action Team'. The CAT team is a group of young people who help social workers understand what children need when they are in foster care. The CAT team can do this because they have all been in care themselves.

The CAT team are also there to help or advise you and you can contact them by phoning Iris Gould on 01962 847215 or emailing her at iris.gould@hants.gov.uk

Thanks to all the children who took part in the competition to name our cat, **Ali**.

Here is Ali Cat to tell you about being in foster care.

Your foster carer will help you to colour in the pictures.



What is foster care?

Foster carers are kind people who are chosen by social workers to look after children who cannot live with their Mum and Dad.

Sometimes parents cannot take care of their children even though

they love them. Some children live with foster carers because their Mum or Dad is ill or because their parents have hurt them.



Foster carers will look after you if you are ill, make sure you go to school or pre-school, help you keep in touch with your family and friends and make sure you feel safe and well.

Foster carers are given lots of help so that they can help you. This includes some money to make sure you have everything you need.

Foster carers must promise not to smack you or to make you feel bad. They must also promise not to tell other people anything about you that is private, except your social worker. If they tell your social worker anything, they will tell you what they have said.

All foster carers promise to do this.

You will have your own Social Worker who makes sure everything is okay for you. You can write his or her name and telephone number in the back of this book so you can 'phone anytime you need to.

Some children already know their foster carer before they go to live with them. They may be one of your family or a friend.

Other children will go to a foster carer they do not know. You may feel worried about going to stay with people you don't know. Your foster carer will help you feel at home by finding out what makes you happy and comfortable.



How did you know pizza was my favourite food ?

You will also find out about your foster family - for example, what they do at weekends or what time they get up in the morning!



You, your Social Worker and your Mum or Dad will see that you take all the things you need and use everyday with you when you move in. It's also a good idea to take some special things from home - like your favourite CDs or photos to help you feel more at home.



You may live with a foster carer who has very different ways of doing things, they may have a different religion, eat different kinds of food and may even speak another language at home. Whatever the difference they will always try hard to make you feel at home. They will also do everything they can to make sure you are fit and healthy.

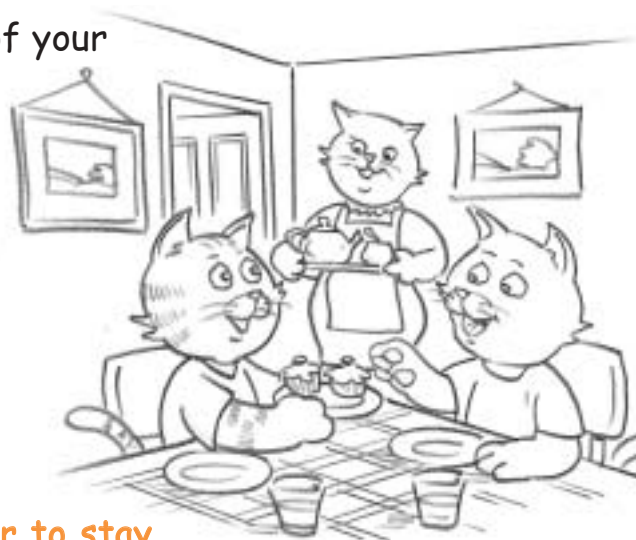
What about seeing my family and friends?

Your social workers and your foster carer will make sure you keep in touch with all the people who are important to you. Usually this will be your family and friends, but if seeing any of those people would mean you are unhappy or unsafe then your Social Worker may make different arrangements for you to keep in touch.



I hope my Dad likes his birthday card

You may talk to some of your family or friends on the 'phone or you may go to a family centre or someone's home to see them. Your foster carer may let you have a friend to tea or to sleep over.



It's great having friends over to stay



Going to Pre-school or School

All children have to go to school and most younger children go to pre-school or nursery. Often children who live with foster carers still go to the same school they always have, but sometimes they have to go to a new school. Your foster carer will make sure you are happy and have everything you need to help you learn and make friends with other children. They will always help sort out any problems at school and be there to help you if you need it.



What else do I need to know about?

Lots of people are interested in helping you, like your foster carer, social worker, Mum and Dad or your teacher. But sometimes you need someone different to talk to.

Sometimes another child or young person who has been in foster care can help you understand things better. They can also help you explain how you feel to other people who need to know.



You can ask for help from a member of the CAT team or someone called an Advocate. You can contact the CAT team or an Advocate yourself or you can ask a grown up to do it for you. You can email the CAT team at iris.gould@hants.gov.uk or ring her on 01962 847215. You can talk to an Advocate by 'phoning Irene Unwin on 01962 847256 or email her at irene.unwin@hants.gov.uk



Make sure you tell me exactly how you feel

All the people who care about you will meet and talk to make plans for your future. You will be invited to go to these meetings, you can ask an Advocate or someone you trust to go to them with you or instead of you, to say how you feel.

What happens if I don't like something?

If something happens that you don't like or don't understand ask your foster carer or another grown up to explain it.



If you are still unhappy and nobody can help you sort it out, you can complain to Irene Unwin (01962 847256) or to an inspector at the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI). Their telephone number is 02380 821300.

Useful Telephone Numbers and Addresses

	Name	Tel no	Email/website/address
Your name			
Foster Carer			
Social Worker			
Support Worker			
Doctor			
Dentist			
CAT team	Iris Gould	01962 847215	iris.gould@hants.gov.uk
Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI)		02380 821300	4th Floor Overline House Southampton SO15 1GW
Ask for an Advocate	Irene Unwin	01962 847256	irene.unwin@hants.gov.uk
Childline		0800 111111	www.childline.org.uk
Voice for the Child in Care		freephone 0808 80058792	www.vcc-uk.org info@vcc-uk.org
The Who Cares? Trust		0500 564570	www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk
Children's Legal Centre		Adviceline 01206 873820	www.childrenslegalcentre.com
NSPCC- advice service for teenagers		freephone 0808 800 5000	www.there4me.com
National Youth Advocacy Service		freephone 0800 616 101	www.nyas.net

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