

Short Breaks Fostering: Support Care Scheme

Helping children and families stay together

About Support Care

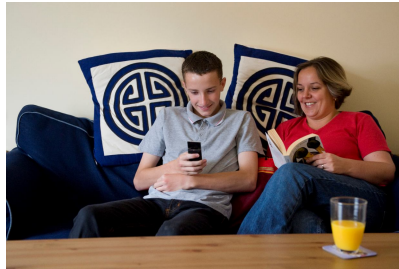
Support carers help children, young people and their families when they are facing periods of difficulty or are struggling to cope.

Parents can struggle for a range of reasons - and we all cope with situations differently. Some cannot rely on an extended family network for an all important breather - and that vital chance to take step back when things change or get tough. Others may struggle to know what to do for the best or how to respond if a child starts pushing boundaries or is excluded from school.

Whatever the situation, when tensions mount sometimes families need a little extra help.

Being a Support Carer

As a support carer, you will work as part of a professional team that offers intensive support to the families that are identified as needing help. This support is usually given through a series of planned



short breaks and some work with the child's family - short breaks could involve everything from after school help over a set period, to breaks during school holidays or weekends. This would typically be for no more than 4 days/5 nights a month, for up to nine months per family.

Every family is individual, and so every support plan will vary to meet their needs. As part of the plan you may spend some time with the child and their family talking about the key issues and sharing a listening ear, advice and expertise to help the family move forward together.

Support Care is the ideal way to make a positive impact on a child's future while also juggling other family and personal commitments.

Families across Hampshire need your help. Make a difference in your life and theirs - be a Support Carer.

Shortbreaks

0845 6035620

www.fostering.hampshire.gov.uk

Fostering with Hampshire

Support care is one of several full and part time fostering options for you to consider.

Fostering full time:

Short term fostering - looking after a child for a few nights to a few years while plans are made for their future or until they are able to return home.

Long term fostering - looking after a child or young person until they are independent

Short Breaks (part-time):

Family Link - looking after a child with a disability or special need, typically for one weekend a month, sometimes more.

More information on each of these options - and the benefits of being a Hampshire carer - is available online:

www.fostering.hampshire.gov.uk



Hampshire
County Council

www.hants.gov.uk

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Skills and Qualities

We are looking for Support Carers to join us in helping family's stay together. It's a part time role, so some carers have other jobs, others are full time parents - it's the combination of a carers life experience, professional skills and personal qualities that are important.

We are looking for people who are able to show:

- Experience of caring for children and young people - either through their own parenting or through a professional role.
- An understanding and empathy of the difficulties and stresses of family life, and an open approach to helping and empowering families to handle them.
- The ability to build relationships with people of different ages, backgrounds and whose experiences may be different from your own.
- An genuine interest in children and young people and helping them make the most of their future.
- Strength to help and encourage children and young people to learn more about themselves and their reactions - and help and encouragement to change.
- Practically, able to offer a visiting child their own space in your home when they stay.



Training and Support for Carers

Support carers are offered all the benefits of full-time foster carers which includes:

- A nominated social worker who will provide formal support and supervision.
- Practical support and advice via support groups, online portal Foster e-Comms, and a duty system
- Training - training before you start to help you understand more about fostering and support care and training once you are caring in a range of essential subjects.
- Alongside this there are opportunities to attend specialist training and develop particular skills and knowledge, as well as follow formal qualification routes such as NVQ
- Social support - from meeting other carers to discounts and offers on local attractions and for special events. This includes a free Culture-all card!

- Allowances to cover the cost of looking after the child while they are in your care
- Some specified expenses can also be claimed - for example travel- as agreed for each placement.

Apply today!

We have an urgent need for support carers across Hampshire. Making the first step to helping a family stay together is simple - just give us a ring or complete the online enquiry form.

Our friendly, professional duty team will arrange to chat through a few things on the phone, and then arrange to visit you to make sure Support Caring is the right thing for you and any family you may have.

The social worker who visits you will also explain about the next steps - for example, the checks and references we need to undertake - and the full process of becoming a Support Carer.

It will usually take around 4-5 months to get you started - including making sure you've had the initial training and support you need to get started and make a success of your role.