




A SUPER SAFE PLACE

Channels & Choices

Welcome to Channels and Choices. We want you to be well cared for during the time you are with the Foster Family you are going to be living with so we have chosen a Family we think you will feel most comfortable with.

We've written this booklet for a number of reasons. We would like to give you a better idea of who we are and what we do but we also want to provide you with information about what you can expect from living in a Foster home and in another section you can find information to let you know what to do if you are feeling unhappy. This guide also provides you with somewhere for you to keep information about you and your Foster carers.

The background of the entire page is a cartoon illustration of a child's bedroom. On the left, a boy with dark curly hair and a red superhero mask and suit stands next to a girl with brown hair in pigtails, also in a superhero costume. To her right is a girl with blonde hair and a pink superhero mask and suit. In the background, there is a blue wall with a yellow starburst, a clock showing approximately 1:50, and a painting of a blue dinosaur on the left. A large white speech bubble with a yellow starburst behind it is on the right side of the page.

IF you have any trouble reading this or are unsure of any of the words please ask someone to read it to you or to explain them for you.

My name is

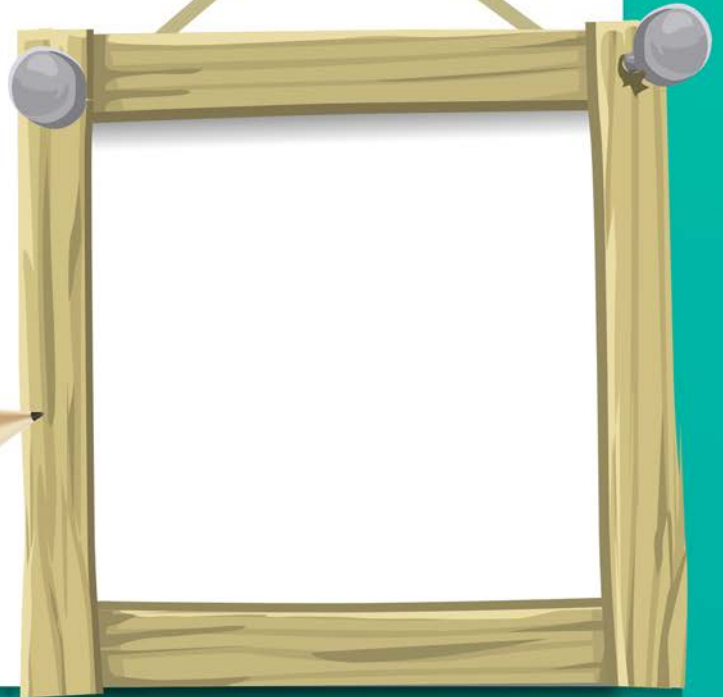
I am

years old.

I like

I don't like

*Draw a picture
of yourself!*



All About Channels & Choices



*Channels & Choices
is a company that provides
Fostering, education and residential services For
children and young people. Our Fostering agency
provides Foster Families For young people who are
in care or 'Looked After' as it sometimes called.*





*Why do I need
to be Fostered
or 'Looked
after'?*

Sometimes a child's Family cannot look after them and keep them safe. This can be for lots of different reasons. Other grown-ups can help look after children to make sure that they are safe, happy and healthy.

What is Fostering?

You might need to go to live somewhere else. When a child has to live away from their Family, they usually go to stay with a Foster Family. Your Foster Family will look after you and take good care of you. You are not alone. At any one time there are about 50,000 children and young people living in Foster care in this country.

Who are Foster carers?

Foster carers are special adults who have been chosen by Channels and Choices to look after children who can't live at home with their Family. All Foster Families are different, but their job is all the same; all Foster Families are there to look after you and make you feel safe.



Who will I live with and what will they be like?

When a Foster carer is being chosen, we always make sure that we try to match your ethnicity, culture and religious needs (if you have any). We also try to make sure that they live near to your school, college and Friends.

Most importantly the Foster carer will need to understand you. A lot of work is done to Find a suitable Family.

Your Foster Family may eat the same kind of Food as you and celebrate the same special days like Christmas, Eid-Al-Addha or Passover. Even if your carers do not share the same tastes, or perhaps the same religion, it is important you know they will do all they can to meet your needs, beliefs and wishes.



What our Foster children say...

"My Foster carers understand me and have never been annoyed with me."

"My Foster carers are the best I could I ever have"

"If I could go back and change anything, I wouldn't or I wouldn't be where I am now (with my carers)."

"Being Fostered - it keeps me safe"



Your Foster carer will also do lots of the things that most parents do like taking you to school if you can't go by yourself and helping you with your homework, but most importantly they will make sure you are kept healthy and happy, take you on outings and give you support with any hobbies or interests you might have.

IF there is enough time we will always do our best to let you meet your Foster Family before you move in. IF you have not met them already, then we will always try to make sure that you are given some information about them as soon as possible. All our Foster carers have a booklet called 'All About Us' which includes photos and tells you who is in the Family, where they live and things they like to do.



My Foster carers are

*Draw a
picture
of your
Foster Family!*



We have asked what some of our Foster carers would like you to know about being Fostered...

"Caring For my Foster child is the best job in the world."

"We love Fostering children - it is the best thing we have ever done!"



What about my Family?

We understand that it is very important For you see the people who are special to you. Your social worker can help arrange For you to meet with your Family. You can tell your social worker about everyone you would like to see. As well as mum or dad, this could include grandparents, uncles and aunties, cousins and Friends. People who are important to me...



IF you Feel worried about seeing someone in your Family please speak with your carer or your social worker.

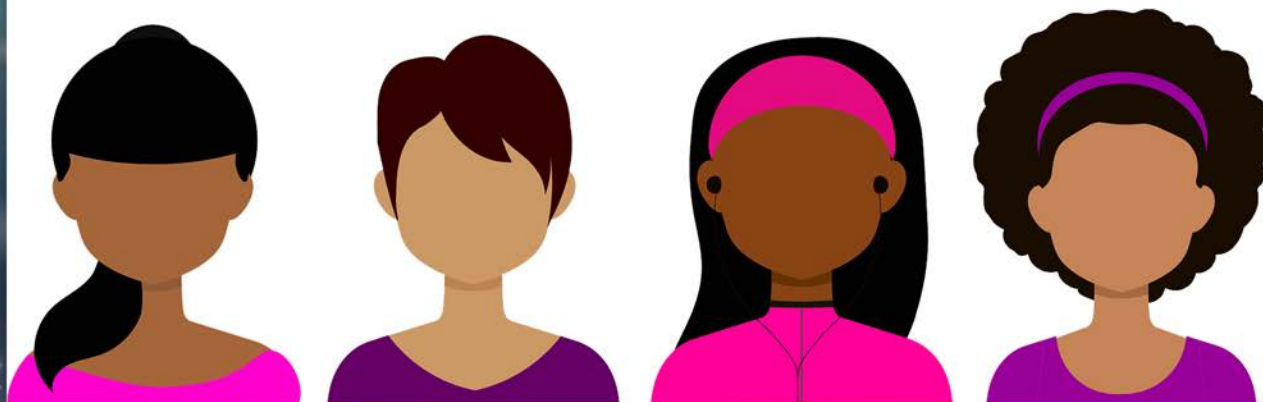
What does the Channels and Choices supervising social worker do?

Your Foster carers have their own Supervising Social Worker. Their job is to make sure your carers are looking after you properly and have all the help and support they need. Their job is also to make sure you are happy and well cared For.

is a Supervising Social Worker and it's their job to visit your Foster Family in the same way that your social worker comes to meet with you.

When you meet with

they will always be pleased to hear how you are and to see what you are doing at school, or at your Foster home



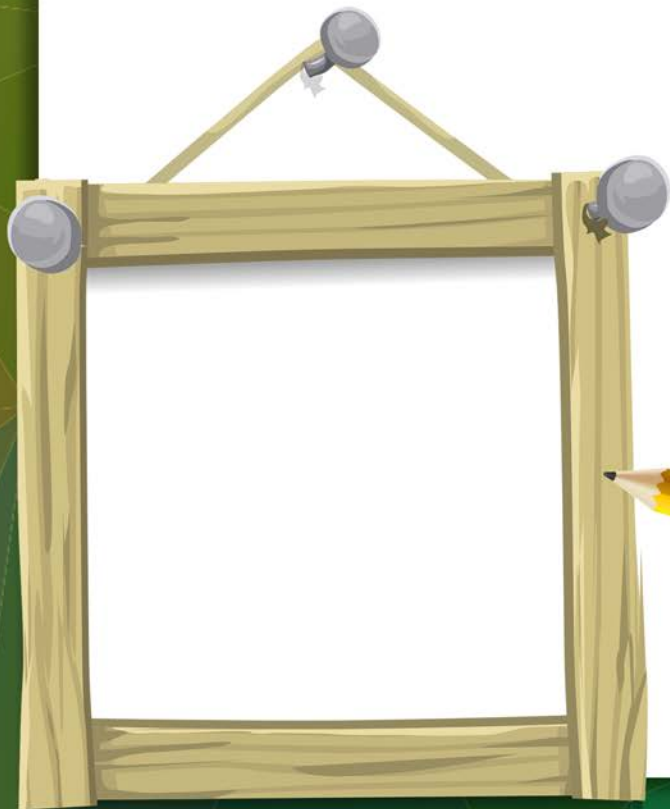
Do you have any questions about your new Foster Family? Write them here.



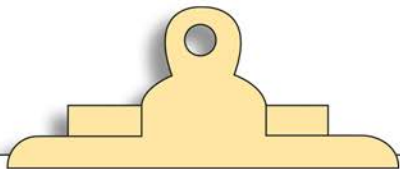
Before they Find you a Family, your social worker will tell Channels and Choices everything they need to know about you so we can Find the right Foster Family For you.

When you First go to live with your Foster carer they will show you around your new home. They will show you where you will sleep, where you can play and where you will eat your meals. You will also meet the other grown-ups, children and pets who might also live in the house with you. You will have your own bedroom.

Draw your new Foster home!



Once you have moved into your Foster Family's home, there will be a meeting which is a chance For you to talk about the day-to-day arrangements of what it will be like For you living in your Foster home. This includes keeping to a routine, going to school and Following the Family rules, or a chance to ask any other questions if there's anything you'd like to know about living with your new Foster Family. You can tell them about your Favourite things to do, what meals you like to eat and anything that you don't like.



Every Family has rules. These are about how to treat each other, about listening to each other and about keeping safe. What are your Foster carers' rules?

You could write them down to help you remember.





Who can I talk to?

We would love to know what you think about our Foster care and if there is anything you would like to change so that we can plan and make things better in the future.

You can always contact the Fostering team...

*Channels & Choices Therapeutic Fostering,
Kearsney Manor, Alkham Rd, Temple Ewell Dover CT16 3EQ
tel. (01304) 827777 email. fostering@channelsandchoices.co.uk*

You can also contact the directors of Channels and Choices directly to tell them about your experiences. You can Follow this link:

www.channelsandchoices.co.uk/contact-us

*There are lots of people who can help if you are unhappy or if you are worried about anything. You can talk to...
Your social worker... Your C&C social worker...
Your Foster carer...Your teacher....*



Ofsted

Channels & Choices are visited by Inspectors who work For Ofsted. It is their job to go around and look at all the places where children in care are living, to make sure they are safe and being well cared For. IF you are unhappy about your care, or something that Channels & Choices is doing, or not doing, then they will listen to you. You can write to them at:

Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD or telephone 0300 1231231 or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

The Children's commissioner

The Children's Commissioner For England is Dame Rachel De Souza. She promotes and protects children's rights in England. You can contact the team on 0207 783 8330 or email: info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk



Remember: Ask For help

It is very important that you talk to an adult if you are worried about something because if an adult knows something is wrong they can help you, but they need to know, to be able to help!

Other people you can speak to...



ChildLine is a free 24-hour helpline for children and young people in the UK where you can talk about any problem, at any time – day or night. ChildLine's counsellors are there to help you find ways to sort things out.

ChildLine is confidential – which means they won't tell anyone about your call, unless you want them to talk to somebody for you, or you are in danger.

Their website address is www.childline.org.uk

You can email them on info@childline.org.uk or call their helpline on 0800 1111 or write to Freepost 1111, London, N1 OBR



Kidscape is a children's charity, who give practical advice on bullying and keeping safe. You can access their website by going to www.kidscape.org.uk



National Youth Advocacy Service. You can call them on their Freephone 0800 616 101 or Email at help@nyas.net. Their website can be found at www.nyas.net



The NSPCC. You can call the NSPCC's free 24 hour helpline to talk about any kind of problem. You can also email for advice and they will reply within 24 hours.

On the other hand, you can visit the NSPCC's website for young people, which includes lots of info about all sorts of problems.

Their website address is www.worriedneed2talk.org.uk or you can email them on help@nspcc.org.uk or call their Freephone on 0800 800 500.



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