

**REPLY SLIP**

If you are interested in becoming a Foster Carer with Foster Care Link please complete the sections below, cut out this section of the leaflet, and post or fax to our offices.

We will then send you an application pack with further details and an application form.

Alternatively, you can obtain this from our website at:

[www.fostercarelink.com](http://www.fostercarelink.com)

<b>FIRST NAME</b>
<b>SURNAME</b>
<b>ADDRESS</b>
<b>TEL NO</b>
<b>FAX NO</b>
<b>EMAIL</b>

PLEASE SEND TO:



159B STOKE NEWINGTON HIGH STREET  
STOKE NEWINGTON  
LONDON N16 0NY

OR FAX: 020 7923 1754



159B STOKE NEWINGTON HIGH STREET  
STOKE NEWINGTON  
LONDON N16 0NY  
TELEPHONE: 020 7923 0330  
FACSIMILE: 020 7923 1754  
EMAIL: [admin@fostercarelink.com](mailto:admin@fostercarelink.com)  
WEBSITE: [www.fostercarelink.com](http://www.fostercarelink.com)

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# WHAT IS FOSTER CARE?

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A BRIEF GUIDE TO WHAT IS  
INVOLVED IN FOSTERING FOR  
POTENTIAL FOSTER CARERS



## **WHAT IS FOSTERING?**

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Fostering involves families looking after children who cannot live with their own families due to a range of reasons. The child or young person could have been abused, his/her parents could be sick or the child could simply be orphaned.

These children, sometimes referred to as 'looked after' children, may need to live with foster carers for a few days or a few weeks or for the whole of their childhood. They are of all ages and have a number of different needs. Children from black, ethnic minority and Muslim backgrounds often find it most difficult to find suitable homes. It is for this reason that Foster Care Link needs a wide variety of foster carers, young and old, with and without children, single carers and married couples from a wide range of different cultures and backgrounds.

Foster care is different from adoption in that foster carers do not have parental responsibility for their foster child. Contact with the birth family is often very important for a foster child. Whilst a child is living with foster carers Foster Care Link pays a generous allowance of upto £300 per week; this includes the expenses of a child's care as well as a fee for the carer. Extra financial support is also available. Training and support is provided to foster carers at all stages.

## **WHO CAN BE A FOSTER CARER?**

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We need foster carers from all walks of life: Whether you are...

- working or unemployed,
- single or living with a partner,
- with your own children or none at all,
- male or female, from any race or culture,

- home owner or tenant - so long as you've enough space,
- any age whether you're in your 20s or your 60s,
- for short, medium or long term fostering,
- for individual children and for brothers and sisters

## **WHAT WILL BE EXPECTED OF YOU?**

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You must...

- like children and be determined to put children's needs first
- be willing and able to look after a child when they can't stay with their own family
- have time to listen, plus patience, tolerance, understanding and a real drive to keep the child happy
- be willing to work as part of a team with Foster Care Link staff, social work staff, families, teachers and doctors
- be committed to equal opportunities regardless of disability, race or beliefs.

Because you will be...

- taking on a big responsibility, caring for someone else's children - maybe for a few days, weeks, months or even years;
- in-charge for their health, welfare and education;
- caring for children who may have had traumatic experiences - for instance, neglect; physical, sexual or emotional abuse;
- sometimes dealing with difficult, disruptive and demanding behaviour;
- working with the child's family and encouraging regular contact with them;
- prepared for the child to go back to their own family when the time comes.

## **HOW CAN YOU APPLY TO BECOME A FOSTER CARER?**

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In the middle of this leaflet is a reply slip, which you must complete and send to us,

We will...

- send you an application pack with an application form and more details about fostering, including how much money you will receive for being a carer;
- begin the process to assess you as a potential foster carer

If this is satisfactory, we will...

- invite you to an information day where you can meet other potential foster carers and learn more about the different schemes which we operate;
- visit you at home to talk about fostering with all your family;
- need to follow up references from your previous employers and check details with your GP, the Police and the Department of Health - for your peace of mind and ours;
- invite you to training sessions to prepare you for becoming a foster carer and to develop your skills;
- ensure there's support for you when you need it once you are a carer;
- try to carefully match foster carers with children - though you always have the right to say no.

For further information you should also read the Foster Care Link Leaflet 'Types of Foster Care Explained' (Leaflet LE3), or visit the Foster Care Link website at [www.fostercarelink.com](http://www.fostercarelink.com)