

# Steps to foster



## There are 8 steps to foster

- 1. Initial enquiry** - Contact the team, we ask for a few details and we will be able to answer any questions.
- 2. Telephone discussion** – A social worker will phone you to discuss your interest.
- 3. Initial home visit** – A social worker will meet with you to talk further and answer any questions that you might have. If everything is satisfactory, we will obtain your consent to making checks with the Criminal Records Bureau and other agencies. If everything is satisfactory we will invite you to an information day.
- 4. Information day** – This day is a chance for prospective foster carers to obtain more information from fostering social workers. It is also a great opportunity to meet experienced foster carers, who will be able to answer any questions or queries you have and help you to decide whether fostering is for you. At the end of the information day we will give you a fostering application form, which will require information about you, your family and details of people who are prepared to act as referees.

*“It’s true that many placements are successful, although some are not-so-good, but it makes it all worthwhile when I know I’ve made a real difference to that child’s life.”*

**5. Preparation course** - After the Information day you may proceed onto a fostering preparation course. The course is led by a foster carer and social worker and includes sessions on –

- What do foster carers do?
- Who are the children and young people?
- Working together.
- Safer caring.
- Understanding behaviour.
- Moving on.

**6. Home visit** – We will talk with you about what you have learnt from your preparation course. Together we may decide that some form of individual preparation should take place, such as gaining experience of caring for children through voluntary work.

**7. Assessment** - A fostering social worker will visit you and talk with you about your family background. You will be asked to provide information about your education, employment history and leisure interests, past relationships and experience of caring for children. We will also ask you to have a fostering health assessment with your GP. The assessment will be very thorough because fostering is a life changing decision. We have to be sure that it is right for you, and we have to be confident in your ability to foster a child.

**8. Fostering panel** - The social worker will write a report, which you will have a chance to read and comment on. The fostering panel will consider the report and you will be invited to attend the panel meeting along with your social worker. The panel will decide whether to recommend you as suitable to foster. The service manager for fostering decides whether or not to accept the fostering panel’s recommendation, based on all of the reports and minutes of the panel meeting.

**\* Remember that at any time you are able to withdraw from the process.**

helping you, help them.