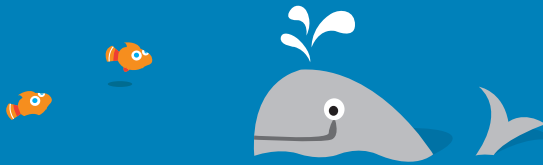


Children's Guide to Fostering Devon



This pack
belongs to:



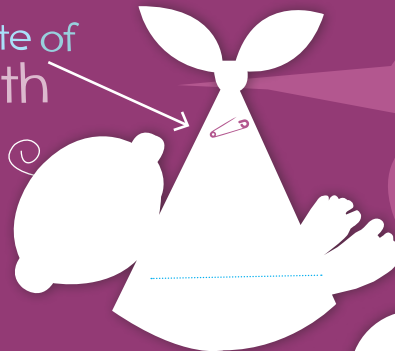
1 Information about me

me



my name

date of birth



my age



my numbers



things to remember

my address



my
hopes and
dreams:

Lined writing area for 'my hopes and dreams'.

my
friends:



Lined writing area for 'my friends'.

People who are
→ important to me:

Lined writing area for 'People who are important to me'.

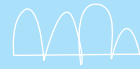


my school:





What is foster care?



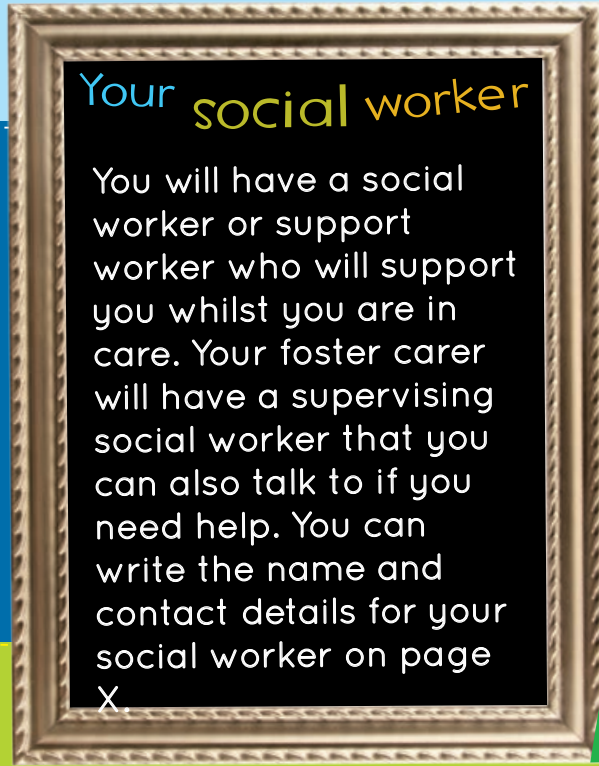
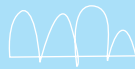
Sometimes your parents can't look after you and your social worker will decide that it is better for you not to live at home. They will see if you have other relatives (family like grandmother or uncle) or friends who can look after you, if this is not possible Devon County Council will look after you and keep you safe, this is called being in care.

While you are in care your social worker will work hard to help and support you. This may need meetings with other people like teachers and other social workers, as well as members of your family, but you will always be asked what you think.

you need to know that it is not your fault

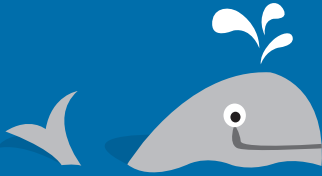
You may be feeling very confused, upset and worried about what is happening, but you need to know that **it is not your fault**. Your foster carer and social worker will talk to you about what is happening, why it is happening and will help you understand.





Your social worker

You will have a social worker or support worker who will support you whilst you are in care. Your foster carer will have a supervising social worker that you can also talk to if you need help. You can write the name and contact details for your social worker on page X.



Foster care is:

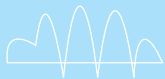
“Where you stay with people because it’s not safe to go home”



“Somewhere you get looked after”

“People who look after you”

Your family



Your social worker will talk to you about seeing your family. It is important to keep in touch with your family and friends.

We will help you to keep in touch with everyone you want to see, unless we think it might be dangerous for you. If you can't see members of your family you may be able to stay in touch by writing letters or emails. You can also tell your social worker if there is anyone you don't want to see.

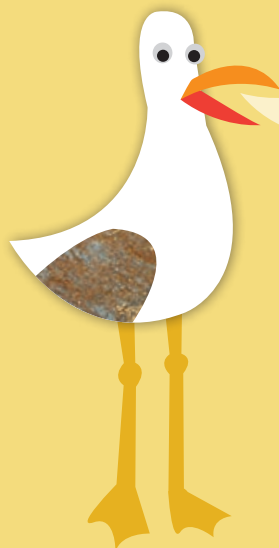


Members of your family may come to some of your meetings if we think it would be a good idea for them to attend. If this is a problem for you let your social worker know.

Your foster carers



When you become looked after by Devon County Council we will find foster carers for you to live with that suit you and the carer best.



Foster carers are ordinary people who want to give children a safe and happy home. They want to help you and will welcome you into their home.

Foster carers can:

- be single people
- be a couple
- have children of their own
- have other foster children.

You might want to ask your carer about any rules they have and what you are allowed to do. There may be different rules in their home and it's good to know what they are.



3

Meetings and plans

Care Plans

When you come into care we will work with you to make a Care Plan.

This will say:

- how we will look after you
- why you are in care
- how you are getting on at school
- how healthy you are
- hobbies you enjoy doing, would like to start or continue doing for example brownies, cadets or football
- how long you are likely to be in care.

Review meetings

A review meeting looks at your care plan and makes sure it is up to date and is working for you.

The meeting will look at:

- how you get on at school
- celebrating your achievements
- if you have been poorly
- the things you enjoy doing
- if you can visit your family.

The meeting will be run by an **independent reviewing officer**. People who know you, like your teacher and your social worker, will be at the meeting. If you want to go to the meeting you will be able to talk to the independent reviewing officer on your own before the meeting starts. If you don't want to go you can write down

Remember: You can choose who gets copies of your review meeting paperwork.

your thoughts and they will be read out for you.

You can also let people know your thoughts through the MOMO app (Mind of my Own) which is available at

www.mindofmyown.org.uk

A meeting happens when they check your progress and what you want to do. Parents can come if they are allowed and if you want them to.



Permanency planning meeting (PPM)

This meeting happens after you have been in care for a few months. It is a discussion that takes place as part of your review meeting, and is to decide the best place for you to live and the best people to care for you if you can't go home. You will be able to say what you want to happen. Some one will be there to help you say what you want if you need them. **Whatever happens don't worry, you will be cared for.**

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

When you come into care you will have a Personal Education Plan or PEP.

The PEP will be done at school with:

- you
- your teacher
- your foster carer
- your social worker
- and sometimes your parents.

You will have a meeting at your school to talk about how you are doing. You may be able to

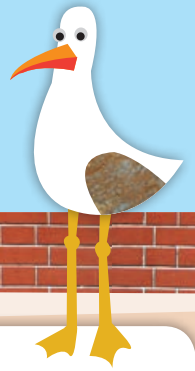
get extra help if you need it and maybe money to do some activities. Your school will have a teacher you can talk to who supports and helps children in care. Your teachers, foster carers and social worker will help you to do your best and enjoy school.

You may need to go to a different school nearer to your foster home, but we will try and make sure you stay at your normal school. If you are worried about this talk to your foster carer or social worker.



4

People I might meet



Foster carer

Your foster carers will look after you while you are in care. Tell your foster carer about the sort of things you like to do and the things that make you happy. Your foster carer will be happy to talk to you and try to help you understand what is happening.

My foster carer's name(s)

phone numbers

email

My social worker's name



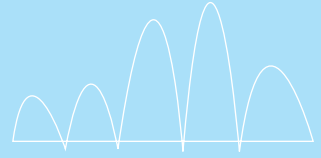
phone numbers

email

Social worker

Your social worker is there to support you and make sure that you are safe and well. You can talk to your social worker if you have any problems while you are in care.

Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)



Your Support Worker and your IRO are there to help you achieve everything you can. They should help you to get any support or services you need. They make sure that your thoughts and feelings are listened to when people are making plans about your future.



My Independent Review Officer's name

phone numbers

email

Advocate

An advocate will help to make sure that the people at the meetings know how you feel and what you want to see happen. They will support you to speak at the meeting or read out things you have written down. Advocates are independent and don't work for Devon County Council.

More information about advocacy can be found at

www.standupspeakup.org.uk/advocacy

My Advocate's name

phone numbers

email

Contact details
of other people
you might meet!

Children in Care nurses



These nurses can give you:

- health advice
- general emotional support
- diet advice
- information about growing up and changes.

You can talk to your nurse about any health problem that is worrying you – even if you think it might be embarrassing! The nurses will always listen and help you.

Southern Devon
Lizzie Cann
Tel: 07814 658544 or
elizabeth.cann@nhs.net

Eastern Devon
Cathy Jermey
Tel: 07814 226 175 or
cathy.jermey@nhs.net

Alison Bodgin
Tel: 07814 659 027 or
alison.bodgin@nhs.net

Northern Devon
Hilary Corfe
Tel: 07792 169 023 or
hilary.corfe@nhs.net

Confidentiality

Everything you talk about with the nurse will be confidential – unless you say that it can be shared, or if the nurse thinks you might be harmed.

Useful websites

Young Minds www.youngminds.org.uk

A website with information to help you deal with difficult feelings.

ERIC www.eric.org.uk

A website about bedwetting which has a section with information for children.

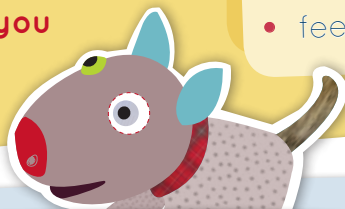


When you come into care you will go with your carer to the doctor to have a health assessment. Your health assessment and health plan will let people know how they can help you to be healthy.

Being healthy means different things.

It includes:

- not feeling poorly
- feeling good about yourself
- having friends
- feeling safe
- feeling fit.



What can help you feel healthy?



Healthy eating

Eating a healthy diet can make you feel well and give you energy. It is fun to try new foods, especially if you have helped to cook them yourself! You should also drink lots of water because it can help you

to concentrate and help prevent headaches.

Exercise

This can be good for your bones and muscles.

And it can help you meet friends, get fit and have fun!

Talk to your foster carer and social worker about helping you to do the things you like doing, like swimming, playing football or playing netball.

Teeth



To have lovely teeth you need to brush your teeth twice a day with a brush and fluoride toothpaste - ask your foster carer for these.



Avoid sugary, fizzy drinks. They may be nice, but they are very nasty to your teeth! Your carer can help you to visit your dentist twice a year.

Sleep

Z Z

Z

Sleep is very important to help your body and mind recover and rest.

Sometimes sleep can be difficult if you are upset or worrying about something. To help you get to sleep try talking to someone or writing down all the things that are worrying you. You could also have a warm milky drink or a warm bath before bed.

Or try reading a book (not a scary one) before you go to sleep.




Z



Z



 If you ever want more information about being healthy you can speak to your Children in Care Nurse. You can phone, text or email us and we will get back to you.

The contact details for your nurse are on card number 4.



What to do if you are unhappy



Sometimes you might feel:

- unhappy in your foster home
- unhappy with things that are happening
- that things aren't working for you
- that people haven't done what they said they would.



You could talk to a grown-up you trust; like a teacher, a carer, your social worker or support worker. They might be able to help you to make things better.

If you want to complain you can speak to our Customer Services Team. They can help you and will tell the right people about your complaint.

If you need someone to help you complain we can get you an advocate. This is a person who can help you to say what you're thinking.

Customer Services Team



Send an email to:

customer.relations@devon.gov.uk

Phone for free on **08081 683750**

Write to Customer Services Team,
CYPS, Room 120, County Hall,
Topsham Road, Exeter, EX2 4QD

Emergencies

An emergency can be:

- when you or someone else is in danger
- when you think that a crime is happening.

If you think there is an emergency you should call straight away. You will speak to an operator who will put you through to the Police, the Fire service or the Ambulance Service.

999



If you have a problem in your foster home at night, on weekends or in the holidays, and can't get in touch with your social worker you can call the Emergency Duty Team on:

0345 6000 388

and they will try to help you.





Contacts

There are people who can help you and talk to you.

Bullying UK

www.bullying.co.uk

if you are being bullied or think that you might be bullying someone else.

Who Cares Trust

www.whocarestrust.org.uk

The Who Cares Trust wants to make things better for children in care.

Get Connected

www.getconnected.org.uk

0808 808 4994

A service that is available all the time to help young people with any problem they have.

Kidscape

www.kidscape.org.uk/childrenteens

An organisation created to help protect children from bullying and abuse.

Teenage Health Freak

www.teenagehealthfreak.org

This website was created by two doctors to give children and young people helpful information on any health problem.

Childline

0800 11 11

You can phone this number free to talk to someone about anything that is worrying you.

Stand Up Speak Up

This is the Children in Care Council which helps children in Devon speak up about the things they need to make their life better. If you want to join you can visit www.standupspeakup.org.uk

The Pledge to Children in Care

is a list of promises that we are making to all children and young people in care in Devon. It also tells the adults who work with children in care what they should be doing to support you.

The Pledge

The Pledge is a list of promises that we are making to all children and young people in care in Devon. It also tells the adults who work with children in care what they should be doing to support you.

Take a pledge of young people and what we are all focused on doing to make a list of top 10 promises which will make a difference to the way Children's Planning Strategy and other services. The new top promises are shown in the blue box.

Many people in care have been in a health workshop and made the new top 10 and all the adults that work with them have signed the pledge. All our services and staff will now make sure about the Pledge and what it means for you.

Watch The Pledge Video



Read The Pledge Promises



