

SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING FOSTER CARE

THE FOSTERING NETWORK

www.fostering.net

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helping children to thrive



WHO ARE THE FOSTERING NETWORK?

- UK wide
- Membership of:
 - 25,000 foster families, (about 60% of all foster families in the UK)
 - All local authorities
 - Over 140 independent fostering providers

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WHAT DO WE DO?

- Campaigning, lobbying and influencing
- Membership benefits that support foster carers
- Training, publications and consultancy
- *Foster Care Fortnight* - attracting and keeping carers
- Fosterline 0800 040 7675 the foster carers' advice line
- Independent support - the Fostering Network advice and mediation service

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CURRENT WORK

- Allegations against foster carers
- Supporting local foster care associations
(Joanna.Adande@fostering.net)
- Developing support care
(Ena.Fry@fostering.net)
- The sons and daughters of foster carers
- The Action on Aftercare Consortium

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Current Issues

- A national minimum allowance for foster carers
- Training for foster carers - developing a post approval training and qualifications framework
- Children's workforce strategy
- The Fostering Network and the Children's Workforce Development Council

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THE BIG ISSUE

Improving outcomes for children in foster care requires a genuine partnership between foster carers and children's social workers.

A partnership that is based on mutual respect and an understanding of each others roles.

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Supporting & Promoting Foster Care

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Fostering Roadshows
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Supporting & Promoting Foster Care

BAAF:

- Undertakes training & consultancy
- Develops training to meet new needs
- Advises individual doctors, lawyers, academics, social care professionals & carers
- Campaigns & lobbies to promote child-centred policy for children & young people separated from their birth families
- Develops & publishes practice guidance for those who work with & care for this group of children & young people

Supporting & Promoting Foster Care

Video
Clip



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Complex Issues:

- Are foster carers professionals or parents?
- Are children & young people in foster care part of the family?
- Are carers able to openly discuss their feelings & emotions?
- Can & should foster care provide a family for life?

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BAAF's Role:

- The Children's Workforce Strategy
- The future of foster care
- Long-term fostering & planning for permanency

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Final Thought:

- How can we support carers to carry out this complex task?



THE COST OF FOSTER CARE

A Joint report by the Fostering Network and BAAF



THE COST OF FOSTER CARE

- An expert working group from across the UK brought together local authorities, ADSS and independent fostering providers, and included observers from DfES and LGA
- A bottom up calculation of the expenditure required to deliver a fit for purpose foster care services
- Explicit assumptions about the level of service required

THE COST OF FOSTER CARE

Report launched 11th July:

- This will mark the beginning of a campaign to secure increased resources for foster care

Our view is that:

- Improved foster care services = improved outcomes for children looked after