



Media pack for services

Foster Care Fortnight

Foster Care Fortnight (11 – 24 May) is The Fostering Network's annual campaign to celebrate the fostering community and raise awareness of the transformational power of foster care.

The campaign provides a great opportunity to reach out to the media to tell them about your fostering service, share stories about your foster carers and the urgent need for more foster carers in your local area.

This pack contains a template press release (including a quote from our chief executive), fostering statistics, including the latest fostering recruitment targets and facts about fostering you may wish to send to your local media. Further resources, including social media graphics, are available at: [Foster Care Fortnight | The Fostering Network](#)

The theme for Foster Care Fortnight 2026 is 'This is Fostering'

We provided three themes for members to vote for this year, and 'This is Fostering' was the winner, aiming to celebrate and raise awareness of the different stories across the fostering community.

This is Fostering brings together three key threads:

- It shines a light on the everyday experiences of fostering, raising awareness of the positive impact foster carers have.
- It acknowledges the pressures foster carers are facing in today's climate – from low allowances and fees and inconsistent support, to feeling excluded from decision making about the children in their care.

- It is a call to action. It gives us a collective platform to stand together as foster carers, kinship carers and the wider fostering community to call on the government for meaningful change.

Over the fortnight we'll celebrate foster carers, shine a light on the challenges and call for change for the fostering community.

Template press release

HEADLINE: Urgent need for foster carers in [fostering service name]

[Fostering service name] is encouraging people in [area name] to consider becoming foster carers this Foster Care Fortnight.

Throughout the next two weeks, [Fostering Service Name] will be joining others across the UK to thank foster carers for all they do and raise awareness of the life-changing impact fostering can have.

This year's theme for Foster Care Fortnight, This is Fostering, shines a light on the everyday realities of fostering, raising awareness of the profound impact foster carers have on children's lives. It celebrates the skills, commitment and love they show, often in incredibly challenging circumstances.

Foster carers play a crucial role in providing safe, stable, and nurturing homes for children and young people - many of whom have faced difficult or traumatic experiences. They support children in their education, physical and emotional wellbeing, and help them rebuild trust and confidence.

But we urgently need more foster carers. Across [region name], there is currently a shortage of [figure], leaving too many children without the local homes they need. Without locally based foster carers, children can end up in foster homes outside of their local authority/trust area, far away from everything they know – family, friends, schools and clubs.

Sarah Thomas, Chief Executive of The Fostering Network, said: "Foster carers are not only parents, providing warmth stability and a place to call home – they are highly skilled. They juggle many roles: educators, mediators, advocates and organisers, with a deep knowledge of children's best interests.

"However, many foster carers are leaving, while the number of children entering care is on the rise. We urgently need more people to step forward so every child can have the right home for their needs.

“There’s no such thing as a ‘typical’ foster carer. Foster carers and kinship carers come from different backgrounds, are different ages, genders, ethnicity and sexual orientation.

“It’s this diversity that brings the fostering community together to help children feel safe, supported and able to thrive.

“So, if you do one thing this Foster Care Fortnight, take a moment to find out more about fostering and whether it might be right for you.”

If you’re keen to learn more about fostering or ready to take the next step, contact [\[fostering service\]](#) or call Fosterline during Foster Care Fortnight.

Recruitment statistics

Foster care provides children with a safe, secure and nurturing family environment, and allows them to maintain their relationships with their own families if they wish and if it is in their best interest.

With a significant proportion of foster carers retiring or leaving every year, thousands more foster families are needed. There is a particular need for foster carers to look after teenagers and sibling groups and fostering services work all year round to find and recruit the foster carers they need locally to look after these children.

Numbers of foster families needed across the UK - approximated by The Fostering Network, May 2025.

(The Fostering Network cannot break these figures down beyond these national and regional numbers.)

UK	6,000
England	5,000
Northern Ireland	300
Scotland	300
Wales	400

Region	
North East	350
North West	700
Yorkshire and Humber	560
East Midlands	370

West Midlands	660
East of England	440
London	770
South East	820
South West	420
Total	5,000

Fostering statistics

On average in the UK, a child comes into care in need of a foster family every 15 minutes.

The Fostering Network has estimated that across the UK around a third of foster care placements will be outside of a child’s local authority/trust.

Around 67,000 children live with over 52,000 foster families across the UK. This is two thirds of the 105,002 children in care away from home on any one day in the UK.

Around 39,000 more children come into care over the course of 12 months, with similar numbers leaving the care system to return home, move in with another family member, live with new adoptive families, become subject to a special guardianship or residence order or move on to adult life.

England

- 54,820 children were living with foster families on 31 March 2025.
- This is 67 per cent of the 81,770 children in care looked after away from home.
- There are around 42,190 foster families in England.

Northern Ireland

- 3,683 children were living with foster families on 31 March 2025.
- This is 84 per cent of the 4,188 children in care looked after away from home.
- There are approximately 3,129 foster families in Northern Ireland, and there is always a need for more foster families.

Scotland

- 3,377 children were living with foster families on 31 July 2025.
- This is over a third (35.9%) of the 9,407 children in care looked after away from home
- There are approximately 2,828 approved fostering families in Scotland on 31 December 2024.

Wales

- Around 4,875 children were living with foster families on 31 March 2024.
- This is 68 per cent of the 7,200 children in care looked after away from home.
- There are approximately 3,600 foster families in Wales.

About fostering

Every 15 minutes another child comes into care needing a foster family in the UK. Every day there are about 68,000 children living with 52,000 foster families.

Fostering offers children and young people a home when they are unable to live with their birth family. Sometimes children only stay with a foster family for a few days, while others will live with their foster family for their entire childhood and beyond. Many of these children have experienced abuse or neglect prior to coming into care. Fostering is often their first positive experience of family life.

Despite the trauma experienced by children coming into care and their difficult start to life, good foster care can help to transform their lives and enable them to flourish. Fostering offers children a safe and caring home and plays a big part in supporting them to maintain links with their birth family.

There is a need for thousands more foster carers every year. Foster carers come from a variety of backgrounds and bring a wide range of life and work experiences with them. They work as part of a team of professionals and receive training to develop the skills required to meet the needs of children and young people in their care. Alongside this professionalism, they offer love, warmth, stability and hope.

The Fostering Network works to make foster care the very best it can be for children who are looked after and the families that care for them.