

Fostering

in Scotland

Issue 41

Spring 2013

In this issue...

- **Can you Bake the Difference for foster care?**
 - **Get in the Frame for *Foster Care Fortnight 2013***
 - **Fostering developments in Turkey**
- ... and more!**

BREAKING NEWS

The Fostering Network have been successful in securing funding to allow us to continue our Fosterline and core work across Scotland. Visit www.fostering.net for more info.

the fostering network
the voice of foster care



Hello and welcome...



In the Frame for Foster Care Fortnight

Hello and welcome to the Spring 2013 edition of *Fostering in Scotland*. The team at the office in Glasgow can't believe how quickly this year has gone by already! As you will see in this newsletter there has been a great deal happening, both within the Fostering Network and developments outwith.

Coming up in May is our annual *Foster Care Fortnight*TM campaign to raise awareness around fostering and encourage more people to think about

fostering. While we receive enquiries all year round from people thinking about fostering, during May we have a real push across the UK to ensure the media and celebrities support our campaign. We would love to hear how you and your fostering services have supported the fortnight!

We have two fantastic new publications available, *Safer caring: a new approach* and *Fostering in a Digital World*. Both these books will be of interest to everyone working in fostering, particularly foster carers as they reflect the changing face of fostering, the need to respond to the rise in social media and digital technologies and the need to ensure the needs of each individual child is met. These are available from our online publications shop – see www.fostering.net for more info.

As you will read later in this newsletter we are awaiting news on a number of funding applications for various aspects of our work. While the Big Lottery funding for the Fostering Links project has now ended, we are hopeful

of hearing more about the success of these applications in coming months and are committed to ensuring we can continue to reach out and support our members across Scotland.

We have also produced our new learning and development flyer and this has been sent out to fostering services across Scotland. We have a busy year of training ahead and are sure these courses will be of interest to all those involved in fostering. Make sure you book up fast to ensure you don't miss out!

But, it's not just about what we are up to. We would love to hear from our members (of all ages) to share what you feel is important to you in regards to fostering. Remember to get in touch with your news and views.

Until next time,

Sarah McEnhill
Operations manager

Bedroom tax fight continues

The Fostering Network is continuing its campaign against the so-called "bedroom tax" for foster carers who claim housing benefit, and needs your help and support.

In March we were delighted when our campaigning led to the Government announcing a last-minute change to housing benefit reform, allowing foster carers one "spare room" before cuts are implemented. However, this still leaves foster carers in social or privately rented housing, who foster two or three children, and who are in receipt of housing benefits, facing penalties.

This means that while foster carers who foster one child are exempt from the threatened cut in housing benefit, those who have two or three bedrooms for fostered children are not and will have to apply to the discretionary

housing fund for support with their housing costs. What is worse, the original £5 million added to the fund for foster carers by Government has now been removed.

Robert Tapsfield, chief executive of the Fostering Network, said: "While we are delighted for the many foster carers who are now exempt from the housing benefit penalty, we are extremely concerned for those who have more than one bedroom for fostered children.

"Forcing foster carers to rely on the discretionary housing fund was always an inherently flawed idea. The Fostering Network identified many examples of bad practice and confusion and reported these to the DWP, persuading them of the need to change policy. Yet by restricting this to those who only foster one child, the

Government is leaving many foster carers struggling to get access to the now depleted fund;

We want to hear from any foster carers who may still be affected by the bedroom tax. Please complete our survey: www.fostering.net/policy-and-campaigns/campaigns

As a charity we also need financial support to keep fighting on this issue. Please do support us by texting a donation and by encouraging your friends and colleagues to do the same; just £5 from you could help us continue our vital campaigning work.



Dear Members,

2013 seems to be speeding ahead, or maybe it is me growing older that makes it seem faster!

I hope that you have all enjoyed a break in early April to celebrate Easter and the spring holidays, although there are few free times for foster carer families! I am sure that we are all looking forward to seeing the sun a little more after the dreary and bitterly cold days of March and April!

It has continued to be a very busy time for the Fostering Network across the UK as well as in Scotland. The recent good news that the UK government had listened to the many voices opposing the inclusion of foster carers in the "bedroom tax" shows the power of foster carers supported by fostering agencies and the Fostering Network. As well as helping to prevent more financial hardship for foster care families, it is recognition of the vital role that foster carers play in children's services across the UK. Some details around the changes to housing benefit are still unclear but I hope that by the time this newsletter is published we may have more details to share with you all – remember to keep checking our website and social networking pages for regular updates.

We had expected to have the outcome of our applications to the BIG Fund for funding to cover much of our work in Scotland by the end of March. Word came through from the BIG Fund that they have been overwhelmed with applications so there has been a further delay of a month till we know. In the meantime the Government is giving

organisations a month's payment to enable them to keep running. It is very difficult for staff to live with the uncertainties of funding hanging over them but I want to thank all the staff at the Fostering Network in Glasgow for keeping going despite the anxieties.

The staff team at Ingram House has been depleted throughout 2013 with the absence through long term illness of both our Director and our Fosterline worker. We have all really missed Sara Lurie and Kate but Sarah McEnhill, Linda, Joy and Deborah have been amazing in getting through the mass of work, keeping positive and planning for the future. Thank you to them all.

The Scottish Advisory Committee is delighted that we have appointed two new foster carer members: Graham Fischbacher from Aberlour Sycamore Services and Jo Pollard from Fife. They are both experienced foster carers and will add to the voices of Kay Jackson (Barnardo's) and Stewart Duncan (Edinburgh), who are already foster carers on the advisory committee. Thanks also to Russ Paterson, Team Manager from Falkirk Council who has agreed to become a full member of the Committee, and adds a social work perspective along with Clare Hughes, Service Manager from Glasgow City and Bill Atkinson, Depute Director, Education & Children's Services, Perth & Kinross Council. Philip Coghill (Chair of the UK Board and Edinburgh foster carer) completes the Advisory Committee along with myself, Anne Black, as Chair. We look forward to a range of lively contributions!

In Sara Lurie's absence I have been attending the Review of Foster Care meetings and you can read more about these discussions elsewhere in the newsletter. Consultation with foster carers and their families is scheduled for later this year and the Fostering Network will be helping the Review to reach as many foster carers as possible to share their views.

The Care Planning hub of the Looked After Children Strategic Implementation Group (LACSIG) continues to meet and will be looking further at the key role that foster carers can play as the permanent carers for many children who cannot return to their birth families. The recognition of the central importance of attachment and the way that carers can help a child to regain trust in adults is a good foundation for stability and security.

The Fostering Network want to be able to continue having meetings with foster carers and workers as we believe that working together does mean better outcomes for children. I am hoping that over the coming months we will have much more certainty about our future funding and look forward to sharing more in our next newsletter.

With best wishes



Anne Black
Chair, Scottish Advisory
Committee

24-hour Legal Helpline – change of phone number

Foster carer members of the Fostering Network are covered by our legal protection insurance, which includes a 24-hour legal helpline.

Effective from Monday 1 April 2013, if you wish to speak to our helpline,

you need to use our new number:
0845 013 5004

If you are subject to an allegation as a result of fostering, please call the number above. Our helpline also provides free advice on any legal matter, as well as a stress counselling service.

Bake the Difference



RAISE MONEY AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

This year we have been cooking up plans for a UK-wide event that will bring families and friends together to have fun and raise some dough for the Fostering Network. So, fresh from the fundraising kitchen, we're excited to present.... **Bake the Difference**

The campaign name comes from a Facebook suggestion by Laura Blain, and we think it perfectly captures the way that foster carers make a difference day in day out for the children they look after. Thanks Laura! Often it's the cups of tea, the hugs and the family gatherings that make all the difference to a vulnerable child.

We're envisaging a cake-fuelled movement across the UK, with neighbours getting together for teatime treats, colleagues going head-to-head with an office bake-off, and families mixing up some magic for a school cake sale or themed tea party. We want you to put your own twist on the cake theme and really make it your

own, so we've put together a special party pack stuffed with:

- celebrity recipes
- party ideas
- invitation templates

...plus much more to inspire you and get you started. To get a slice of the action, visit

www.bakethedifference.org and download your party pack today.

But it's not just about raising money. We would love to see photos from your party, and recipes for your favourite cakes! The best ones will be featured on our website, www.bakethedifference.org, and we'll be using Facebook and Twitter throughout the event. Let us know how much you raised, and we'll shout about your success.

Bake the Difference will be going on throughout 2013, so it's a great excuse to butter up your friends and start your very own pudding club! If you want to

get a bit competitive about it, you could even put your kitchen kudos to the vote with a 'Come Dine with Me' dinner swap. However you choose to do it, know that along with sticky fingers and copious crumbs, you'll be helping to make a huge difference to the future of foster care.

There are almost 62,000 children in foster care in the UK (almost 5,300 in Scotland) and big inequalities in the support foster carers receive. The care system is overburdened and political decisions are being made which will affect foster care for years to come. When you Bake the Difference in support of the Fostering Network, you make a difference for some of the hardest-working and least-rewarded people in society, and some of the UK's most vulnerable children. And that, really, is the icing on the cake.

Let us know your fantastical party plans! Email bakethedifference@fostering.net or call Laura Hocking, Fundraising Officer on 020 7620 6400

Happy baking!



Statistics on looked-after children 2011-2012

Each year the Scottish Government publishes the statistics relating to looked-after children. The most recent statistics were collated for the year ending 31st July 2012 and were released publicly in March 2013.

In Scotland 'looked-after' children includes those children who remain at home on supervision requirements as well as those

accommodated out with their family home. This year the total number of looked-after children was 16,248 and while this indicates a slight increase on the previous year (16,231), the figures also show that an increasing proportion of children are being cared for in foster care and kinship care placements.

- 5,153 (31.7%) of children were living at home with parents
- 4,076 (25%) were living with

relatives or friends/ kinship care

- 5,279 (32.5%) were cared for by foster carers
- 1,433 (8.8%) were living in residential accommodation.

These figures show that for those children requiring support, foster carers care for more looked after children than any other resource and that is something of which the foster care service can be justly proud.

Fosterplus Conference



Dr Jon Baylin PhD
Brain-Based Parenting
18th June 2013

Following the success of his presentation at last year's autumn conference Fosterplus are delighted to be able to bring Dr Baylin back by popular demand!

Why Attend:

Jon will provide an exploration of how the parenting brain works and identify the factors that can cause difficulties. He will also share ways that the caring potential can be "awakened" or restored with sensitive, brain based interventions. Carers, parents and professionals may see "blocked care" as the end of the road for a family. Jon sees it as an opportunity to understand the parenting brain and how this in turn can help to reclaim empathy.

Who should attend:

- Social Workers
- Health Professionals
- Adoptive Parents
- Panel Members
- Foster Carers
- Teachers
- Children Therapists & Educational Psychologists

About the Speaker:

Dr Baylin has been working in the mental health field for 35 years. He has delivered numerous workshops for mental health practitioners on "Putting the Brain into Therapy".

Venue:

The Lecture Theatre,
The Burrell Collection,
Pollok Park, 2060, Pollokshaws
Road, Glasgow, G43 1AT

Parking at the venue is free for conference delegates & Pollokshaws West train station is within walking distance

Cost:

Carers and adoptive parents
£65 + vat

Professionals £125 + vat

If interested please contact
Carolyn Taylor for a booking form
by emailing ctaylor@fosterplus.co.uk or telephone 01698 892380



Plans for this year's **Foster Care Fortnight** (13-26 May) gathering pace

The Fostering Network's frame has been out and about, taking pictures of celebrities, as well as snapping attendees in the frame at our *Foster Care Fortnight* workshops. We are also pleased to hear that fostering services across the country are already taking photos of their team managers, councillors and existing and prospective foster carers in their frames in readiness for the campaign. Don't forget to send your photos in to fcf@fostering.net to be part of the online gallery.

For more information on Get in the frame, go to www.fostering.net/foster-care-fortnight or email james.foyle@fostering.net



Fostering panels

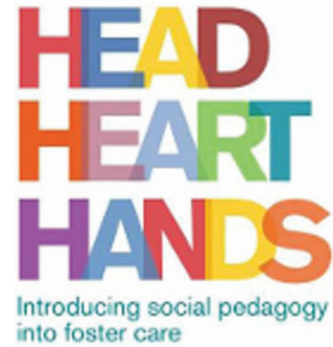
We reported in our last newsletter that the Fostering Network has received a small sum of funding from the Big Lottery's 'Investing in Ideas' fund to explore the involvement of young people with care experience on fostering panels.

Fostering panels should include members who have an understanding of the fostering task and have a range of different experiences, including adults who have experienced the care system. This should ensure an informed, objective, independent group which best understands and

reflects the diversity of the community within which the fostering service is delivered.

The aim of the project is to undertake some initial discussions to explore the extent to which young people with experience of foster care currently inform fostering panels across Scotland. It is hoped these discussions will help identify challenges and barriers and develop an overview of the fostering panel situation across Scotland. If you would like to be feed into these discussions please contact Sarah McEnhill.

The Fostering Network are also keen to support fostering services to develop their existing fostering panels. If you have experience of foster care, whether as a foster carer, young person, or other and would like to be part of a fostering panel, please contact Sarah McEnhill to find out more.



HEAD, HEART, HANDS launched in Parliament

The Fostering Network's groundbreaking social pedagogy programme, Head, Heart, Hands, has now been formally launched at a Parliamentary event.

The launch in the House of Commons was welcomed by children's minister Edward Timpson MP and his shadow Lisa Nandy MP. Attendees also heard from foster carer Amanda Mercer, who already takes a social pedagogic approach to fostering.

Over the next four years, 240 foster carers in the six demonstration sites in England and Scotland will participate in a learning and development programme, supported by the programme's social pedagogy consortium and two social pedagogues employed by each site.

Find out more about Head, Heart, Hands at www.fostering.net/head-heart-hands

These courses will provide foster carers with more understanding and new techniques to apply in their fostering. The aim is that this will support them to strengthen the relationship they have with their fostered child and make decisions confidently in the best interests of the child, enabling a shift away from the overly risk-averse approach so prevalent in current social work culture. The aim is that the learning from the programme will be shared across the UK.

We are looking forward to launching the programme in Scotland and celebrating the involvement of the City of Edinburgh, Orkney and Sycamore Services as the demonstration sites for the pilot – watch this space for further updates!

Government response to consultation on the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill*

Between July and September 2012 the Scottish Government published a consultation requesting comments on the draft *Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill*. We were delighted that so many of our members responded to this, including children and young people who responded to our online survey, and foster carers who attended meetings with us across the country.

The analysis of all the responses to the consultation was published in late 2012 and in March 2013 the Government published their response to the consultation. In this, many of the Government's original

proposals were confirmed, including:

- definition and responsibilities of a corporate parent
- the GIRFEC approach being central to all children's services,
- children's rights being enhanced,
- more requirements for different bodies to work together for children
- the public to be informed of the outcomes for children and young people who receive services
- additional hours of funded early learning and childcare

- the introduction of a named person from universal services for all children aged 0-18 as point of first contact with the child and family.

The Government are clear that fostering issues should be included in guidance rather than legislation. There is a Review of Foster Care currently taking place and the Fostering Network understand that the Review Group will explore training, allowances, placement limits and a national register of foster carers among other fostering areas. Read on elsewhere in this newsletter for more on the Review Group.

Calling young people aged 11 and 15...

What does wellbeing mean to you?

The **Scottish Government** are looking for talented young writers and also artists/ designers to help them to develop a meaningful guide for young people about *Getting it right for every child* (GIRFEC).

Their 'wellbeing' competition is open to young people aged between 11 and 15 and the Scottish Government would like young people to share what wellbeing means to them.

With their **writing competition** entrants are invited to write a 500-word short essay, story or poem about one of the eight GIRFEC 'indicators' of wellbeing – the words that describe what it looks like when things are going well for a child or young person:

Safe **Healthy** **Achieving** **Nurtured**
Active **Respected** **Responsible** **Included**

It can be happy or sad, fictional or based on a real experience. They're looking for good writing style, authenticity and an ability to bring the topic to life.

For young artists and designers, there is a **design competition** looking for a design for a cover for the guide – or perhaps for a web-based version. Again, basing their work on one of the eight GIRFEC indicators, they are invited to draw, paint, collage, design or photograph what one of these words means.

The closing date is 30 September 2013.

For full terms and conditions, including acceptable formats, please visit:
www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/wellbeingwk/competition

What will happen next?

10 winners will be picked – mainly writers – who will be invited to visit the Scottish Government's offices in Edinburgh. There, they will work with members of the GIRFEC team to draw up information about GIRFEC that will be meaningful and relevant to peers.

Winner(s) in the art and design competition will also be invited to work with professional designers on the final GIRFEC guide for young people.

Once the guide is complete, the whole group will be invited to join the GIRFEC team at the Scottish Parliament to present their work to MSPs, including lunch with the Minister for Children and Young People and a tour of Holyrood.

How to enter

By email: include "Wellbeing Competition" in the subject heading and email entries to: gettingitrightforeverychild@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

By post:

Wellbeing competition
Getting it right for every child team
Area 2B North Victoria Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

SCCYP

**Scotland's Commissioner
for Children & Young People**

The Golden Rules for Participation

Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People has produced *The Golden Rules for Participation*, a set of principles designed to help anyone working with, and for, children and young people.

The purpose of the new resource is to remind adults of what participation means from the point of view of children and young people. They also aim to encourage children and young people to think about what they need from adults to support them to participate.

Developed through consultation with children and young people from across Scotland, they are informed by research, reflecting the knowledge and experience of those working to promote participation.

Every Golden Rule has a list of key things to consider about children and young people's participation. Each Golden Rule also prompts 'Things to think about' for children and young people, and adults, to encourage discussion and reflection.

The cards have been developed to support children and young people's participation individually or in groups. They can be used as prompts for discussion, decision making or as part of a wider children's rights programme of work. They can also be used with adults for training and professional development purposes.

To find out more about the Golden Rules or order a pack, phone 0131 558 3733 email inbox@sccyp.org.uk, or go to www.sccyp.org.uk/resources



Fostering Healthy Finance

The Fostering Network Scotland will be undertaking the Fostering Healthy Finance project which will work with foster carers, helping them to equip some of Scotland's most vulnerable young people to feel supported in the management of their own finances, enabling them to leave care financially equipped for the future.

Foster carers are classed as self employed for tax purposes however many are unsure of how to register with HMRC and in particular, how to complete their tax returns. Financial advice and awareness of tax and other areas will ease the worry for foster carers around their longer term financial security. All children in foster care should have a bank account to allow them to save for their future and gain financial skills and independence, however many foster carers find it difficult to access current accounts for their young people, and indeed many require guidance on how to support longer term savings options.

Through a series of workshops and a 'Fostering Finances' pack aimed at foster carers, the project will help to ensure young people in foster care have the financial support they need to prepare for their future. The project will also aim to minimise any stress experienced by foster carers in relation to their financial affairs including tax and national insurance, thus ensuring that they are best placed to support the children and young people they care for to be financially healthy.

For further information contact Sarah McEnhill.

Letterbox Club Induction Day

The Letterbox Club held an induction day for everyone involved with the Letterbox Club pilot in Glasgow on Thursday 21 March.

Representatives from the five authorities taking part in the pilot, Aberdeenshire, City of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Highland and Inverclyde, attended the day along with staff from Fostering Network Scotland and a researcher from the University of Edinburgh who will be evaluating the project.

The Letterbox Club team ran the day with Lizzie Poulton, Project Development Manager talking through the overview of the pilot and the logistics of running the programme. Rose Griffiths, Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Leicester and founder of Letterbox Club (pictured), spoke about the history of the programme and how it had developed, and Marian Keen-Downs, Booktrust's Head of Sector for Children and Young People, discussed the reading needs of looked after children and the book selection process.

Niall Walker, Edinburgh Libraries' Reading Champion, also attended the day and spoke to the group about his

personal experience of the difference that books can make to the lives of looked after children.

The importance of supporting children and young people with reading and numbers, particularly during the summer school break, has been evidenced. The Letterbox Club ensures that children not only enhance their literacy and numeracy skills, but also increase in self esteem; feeling special when they receive a pack in the post.

The pilot will commence in Scotland in May and will benefit 15 children in each of the five pilot authorities. To find out more about the Letterbox Club visit www.letterboxclub.org.uk



Ongoing disruption in Ingram Street

The Fostering Network's Glasgow office has had some interesting activities taking place outside our windows over the past few months.

Ongoing demolition works have seen the former Bank of Scotland building on Queen Street being flattened and over the next couple of years it will be rebuilt as an office and retail complex. There has been a lot of activity and noise from outside, with some unexpected shaking and movement inside the office!

We hope this doesn't affect our day to day work too much, but please bear with us! If you do experience difficulties contacting us by phone, 0141 204 1400, you can also email the office: scotland@fostering.net



Fosterline UPDATE

Permanence Orders

In recent weeks Fosterline Scotland has received a number of enquiries about Permanence Orders (POs). These were introduced by the *Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007* and replaced Parental Responsibilities Orders (PROs). Existing PROs were 'deemed' to be POs from the date of implementation.

Permanence Orders can only be applied for by the local authority and are designed to safeguard a child who will not be returning home. They can last until the child reaches the age of 18 and will remove the child from the Children's Hearing system.

Permanence Orders consist of two parts:

- Mandatory provisions give the local authority the parental responsibility to provide the child with guidance and the parental right to regulate where the child lives.
- Ancillary provisions are to do with other parental responsibilities and rights and other matters to do with the child. They are the key to every order and give it the flexibility needed to suit each child and his or her circumstances.

Permanence discussions should form part of the child care review system and specifically the local authority, in consultation with the child, their parent(s), foster carers and other relevant people. The discussion should consider parental rights and responsibilities, what should be taken away from parents and what should remain with them and what should be shared, or not shared, between foster carers and the local authority. The key is making a full assessment of the child, parents and others involved with the child.

Examples of things that might be decided are contact arrangements with parents, the delegation to foster carers of responsibility for medical treatment and giving more responsibility for day to day decisions to foster carers.

The final decision is for the court, but the local authority should be clear about what ancillary provisions they are seeking and why.

The Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS) has established a Permanence Team with the remit of working in partnership with key stakeholders to deliver improvements in permanence practice across Scotland. The team will provide support to local authorities to help reduce their outstanding permanence caseloads and to develop and disseminate good practice across Scotland.



Our Fosterline service - correction

In the last edition of *Fostering in Scotland* we noted that our *Fosterline Scotland* service is funded by the Scottish Government. The funding from the Scottish Government for the service had in fact ended 31 December 2010 and since then the Fostering Network were able to continue to deliver Fosterline Scotland thanks to the generosity of donations from trusts, individuals other funders.

We are delighted that we have been able to continue to provide this much needed service to our members throughout the country and have been

actively seeking funding to continue with and further develop this service. In February we submitted a funding proposal to the Big Fund and were due to hear the outcome of this by 31 March 2013. However, we have been informed that the decision making process has been delayed and we hope that we will hear whether we have been successful as this edition of *Fostering in Scotland* goes to press.

As this newsletter lands on your doorstep please keep an eye on our website for regular updates.



Publications update

The **Fostering Network** offers a range of high quality books and resources for foster carers, fostering services and others working with looked-after children. The most well-known of our resources is *The Skills to Foster* range, which includes the UK's leading pre-approval training course and assessment materials.

Building on *The Skills to Foster*, our *Pathway* series covers the key topics of:

- Attachment
- Behaviour
- Contact
- Education
- Health
- and our new release, *Safer Caring: a new approach*.

Safer Caring: a new approach equips foster carers, fostering services and public authorities with an approach that will help to manage risk. *Children and Young People Now* magazine reviewed this book as a 'Vital guide to sensible risk for foster carers.'

Our latest release, *Fostering in a Digital World: a common sense guide*, builds on this approach and provides foster carers and other professionals with essential information and tools to enable fostered children to benefit from using laptops, gaming consoles, tablets and mobile phones, while managing risk sensibly and effectively.

For more information, or to buy any of these resources, visit www.fosteringresources.co.uk

Review of Foster Care

On behalf of the Fostering Network, Anne Black has been attending the Review to ensure that the voices of foster carers and young people in foster care and fostering workers are heard. Anne updates us on the progress to date...

To date there have been three meetings and these have all been interesting and made me realise how many variations there are in the way fostering services operate across Scotland. There has been some discussion around a common terminology for foster carers as there are many labels currently used, e.g. 'emergency', 'temporary' or 'short-term'. The first meeting of the group also looked at the vision for foster care. Initial thoughts were that there needs to be a range of foster carers who can meet the individual and diverse needs of the children coming into foster care. It was also felt that foster carers need a standardised programme of core learning and development that will help them to care safely for the children coming into care.

The second meeting considered how permanency can be secured for looked-after children who are placed with foster carers. Research shared with the group highlighted that securing permanency with a foster carer is a positive outcome for many children but perhaps not always seen as the first option. When in the best interests of the child this raises the question of "Why not?"

The third meeting focused on the potential of a register of foster carers. There is currently an adoption register which is mainly used for matching a family to a child. With the numbers of children starting to be looked-after and needing to be placed in foster care at around 3,500 each year, a foster carer



register could match children requiring specialist placements. The review was keen to point out that having a register of foster carers akin to a database could give a better overview of the size and shape of the foster care resource, however, after reflection on the perceived costs associated with the proposal, the Review has decided that plans for a register of foster carers should not be taken forward at this time. Alternative solutions to address some stakeholders' safeguarding concerns, and the need for better information on the foster care resource, are now being explored.

Also discussed at the latest meeting was the question of placement limits,

something not currently in place in Scotland unlike the rest of the UK. The debate continues as to whether a limit needs to be written into legislation or can a reduction in numbers be achieved with statutory guidance. There do appear to be less fostering families with four or more unrelated children in placement however the Fostering Network would be keen to hear from foster carers as to what their experience is – get in touch to let us know your views.

Consultation with foster carers and care experienced young people on the issues discussed is planned for later in the year. Watch this space!

Date for your diary

For those involved in the recruitment of foster carers, the Scottish Government are running a seminar:

Recruitment in Foster Care: Sharing Good Practice

Tuesday 14 May,
Glasgow City Chambers

Please call 0131 244 0003/5410 for more information.

Scotland helps Turkish foster care services



The Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland 'CELCIS' recently received a request for support from the Turkish Government in respect of their foster care service. As a result Dr. Ian Milligan, International Lead at CELCIS, invited Bryan Ritchie, General Manager at Fostering Relations to join him in travelling out to the country to undertake a series of workshops on both the strategic and operational issues around establishing and improving foster care services. Bryan shared this report...

Despite being much larger than Scotland in terms of population Turkey actually has fewer children in care. Additionally many children are in institutions and the plan is to begin recruiting carers in order to move children and young people into foster care. Turkey is hoping to join the EU and as such it is investing heavily in infrastructure projects such as foster care. CELCIS has as part of its remit supporting developments across the globe and has been working with Turkey for nearly a year.

The development of foster care in Turkey is in its infancy but the country is moving swiftly to build a system that provides children with a quality service. The workshops were conducted in Ankara and involved a mixture of participants including Heads of Service, Inspectors, and Social Workers from across nearly all the provincial governments. The responsible Minister introduced the Workshops and it was clearly seen as a priority for the Government to expand foster care across the country.

One of the areas where change was suggested was in regards to care plans for children that are comprehensive

in nature and multi disciplinary in provision. By using the GIRFEC model Ian and Bryan were able to explore how they might capture the needs of each child within an individual plan, something that at present is not fully undertaken in Turkey.

Ian and Bryan also worked with the Inspection agency in terms of helping them improve the way they both inspect and support the new service. One of the striking features of the current inspection system is its centralised nature with Inspectors

travelling out to the more distant, remote areas to carry out inspections. This can involve them being away for weeks at a time.

We also explored in some detail issues. These included self assessment and annual returns of services, compliance and improvement, and participation. All of which are inherent with the Scottish system.

Ian and Bryan took with them a variety of materials to aid development including the *National Care Standards*, *Getting it Right for Every Child in Kinship and Foster Care* and *Moving Forward in Kinship and Foster Care*. Copies of publications from the Fostering Network were also found helpful including *Safer Caring*, and other publications from the *Pathways through Fostering* series.

On an operational level Bryan explored with the social workers recruitment, assessment, and approval processes used within his fostering service, and shared copies of the materials developed by Fostering Relations.

Bryan said "It was a fascinating experience to get in on the ground floor and make suggestions about how they might by making a few significant changes improve the experience of children and carers."

A team from CELCIS has recently produced a global handbook: to support the improvement of services for children in care: *Moving Forward: Implementing the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children*, see: www.alternativecareguidelines.org

Don't forget: special discounts for our foster carer members

40% off the fee for a completed mortgage

As well as providing expert financial advice, Endsleigh can also help foster carer members find a suitable mortgage for a discounted fee.
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e tfn@endsleigh.co.uk

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Update from Learning and Development

Joy and the team of associate trainers started off 2013 with training taking place across the country. The year has continued to be busy with many of our popular courses being delivered to fostering services throughout Scotland. In February we were pleased to welcome participants on the *Skills to Foster: Assessment materials* to the office in Glasgow. The course had a small group size and having the training in the office, rather than externally, allowed course participants to receive individual attention.

We have also produced a brand new flyer detailing all the courses from the Fostering Network Scotland which can be purchased as 'in house' training, i.e. within your fostering agency ensuring you keep up to date with the latest developments in foster care. Copies of the flyer have been mailed to fostering services (with this newsletter), but can also be downloaded from our website, www.fostering.net To find out more, contact Joy Crawford.

Don't forget, we also have the following popular 'open' courses taking place:

The Skills to Foster: leaders' course

Wednesday 12, Thursday 13 & Friday 14 June 2013
Glasgow

Price: members £299.00 + VAT/
non-members £598.00 + VAT
(includes lunch)

Men who Foster

Saturday 24 August 2013
Glasgow

Price: members £98.00 + VAT/
non-members £196.00 + VAT
(includes lunch)

The Role of the Supervising Social Worker

Wednesday 18 & Thursday 19
September 2013
Glasgow

Price: members £210.00 + VAT/
non-members £420.00 + VAT
(includes lunch)

Caring for Children who have been Abused: a male perspective

Saturday 5 October 2013
Glasgow

Price: members £98.00 + VAT/
non-members £196.00 + VAT
(includes lunch)

The Skills to Foster: using the Skills to Foster assessment materials

Tuesday 12 &
Wednesday 13
November 2013
Glasgow

Price: members
£210.00 + VAT/
non-Members
£420.00 + VAT
(includes lunch)



To book a place, or find out more about any of our training courses, contact joy.crawford@fostering.net t 0141 204 1400

The Fostering Network Scotland...



The Fostering Network Scotland
2nd floor, Ingram House
227 Ingram Street
Glasgow
G1 1DA
t 0141 204 1400
f 0141 204 6588
e scotland@fostering.net
www.fostering.net

Other useful numbers:

The Fostering Network - Head office

For queries relating to membership, or how to access the members' area of the website.
t 020 7620 6400

For help with membership queries

e membership@fostering.net

Legal and stress helpline

24 hours, 365 days a year

Your first point of call if an allegation arises. Queries are answered by fully qualified experts with years of experience helping our members. Members are free to raise any legal query, not just relating to foster care.
t 0845 013 5004

Publications & Resources

t 0844 335 1892

e orders@fosteringresources.co.uk

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