

The
Fostering
Network

FOSTERING IN Scotland

issue 51

The newsletter of **The Fostering Network** Scotland

Autumn 2015



In this issue:

- **Update on Continuing Care**
- **Peer support for foster carers**
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- **And more!**

Hello everyone



It is with regret but tremendous gratitude that I announce that Anne Black is retiring as Chair of the Scottish Advisory Committee for The Fostering Network. For the past 14 years her unwavering commitment to making foster care better for every fostered child and every foster family has been an invaluable asset to the charity. We cannot possibly thank her enough for all she has done, and wish her all the best. Anne will be a hard act to follow, but I am delighted to announce that Janet Smith will be our new Chair and brings with her a wealth of experience. We are pleased to include letters from them both on this page.

We would like to remind all members that in addition to our panel training, we hold a panel database and if anyone is interested in being on a fostering panel, or would like additional information, please get in touch.

Many of you will have heard the news that the Scottish Government has announced that kinship carers will now be paid the same allowances as local foster carers. We have been campaigning for many years for a basic minimum allowance for all foster carers in Scotland and hope that the Scottish Government will now commit to ensuring that there will be an end to the allowances post code lottery.

As winter approaches, we're delighted to announce our festive e-card competition and we look forward to receiving hundreds of entries from across Scotland! Please see the back page for further information. All foster care households will also have received an Arts and Crafts Let's Go Again booklet with this edition of the newsletter. Every child who completes this will be a medal winner, and we look forward to hearing all about your challenges.

And finally, a huge thank you to everyone who has donated to The Fostering Network Scotland. If you too would like to support our vital work, please visit: mydonate.bt.com/charities/thefosteringnetworkscotland

Until next time,

Sara Lurie

Dear Members

Anne Black and Janet Smith.



I am delighted to let you know that Janet Smith is going to become the Chair of the Scottish Advisory Committee. I have worked with Janet over many years and she is a strong advocate for foster care services and brings warmth and humour to the table as well as experience! I know you will all be in safe hands.

As I come to the end of 14 years of involvement with The Fostering Network in Scotland and in the UK, I am able to look back and remember the amazing people who are involved in foster care. These include foster carers and workers, and the wonderful young people who live in foster care households, both those who are looked after and the sons and daughters of carers.

I have been so lucky to have the support of the dedicated staff at Ingram Street, always so willing to help and with such good humour. I will miss them.

Events at The Fostering Network have been many and varied over the years but the Summer Schools stand out for me. Also the many events with foster carers and agencies as well as time with young people and listening to their stories.

I have really enjoyed working these last few years with Sara Lurie, her dynamism has been stimulating and her commitment to working to improve foster care services has been unwavering.

I look forward to hearing of the new developments ahead.

With thanks for the friendships made and the hard work done over the years.

Anne Black
Chair, Scottish Advisory Committee

A word from our new Chair

When I was approached about the possibility of becoming Chair of the Scottish Advisory Committee for The Fostering Network, I was initially honoured to be asked and delighted to accept; and then daunted by the prospect of trying to fill Anne's shoes!

I have had a lifelong involvement in fostering. My parents were foster carers in the 1950s and that led me to a career in social work from which I retired in April 2015 after more than 40 years. The majority of that time I worked in family placement teams, primarily in local authorities in the west of Scotland. I loved

working with foster carers and adopters. I found carers to be remarkable folk who were prepared to give most generously of their time and skills to care for some of the most traumatised youngsters in our communities.

I am excited to have the opportunity to continue my involvement with foster carers and fostering workers and I am looking forward to helping guide the organisation through the next few years.

I look forward to meeting you at many of The Fostering Network events.

Janet Smith

Recommendations from the Fatal Accident Inquiry

Sara Lurie, director of The Fostering Network Scotland, was called as an expert witness at the Fatal Accident Inquiry held into the tragic death of foster carer Dawn McKenzie. We are currently liaising with fostering services on implementation of the recommendations made by the inquiry, which specify:

- 1. Staff and carer training needs should be reviewed to ensure that all first time foster carers approved to take children in middle childhood or adolescence should receive Crisis Prevention and Intervention training prior to taking up their first placement.**
- 2. Prospective foster carers when being asked to consider a placement should be given as much information as possible in writing, in a digestible and understandable form, about the child or children who are subject of the placement to inform their decision as to whether or not to accept the placement offered. Full and detailed notes should be kept of any meetings that occur when the placement is offered to prospective foster carers when such information is passed on.**
- 3. The system of using stated preferences within unrestricted age ranges should be discontinued. Emphasis should instead be given to foster carers' strengths and abilities and any perceived weaknesses with regard to their ability to care for the child or children to be placed with them. This is especially important for newly approved foster carers.**

The full report can be found on the Scottish Courts website: <http://tinyurl.com/qccbpqp> In response to the publication of the report, Sara issued the following statement:

'This unimaginable tragedy must provide the sector with learning; we support Sheriff Bicket's thorough report and recommendations, and will be sharing them with fostering services across the UK.

'Fostering is an immensely challenging career, and foster carers need to be properly skilled, trained and supported to carry out the invaluable work that they do. We believe that foster carers must only be approved to look after children for whom they have the skills needed to provide the very best care; whatever the approval range, robust matching is essential. In all circumstances foster carers must be given all the available information about every child they are to care for, and in addition to preparation and basic training, they must receive ongoing bespoke training and support that is tailored to the needs of each child.

'Foster carers, like Dawn McKenzie, do a truly amazing job looking after some of society's most disadvantaged children. Only by recognising the vital role that foster carers carry out on behalf of the state can we ensure that they're as prepared and supported as every other professional working with children.'

Message from the Scottish Government

Decision Making Guidance

The Scottish Government commissioned Scottish Child Law Centre to write guidance that will be a helpful resource for foster carers in making every day decisions with regard to the children they care for. The guidance explains the legal position regarding a range of topics, for example education, discipline, money, contact, haircuts and holidays. A consultation on the draft guidance will be issued shortly. A link will be circulated via The Fostering Network in due course.

Foster Care Review

The Scottish Government has been taking forward a programme of work to implement the six recommendations from the national review of foster care. You can read a full progress update on their website.

www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/protecting/lac/foster-care-review

Kinship Care Allowances

The Scottish Government is providing funding to councils to raise kinship care allowances to the same level as foster care allowances. Visit: news.scotland.gov.uk/News/More-support-for-kinship-carers-1cda.aspx

After Care and Continuing Care

The Scottish Government consulted on the guidance for Aftercare and Continuing Care in August/September and is currently considering feedback. Please note the consultation is now closed but if you would like to read the draft guidance visit

www.gov.scot/Resource/0048/00484026.pdf

Please turn over for more information from the Scottish Government on Continuing Care.

Continuing Care: Scottish Government update



The Fostering Network is delighted to be working with the Scottish Government to ensure the success of Continuing Care, including raising concerns related to foster carer fees and the impact on foster carer approvals. We are pleased to share the following update on Continuing Care from the Scottish Government:

On 1 April 2015, Part II of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act was implemented. This means that Scottish local authorities now have a new duty to provide 'Continuing Care' to young people in foster care, kinship care and residential care. If a young person moves to Continuing Care then they cease to be looked after. They are described as being in a Continuing Care placement and are entitled to the same supports and accommodation as they received when they were 'looked after'.

Continuing Care is a significant innovation in the Social Care sector. This is recognition of the strength and importance of the relationship between children & young people and their foster carers, who have often devoted their lives to caring for them. It means that any young person currently in foster care who is 16 (born after 1 April 1999) has the right to request Continuing Care and if everyone is happy to do this then the young person can remain with their carers until their 21st birthday.

If the local authority disagrees with the decision to provide Continuing Care they must show that if the young person were to remain with their carer then it would significantly adversely affect the welfare of that young person. This must be evidenced through a written assessment, this assessment is called a Welfare Assessment and the young person's views must be clearly expressed within it. The Scottish Government is committed to funding Continuing Care, for more detailed information on this please visit <http://tinyurl.com/poslgnw>

A Continuing Care placement will then be reviewed at least once a year. The only

reason a Continuing Care placement can be ended is if the young person and/or the carer agree to this or again if the young person's welfare would be significantly adversely affected by their staying there.

The Scottish Government realises that Continuing Care and how it can be implemented is new to local authorities, young people and foster carers. We have been working hard to produce guidance that will help everyone make Continuing Care a success.

We have consulted widely throughout the sector and with those involved in fostering specifically. A very helpful event was held, facilitated by The Fostering Network, earlier in the summer involving a number of carers. This provided helpful feedback, which we hope we have incorporated in the draft guidance.

We are currently collating all of these responses and are sure that they will help us produce guidance which is helpful and clear in assisting young people and their

carers to decide if Continuing Care is the appropriate placement.

Next year will be a very important year for Continuing Care. After 1 April 2016 not only 16 year olds but also 17 year olds in foster care will be eligible to request Continuing Care. We hope that carers will be able to have informed discussions about Continuing Care with all their young people as a way to help keep the young person with them until their 21st birthday.

In summary, staying put in nurturing, positive relationships through a Continuing Care placement is a key factor in helping young people and local authorities and their carers achieve successful and sustained interdependence for young people ceasing to be looked after. Continuing Care enables young people to retain a day-to-day relationship with their carer, and an ongoing relationship with the local authority and other corporate parents (see Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014). In this sense, Continuing Care is about facilitating relationship-based practice with young people, and providing them with a continued feeling of belonging, permanence and stability to support and prepare them as they transition towards interdependency.

Nick Newlands
Professional Adviser
Scottish Government



Sons and daughters have their say

October was Sons and Daughters Month, The Fostering Network's annual campaign which celebrates the vital contribution made by the children of foster carers. We would like to thank everyone who took part this year, sharing with us their experience of being part of a family that fosters.

This year we provided a range of resources, including a toolkit for fostering services, and also encouraged the sons and daughters of foster carers to share their thoughts and stories. We are delighted to share with you Sarah-Jayne Copland's reflections on 'What friendship means to me', with huge thanks to Sarah-Jayne and everyone else who wrote in!



Young people in Scotland now eligible to vote...



Are the young people in your household eligible to vote? Following the Scottish Elections (Reduction to Voting Age) Act 2015, 16 and 17 year olds in Scotland are now eligible to vote at Scottish elections, including Scottish Parliamentary and local government elections.

For more information on registering to vote, visit the Electoral Commission's website: www.electoralcommission.org.uk All young people who will be at least 16 by 5 May 2016 are eligible, so register now to have your say!

Would you like your face on the cover of our newsletter?

Can you help us to find a photograph for the cover of our newsletter? We are looking for high quality jpeg images of families, young people or children which we may be able to use in future editions. We would prefer them to be natural rather than posed, without any football colours.

Most importantly, please make sure you have relevant permissions for use of any of the children featured. We cannot guarantee your photograph will be used on the cover, but if not there, we may be able to feature it elsewhere.

Please send your photographs to:
e scotland@fostering.net.



What friendship means to me

to me friendship means being there for someone you care about. True friends will not judge you and know when something is wrong even when you don't show it. my friends always support me when I feel like fostering is hard and they always tell me I am doing very good at helping children. real friends always boost each others confidence, and help you feel more comfortable in any environment. but you also make a lot of good memories to look back at when you are older and laugh. like sleepovers or birthdays. I feel like my friends are part of my family and could not live without them as I feel like everyone needs at least 1 friend. Because friends bring sunshine on a rainy day.

by Sarah-Jayne Copland
 aged 13

Fostering Community Champions

Fostering Community Champions is an exciting four year project that aims to improve the outcomes of children in care. It will do this by reducing the isolation experienced by many foster carers, and by helping young people to use their experience of foster care in a positive and meaningful way. The project is funded by the Big Lottery Fund's Investing in Communities programme.

Twelve young people from fostering households (who are or have lived in foster carer; or who are sons or daughters of foster carers) will take part in a range of activities and 36 foster carers will be trained to provide peer support to foster carers throughout Scotland.



LOTTERY FUNDED

The Fostering Community Champions project recently celebrated its first birthday. Over the course of year one we have recruited a project worker, 15 foster carer champions and 10 young champions.

The foster carer champions have been on various training sessions to assist their supporting role:

- *Responding, Reflecting and Recording* looked at the skills needed to actively listen, how to respond appropriately and what details need to be recorded.
- *Speaking Up and Speaking Out* gave participants the opportunity to learn and practice the skills and techniques to give informative and effective talks to groups and the media.
- And coming up we have *Being Heard*, a course exploring the most effective ways to advocate for young people and foster carers.

We have also started to support a number of foster carers who have contacted The Fostering Network looking for the support and guidance that comes from talking with someone who has experienced a similar situation. If you or anyone you know would appreciate this kind of support, or would like to know more about the project, please get in touch with Sarah or Jane: **t** 0141 204 1400.

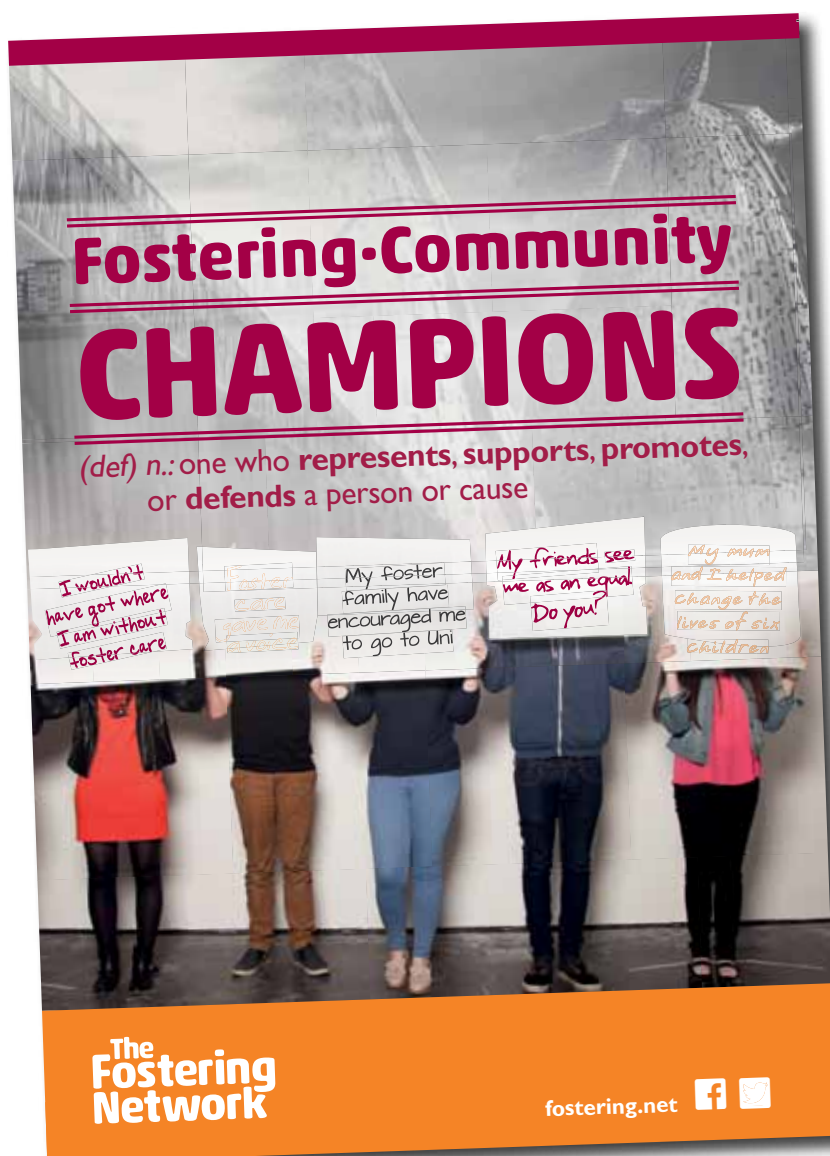
During year two we will be focussing on a couple of issues that can be difficult for foster carers:

Contact

Keeping in touch with birth families and those close to them is important for children and young people in foster care. Maintaining this effectively can raise some challenges. The project will be engaging in discussions to explore how some of these challenges are being met to ensure we can collate and share good practice around enabling children and young people to maintain relationships.

Social media

Social media can feel like a minefield for foster carers, so over the course of year two we will be working with some of our champions to enhance our current Fostering In a Digital World training to include some current social media platforms and the advice around using them safely.



Update from the young champions

As young champions we have been busy making plans for our Big Day Out at Edinburgh Zoo in November, as well as discussing other issues that matter to us to do with fostering.

When we met up in August everyone was in holiday mood and we talked about everything from stigma to skydiving. We discussed Snoop Dog, The Duchess of Cambridge and branding guidelines along the way!

At our meeting in early October we continued discussions on some of the themes that are important to us as young people. One theme was stigma for children and young people in foster care and how young people can be judged for things that aren't their fault. Another theme we talked about follows the journey from birth to independence for a young person in the care system. We will be continuing to work on these themes as the project progresses and were



Mairi, Shaddelle, Rachel, Charlotte, Rebekah, Amy, Sam and James, plus Connie and Cherise (not pictured)

delighted to have help from Scottish BAFTA winning filmmaker Benjamin Cook at our last group.

At the moment there are 10 of us involved with the project but we are very friendly and have space for a few more. If you are a young person aged 15 to 22

and have experience of foster care, either as a son or daughter of foster carers or as a looked after young person, and would be interested in joining with us then please get in touch, **e** bethevoice@fostering.net or **t** 0141 204 1400.

Peer support from Fostering Community Champions

Foster care is a fantastically rewarding and worthwhile role, however at times foster carers can face challenges and difficulties. Some days it might be the small things like making a dinner that everyone will eat or how to be in two places at the same time without the use of a time machine!

Other days, however, it can be much more challenging than that. Maybe it is coping with a continually screaming baby who is withdrawing from parental drug misuse, or dealing with the behaviour of a child who is sad, confused and struggling

to deal with the enormity of what has happened to them. For some foster carers the challenges are around helping a young person move to independence or access further education. Perhaps it is proving difficult to obtain the educational support your child needs or accessing counselling or other therapies that would help them cope with their experiences.

We all need someone to listen to and empathise with us, and through Fostering Community Champions we can provide that support from a specially trained foster carer who understands.

Whatever the difficulty you are facing, we can match you with an experienced foster carer who has had similar experiences and will understand the complexities of what you are going through. This is a confidential, phone based service where you can discuss the issues freely and honestly with someone who 'gets it'.

If you would like to receive support from a 'champion' or know someone who would benefit from this support, please contact: **e** bethevoice@fostering.net or **t** 0141 204 1400.

Fundraising challenge

Over the weekend of 13-15 May 2016, directly before the start of *Foster Care Fortnight™*, The Fostering Network is challenging people to climb one of Britain's highest peaks to raise vital funds for our work helping to transform children's lives. What better way to start the 2016 campaign than at the top of Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike or Snowdon?

Whichever challenge you choose, you'll arrive on the Friday evening ready for a briefing with your fellow trekkers as well as the team who will be looking after you. After you've finished your trek on Saturday, you'll be rewarded with a celebratory meal with your new trekking friends! You'll stay a second night in the hotel and then after breakfast on Sunday you'll begin to make your separate journeys home.

There are three challenges to choose from:

Ben Nevis: Ben Nevis is the highest mountain peak in the UK. The trek is a strenuous 12 mile challenge but is well worth it for the breathtaking views (weather permitting) when you reach the summit.

Scafell Pike: Scafell Pike is the highest peak in England. The trek is a tough seven mile climb but you'll be rewarded with stunning views of the Lake District.

Snowdon: The Snowdon Trek will be a challenging seven mile climb to the summit of the highest peak in Wales.

There is a registration fee and minimum sponsorship for each trek. We will provide you with everything you need to make your fundraising a success, including a fundraising guide packed with ideas and advice and a step-by-step guide for setting up an online giving page. If you would like the sponsorship you raise to be used in Scotland, please mention this when you register.

To take part in this exciting challenge, please visit www.fostering.net/treks for more information.

Happy trekking!



Fosterline Scotland update

Hi everyone! Fosterline Scotland has recently experienced an increase in the number of queries from foster carers who are interested in fostering unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children arriving in Scotland.

With the announcement that the UK will welcome thousands of refugees in the coming years, it is likely that even more foster carers across the UK will be called into action to provide for children who arrive in the country. In January, The Fostering Network called for a further 8,370 fostering families to come forward in 2015, but because of the ongoing humanitarian crisis, many areas may experience an increase in the need for foster carers. In Scotland alone, 750 more fostering families are needed.

Existing and trained foster carers who don't currently have a child in their home, or who have a spare bedroom and would consider looking after an unaccompanied child, should approach their fostering service and let them know that they're able to provide a home to unaccompanied children who may be placed in their area.

Whatever your skillset or experience, don't rule yourself out before contacting your fostering service to see if your skills, experiences and circumstances can provide loving



and stable homes for unaccompanied asylum seeker children.

Our director, Sara Lurie, said: 'When children from throughout the world arrive alone in Scotland, it is approved foster carers who offer them homes and security, with the support of their local authority and fostering service.'

Remember, Fosterline Scotland is here to assist with this query and many other types of queries! All foster carers should be registered as self-employed for tax purposes. Don't forget that the deadline for paper tax returns is midnight 31 October 2015, and for online tax returns is midnight 31 January 2016. HMRC's helpline for the newly self-employed is 0300 200 3504, and you can also contact Fosterline Scotland for additional support. Our Fosterline Scotland telephone line is open Monday to Friday, 10am until 4pm. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have a query you would like help with.

Fosterline Scotland
0141 204 1400
fosterlinescotland@fostering.net



Introducing *Let's Go Again!*



Following the success of our Let's Go project, we are delighted to launch *Let's Go Again!* Inside this edition, foster families across Scotland will have received a copy of our booklet with the theme **Arts & Crafts** – this is your chance to participate in more challenges and become a medal winner!

If you would like any additional copies of **Arts & Crafts**, or if you would like a copy of our original booklet, **Let's Go: Sporting Challenges**, please get in touch: **t** 0141 204 1400, **e** scotland@fostering.net

Perfect for a winter's evening, our arts & crafts booklet encourages children to learn a new skill, be creative and make a gift! Thanks to funding from the National Lottery's Awards for All programme, this is just the first of four new booklets – so watch this space!

Each new booklet will be themed and colour-coded: **Fun with Food** will involve cooking and health eating challenges; **Nature Explorers** focuses on discovering wildlife and enjoying the outdoors; and **Scotland has Talent** will engage children in music and drama.



Competition winner!



We are pleased to announce the winner of our quilt competition is two year old Graeme, who sent in a gorgeous picture of his teddy, George.

Graeme will be rewarded with one of our beautiful quilts, which have been generously donated by our friends, Kent Quilters.

We love receiving children's drawings, poems and stories – if a child in your household would like to send something in we would be delighted:
e scotland@fostering.net

Propelling care leavers to higher education - new website launched



Many care leavers go on to achieve amazing things in higher education. Is there a young person in your household who could too? The Who Cares? Trust has recently launched a new website, Propel, to help inspire more care-experienced young people across the UK to go on to higher education.

Propel provides full information about each education institution's provision for care leavers, as well as inspirational stories from care-experienced students. It allows young people to make an informed choice about the right course at the right institution for them. It also helps to ensure they have

access to all the support to which they are entitled, reducing the numbers of care leavers who don't complete their course.

For more information, please visit www.propel.org.uk

Update from Learning and Development

Our training courses continue to be oversubscribed, and we have had an increasing number of fostering services inviting us to provide consultation and training for their foster carers and social work teams. Our most popular courses include Safer Caring, Managing Allegations, The Role of the Supervising Social Worker, and The Skills to Foster: Train the Trainers.

Following requests from our members, we have developed a new course entitled 'Preparing for Continuing Care'. We are happy to discuss your training requirements. Please phone or email Joy (details below) for more information.

We also have the following popular open courses:

Men Who Foster*

**Saturday 21 November 2015
Glasgow**

Price: members £98.00 plus VAT/non-member £196.00 plus VAT

*Please note: this course is for men only

Caring for Children who have been Abused: a male perspective*

**Saturday 20 February 2016
Glasgow**

Price: members £98.00 plus VAT/non-member £196.00 plus VAT

Following on from the hugely popular Men Who Foster course, this course deals with the issues surrounding child abuse with a particular focus on the perspective of male carers

*Please note this course is for men only

The Skills to Foster: Train the Trainers

**Wednesday 24, Thursday 25 and
Friday 26 February 2016
Glasgow**

Price: members £299.00 plus VAT/non-member £598.00 plus VAT

All our courses include lunch.

To book a place on any of these courses, or to find out more, get in touch with Joy Crawford: **t** 0141 204 1400

e scotland@fostering.net

or visit: **www.fostering.net**

Head, Heart, Hands: an Orkney social pedagogue shares her story

As part of The Fostering Network's Head, Heart, Hands programme, this social pedagogue was supporting young people during a coasteering activity and describes the strategies used that made a difference to a child and created a positive experience.

'At the beginning of the activity Chloe was pretty frightened. She told me she had only paddled in the sea before and is not a confident swimmer in the pool either. I supported her using the steps you would with a younger child going into the water for the first time. I held both of her hands and helped her in the water step by step. We then took time to explore the water, getting used to it. She had a few tears streaming down her cheek and held on to me at all times. With small steps we achieved stepping on to the rocks, going into the water, and swimming through the channel. To start with, every step of the way she was saying she couldn't do it, however things changed throughout the process.

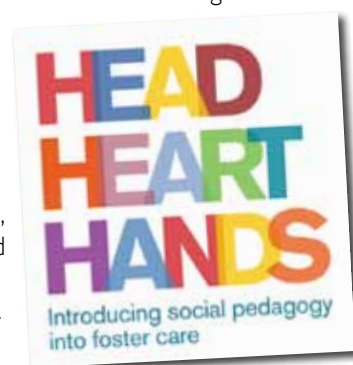
'She began to trust me and the instructors, followed our instructions well and did not give up. She tried all aspects of the activity. She had an option to go in to the sea by sliding down but chose to try jumping. I waited for her in the sea and held her when she got out of the water. She held me very tight, cried and kept on repeating that she did not like it and that the sea tasted different to swimming pool water.

'After being reassured, she calmed down and continued with the next activity which was to climb on the rock in the middle of the sea. I started to notice the difference in her attitude after the jump and I spoke to her about her strengths in everyday life and how she gets through the challenges and uncertainty. After that I felt she became more adamant as she decided to climb on to the rock without assistance. She was no longer saying that she couldn't do things and started to enjoy herself by smiling and interacting more with the other two young people in the group. She kept checking how they were doing and wanted to help them and myself if we jumped into the water and she waited on the rocks to help us back up. The session carried on for another hour with Chloe taking on challenges, smiling, still having my support and holding on to me but trying out things by herself as well.

'I noticed she needed to be shown how to walk on rocks and climb off them as she hadn't done similar things before. I explained to her how to place her feet to get a good grip, how to fall and not get hurt (or get hurt less), and how to slide off the rock with an awareness of the environment around her. The other two young people seemed to already have that knowledge and experience.

'By the end of the session Chloe did not want to leave. She wanted to go back into the water (such a difference from the start) and also extended the distance between myself and the instructor. She refused our help to get her to the beach and wanted to do it herself. She took a while, longer than you might allow as she had a meeting to attend, however I felt it was important to follow that through as it was something she wanted to achieve by herself. She did so and was happy, laughing and smiling as well as asking about activities next time.

'I observed a big change from the beginning of the activity to the end. Chloe was working on her physical skills, her confidence, how to approach a challenge, resilience and coping with stress, asking for help, cooperating with others and being a part of the team. She expressed that she had a good time and she seemed happy when she left.'



Are you a talented writer?

We want to hear from you!

We are always keen to hear from children and young people about their views on living in a fostering household. Have you written a story or an essay for school? Here's an excuse to let your inner talents flow! Below are some extracts from essays to whet your appetite: we are hoping to have them published soon, and yours could be amongst them.

“ The room was so beautiful and light, with magnolia walls and a beige border with little bears dancing around the alphabet. The cot, the blankets, were all still in the same position as when he woke up. His teddies were neatly scattered, since he last played with them, utterly unaware of the fact that his whole world would be turned upside down once more. If I closed my eyes I could see him again, sitting in his cot, giggling with glee. Then of course, I opened them, to be sorely disappointed. He wasn't there. ”

“ Andrew didn't just steal all our hearts; he was one of those kids everyone loved. A cheeky grin and a laugh that made everyone smile. He could wrap anyone, young or old, male or female around his finger. I saw him do it so many times, he'd just beam up at you and you just couldn't help smiling back. We all loved him, and of course his parents did as well. ”

“ With every new placement, there is an adjustment that needs to happen within the house. Some of these adjustments can be straightforward and simple, other times, they can be a bit more complex. I don't think you can ever truly know what a child will be like if you have never met them before but just seen what is written on paper, because in reality that is only the tip of the iceberg. ”

Entries can range from 100 to up to 2,000 words in length (and may need some minor editing). For your chance to have a piece published, please email it to us: e.scotland@fostering.net

Cross Party Group on Children and Young People

In September, we attended the Cross Party Group on Children and Young People at the Scottish Parliament.

The group was discussing proposed new legislation to make 'revenge porn' or intimate image abuse, as it will be known, a criminal offence.

The Lord Advocate, Frank Mulholland, outlined the background to the proposed legislation and speakers from Respect Me, an anti bullying charity, and CAMHS sexual trauma team outlined how traumatic this kind of abuse can be for a child or young person. Input from a number of other individuals and organisations highlighted the need for greater education among young people around the dangers of sharing intimate images, even with those they trust.

The Fostering Network has indicated that we are keen to feed into the ongoing discussions around this to ensure that we can continue to support foster carers in talking to young people about these issues.



Jane Wright, project worker, and Natalie Innes, foster carer, who attended the group.

Are you feeling festive?

Once again it's time for The Fostering Network to invite you to take part in our festive e-card competition! We hope to receive great pictures sent in from children and young people up to the age of 15.

Our festive e-card is sent out by email across the country to everyone we work with and we would love to see one of your images sending some festive cheer!

We would like children and young people from across Scotland to design a picture that shares what the festive season and foster care means to them. We will feature the top three entries in the next edition of our newsletter, *Fostering in Scotland*.

- Remember to use lots of colour.
- Your design must be on a piece of paper no larger than A4 sized.
- Entries can be emailed or posted to us in Glasgow (see contact details below).
- The winner will receive a £25 voucher, and two runners up will each receive a £10 voucher.
- Please remember to include the artist's name, age and contact details so that we can get in touch with the winners.
- Closing date is Friday 11 December at 5pm.



Dates for your diary ...

Sunday 15 November 2015

Big Day Out, Edinburgh Zoo

Saturday 21 November 2015 (Page 10)

Men Who Foster

Friday 11 December – 5pm (Page 12)

E-card competition closing date

Tuesday 19 Jan 2016

Induction session

11am – 12pm

Aimed at student social workers, newly qualified social workers or workers new to fostering

Saturday 20 February 2016 (Page 10)

Caring for Children who have been Abused: A male perspective

Wednesday 24, Thursday 25 and Friday 26 February 2016 (Page 10)

The Skills to Foster: Train the Trainers

Friday 13, Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 May 2016 (Page 8)

Trek Challenge

If you are interested in attending any of these events

t 0141 204 1400 or

e scotland@fostering.net

The Fostering Network Scotland...



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For help with membership queries:

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t 0845 013 5004

The stress counselling helpline can be accessed through this number



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