



## In this issue:

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# Hello everyone



As you will see from my profile photograph, I braved the wilds of outdoor swimming on New Year's Day for the loony dook. It was a fantastic setting in Edinburgh with the Forth Rail Bridge in the background – but also very, very cold! I would recommend you brave it in future years, as it was great fun. You could raise some vital funds for The Fostering Network at the same time!

Our cover photo shows eleven-year-old Aidan McGuire, who was thrilled to receive his prize from The Fostering Network as the winner of our festive e-card competition (see page 5). His entry was forwarded across the whole of Scotland before we closed for the festive break.

One of our priorities for the year ahead is to ensure the Scottish Government introduces a minimum allowance for foster carers. Despite regular reassurances from the Scottish Government, we are no closer to having a national minimum allowance – indeed, we are concerned that the 'root and branch' review of the care system that was announced by Nicola Sturgeon at the end of last year will be used as a reason to delay the introduction of the allowance for

at least two years. More information is available on our website:

**[thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/get-involved/our-campaigns/scotland-allowances](http://thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/get-involved/our-campaigns/scotland-allowances)**

Scotland is the only nation in the UK which does not have a minimum allowance, and nine out of ten local authorities in Scotland now provide less than the national minimum allowance in Wales. This situation must be brought to an end, so we are urging all foster carers to write to or email Nicola Sturgeon. A template for this letter can be found on our website (from where you can also send an email directly to the First Minister).

We are delighted that Mark McDonald, Minister for Childcare and Early Years, has provided an update for this newsletter. Foster carer Colin Brough and I met with the minister in December, and we were encouraged by his determination to ensure Continuing Care works for all. He is particularly interested in hearing from foster carers about their experiences and challenges, and in his update he has asked foster carers to get in touch directly with the Scottish Government. Please refer to his update for contact details.

We have been hearing from young people across Scotland who have been able to remain with their foster carers beyond the age of 18, and are delighted to share with you their quotes (page 3) about the invaluable difference this has made.

Our centre spread provides an update on our Fostering Community Champions project. Our Big Day Out at Edinburgh Zoo was a huge success in November, and we are excited to be launching the young champions' film on stigma soon.

Our training suite is now up and running (see pages 10 and 11) and I would encourage you to consider booking it for any events or meetings you have coming up. Our rates are competitive and it is in a prime location in our offices in the centre of Glasgow. Many of our training courses are now delivered here, and we have a number of courses coming up. Make sure you get in touch soon to secure your place, as the courses fill up fast.

In addition to our training, we also have a couple of free workshops for foster carer members. One is looking at mediation within an education setting to ensure your foster child gets the education support he or she needs (page 9), and the other is looking at consent and confidentiality around medical issues (page 9) as part of our Health Matters project.

Our Walking Tall project, which will benefit children of primary school age living in foster families across Scotland, will begin in April. We will shortly be recruiting for the new post of children's participation worker, so keep an eye on our website for more information.

Until next time,

**Sara Lurie,**  
Director for Scotland

**“ Scotland is the only nation in the UK which does not have a minimum allowance, and nine out of ten local authorities in Scotland now provide less than the national minimum allowance in Wales. This situation must be brought to an end, so we are urging all foster carers to write to or email Nicola Sturgeon. A template for this letter can be found on our website (from where you can also send an email directly to the First Minister). ”**



# Continuing Care – the benefits of staying in care

Mark McDonald, Minister for Childcare and Early Years, has shared the following article:

We should be doing everything we can to encourage our looked after young people to delay their departure from care until at least 18. We need them to know that by staying in their care family for longer they will benefit from a more gradual transition at a pace better suited to their own circumstances and needs. This includes ensuring they have everyday skills such as managing their money and time keeping. At this young age they may also, like all their peers, require help to access educational, training or employment opportunities.

The measures in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 embody this explicit philosophy of care, recognising the importance of caring relationships and hopefully inspiring a much greater sense of belonging. Through Continuing Care and the extension of Aftercare up to age 26 we have a real opportunity to make a positive difference. These measures should be considered within the package of legislation that support local authorities and corporate parents to work together to provide the best package to enable our care-experienced young people to fulfil their goals like all our young people.

I want to see these legal duties fully embraced so that best practice becomes standard practice all across Scotland. I recently enjoyed meeting Colin Brough, an experienced foster carer with City of Edinburgh Council, and Sara Lurie. We explored some issues around the availability of Continuing Care and Aftercare support for



Colin Brough (pictured right) with Mark McDonald.

young people and how a lack of such support can negatively impact on our young people in foster care.

I also know that everyone involved in front line delivery of children's services understands fully why we should be providing the right sort of care to every single one of our looked after young people. We understand the need to think carefully and act collectively to prepare young people to navigate every day challenges to help them reach their own personal goals.

In the coming months I'll be taking a close interest in how Continuing Care and Aftercare up to age 26 is being offered and where young people are engaging with local services. I want to know more about its impact for young people. I would welcome input from The Fostering Network's readership, so please submit any queries to [e looked\\_after\\_children@gov.scot](mailto:looked_after_children@gov.scot) on these provisions, including any challenges you have experienced and of course, examples of good practice we can share more widely.

During 2017 we will also be taking forward the outstanding recommendation from the Review of Foster Care on allowances for children living in foster and kinship care. I know a national approach to allowances in Scotland is an issue of importance to our foster carers. This work was interrupted by legal challenge by the Equality and Human Rights Commission to Scottish Local Authorities. I would like to reassure you that we will be establishing a group of experts to take this important issue forward as soon as possible.

The First Minister's commitment to an independent review of the care system provides a valuable opportunity to ensure that any national approach to allowances is complementary to the scope and intentions of that wider review. Arrangements are being made to take the review forward and more details will be announced in coming weeks, including how the review will meet the First Minister's commitment that young people will play a central role. This will include hearing the voices of care experienced young people who can, better than any of us, highlight what works well for them and what could be improved.

As we move forward together I'd like to recognise your contributions in developing national guidance to help explain the legal position for foster carers making everyday decisions like taking their foster children on holidays and arranging haircuts; and the excellent support offered to SSSC in producing a Learning and Development framework. I know that by collaborating in this way we can better support you as much valued and respected foster carers, providing much needed opportunities to access training and recognise the vast array of skills and experience you already have.

## Why remain in care?

The Fostering Network spoke to young people who have remained in foster care beyond 16. Here are their thoughts on Continuing Care (we have kept the quotes anonymous to protect identity):

***'I would never have gone on to college if I had left when I was 16. I now have a job as a chef.'***

***'This is my home, why would I leave? I never really thought about it.'***

***'It gave me an amazing family and wonderful friends who see me as an ordinary person and treat me no different.'***

***'It gives you a secure family home with people who love you and look after you. It gives you great opportunities, such as the young champions and my job, people who support you. I guess it's just a great idea.'***

***'It gave me the chance of a normal family life.'***



A young adult, having moved to his own flat, sent this gift to his foster carers.



# Celebrating success - Head, Heart, Hands comes to an end



On 15 November 2016, The Fostering Network Scotland hosted a Head, Heart, Hands conference at Surgeon's Hall in Edinburgh followed by a parliamentary reception at the Scottish Parliament in the evening, sponsored by Liam McArthur MSP. The events celebrated the end of our four-year Head, Heart, Hands programme and the impact social pedagogy has made during that time throughout Scotland.

The day was attended by more than 70 foster carers, young people, social pedagogues, researchers, social workers

and other professionals and highlighted the enthusiasm for social pedagogy which the programme has generated. It clearly demonstrated the impact social pedagogy has had on foster families across Scotland.

An impact report on the Head, Heart, Hands programme has been produced, which concludes: 'Social pedagogy can help fostered children and young people to have a **positive experience of family life**, with deeper, more trusting and equal relationships. With foster carers better

able to understand their needs, children and young people who lived in Head, Heart, Hands families reported feeling more **confident, empowered, and valued.**

The full report, together with additional information on the programme, is available on our website: [thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/hhh](http://thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/hhh)

Although Head, Heart, Hands has come to a close, our Scottish social pedagogy in practice forum continues to meet on a quarterly basis. If you would like more information about this, please contact Sara Lurie, **t** 0141 204 1400 or **e** [scotland@fostering.net](mailto:scotland@fostering.net)



# Festive Fun Day

It is always difficult to judge the festive e-card competition, and we are grateful to our team of young champions for taking on that role during a festive fun day which we hosted in our Glasgow office. The young champions joined together with our foster carer champions and their families on 10 December for some festive fun, mince pies and hot chocolate!

Cherise, one of our young champions, made the day for many of the children with her specialist festive face painting. One of our foster carer champions, Dot, who runs an art gallery, kindly gave her time and skills to host an arts and crafts table where everyone was invited to decorate canvas Christmas bags, cards and jewellery.

Everyone was in high spirits and it was a fantastic day! It was a good chance for all our champions and their families to come together, to have fun, and to get to know each other.



## Congratulations to Aidan, our festive e-card winner!

Congratulations to all the fantastic artists who submitted their images for our e-card competition. We were so pleased to receive all the artwork which added some festive magic to our office in Glasgow!

Remember, we love seeing your artwork and hearing your stories, so please share them with us and we may feature them in a future edition of this newsletter.



We are delighted to announce that ten-year-old Aidan's festive image was voted by our judges to be the winning image of our annual festive e-card competition. Well done, Aidan!

Aidan, who has just turned eleven (Happy Birthday, Aidan), was chuffed to receive his voucher and we're thrilled to be featuring him on the cover of this newsletter. Michael and Michelle won joint second place, and we also had a number of brilliant runners up.



# Fostering Community Champions



Please see below for an update on the progress of our four year project.



enjoyed face painting and arts and crafts (huge thanks to our foster carer champion Dot and her helper Leo for assisting with this).

The young champions also previewed their short film, 'Give Me A Chance.' The film tells the story of Stephanie, who was placed in care as a young child. The group worked hard to write, produce, co-direct and star in the film. Give Me A Chance highlights the stigma which young people in care can experience, and also the importance of a positive fostering experience and the huge difference it can make to a young person's future. We are thrilled that the Scottish Parliament has agreed to host the film's launch on 30 March. Places are by invitation only, please get in touch if you would like to join us.

You can see the young champions' film on our website: [thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/fostering-community-champions](http://thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/fostering-community-champions), and they would love to come and discuss it with any group/agency. So please do get in touch if you are interested.

A dry day made it all the more fun at Edinburgh Zoo this year. The champions' Big Day Out was a huge success with 214 people attending, including 114 children. Attendees were able to enjoy the zoo, as well as chat with new and old friends, hear from The Fostering Network and enjoy refreshments in the café. The children (and adults) all helped to make a large jungle-themed collage which is now proudly displayed in our office and receives very positive comments.



The young champions donned their animal onesies to lead a jungle parade for all the children and young people, and children also

## Lauren Wade - A young champion in profile



Liam McArthur, MSP, with Lauren Wade

representatives of other charities, politicians, foster carers, and most importantly children in care. I've attended conferences on permanence and promoting Young Champions Boards. The young champions also wrote, produced, directed, and starred in a short film about the stigma of being in care and the effect that can have on a young person's life.

'We organise annual fun days out at Edinburgh Zoo to promote The Fostering Network, we have great Christmas parties, and we join in on fundraising events.

'The young champions meet up as often we can to discuss and debate issues that a child in care might face. Looking at both perspectives strengthens us and really helps us understand what areas the foster care system needs to improve.

'I highly recommend becoming a young champion. We have so much fun whenever and wherever we meet, while solving problems and generally doing our best to help create a foster care system that is in the best interest of all children in care.'

'I joined the young champions in 2014. I loved that it was a group of young people who were either in foster care themselves or were the children of foster carers, who came together to discuss important issues regarding the foster care system and the impact it has on children in foster care.

'Being a young champion has been so rewarding. I've had the chance to speak to so many people such as social workers,

If you are interested in becoming a young champion, or would like more information, please contact Sue McKellar: **t** 0141 204 1400 or **e** [scotland@fostering.net](mailto:scotland@fostering.net)



# Young champions Christmas day oot!



To celebrate a very successful and busy year, the young champions had a day out at the Christmas market in Edinburgh. It was a chance for the team to get together to discuss what they have achieved together and to share another fun experience. Bonding over chocolate waffles is always a winner!

We would like to thank all the young champions for their hard work and

dedication to the project. Their passion and commitment is inspirational and will no doubt make 2017 another successful, and busy year.

If you are aged 15 – 22 and would like to be part of the project, please get in touch with us. The group meet up around once a month and it's a great opportunity to share your fostering experiences as well as make new friends and have some fun!

## Support through allegations

If you are an experienced foster carer, are interested in supporting others, and would like to be involved in this exciting project, we would like to hear from you. We are particularly keen to hear from foster carers who have been through an allegation and feel they could support another foster carer going through this.

Foster carers involved in the project must be currently approved and references from your fostering service will be required. The role is voluntary and full training and ongoing support will be provided.

If you are interested please contact Sara Smith:  
t 0141 204 1400 or  
e [scotland@fostering.net](mailto:scotland@fostering.net)

## Foster carer champions

**Listening and Support Team - help create a ray of light when life becomes cloudy**



Fostering can, at times, be like walking on a foggy day – you just cannot see the way forward, every direction is clouded and muddled, you are longing for the sun to break through and things to feel easier. A ray of sunlight uplifts us and makes us feel better in ourselves, things become clearer and that route becomes easier.

Our team of volunteer foster carers, part of the Fostering Community Champions project, are there for you, ready to listen and support you when fostering becomes difficult, and a little support can help you to see the way forward.

If you need to talk over any fostering problems and have someone to listen to you, The Fostering Network can link you with an experienced foster carer. Support can be given by phone, email or a face-to-face meeting and is all treated confidentially. Please contact  
t 0141 204 1400 or  
e [scotland@fostering.net](mailto:scotland@fostering.net)

# Fosterline Scotland update



Julie Reid (pictured), our Fosterline worker, is covering for Mirren Taylor while she is on maternity leave, and has become a valued member of our team.

Fosterline Scotland offers advice and information on a broad range of subjects. The volume of calls relating to tax and self-employment always increases at this time of year, and in addition we have been receiving finance enquiries relating to national insurance contributions and benefits. It is not only finance related calls we deal with, however - and Fosterline Scotland can help you with a range of queries, such as:

- Are you considering changing fostering service and looking for advice?
- Is the child in your care approaching 18 and you would like guidance on Continuing Care?
- Are you experiencing professional tensions, and would like advice to achieve a positive resolution?
- Do you have a panel coming up and are facing changes to your approval?

Fosterline Scotland is a support service open to all members of the fostering community. As well as foster carers we



receive enquiries from service providers, prospective foster carers, retired foster carers, birth parents and their families, young people, and other professionals working in fostering.

Fosterline Scotland can also refer foster carers to a foster carer champion if they are in need of additional emotional support from somewhere who has 'been there'. They can offer a supportive shoulder during times of need. For more information on this, please turn to page 7.

If you are looking for information and advice on any fostering related issue, or just want a listening ear, we are here to help.

Julie Reid said: 'Helping people with their fostering role is extremely fulfilling. As a foster carer myself, I know that good support can help you make that difference to the children in your care, and the additional peer support offered through our Champions project can be invaluable. We would love to hear from you if there is anything we can help you with.'

Fosterline Scotland is here to support with these and many other types of query! Our Fosterline Scotland service 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.

You can also call our legal helpline on **t** 0345 013 5004 or our stress helpline on **t** 0345 074 2799. Both are open all day, every day.

## Valuing our foster carers

Foster carers make a real and lasting difference to some of Scotland's most disadvantaged children. Whether they have fostered one child, or over one hundred, that difference is incredible. We are delighted to shine the spotlight on two different approaches to fostering, from both ends of the spectrum.

Betty Middleton and her husband Joe have opened up their home to 186 traumatised children over more than three decades. Betty said, 'Just to see the changes in the children is very rewarding - to watch them become confident, talented young people. You get children who haven't been shown any encouragement or love, and seeing them thrive gives you a great feeling of pride.'

Betty and Joe, now 83, still support Tom, who is now 22. 'Tom came to us a young boy and he struggled to talk,' Betty explained. 'Seeing him grow up into a



bright, caring young man has made us incredibly proud.' Betty and Joe are photographed here with Tom alongside Glasgow's Lady Provost.

Graham Fischbacher (pictured) has, by comparison, fostered six children over eight years. He said, 'Fostering a single child allows time to be spent getting to know that child without distractions. A genuine rapport develops over time and a more detailed understanding of the child's needs. I have got to know the child's family over time, and this has helped him understand his background and current situation. Working with the professionals and knowing the child well helps to promote positive outcomes.'



We are always pleased to hear stories from our foster carer members. If you would like to share your experiences of fostering, do get in touch, **e** scotland@fostering.net





## Giving young people a voice

The Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) is the democratically elected voice of Scotland's young people. There are two Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) for every parliamentary constituency in Scotland, and two MSYPs that represent various partnering voluntary organisations. MSYPs work throughout their term to campaign on the issues that are important to young people in Scotland. They also seek to ensure that young people's rights are protected and upheld.

Every two years a new group of MSYPs are elected by their peers to represent their views on a local and national level. The next SYP Elections will take place from 3 – 17 March. All young people between the ages of 12 and 25 are eligible to vote for their representative. Voting in the SYP elections is a fantastic opportunity for young people to have their voice heard, and vote for the candidate they think will best represent them on a national platform.

To find out more about the SYP elections, visit: [syp.org.uk/stand4syp](http://syp.org.uk/stand4syp).

For more information on the SYP, visit their website: [syp.org.uk](http://syp.org.uk).



## Consent and Confidentiality – Free workshop for foster carers

As part of our Health Matters project, we are delighted to be working in partnership with Action for Sick Children Scotland again to deliver a free workshop for foster carer members on consent and confidentiality.

The workshop will explore the medical rights of children in foster care, aiming to provide foster carers with:

- understanding and knowledge of children's rights in a medical setting
- a chance to explore these rights as they relate to foster carers
- an introduction to the specific issues of consent and confidentiality when accompanying a child in foster care who has healthcare needs
- an opportunity through interactive activities (including quizzes and case studies) to apply their knowledge to different situations
- increased confidence when they encounter situations in which these issues apply.

The workshop is free of charge to foster carer members, and includes lunch. It will be held on Thursday 27 April in our new training suite in central Glasgow:

### Managing issues of consent and confidentiality

To secure your place, please contact Linda Bowie: [e.scotland@fostering.net](mailto:e.scotland@fostering.net), [t 0141 204 1400](tel:01412041400).



## Education – getting the support your foster child needs

As part of Foster Care Fortnight™ 2017, we are delighted to be hosting an education workshop in partnership with Children in Scotland in our Glasgow training suite.

If you are concerned about the education or additional support needs of a child in your care, talking to their school is a good place to start. It's often possible for issues to be sorted out by explaining your concerns to the child's teacher or head teacher, or by asking to discuss the child's Personal Learning Plan or individualised education programme (IEP). Mediation is an alternative approach if you remain unhappy. By law, education authorities must provide an

independent additional support needs mediation service free of charge, for parents, carers and young people.

Mediation is a voluntary and confidential process where an independent person – the mediator – helps those involved in a disagreement to explain their concerns to each other and find a shared solution both parties are happy with. Any disagreement about the education of a child with additional support needs can be referred to mediation. Using mediation will not affect your rights to take the matter further later on.

If you would like more information on this, please come along to our education workshop, led by Sandra Mitchell, mediation manager for Additional Support for Learning, Children in Scotland:

**Thursday 11 May 2017**

**Glasgow**

**Time: 10.30am – 2.30pm** (includes lunch)

The workshop is free for foster carer members. To secure your place:

[e.scotland@fostering.net](mailto:e.scotland@fostering.net) or

[t 0141 204 1400](tel:01412041400).



# Spotlight on Sara Smith and The Role of the Supervising Social Worker



“ My role within The Fostering Network is project worker for the Fostering Community Champions project. Additionally, I assist with delivering training to both foster carers and social workers. I was delighted when asked to support Sara Lurie, our director, with delivering our two day training course entitled The Role of the Supervising Social Worker. As well as being a foster carer with 13 years of experience, I also have a background in training, delivering Safeguarding and Protecting Children workshops for Sportscotland and a range of coaching workshops for Horsescotland. The Role of the Supervising Social Worker course was a great opportunity for me to work with a group of supervising social workers from across Scotland. Participants came from local authorities and the independent sector, and from as far afield as Shetland.

The two-day course was a chance for supervising social workers to come together to reflect on their practice and learn from each other. All who attended were experienced and qualified social workers, but relatively new to their role of assessing, supervising and supporting foster

carers. The course allowed everyone to share ideas, reflect on practice and be challenged. On the opening day, supervising social workers were asked: 'If your foster carers were to write your annual appraisal, what would they say are your strengths and weaknesses?' Further exploration allowed participants to consider the job description of foster carers and the job description of supervising social workers.

A wide range of issues were explored, including:

- How should you support carers when a placement is ending?
- Who should see foster carers medical records?
- How should you support foster carers when an allegation is made?
- How can you effectively support foster carers' own children?
- Are our agency's supervision recording sheets fit for purpose?
- How can you make the most of an unannounced visit?
- How should you involve the children's social worker?

- How do we implement the recommendations from the Fatal Accident Inquiry?
- How do you assess 'love' in a fostering household?

The feedback from supervising social workers on our January course was overwhelmingly positive:

**'Reinforced key areas of good practice, therefore boosting my confidence.'**

**'Great group – the course was informative and interactive.'**

**'Really enjoyed this training, felt like very respectful, positive, thoughtful training.'**

**'Really engaging. Fantastic to share views and ideas with other workers and the presenters.'**

Social workers praised the opportunity to attend a course co-presented by a social worker and a foster carer, commenting that it encouraged reflection, debate, discussion, humour and actions.

We are delighted to be offering this course again in our training suite in Glasgow in October 2017 (see page 11). In the meantime, you may be interested in purchasing the course in-house. A number of fostering services have purchased the course in-house for their social work teams. Others have purchased it as a team building course for their supervising social workers and foster carers to attend together. For more information on this, please contact Joy Crawford: **t** 0141 204 1400, or **e** scotland@fostering.net

## Glasgow training suite available for hire!



Our training suite, which holds up to 20 people and is situated in a prized location in the centre of Glasgow, is now well established and available for hire! Are you looking for a venue for a meeting or event? Our rates are competitive.

Please contact Linda Curran for more information: **t** 0141 204 1400 or **e** scotland@fostering.net



# Training courses booking up fast – secure your place now!

We are delighted by the number of fostering services who have requested our trainers deliver a range of courses to their foster carers and social workers. Is this something you or your fostering service could do?

Our Finance and Foster Care course has traditionally been offered to foster carers to help them complete their tax returns and to better understand fostering related benefits, national insurance contributions, and to consider the financial needs of the children in their care. Following requests from team managers, social workers and finance staff to get a better understanding of finance issues affecting foster carers, we now deliver a course specifically for them. Feedback has been excellent:

'It was extremely useful as I have limited knowledge in all areas of finance; it clearly highlighted the implications for foster carers.'

***'Very helpful – I don't feel as "scared" about sharing information about being self-employed now. It opened up further questions that need to be addressed on how we as a local authority support and pass this information on to foster carers.'***

As well as offering courses in-house, we are continuing to deliver our open courses in our new training suite. Upcoming open courses, all being held at the new training suite in our Glasgow office with lunch included, are:

## **Finance and Foster Care**

(for social workers and finance staff)

Tuesday 25 April 2017

Price: members £110.00 plus VAT/

non-members £220.00 plus VAT

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

(for male foster carers)

Wednesday 3 May 2017

Price: members £110 plus VAT/

Non-members £220 plus VAT

## **Managing Allegations against Foster Carers**

(for foster carers, though social workers can attend)

Wednesday 31 May 2017

Price: members £110.00 plus VAT/

non-members £220.00 VAT

## **The Skills to Foster: Train the Trainers**

(for foster carers and social workers)

Tuesday 26, Wednesday 27 and

Thursday 28 September 2017

Price: members £310.00 plus VAT/

non-members £620.00 plus VAT

## **The Role of the Supervising Social Worker**

(for new and experienced social workers)

Wednesday 25 and Thursday

26 October 2017

Price: members £215.00 plus VAT/

non-members £420.00 plus VAT

Our courses book up fast, so to secure your place on one of the above open courses, or to enquire about running one of our courses in-house, please contact Joy Crawford: **t** 0141 204 1400  
**e** scotland@fostering.net  
**thefosteringnetwork.org.uk**

## Criminal injury compensation for children and young people

Many children in foster care will be entitled to criminal injury compensation due to a historical incident which may have triggered their admission into care. Not all foster carers will be aware of this, neither are some children's social workers. This has been drawn to our attention by a number of calls received to our Fosterline Scotland service.

As a result, we are currently liaising with Victim Support Scotland, and they have sent us the following information for our newsletter: 'Victim Support Scotland is a nationwide voluntary organisation that provides: information on the criminal justice system, for example what happens after a crime is reported to the police;

someone you can talk to about what has happened, how you feel about it, and how it has affected your everyday life; assistance with criminal injury compensation claims if you are eligible (see below); support at court through our Witness Service; and links to other sources of help and information. The criteria for claiming compensation is:

- the application needs to be within two years of the injury or two years from the date of a young person turning 18 years of age
- the injury needs to have been reported to the police and it must have been diagnosed and treated by a specialist

- this compensation is also available under certain circumstances for foster children who have lost a parent due to serious crime.

'You can contact Victim Support's national helpline on **t** 0345 603 9213 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm), or follow this link for more detailed information: [tinyurl.com/q8b8kdj](https://tinyurl.com/q8b8kdj).'

As well as contacting Victim Support Scotland, we suggest you discuss with your child's social worker whether they are entitled to criminal injury compensation and get confirmation of who will take responsibility for completing the application process. You can also seek advice from Fosterline Scotland, **t** 0141 204 1400.

  
**Victim Support Scotland**

# Scottish Child Law Centre annual conference

Young champion Amy Davidson gave an inspirational speech on permanence and the positive impact it had on her life at the Scottish Child Law Centre's Annual Conference in November. Amy also spoke about her work with The Fostering Network.

Evelyn Hay from the SCLC told us: 'The conference heard from an expert panel of speakers who presented the latest information and views. The event attracted perhaps the widest range of professionals that has attended any of our conferences, from across Scotland and other parts of the UK. A highlight for many was Amy, whose insider view on permanence was an inspiration.'

We have been told by some attendees that Amy and her story will be the force that will motivate them going forward to make improvements in their work.

Well done Amy, we are very lucky to have you representing The Fostering Network.



## Dates for your diary ...

### Tuesday 25 April 2017

Finance and Foster Care (Page 11)

### Thursday 27 April 2017

Consent and Confidentiality workshop (Page 9)

### Wednesday 3 May 2017

Caring for Children who have been Abused: a male perspective (Page 11)

### Thursday 11 May 2017

Education workshop (Page 9)

### Wednesday 31 May 2017

Managing Allegations against Foster Carers (Page 11)

### Tuesday 26, Wednesday 27 and Thursday 28 September 2017

The Skills to Foster: Train the Trainers (Page 11)

### Wednesday 25 and Thursday 26 October 2017

The Role of the Supervising Social Worker (Page 11)



If you are interested in attending any of these events:

t 0141 204 1400 or e scotland@fostering.net

## The Fostering Network Scotland...

### The Fostering Network Scotland

2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Ingram House  
227 Ingram Street  
Glasgow  
G1 1DA

t 0141 204 1400

e scotland@fostering.net

thefosteringnetwork.org.uk

For help with membership queries:

t 020 7620 6400

e membership@fostering.net

### Publications & Resources

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e orders@fosteringresources.co.uk

Registered Charity Number: 280852

Registered in Scotland SC039338

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### The Fostering Network – Head Office

Registered office  
87 Blackfriars Road  
London  
SE1 8HA

For queries relating to the members' area of the website:

t 020 7620 6400

### Legal Helpline

t 0345 013 5004

### Stress Helpline

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