



**The
Fostering
Network**

Keep Connected

Leeds member conference
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Izzy Roberts
Campaigns and Engagement Officer

Golden thread

- Relationships are the golden thread in children's lives
- Stable relationships help children to develop a strong internal working model
- Foster carers are important people in children's lives
- Former foster carers can offer long-term support

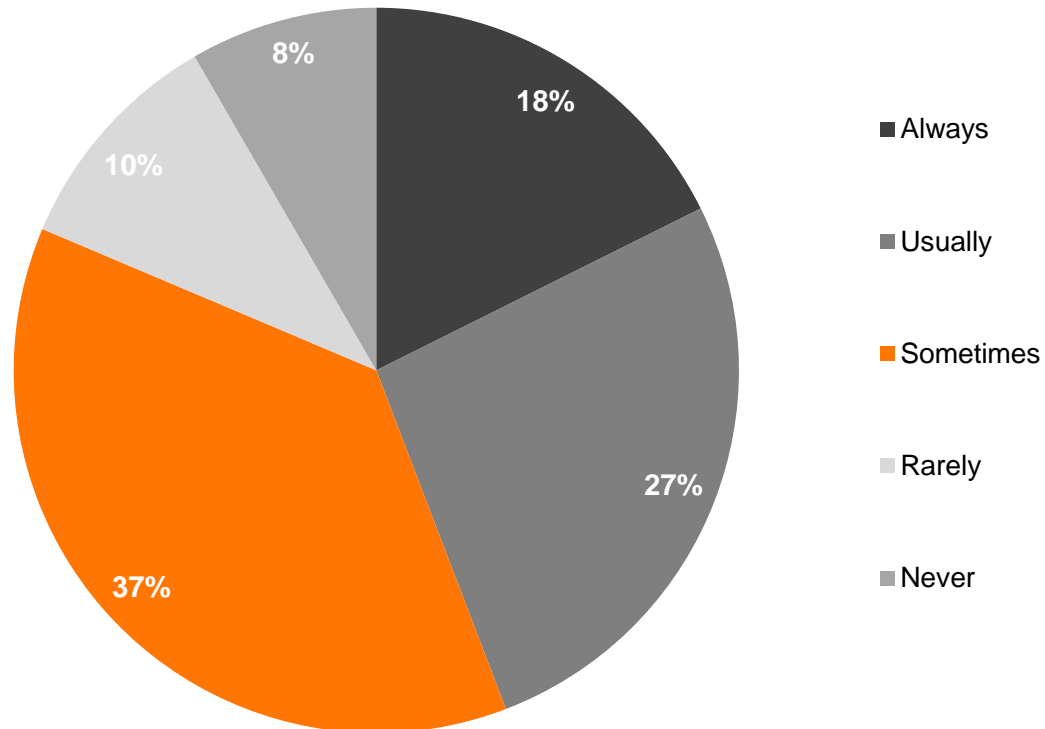


Keep Connected

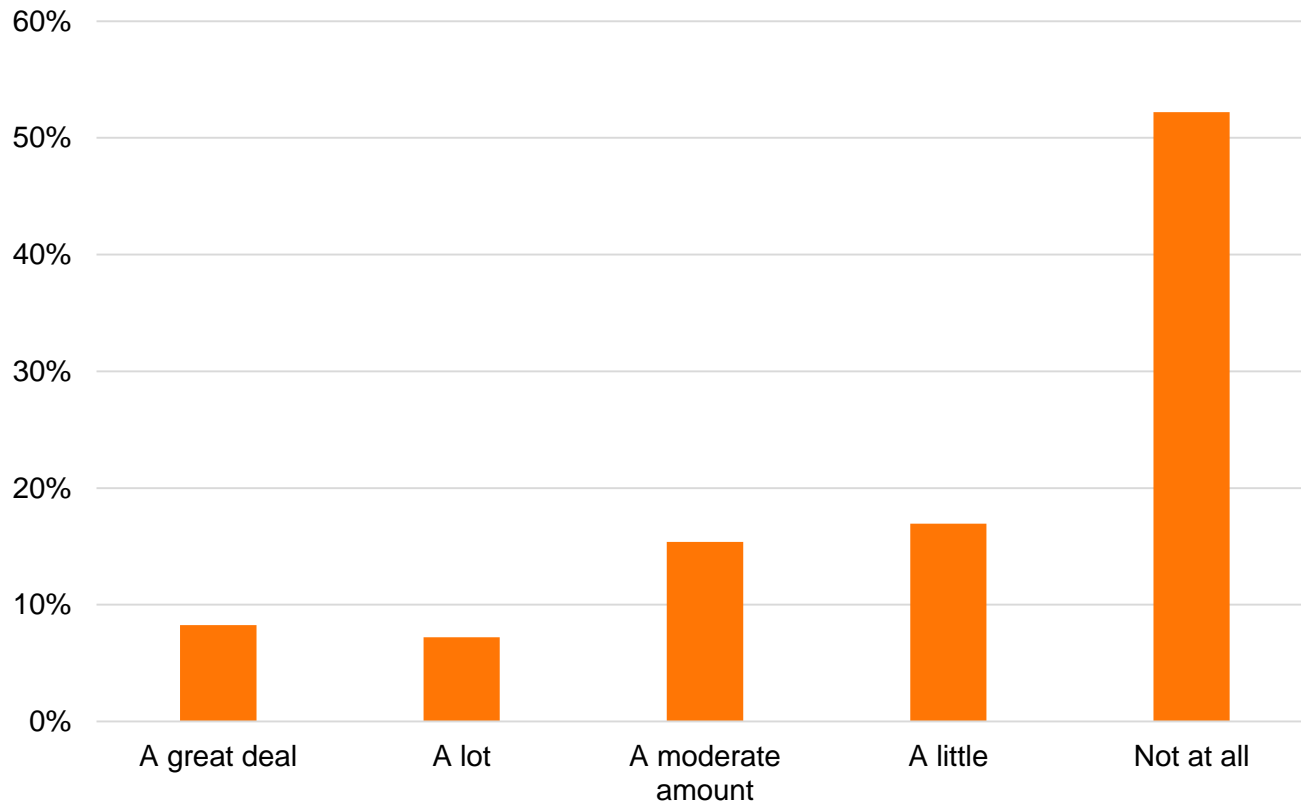
Children and young people who move within and out of the care system should be enabled and supported to maintain their relationships with their former foster families and other people who are significant to them



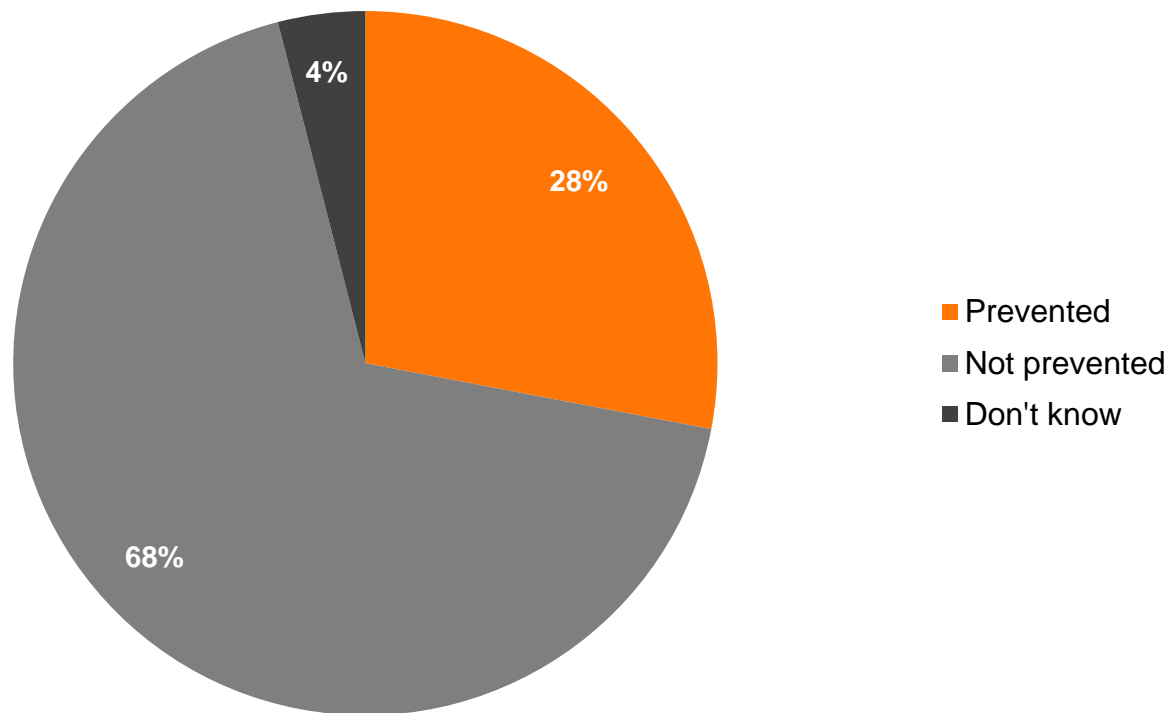
Do you keep in contact with former foster children?



How supported do you feel in maintaining contact with former fostered children, where appropriate?



Have you ever been prevented from having contact with a former foster child?



Keep Connected

- Foster carers
- Fostering services
- Children's charities
- Ofsted
- DfE
- Mary Beek, researcher



Keep Connected principles

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2. The child's feelings should be held in mind and responded to sensitively. Where it is possible, children should be consulted about the relationships that are important to them and how they would like to maintain contact.
3. Every member of the team around the child should understand the importance of the child's key relationships, particularly the foster family, throughout the transition and beyond.



Keep Connected principles

4. Maintaining contact after a fostered child moves on should be routinely considered part of the role of a foster carer, and foster carers should be supported to carry this out.



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5. The relationship between the foster carer and the new family, in whatever form that takes, should be promoted as an ongoing working relationship that needs to be sustained and supported sufficiently over a period of time.
6. Birth family members and adopters should be encouraged and supported to enable their children to maintain contact with former foster families.



Keep Connected principles

7. Where it is not possible to maintain direct contact with foster families in the longer term, children and foster carers should be encouraged to keep in contact in other ways. This could include letters, cards, telephone calls and social media, but should not be used as substitutes for the initial face-to-face contact post-move, unless absolutely necessary.



Keep Connected principles

- How can we work together to embed the principles in practice?



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Thank you

Izzy.roberts@fostering.net

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