



Caldecott
Fostering

A Guide to Foster Care for Young People

HELPING CHILDREN BUILD A FUTURE

This guide is **for you** if you are living with, or about to live with, a foster family through Caldecott Fostering.

Moving into foster care can bring up lots of **different feelings**. You might feel worried, angry, relieved, confused, sad, curious, or a mix of everything. Whatever you feel is okay. You have **the right** to ask questions and be listened to.

No question is a silly question. If something in this guide does not make sense, you can ask your foster carer, social worker, supervising social worker, teacher, IRO, advocate, or another trusted adult to explain it.



“Remember: you are safe, you are not in trouble and people should listen to what matters to you.”



What this guide is for

This guide explains what foster care means, who is involved, what your rights are, who you can talk to, and what you can do if you feel unhappy, unsafe, confused or not listened to.

You do not have to read it all at once. You can come back to it whenever you need to, or ask an adult you trust to go through it with you.

My important people: who can I talk to?

These are people you can talk to if you have questions, worries, ideas, or just need someone to listen. You can fill this in with an adult you trust.

Person	Name	Contact & Phone Number
Foster Carer		
My social worker		
Caldecott supervising social worker		
Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)		
Advocate		
Teacher / school or college adult		
Someone else I trust		

If something feels unsafe or urgent, tell a trusted adult straight away. If you cannot speak to someone you know, you can contact **Childline on 0800 1111**.



What is Fostering?



Fostering means living with a foster family because you cannot live with your own family for a while. Some young people stay for a short time, and some stay longer.

This is **not your fault**.

While you live there, you should be treated as part of the family. Being in foster care does not mean your family do not love you. It means adults are making plans to make sure you are safe and cared for.

Your Rights

You have the right to be safe.

You have the right to be listened to and taken seriously.

You have the right to understand plans and decisions about you.

You have the right to ask questions.

You have the right to be supported with school, health, friendships and family time where this is part of your plan.

You have the right to make a complaint if something is wrong or unfair.

You have the right to ask for an advocate to help share your views.

If you are not sure what your rights mean, ask your social worker, IRO, advocate, foster carer or supervising social worker to explain them.



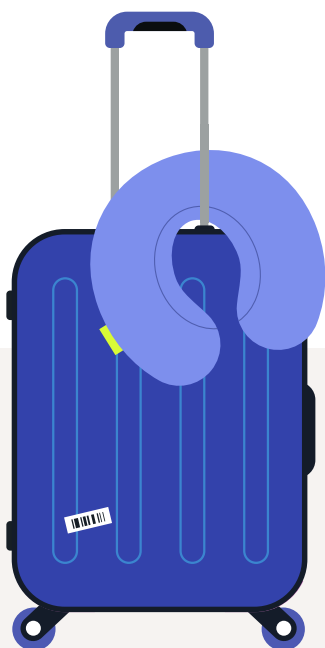
Who are Caldecott Fostering?

Caldecott Fostering is an independent fostering agency. We help find and support safe foster families for children and young people.

We work with:

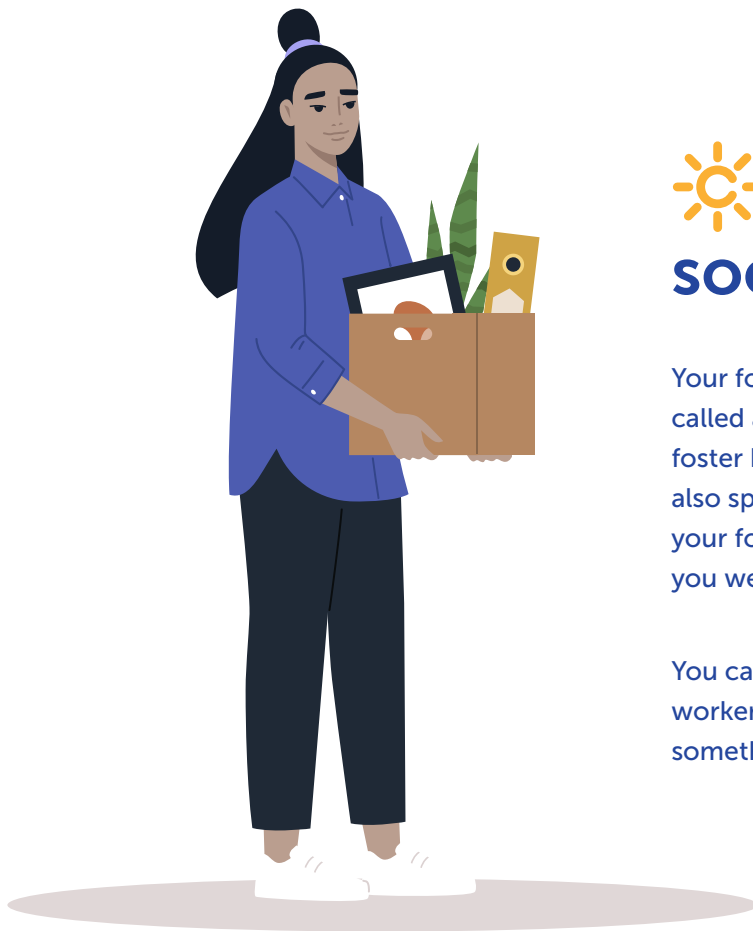
-  **Foster Carers**
-  **Social Workers**
-  **Local Authorities**

Our job is to help make sure you are safe, cared for, listened to and able to enjoy ordinary things like school, friends, hobbies, activities and family time where this is part of your plan.



Holidays & Activities

Caldecott also arranges activities during the year, such as holiday clubs, trips, picnics, parties, beach days, dog walks and other events. You can share ideas for activities with your supervising social worker.



Your supervising social worker

Your foster carers have their own social worker, called a supervising social worker. They visit the foster home, speak with your foster carers, and will also speak with you. Their role is to help make sure your foster carers have what they need to care for you well.

You can ask to speak with the supervising social worker if you have questions, worries, ideas, or if something at home does not feel right.

What does Caldecott know about me?

To help care for you properly, Caldecott and your foster carers need to know important information about you. This might include your birthday, health needs, school, likes and dislikes, how you are feeling, people who are important to you, and any big changes happening in your life.

This information is kept safely. If you want to know what information is held about you, you can ask your social worker, supervising social worker, foster carer or Independent Reviewing Officer.





Moving into a Foster Home

It can take time to adjust to a new home, new people and a different routine. You do not have to feel settled straight away.

You should have:

-  Your own bedroom
-  Space for your belongings
-  Privacy

House rules should be explained and discussed with you. These might include things like knocking before going into bedrooms, treating each other respectfully, agreed times for coming home, internet safety and helping with everyday routines.

 ***"Remember: you can ask questions about rules and share your views. Everyone in the home should be treated with respect, including you."***

Living in someone else's home

Every family does things a bit differently. It is okay to ask questions about food, routines, chores, Wi-Fi, going out, friends visiting, bedtimes or coming-home times. Your foster carers should explain what is expected and listen to what matters to you.

You should be treated with respect and you should also try to respect the people, belongings and routines in the home. If something feels difficult, talk it through with your foster carer or another trusted adult.

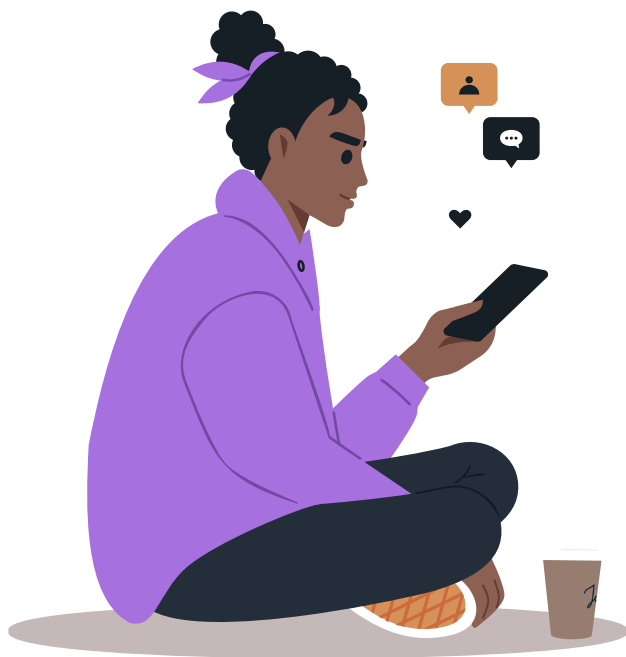


Privacy, personal boundaries

You should have privacy, including space for your belongings and somewhere to spend time on your own. Other people should not go into your room, use your things or look through your belongings without a good reason and without talking to you, unless there is a safety concern.

Adults may sometimes need to talk with you about safety, phones, messages, social media, internet use or where you are going. This should be done respectfully and explained clearly.





Phones, internet & social media

Phones and online spaces can help you stay connected, learn, relax and have fun. They can also sometimes feel stressful or unsafe. If anyone online makes you feel worried, pressured, threatened, embarrassed or unsafe, tell a trusted adult. You will not be in trouble for asking for help.

- *Think carefully before sharing photos, videos, personal information or your location.*
- *Tell someone if you receive upsetting messages, threats or requests that do not feel right.*
- *Ask for help if you feel stuck in an online situation.*
- *Adults should explain any rules about phones, Wi-Fi or social media clearly and respectfully.*

Sleepovers

Sometimes you will get to know another Caldecott foster family and stay overnight with them.

Sleepovers:

- *Are planned*
- *Are short term*
- *Are with approved carers*

They are not a punishment and do not mean you have done anything wrong.

You should be told what is happening and why.





What happens next?

When you move in, adults should help you understand what is happening and what the plan is. You may have visits from your social worker and supervising social worker. There may also be meetings where adults talk about how things are going and what needs to happen next.

You can ask questions such as:

- *How long might I stay here?*
- *Who will visit me?*
- *When will I see or speak to my family?*
- *What happens with school or college?*
- *How can I share my views?*

Keeping in touch with your family and people who matter to you

You may still keep in touch with family members, friends or other people who are important to you, if this is part of your plan.

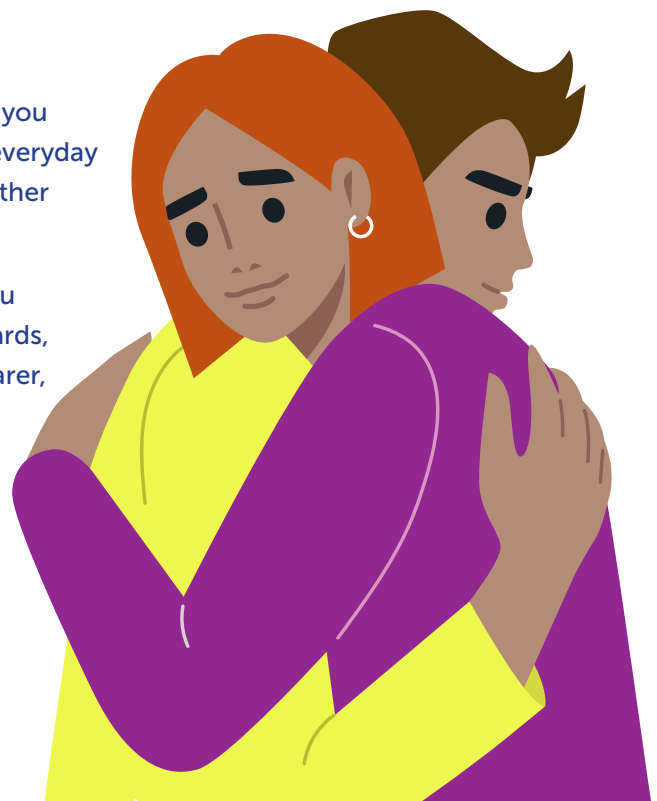
This could be:

- *Visits*
- *Phone calls*
- *Video calls*

Adults should explain what is planned and listen to how you feel about staying in touch. At Caldecott, we try to use everyday words like visits, phone calls, video calls or messages, rather than using the word 'contact.'

It is normal to have mixed feelings about family time. You might look forward to it, feel nervous, feel upset afterwards, or feel unsure what you want. You can tell your foster carer, social worker or supervising social worker how it feels before and after. Adults should listen and explain any changes to the plan.

Living with a foster family does not mean you have to stop caring about your own family or important people in your life.





Education

Adults should support you with school, college, training or plans for your future.

You should get help if:

- *You are struggling*
- *You need extra support*

Education matters, but so does feeling understood. If school or college feels hard, tell an adult you trust so they can help you get the right support.

You should be encouraged to aim high, whether your plans include college, university, an apprenticeship, work, training, or something you are still figuring out.



Preparing for adulthood

As you get older, adults should help you build skills for the future. This might include cooking, budgeting, travel, college, apprenticeships, work, health appointments, friendships, confidence and asking questions about what happens when you turn 18.

You do not have to know your whole future now. You should be supported to explore your options and make plans at your own pace.

Health



Your physical and emotional health both matter.

You may be supported to attend:

- *Doctor appointments*
- *Dentist appointments*

You should be involved in decisions about your health and wellbeing. This includes physical health, emotional health, sleep, food, exercise, appointments and any worries you have about how you are feeling.

Talking about your feelings

When you move in, adults should help you understand what is happening and what the plan is. You may have visits from your social worker and supervising social worker. There may also be meetings where adults talk about how things are going and what needs to happen next.

You may feel:

- *Angry*
- *Sad*
- *Anxious*
- *Confused*

Talking can help, but you do not have to share everything all at once. You can talk, write things down, text someone safe, draw, or ask another person to help explain how you feel.

Adults should listen, take you seriously and explain things clearly. If something cannot happen in the way you hoped, adults should explain why.

Other ways to show how you feel

If talking feels hard, you could write a note, send a message to a safe adult, use a feelings scale, draw, listen to music, go for a walk, ask for space, or ask someone to sit with you while you explain. There is no one right way to share your feelings.





If you feel sad, unsafe or bullied

If you feel unsafe, bullied, threatened online, or very unhappy:

- Tell an adult you trust
- You will not get into trouble

Bullying can include name-calling, threats, hitting, pushing, leaving you out on purpose, spreading rumours, or upsetting messages online. Cyberbullying means bullying using phones, tablets, games, apps or social media



***"Remember: You can also
contact Childline at any time"***

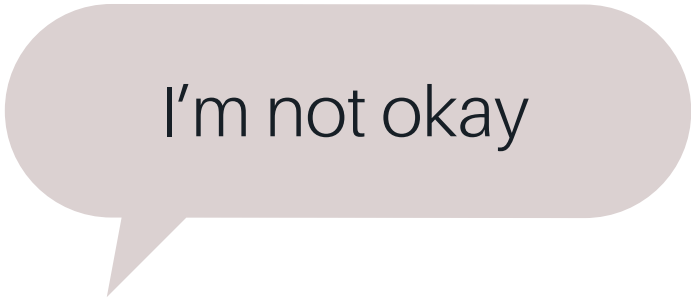
How to make a complaint

If you feel unhappy about the way you are being treated, you **have the right to complain**.

You can talk to:

- *Your foster carer*
- *Your social worker*
- *A supervising social worker*
- *An advocate*

You can also complain directly to Caldecott Fostering.



I'm not okay

How to contact Caldecott Fostering

- **Phone:** 01303 760430
- **Website:** www.caldecottfostering.co.uk (Get in touch)
- **Post:**

Caldecott Fostering
Caldecott House
Hythe Road
Smeeth
Ashford
TN25 6SP

You **will not get into trouble** for making a complaint.
You can ask an advocate or your Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) to support you.





Some questions you might have



What is an advocate?

An advocate is someone independent who can help you say what you think, understand your rights, ask questions, attend meetings, and make a complaint if you want to. They can help make sure your voice is heard.



What if I feel no one is listening?

You can ask to speak to your Independent Reviewing Officer, often called your IRO. Their job is to check that plans for you are right and that your wishes and feelings are being considered. You do not have to wait for a review meeting to ask to speak to them.



What happens at meetings?

Sometimes adults have meetings to talk about how things are going and what needs to happen next. You should be helped to share your views in a way that works for you. You might speak in the meeting, write something down, draw, use a form, or ask someone you trust to speak for you.

If you disagree with a decision

You may not always agree with decisions adults make. You can ask why a decision has been made, ask for it to be explained again, tell people what you think, or ask someone to help put your views in writing. You can speak to your social worker, IRO, advocate, foster carer or supervising social worker.

Things I want adults to know about me

Things that help me feel safe

Things that make me worried

What helps when I am upset

People who matter to me

Things I enjoy

Questions I want to ask



Words you might hear

Foster carer

A person who looks after children and young people who cannot live with their own family at that time.

Social worker

The person from your local authority who helps make plans for you and checks you are safe.

Supervising social worker

The Caldecott social worker who supports your foster carers and checks how things are going.

IRO

An Independent Reviewing Officer who checks that people are listening to you and making good plans for you.

Care plan

The plan that explains what support you need and how adults will help you.

Complaint

Telling someone that something is wrong, unfair, unsafe or not being listened to.



How can we make Caldecott Fostering better?

We want young people to help shape Caldecott Fostering. You can share ideas for activities, tell us what would make foster care feel better, and ask your supervising social worker about ways to get involved, including young people's panels or feedback opportunities.



You are not alone. There are people whose job is to listen, help and explain things. If something does not feel right, keep telling someone until you are heard.

Support numbers



Childline: 0800 1111
NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
NYAS: 0808 808 1001
Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

Post:

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Children's Commissioner :

0800 528 0731

Post:

11th Floor
64 Victoria Street
London
SW1E 6QP



My information about me

A guide to asking to see your personal information



You can ask to see the information kept about you. We keep information to support you, listen to you and help keep you safe

1 What information is kept?

Your file may include information that helps adults understand your needs and support you well.

- Your name and date of birth
- Information about where you live and your family
- Notes from meetings and about your care and support
- Photos, videos or recordings, if permission has been given

2 Who can help me ask?

You can ask a trusted adult to help you make the request:

- Your foster carer
- Your social worker
- An advocate
- A trusted adult
- A member of staff

3 What happens next?

Adults will check who you are, find the information and help explain it to you if needed.

- We check the information belongs to you.
- We look for the records you asked for.
- We share what we can.
- We help explain any tricky words or information.

4 Why might some stay private?

Usually, you can see most of your information. Sometimes some details have to stay private.

Some information may not be shared if it belongs to another person, was shared privately, could put someone at risk, or is linked to legal or police matters.

5 What if something is wrong?

Tell us. We will listen and make sure your views are recorded. For example:

- Your address or date of birth is wrong.
- Something does not match what happened.
- You want your own view added to the record.

Remember

- It is okay to ask questions.
- You can ask someone to help you.
- You have a right to understand information about you.
- Your views matter.

Who to contact

Jackie Neil · Registered Manager
Caldecott Fostering Ltd, Caldecott House
Hythe Road, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SP
Tel: 07392 082612
Email: Jackie.neil@caldecottfostering.co.uk

This is what you can say:

"Hello my name is..... I'd like to make a request to see the information you have about me. Please can you help?"

Who can help me say what I think or want to happen?

Local advocacy contact: _____

Caldecott Fostering
Caldecott House
Hythe Road
Smeeth
Ashford
TN25 6SP

Call 01303 760430
www.caldecottfostering.co.uk