



SHINING STARS FOSTERING AGENCY

CHILDREN'S GUIDE TO FOSTER CARE

AGE 4 - 11 YEARS



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
What is foster care?.....	3
What is a foster carer?.....	4
Why do I have to live with a foster carer?.....	5
When will I see my family?	8
What about what I want? What about my wishes and feelings?	9
Shining Stars Fostering Social Workers	10
What about my education/school?	11
Looking after you and keeping you safe and sound	12
Happy Foster Families.....	14
Who decides what will happen to me?.....	14
Who does my plans?	15
What if I have a problem or I am sad?	15
Making a Complaint.....	16
Do you have a little complaints book from your Social Worker?.....	16
Emergencies	18

INTRODUCTION

Hi there, we are Shining Stars Fostering Agency and we are here to tell you what Foster Care is. This book is for you. We have written it to explain and help you understand what happens when children go to live with foster carers. You can read this book with your foster carers. It might help us all to get to know each other a bit better. This book asks you some questions about you and the sort of things you would like to do.

This little book is yours to keep and use whenever you want to find something out.



Your mum or dad can't look after you at the moment so your Social Worker has asked us to find a foster carer for you. Foster carers are people that are specially trained to care for children and share their homes with them. There is more information about them later in the handbook.

SHALL WE FIRST WRITE YOUR NAME AND AGE ON THIS PAGE?

My full name is:

.....

How about a picture of yourself?



Here, it can
be a photo
or drawing.

The name I liked to be called is:

.....

The name my mummy and daddy call me is:

.....

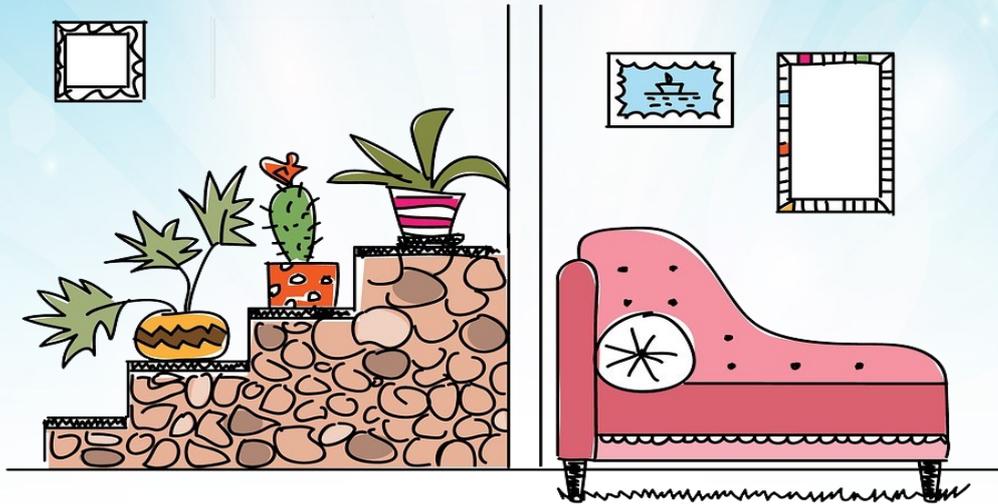
.....

I am this many years and months old:

..... YearsMonths

WHAT IS FOSTER CARE?

Foster care is staying in a home with another person or family. You will be welcome in this home because you have been specially picked to stay here. You will have your own bedroom and play space.



There may be other children in the home. The children may be younger or older than you are. These children will make you feel welcome. They will play with you. You can bring your own clothes and toys into foster care. You can still see your family and friends when you are in foster care and the foster carer will help you to do this.



WHAT IS A FOSTER CARER?

Foster carers are special people who have been carefully chosen to look after other parents' (mummies and daddies) children. Foster carers do all the good things parents do, such as looking after you, telling you what you can and cannot do in and outside of the house, and helping you with things like cleaning your teeth and making sure you eat the right food.

Your foster carer/s names are:

.....
.....

Your foster carers live at:

.....
.....

Sometimes foster carers have their own children living with them. Do your foster carers have children who also live with you? They are:

.....
.....

Does anyone else live with you and your foster family? Who are they?

.....
.....

Do your foster carers have pets? What are their names? And what sort of pets are they?

.....
.....

If you are not feeling very well foster carers will take you to the doctors. If you have an accident foster carers will take you to the hospital. Foster carers will take you to nursery or school. Foster carers will give you lots of smiles when you are being good at nursery or school. Foster carers will play with you in and outside of the house and they will teach you to colour books and read and write. Your foster carers work for people called **Shining Stars Fostering Agency Limited**.

WHY DO I HAVE TO LIVE WITH A FOSTER CARER?

Children live with foster carers for all sorts of reasons, but it's not because of anything you have done wrong. When a child cannot live with their own family, they can live in a foster home for a while. Moving into a new and different family is not easy, but your Social Worker and your foster carers want to make sure you are in a safe, caring and happy home.



HOW ABOUT HAVING SOME FUN NOW. CAN YOU JOIN THE DOTS TO REVEAL THE HIDDEN PICTURE.





Our little friends Jack, Sarah, Ali and Enzo love to draw.

Would you like to draw a Picture too?



WHEN WILL I SEE MY FAMILY?

Your family is important to you. Just because you live in a foster home doesn't mean that you have to lose touch with your family. We will make arrangements with your social worker about seeing your mummy and daddy, brothers and sisters and other members of your family. You may see them in your foster home or at another safe place. Your Social Worker will speak with you about when you



can see your family and how often you can see them. Tell them who you want to see so they can try and make sure this happens. Your Social Worker is someone who will make sure you are OK. Your Social Worker will visit you regularly and see you by yourself. You can talk with your Social Worker about what is happening to you.

Your social worker is:

.....

His/her contact number is:

.....

His/her email is:

Who is in your family?

.....
.....

You can help your social worker get things right for you by telling them what you think. You can tell them who you would like to see and who you don't want to see and they will do their best to help with this. Your social worker will always do what is best for you.

What are your wishes about seeing your family?

.....
.....
.....

Who would you like to see?

.....
.....

Wishes are what you want to do, what you want to happen, or what you want someone to do for you.

This is how I am feeling today?

.....

These are my wishes today?

.....



Frustrated



Embarrassed



Sad



Happy

SHINING STARS FOSTERING SOCIAL WORKERS

Your foster carers have their own fostering Supervising Social Worker. These people work for a company called Shining Stars Fostering Agency. Their job is to make sure your foster carers are looking after you properly and have all the help they need. These people will also talk to you to make sure you're happy and well cared for.

Your Foster Carer's Supervising Social Worker is

.....

Their contact number is:

.....

Their email is:

.....



WHAT ABOUT MY EDUCATION/SCHOOL?

The teachers will know that you are staying with foster carers at the moment. The foster carers will talk to your teachers to find out how you are getting on so that everyone can be sure that you are happy when you are at school.

What school do you go to?

.....

Who is your favourite grown up at school?

.....

Who is your best friend or friends?

.....

Who is your class teacher?

.....

Which year are you in?

.....

Your foster carer/s will make sure you get to school everyday.



LOOKING AFTER YOU AND KEEPING YOU SAFE & SOUND

Your foster carers will look after you and make sure that you are safe.

Your foster carers do the following:

- They will take you to see a doctor to make sure you are ok.
- Cook healthy food to make sure you are strong.
- Take you to see the dentist to make sure you've got strong teeth.
- Take you to the optician to check your twinkly eyes



IF YOU DON'T FEEL WELL PLEASE TELL YOUR FOSTER CARER

SAFETY

We want you to be as happy as possible with your foster carers and please talk to your foster carers if you are feeling upset or unhappy. If you would like to speak to your Social Worker your foster carer will ring and let them know you want to talk to them.

If for some reason you don't feel you can talk to your foster carers then there are other people you can talk to. You can talk to your Social Worker, a teacher or someone at school, a member of your family or any other grown-up that you trust.

When your Social Worker comes to visit you can see them on your own don't be afraid to talk to them, they are there to make sure that everything is ok for you.

Have a talk with your foster carers so that they know:

The things that you like to do:

.....
.....
.....

What you like to eat?

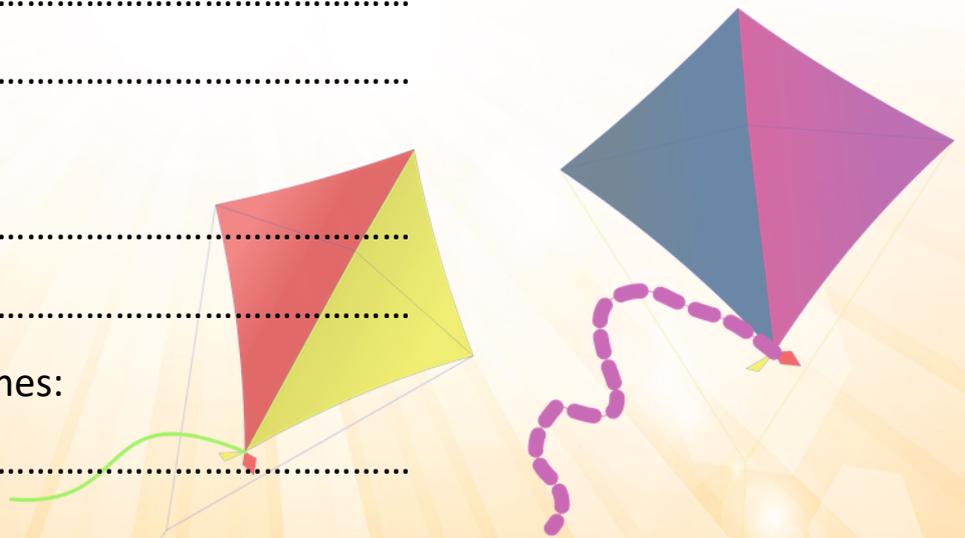
.....
.....

Your favorite toys and games:

.....
.....
.....

Your favorite TV programmes, music and books

.....
.....



HAPPY FOSTER FAMILIES

Every family has rules and so does your foster family. Everyone has rules so that we can live together in a safe and happy way. Some rules are about how to treat each other, about listening to each other and keeping safe. Some rules are about us being healthy and well.

What are your foster carers' rules? You can write them down to help you remember.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

WHO DECIDES WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME?

Your foster carers will make day-to-day decisions about you such as what you are going to have for dinner or tea and what time you must go to bed but while you live with your foster carers, there will be lots of meetings and things called 'plans' made for you. A plan is like a map – it tells you where you are and where you should be.



WHO DOES MY PLANS?

Your Social Worker will make all of your plans for you. The biggest plan is called your 'care plan' or a 'child plan' and includes everything that's important to you such as: your school, your health, when you see your family and friends how long you will stay with your foster family, your wishes and feelings and your welfare.

The second biggest plan for you is called your 'permanence plan'. This happens when you have been with your foster carers for about 4 months. It is to tell you where the very best place for you to live is, how long you can live there and the very best people to look after you if your mummy and daddy, grandparents or other relatives cannot care for you.



WHAT IF I HAVE A PROBLEM OR I AM SAD?

We want to know if you are worried, frightened or sad. You must tell someone if you are worried, frightened or sad. There are lots of ways you can tell people and lots of people you can tell if you are worried, frightened or sad.

You can tell your:

- Foster carer
- Your social worker
- Supervising social worker
- Family
- Teacher
- A friend
- Ofsted
- Childline
- Commissioner for children
- Complaints officer at local authority



MAKING A COMPLAINT

Your social worker should have given you a little book telling you how to make a complaint when you came to your foster carers. Our fostering social worker will also give you some information.

DO YOU HAVE A LITTLE COMPLAINTS BOOK FROM YOUR SOCIAL WORKER?

Yes

No

If not ask your foster carer to get one from your Social Worker, or you can ask them for the booklet and ask for a copy of Shining Stars Complaints and Representations Policy for Children and Young People. You can also make a complaint by telling the fostering Social Worker or your foster carer. Or you can make a complaint by ringing us, emailing or writing to us. Our details are:

Shining Stars Fostering Limited Agency

The Lansdowne Building,

No 2 Lansdowne Road

Croydon CR9 2ER

Contact Phone: 020 8263 6260

Email: info@shiningstarsfostering.com

YOU ALSO HAVE THE RIGHT TO TALK DIRECTLY TO AN ORGANIZATION CALLED OFSTED IF YOU LIVE IN ENGLAND. THEIR DETAILS ARE:

Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills)

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street,
Manchester M1 2WD
0300 123 1231
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk
0300 123 4666
(Contact Ofsted about any concerns)
CIE@ofsted.gov.uk

THERE ARE ALSO OTHER ORGANISATIONS THAT YOU CAN CONTACT SUCH AS:

Children's Commissioner for England

Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT
020 7783 8330
info.request@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Bullying UK

www.bullying.co.uk
For advice and support on dealing with bullying
0808 800 2222

BECOME

The charity for children in care and young care leavers
15-18 White Lion Street
London N1 9PG
0800 023 2033
advice@becomecharity.org.uk

NSPCC

The UK's Children's Charity
Weston House, 42 Curtain Road
London- EC2A 3NH
0808 800 500
help@nspcc.org.uk



Childline is a service provided by NSPCC
0800 1111

EMERGENCIES



An emergency can be:

- When you or someone else is hurt or in danger
- When you think something really bad is happening

If you think there is an emergency **call** for help on **999** straight away - you will speak to a person called an operator who will listen to you and tell you what to do.

If you have a problem in your foster home at night, on weekends, or in the holidays and can't get in touch with your Social worker you can call the Emergency Duty Team onand they will try and help you.

Remember to keep this little book somewhere safe so you can come back and read it any time you need to!

This booklet was created in consultation with children looked after.