

Support and supervision

Once you are approved as a short breaks foster carer you will have your own supervising social worker, from the Family Placement Team, on hand to give advice, guidance and supervision. You will also have the opportunity to attend regular support groups with other foster carers and take part in ongoing training.

The children you are looking after will also have their own social worker.

Equipment

The Family Placement Team will provide you with the essential equipment you might need, including, towels, stairgates, push-chairs etc for the young people you look after.

What happens next?

If you would like to find out more please contact the Family Placement Team and you will be visited at home by a social worker from the Family Placement Team who can discuss any queries you have in more detail.

SHORT BREAKS FOSTER CARE

COMMUNICATING CLEARLY

We are happy to translate on request and provide information and publications in other formats, including braille, tape or large print.

如有需要我們樂意提供翻譯本，和其他版本的資訊與刊物，包括盲人點字、錄音帶或大字體。

Zapewnimy tłumaczenie na żądanie oraz dostarczymy informacje i publikacje w innych formatach, w tym Braillem, na kasecie magnetofonowej lub dużym drukiem.

ਅਸੀਂ ਸੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਨਾਲ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਦਕਾਰੀ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਬਰੈਲ, ਟੇਪ ਜਾਂ ਵੱਡੀ ਛਪਾਈ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹਨ।

Körler için kabartma yazılar, kaset ve büyük nüshalar da dahil olmak üzere, istenilen bilgileri sağlamak ve tercüme etmekten memnuniyet duyuyoruz.

اگر آپ چاہیں تو ہم خوشی سے آپ کو ترجمہ فراہم کر سکتے ہیں اور معلومات اور مواد کے نسخوں میں اضافہ کر سکتے ہیں۔

The sinn toilichte cadar-theangachadh ma thèid iarraidh agus fiosrachadh agus foillseachaidhean a thoirt seachad ann an cruthan eile.

Contact 0131 270 7500 or email: communications@midlothian.gov.uk



For more information please contact the duty worker at the Family Centred Care Team on: **0131 270 5678** or familycentredcareduty@midlothian.gov.uk
www.midlothian.gov.uk/fostering

“Short breaks care means I can work & support a local child”

FOSTER MIDLOTHIAN



What is short breaks foster care?

Short breaks foster care offers children and their families some space from each other; this might be in response to a sudden crisis/emergency in the family or to provide regular planned breaks e.g. one week each month.

The primary purpose of short breaks care is to provide support to enable the child to remain living in the long-term with their own family. Regular breaks may make all the difference in helping a family cope. It may be that the child's behaviour is quite demanding and the parents may be struggling. It may be that the parents have their own emotional problems and don't have the space to attend to the child's needs.

Short breaks foster care can be offered on a regular basis to provide 'time-out' for full-time foster carers who are looking after children who require a lot of attention. Regular short breaks provide breathing space for the child and the foster carer, which will help the child or young person to remain in that placement.

Below are some examples of when short breaks foster care can be needed:

Amber (7) and Alex (5): live with their Mum; Julie, and baby sister. Julie is suffering from severe post-natal depression as she did, similarly, after the birth of the

older two children. Julie is quite an isolated young woman and has no support from her family. Julie's social worker and health visitor are extremely concerned about the care of Amber and Alex at weekends when there is not the "safety-net" of school.

Julie's social worker is requesting a short breaks foster carer to look after Amber and Alex every fortnight from Saturday morning, for an overnight stay and to return them home on Sunday tea-time. The duration of this would be until Julie recovered sufficiently from her post-natal depression to resume full-time care of her children. Short breaks care would give Julie a much needed break and prevent the children having to be taken into full-time foster care.

Sean (11): is with Midlothian foster carers and it is expected he will remain there for at least another six months. Sean's foster carers had planned an Anniversary weekend, for just the two of them, which was booked and paid for well in advance of Sean's placement commencing.

Sean's foster carers have requested a "one-off" short breaks weekend.

John (13): lives with his Mum who keeps poor health. Despite considerable family difficulties multi-agency support services have managed to sustain the level of care for John to remain at home.

However John's social worker has now made a request for short breaks care, hoping John can spend one weekend a month in a positive family environment at the same time allowing his Mum a break from looking after a teenager.

Why choose short breaks care?

Foster care involves looking after someone else's child or teenager in your home and working towards the child returning home. Even if the child is of school-age it can be difficult for someone in full-time employment to have children placed during the week. This is because carers are expected to be available during the day for the regular meetings with Social Workers and other professionals or to respond to emergencies with the child.

If you are employed full-time you may be interested in short breaks care, offering weekend short breaks on a regular basis, for example every other weekend.

Short breaks caring is a challenging job but it provides many rewards. Many carers find short breaks fostering enriches their own, and their children's, experience of family life.

What do short breaks carers do?

Offering short breaks care is not like caring for your own children. Many children bring emotions and behaviours, which can be quite

challenging for carers to cope with. These may reflect the difficulties the children have experienced or even their uncertainty about being in the 'strange' environment of short breaks care. Building up a trusting relationship with a wary or withdrawn child can take a lot of time and requires patience along with the reassurance of consistency and regular routines.

Short breaks care should offer children a positive family experience. Many carers enjoy the opportunity to get involved in activities, for example swimming or football, with the children having short breaks. You can have an invaluable role of encouraging children to develop new skills and confidence.

Who can be a short breaks foster carer?

We need many different kinds of short breaks carers to match the many different children requiring this service. There is no 'ideal' short breaks foster carer. You may, or may not, have children of your own. You may be single or in a stable relationship. Above all we are looking for people, over the age of twenty-five who are flexible, patient, like children and have plenty of energy.