

Children's Guide

**Description**

## **Children's Guide**

**A guide for children and young people**

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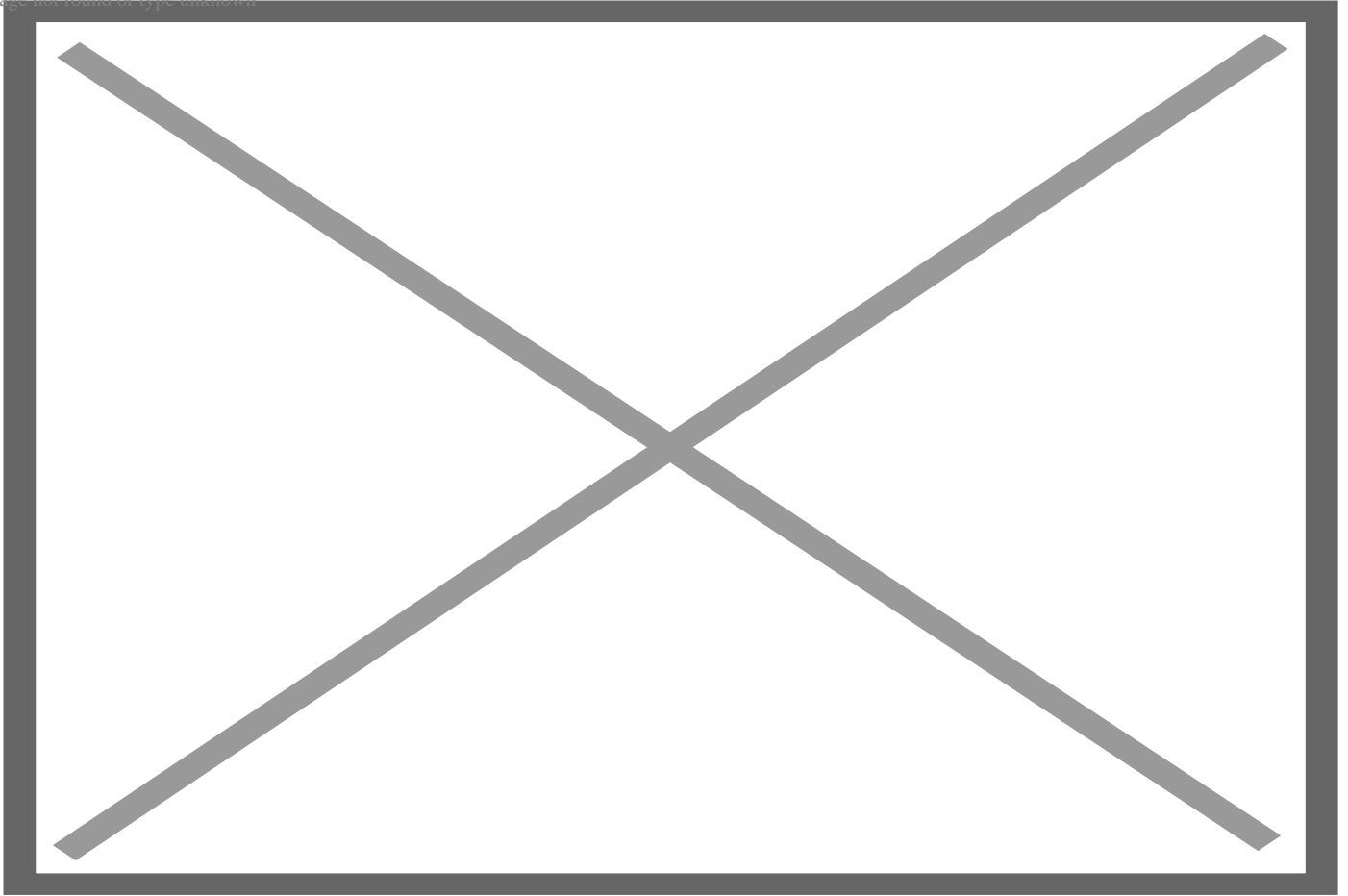
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## **Welcome to your fostering home**

Welcome to your foster home. Foster carers are people who help to look after children who need a home, either for a short time or for a long time. Being a foster carer is mostly about looking after children, but it is also a professional job, which means that the foster carers have to go to regular training, go to lots of meetings and they write lots of reports.

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## **Your foster carers**

If you want your foster carer to write down their name, and the names of new people you will meet over the next few days, they can do that for you, or they can just remind you if you forget their names.

Your foster carer is expected to do everything they can to make sure that you are comfortable in the home. You may have your own bedroom, or you may be sharing with your brother or sister. Either way, you will have your own bed, space for all of your things, and space to study, relax and spend time with other people. If you want to put things in your bedroom that are special to you, that is OK. Your foster carer will explain the fire plan to you so that you will know what to do if there is a fire in the home.

## **Other children in the home**

If there are other children in the home, you will be given the same care as them. So for example, you can all take turns in using the shower (or you can use it more if it is free), you will all have the same type of food, and your foster carers will try to give you equal amounts of time and attention. Some children (including you) may need more attention, for example if they're hurt or if they've had a bad day, and the foster carers will do their best to make sure that nobody feels left out.



## Getting affection

It is up to you if you want to cuddle your foster carer. Other ways of showing that you care for each other is to help each other with jobs or housework, writing nice notes to each other, saying nice things, giving small thoughtful gifts, having a nice chat, going for a walk together, or playing sports or board games together. Your foster carer will learn what activities you enjoy the most – perhaps you can experiment with a few different things until you find the best ways to help you to build a strong, trusting and happy relationship together.



## **Staying safe**

Your foster carer will do whatever they can to make sure you are safe, both inside the home and outside the home. If your behaviour makes you or anyone else unsafe, the foster carer will help you to do better so that you can be happier and safe.

Your foster carer will tell you when you can go out and where you can go, and you must always let your foster carer know where you are, so they can keep you safe. If anyone makes you feel unsafe, you must tell your foster carer or your social worker.

If you do something you're not supposed to, your foster carer will explain to you why you shouldn't do it. Your foster carer may speak to you in a firm tone of voice, but they won't shout loudly and they won't hurt you physically. Your foster carer should never want you to feel bad about yourself, so if they speak firmly, it's because they want what is best for you.

## **Self-care**

Your foster carer will also help you to take care of yourself by ensuring you wash and shower regularly, that you wash and comb your hair, keep your room clean, wear clean clothes and cut your nails when needed. Your foster carer will help you as much as you need if you need help at all.

Your foster carer will make you healthy food. You can speak with your foster carer about what you like to eat (including snacks), and what you don't like to eat, so they can try to make food that you will like. We hope that you'll also enjoy trying some new foods. Your foster carer will make sure that you can have three meals a day and some snacks in-between. If you need extra food, you can get it from the kitchen cupboards or fridge at any time, as long as you are not making yourself too unhealthy – your foster carer can help you to understand how much and what types of food are good for you.

## **Learning**

You will continue with your learning while you are in foster care – this may mean going to the same school or college as before, going to a new school or college, or learning from home. Your foster carer will help you with your homework, and will help you with your relationships with friends and teachers.

## **Staying in touch**

If you want to stay in touch with any other people, you can speak with your social worker about the plans for you to stay in touch – this includes family members, friends, and previous foster carers. You will only be able to see people if your social worker is confident that you will be safe and that it is good for you to see them. Your foster carer can take you to visit anyone who lives nearby and can help you to contact people on the phone or by video calls.

## **Sports**

You'll be able to carry on with any sports activities that you enjoy, and try new ones if you want to – your foster carer is happy to take you to sports clubs. You can also do other fun things like drawing, dance, singing, go to the cinema, or go shopping, either with your fostering family or with friends.

You will get pocket money every week, which you can use for fun activities, sweets, toys or anything else that is important to you. Your foster carer will help you to make sure you spend your money wisely.



## Celebrations

Your foster carer wants you to have as many good experiences as possible, so you'll celebrate events like your birthday, Christmas, New Year and other dates that are important to you – you may need to tell your foster carer which other dates are important to you.

If there are any dates or times that make you feel upset, you should tell your foster carer, so they can give you extra support to help you with any difficult feelings.



## Paperwork

Foster carers have to write lots of reports. One of these is the 'foster carer recordings' – this is a bit like a journal for you. For the first few weeks your foster carer will do a daily record, and later on it will be weekly, then maybe monthly (if you live with them for a long time). You can have a look at these records, or even better, you can help your foster carer to write them. Your foster carer can even add some photographs of you to the records – we can send copies of these records to you whenever you want them.

## Social workers

Your foster carer has a social worker, who is sometimes called a 'supervising social worker', or 'fostering social worker'. The fostering social worker will give advice to your foster carer about how to help you. The fostering social worker will speak with you on your own at least once a month, to make sure that you have the time to say whatever you want to – you can ask the fostering social worker to explain their job if you want to know more.

You also have your own social worker, whose job it is to make sure you are looked after well.

You will meet your independent reviewing officer when the professionals meet to discuss your plan –



the independent reviewing officer makes sure that the social workers are doing a good job and that you're given the best support that you can be given. There are also other people, like education and health staff, whose job it is to help you. You may also have support from family members or other adults who work together to give you the best support that we can.

All the adults in your life should be working together to make sure that you're given the best support possible. All of the adults who are working together to help you will put a plan together for you. It is important that the plan is explained to you and that you say what you think about the plan. The plan is to make sure that you are given good help when you get angry (everyone gets angry sometimes), that you are helped with any sadness, that you can do your best with education or school, that you're healthy, that you're able to enjoy sports and leisure activities and that you're learning new skills (like cooking, cleaning and spending money wisely) which will help you to become a confident, happy and independent adult. You can add things to the plan if you want to and you should say if you don't agree with anything in the plan.

The adults who are working together to help you need to know quite a lot about you so they will ask you quite a lot of questions. The other people who live with you (including the children) may be told what they need to know so that you can be given the help you need. Other than the people who are involved in helping you, nobody will be told things about you, such as why you are in foster care.

## **Plans for you**

Different children stay in foster care and in fostering homes for different lengths of time – some children only stay for a few days and others stay for many years. Your social worker will explain your plan to you and why those decisions are made for you. If you don't agree with the plan, you should tell your social worker and any other adults who are working together to help you.

## **Feeling heard**

If you think the adults aren't listening to you, or aren't looking after you in the best way that they can, or if you have any ideas for how things could be better for you, you should speak with any of the adults who are working together to help you. You should never worry about telling adults if you are unhappy – sometimes even adults and professionals need the help of children to tell them how to do better.

The first person you should speak with is your foster carer or your social worker. Your foster carer's social worker will also meet with you, so you can speak with them. You may also have teachers or other adults who you meet with – you can ask to speak with them about anything that is upsetting you. Your 'independent reviewing officer' will meet you at your care reviews, but you can ask to meet with them at any time if you think you need more support (you can ask your social worker to give you the contact information for the independent reviewing officer).

If you have any feedback or ideas about how your foster carer, or their social worker, or Sparks Fostering could do better, you can speak with your foster carer and their social worker about it. You can also ask to speak with the registered manager, whether you have a complaint or just want a chat, the Sparks Fostering registered manager would be happy to hear from you.

You can also ask for an ‘independent advocate’ to meet with you regularly – their job is to listen to you and to make sure that everyone understands what you want. If you want someone to spend time with you, just to listen to you and do fun activities, you can ask for an ‘independent visitor’.

You also have the choice to call Childline – they will also listen to you and help you if you are struggling – their website is [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) and their phone number is [0800 1111](tel:08001111).

If you think that Sparks Fostering isn’t doing a good job in keeping children safe and they’re not listening to you, you can speak with Ofsted, whose job it is to make sure that fostering agencies look after children well. You can phone Ofsted on [0300 123 1231](tel:03001231231) or email them at [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

The Children’s Commissioner runs an advice line for children. [Click here](#) to visit the website.

We need you to say if there is anything making you unhappy because we want you to be happy, to feel cared for and valued and for you to be successful in your life. If you want to call or email any of the services listed above, you can do so in private, or with the support of any adults that you choose to support you.

If you think we are doing a good job, you can let your foster carer, social worker, the fostering social worker or Registered Manager know.

## Sparks Fostering family

The person responsible for making sure that Sparks Fostering is working well to look after the children is the ‘Registered Manager’ – you will meet the Registered Manager once you have settled into the fostering home. You can ask to speak with the Registered Manager by emailing [info@sparksfostering.org](mailto:info@sparksfostering.org) or phone [0161 262 0999](tel:01612620999). You can contact the Registered Manager if you feel that your foster carer or social workers (or their managers) aren’t looking after you well (and not listening to you), or you can contact the Registered Manager to tell us what is going well, or you can let us know if you have any ideas for what we can do better.

Sparks Fostering also has a ‘Responsible Individual’ whose job is to make sure that the Registered Manager is doing their work well. You can ask to speak with the Responsible Individual if you don’t feel comfortable talking to the Registered Manager (using the same contact information).

Your foster carer will make sure that you know the names of everyone you will meet over the next few weeks. You will also meet your foster carer’s social worker regularly and if you want to speak with the fostering social worker’s manager, you can ask to meet them.

We know it can be difficult moving to a new family, and getting to know so many new people, and we will do our best to help you so that we can make things easier for you.



## Resources For Residents

### For the foster carer's own children

[Braver than me \(Rhonda Wagner\)](#). Braver Than Me is a story about Avery, a loquacious girl whose family welcomes their first foster child into their home. Avery shares with her Mom and Dad about her mixed-up feelings. She and her parents learn together what it is like to be a foster family-that it's okay to feel two emotions at the same time, especially when reunification takes place. Love, bravery, and empathy fill the pages as Avery realizes her foster sibling is "braver than me."

[The stuffed giraffe: A foster care story \(Kimber Daley\)](#). "The Stuffed Giraffe" is the story of Ben, a little boy who is full of excitement (and a little bit of nervousness) at the thought of becoming a foster brother. Will he like having a baby in his house? What if she's stinky? What if she cries all the time? Follow along on this heartwarming journey of Ben, baby Hope, and her stuffed giraffe, Summer. This book is perfect for foster families, foster families in training, children in the foster care system, foster agencies, or anyone who would like to learn a little bit more about the experiences of foster families. This beautifully illustrated book will capture the attention, and the hearts, of children and adults of all ages.

### Under 10s

[A land called grief \(Maddie Janes\)](#) A Land Called Grief is a story that helps little and big kids alike understand the emotions that show up when we navigate through the stages of grief. Although grief can be heavy, A Land Called Grief, helps us understand that our grief can be turned into something beautiful. A beauty that can heal. A beauty that can be shared.

[A mother for Choco \(Keiko Kasza\)](#) Family is about love no matter how different parents and children may be, adopted or not. Choco wishes he had a mother, but who could she be? He sets off to find her, asking all kinds of animals, but he doesn't meet anyone who looks just like him. He doesn't even think of asking Mrs. Bear if she's his mother-but then she starts to do just the things a mommy might do. And when she brings him home, he meets her other children-a piglet, a hippo, and an alligator-and learns that families can come in all shapes and sizes and still fit together.

[A safe place for Rufus – Elfa and the box of memories – Morris and the bundle of worries.](#) Aimed at children aged three and over, these picture books address key issues for all young people – feeling safe, the importance of memories, and dealing with fears and worries.

[Delly Duck: Why a little chick couldn't stay with his birth mother \(Holly Marlow\)](#). When Delly Duck lays an egg, she is excited for it to hatch. But she doesn't really know how to keep an egg safe, or how to look after her chick when he hatches. See how a concerned goose tries to help Delly to learn how to care for her chick, in this touching adoption story. Delly Duck is intended to help support and stimulate discussion around some of the questions an adopted or fostered child (or another child trying to understand adoption) may have. The story can be used to help answer difficult and emotive questions, such as Why can't I live with my birth mother? and Why didn't someone just teach her how to parent me safely?

[Dennis and the big decisions \(Paul Sambrooks\)](#). This brightly illustrated picture book explains to young children who are living in foster care about why they have moved from their family, why they may have future moves, and who will make these decisions. It is the sequel to the ever-popular Dennis Duckling (BAAF 2009). The story follows Dennis, living in foster care, as important decisions are made about where he should live and who with. It looks at the range of adults who are involved in decision making, including social workers, foster carers, judges and birth parents, and emphasises how they all want to make the right choice for Dennis. The story can help children who have to be separated from their birth parents to understand what is happening to them and why, what the future may hold, and how they can be involved in making big decisions no matter how old or young they are. It clearly explains that children are not responsible for making decisions, or resolving the difficulties that surround them, but that their wishes and feelings are vitally important and will be listened to. Dennis Duckling and the Big Decisions does not have a set ending. It is left to the child and reader to imagine what happens next, hopefully reflecting the plan for the individual child. The story can be revisited and expanded many times as plans progress and decisions about the child's future become clearer.

[Finding a family for Tommy \(Rebecca Daniel\)](#). Tommy needs a new family to give him lots of love, but where will he find one? On a farm? In the pond? At the zoo? Which family will be right for Tommy? This lift-the-flap picture book introduces young children to the idea of different families and the meaning of belonging. It can also be used to address concepts of fostering, adoption and moving to a new home.

[Fitzy needs a family \(Kait Isaak\)](#). Fitzy Needs a Family explains Foster Care in a relatable way to children. Walk alongside the Panda family as they welcome Fitzy into their home.

[Foster care: One dog's story of change \(Julia Cook\)](#). In this heartfelt story from the bestselling author of My Mouth is a Volcano!, Foster meets new friends and a kind foster mom who help him navigate the fears and feelings associated with going into foster care. Foster has lived with his mom and "sometimes dad" all of his life...until now. And like so many others entering foster care, he has more questions than answers and so many new feelings to deal with. Written in an honest, approachable way, Foster Care will encourage children entering or already in foster care and help them understand they are not alone. Foster, Daisy, Zeke, Simpson, and Rex all have different circumstances which brought them to foster care. Together they talk through their stories and realize this is right where they need to be for now; under the caring watch of foster mom, Miss Beulah.

[Help your dragon cope with trauma](#): A cute children story book to help children understand and overcome traumatic events. The series also has other books which may be useful to the children we look after (Steve Herman)

[How are you feeling today baby bear? Exploring big feelings after living in a stormy home. \(Jane Evans\)](#)

Baby Bear lives in a home with the Big Bears, and loves to chase butterflies and make mud pies – they make Baby Bear's tummy fill with sunshine. Then, one night, Baby Bear hears a big storm downstairs in the house and in the morning, Baby Bear's tummy starts to feel grey and rainy. How will such a small bear cope with these big new feelings? This sensitive, charming storybook is written to help children who have lived with violence at home to begin to explore and name their feelings. Accompanied by notes for adults on how to use each page of the story to start conversations, it also features fun games and activities to help to understand and express difficult emotions. It will be a useful book for social workers, counsellors, domestic violence workers and all grown-ups working with

children.

[I love you when you're angry](#) (Erin Winters)

[Kids need to be safe: A book for children in foster care \(Julie Nelson\)](#). "Kids are important... They need safe places to live, and safe places to play." For some kids, this means living with foster parents. In simple words and full-color illustrations, this book explains why some kids move to foster homes, what foster parents do, and ways kids might feel during foster care. Children often believe that they are in foster care because they are "bad." This book makes it clear that the troubles in their lives are not their fault; the message throughout is one of hope and support. Includes resources and information for parents, foster parents, social workers, counselors, and teachers.

[Mama's waves](#) and [Daddy's waves](#). Ellie's mama/dad did not come for their visit, and Ellie is stuck in a cloud of sadness and anger as she tries to understand why. Fortunately, Miss K. and Ellie's Uncle Finny are there to help her. Using the metaphor of a wave, they help Ellie talk about and understand her mummy/daddy's ups and downs, recognize and hold on to loving memories, and know that she is not alone.

[Maybe days: A book for children in foster care \(Jennifer Wilgocki\)](#). Will I live with my parents again? Will I stay with my foster parents forever? For children in foster care, the answer to many questions is often "maybe." Maybe Days addresses the questions, feelings, and concerns these children most often face. Honest and reassuring, it also provides basic information that children want and need to know, including the roles of various people in the foster care system and whom to ask for help. An extensive afterword for adults caring for foster children describes the child's experience, underscores the importance of open communication, and outlines a variety of ways to help children adjust to the "maybe days" and to thrive.

[Miss Maple's Seeds – Read aloud picture book](#). On YouTube. Not about fostering, but has lots of lessons which can related to fostering.

[Morris and the bundle of worries \(Jill Seeney\)](#). All young children have worries, but looked after children may have more worries than most as they lack the reassurance and security of permanent, stable family life. In this colourful picture book for young children, Morris the mole finds out that talking about his problems, and facing his worries with the help of others, is more helpful than hiding his fears. The book explores the importance of sharing worries and thereby learning to cope with and manage them.

[Murphy's three homes: A story for children in foster care \(Jan Levinson Gilman\)](#). Murphy, a Tibetan Terrier puppy, describes the emotional ups and downs of being in multiple foster homes and living in unfamiliar surroundings until he is placed in a caring foster home where he feels comfortable and valued once again.

[No matter what: A foster care tale \(Josh Shipp\)](#). Josh was a squirrel without a family. Between the pelicans, the leopards, the otters, the snakes, and many more, no one seemed to want a squirrel like him. Josh didn't want a family, either. He did everything he could to scare those families away first, but the elephants weren't like other families. The elephants were very large and very patient, and they wanted Josh to be part of their family today, tomorrow, and the day after tomorrow. When Josh takes his plans a little too far and gets into a sticky situation, will Josh finally be convinced that this family is

his? From award-winning motivational speaker and bestselling author Josh Shipp comes a mostly autobiographical tale about finding home. With hilarious illustrations and a heartwarming message, *No Matter What: A Foster Care Tale* is sure to have your own family in peals of laughter and holding each other tight.

[Room in the nest](#): An inclusive foster care story to explain fostering, reunification, kinship care etc. (Holly Marlow).

[Spark learns to fly \(Judith Foxon\)](#). Spark the little dragon lives happily with his parents and baby sister, Flame, until his mum and dad start fighting. When the children get injured, they have to go and live with a foster carer, who helps them understand their situation and come to terms with their problems and painful emotions. How did Spark and Flame feel when they had to leave their family home? What memories do they have of what happened and how do they deal with them? Can they ever live with their mum and dad again?

[The colour of us \(Christie Hainsby and others\)](#). Developed in collaboration with an educational specialist and authenticity readers, this interactive board book is designed to encourage a first conversation about skin color. It explores and celebrates the many different colors of us, with a turning wheel showing different faces, and explains to kids that we are all different and unique. Aimed at kids from 2 – 5 years old. Kids will be excited to receive this as: -A birthday present, Valentine's Day gift, Easter basket goodie, or stocking stuffer-A road trip activity, boredom buster, or good behavior reward.

[The complete Sarah Naish Therapeutic Parenting Library for Children](#): Nine therapeutic storybooks for children who have experienced trauma.

[The foster dragon: A story about foster care \(Steve Herman\)](#). Join Drew and his dragon Diggory Doo on this uplifting story to understand what it means to be a foster child and the many issues, questions, and feelings they have that are directly or indirectly affected by Foster Care. With the cute and relatable Dragon Diggory Doo going through the same issues children have, this is an essential book to help children cope with difficult challenges such as changing families, being removed from a home, or how scary things can be, and how to navigate the fears and feelings going into Foster Care.

[The IGLOO guide to foster care and adoptions: A guide to difficult conversations for 5 to 12 year olds \(Luke B Mitchell\)](#). This book is a friendly guide to help kids navigate tricky questions about their Foster Care or Adoptive home. For the little ones, it's all about diving into the book together, sparking their thoughts about the questions they encounter, and how they could respond in various scenarios. They get to pick from these cool IGLOO choices that guide them. And guess what? This book serves up straightforward explanations, packed with real-life examples and helpful suggestions that kids can make their own!

[The Yellow Shirt: A journey through foster care \(Liane Joly\)](#). Are you caring for a child currently in foster care? Have they moved through multiple foster homes and you're looking for a way to bring up those hard questions and emotions? Follow the Yellow Shirt as it moves through different homes while waiting to find its forever home! The Yellow Shirt brings up some big feelings and questions children in foster care may have and answers them once and for all.

[When I was little...a child's journey in overcoming abuse and trauma](#) (Keri Vellis)

## Teens

[Chloe's journey through foster care \(Karen Eve Jeter Thomspen\)](#). This is a realistic fiction story about a girl named Chloe. Chloe shares her experience with foster care and her struggles with her emotions as she adjusts to the changes in her life. Being able to see foster care through Chloe's perspective will hopefully help children in foster care understand they are not alone and their feelings are normal. Although Chloe experienced challenges in her journey, life changed for her when she went to live with Ms. Abney. Meeting Ms. Abney the best thing that happened to Chloe. She still misses her mom, but Chloe is comfortable in her new forever home.

[Control freak trilogy \(Henrietta Bond\)](#). How do you hold it together when you're leaving care, falling in love and your little brother's gone missing? Seventeen-year-old Holly Richards is tough, practical, determined, and has her whole future carefully mapped out. So for her, leaving foster care to move into her own flat should be no problem. But Holly hasn't bargained for the problems that an out-of-control brother, a too-good-to-be-true boyfriend and a lovestruck best friend can create. As her perfectly laid plans go pear-shaped, does she have the nerve to stay in control? The first in a trilogy, this realistic and engrossing novel for young people is ideal reading for all those over the age of 13, with a care background or not.

[Forever, or a long, long time \(Caela Carter\)](#). Flora and her brother, Julian, don't believe they were born. They've lived in so many foster homes, they can't remember where they came from. And even now that they've been adopted, Flora still struggles to believe that they've found their forever home. Though Flora is trying her best to trust two new people, when she finds out that there will be a new baby, she's worried that there won't be enough love for everyone. So along with their new mother, Flora and Julian begin a journey to go back and discover their past—for only then can they really begin to build their future.

[Know my place \(Eve Ainsworth\)](#). A teenager's longing for family and a place to call home is poignantly portrayed in this heartfelt and ultimately uplifting story of life in the foster-care system from bestselling author Eve Ainsworth. Feeling betrayed when her long-term foster placement breaks down, Amy is sent to live with a new family, the Dawsons. Although initially reluctant to trust them, she eventually starts to let down her guard. But just when it seems like she's found her forever family, she hears a telephone call that suggests things aren't going to work out. Will Amy be abandoned again – or does she dare hope that she might finally have found home?

[Long way home \(Michael Morpurgo\)](#). Long Way Home is a heartfelt tale of an orphaned boy in search of family from Britain's best-loved children's author, Michael Morpurgo. Another summer. Another foster family. George has already made up his mind to run away, back to the children's home. None of the previous families have wanted him. Why should the Dyers be any different? But George begins to feel at ease with Tom Dyer and his sister Storme, even happy, and changes his mind. He could even feel at home with them couldn't he?

## Adults

[A terrible secret \(Cathy Glass\)](#). Tilly hates her stepfather, Dave. He abuses her mother, but she refuses to leave him. Frightened for her own safety, Tilly asks to go into foster care and is placed with Cathy. Tilly arrives with a graze on her cheek and Cathy becomes increasingly concerned by Dave's



behaviour, especially when she learns he has been showering Tilly with gifts. While she's busy looking after Tilly and trying to keep her safe, Cathy is also worried about her own daughter, Lucy. She has a very difficult decision to make that will affect the rest of her life, and Cathy hopes she makes the right choice.

[Fifty-one moves \(Ben Ashcroft\)](#). A 'Going Straight' genre life story which breaks new ground in taking as its focus the vagaries of the child care system and in doing so is re-assuring for professionals and young people in care alike. It is a shocking fact that whilst just one per cent of young people enter care to be 'looked after' by a local authority, foster parents and in children's homes, a whopping 27 per cent of prisoners have been in care at some time or another. Ben Ashcroft was one of these. Fifty-one Moves is his vivid and telling first-hand account of his experiences in 37 different establishments. Altogether – as the book's title implies – he was moved 51 times from his first placement as a ten-year-old until he left care at age 16, as he drifted into penal custody. With his experiences of young offender institutions behind him and out of trouble for ten years, his is a positive example of personal change.

[Foster care and me \(Judith A.M. Denton\)](#). Placed in Foster Care at the age of 9, growing up through the system, Judith experienced exclusions from School and College, a run in with the Law, and then as a Care Leaver, she experienced a period of poor Mental Health. But thankfully her story doesn't end there.... In this real-life narrative, Judith openly details the challenges faced and overcome, at every stage of her journey through and out of the Foster Care System. You'll also find 'Messages' she has penned to inspire hope to Children In Care and Care Leavers, along with 'Messages' to Foster Carers, Social Workers, School Staff and our Government, a call to action, to make the urgent changes she believes is needed to help improve the outcomes and life chances of our Looked After Community. Now the Founder and CEO of The Transformed You, providing Intervention and Support Mentoring Programmes to improve their outcomes and life chances of Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers, aged 11 – 25 who have behaviour, emotional and social difficulties, Judith is also a sought-after Keynote Speaker at Social Care Conferences and a member of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham's Fostering Panel, positioned to help make sure our Children and Young People in Care get the best of Care, and as you read you will be inspired to see and believe that Change Is Possible!

[Hackney Child \(Hope Daniels\)](#). At the age of nine, Hope Daniels walked into Stoke Newington Police Station with her little brothers and asked to be taken into care. Home life was intolerable: both of Hope's parents were alcoholics and her mum was a prostitute. The year was 1983. As London emerged into a new era of wealth and opportunity, the Daniels children lived in desperate poverty, neglected and barely nourished. Hounded by vigilante neighbours and vulnerable to the drunken behaviour of her parents' friends, Hope had to draw on her inner strength. Hackney Child is Hope's gripping story of physical and emotional survival – and the lifeline given to her by the support of professionals working in the care system. Despite all the challenges she faced, Hope never lost compassion for her parents, particularly her alcoholic father. Her experiences make essential reading and show that, with the right help, the least fortunate children have the potential not only to recover but to thrive.

[Holding on and hanging in \(Lorna Miles\)](#). This compelling story tracks Wayne's journey from first being fostered by Lorna at the age of seven, in a therapeutic fostering placement, through nearly five years of family life. Wayne is traumatised by his early experiences of neglect and domestic abuse. Even when surrounded by a team of experienced foster carers, counsellors and therapists, helping him grow

and heal will be a long and difficult process. But Lorna and her family are determined not to give up hope.

[Just another slice – a foster carer story based on true events \(Dr. Sharon Zaffarese-Dippold\)](#). In *Just Another Slice*, nine-year-old Sarah Bailey tries to survive in a family full of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse while at the same time trying to protect her younger brother Curtis. Sarah learns that asking for Just Another Slice of toast is not the only thing in her life she will be denied. Yet, in a world full of cruelty, she finds kindness and happiness in the most unsuspecting people, places, and things. Sarah and Curtis's foster care story is based on actual events about Dr. Sharon Zaffarese-Dippold and her brother, Carl. In this book, Sarah and Curtis learn they are foster children. Join their journey of laughter, pain, hope, and resiliency. You will see, hear and feel what Sarah and Curtis does throughout this sad and inspiring story of not just surviving but thriving.

[My name is Why \(Lemn Sissay\)](#). At the age of seventeen, after a childhood in a foster family followed by six years in care homes, Norman Greenwood was given his birth certificate. He learned that his real name was not Norman. It was Lemn Sissay. He was British and Ethiopian. And he learned that his mother had been pleading for his safe return to her since his birth. This is Lemn's story: a story of neglect and determination, misfortune and hope, cruelty and triumph.

[Nobody's Child \(Kate Adie\)](#). What's your name? Where were you born? What is your date of birth? Simple questions that we are asked throughout our life – but what if you didn't know the answers? Journalist and presenter of BBC Radio 4's *From Our Own Correspondent* Kate Adie uncovers the extraordinary, moving and inspiring stories of just such children – without mother or father, any knowledge of who they might be, or even a name to call their own. With a curiosity inspired by her own circumstances as an adopted child, Kate shows how the most remarkable adults have survived the experience of abandonment. From every perspective Kate Adie brings us a personal, moving and fascinating insight into the very toughest of childhood experiences – and shows what makes us who we really are.

[Silenced: The shocking true story of a young girl too afraid to speak](#) (Rosie Lewis)

[Terrified \(Angela Hart\)](#). It tells the emotionally devastating but ultimately uplifting true story of Vicky, a little girl who arrives on Angela's doorstep unwanted and unloved after suffering years of emotional abuse at the hands of her mother. Desperate never to return home, Vicky is haunted by many demons and waking nightmares. This book tells the moving story of Angela's determination to set Vicky free.

[The brightness of stars: Stories from care experienced adults to inspire change \(Lisa Cherry\)](#). In this poignant book, Lisa Cherry brings together a collection of candid and personal reflections on the care system in the UK, offering alternative ways of thinking about the care experience, supporting better ways of working, and providing justification for a trauma-informed lens to be applied to all forms of work with those in care.

[The boy no one loved: A heartbreaking true story of abuse, abandonment and betrayal \(Casey Watson\)](#). Justin was five years old; his brothers two and three. Their mother, a heroin addict, had left them alone again. Later that day, after trying to burn down the family home, Justin was taken into care. Justin was taken into care at the age of five after deliberately burning down his family home. Six years on, after 20 failed placements, Justin arrives at Casey's home. Casey and her husband Mike are specialist foster carers. They practice a new style of foster care that focuses on modifying the

behaviour of profoundly damaged children. They are Justin's last hope, and it quickly becomes clear that they are facing a big challenge. Try as they might to make him welcome, he seems determined to strip his life of all the comforts they bring him, violently lashing out at schoolmates and family and throwing any affection they offer him back in their faces. After a childhood filled with hurt and rejection, Justin simply doesn't want to know. But, as it soon emerges, this is only the tip of a chilling iceberg. A visit to Justin's mother on Boxing Day reveals that there are some very dark underlying problems that Justin has never spoken about. As the full picture becomes clearer, and the horrific truth of Justin's early life is revealed, Casey and her family finally start to understand the pain he has suffered.

[The foster care rollercoaster: Stories from a couple who fostered 125 children](#) (Emma Jane)

[Thrown away child \(Loise Allen\)](#). Thrown Away Child is a memoir covering Louise Allen's abusive childhood in a foster home, how she survived – using her love of art as a sanctuary – and how she hopes to right old wrongs now by fostering children herself and campaigning for the improvement of foster care services. It is a compelling and inspirational story. This book gives a voice to the many children who grew up unhappily in care.

[Too scared to cry: And other true stories from the nation's favourite foster carer.](#) (Maggie Hartley). Maggie Hartley is one of the UK's most prolific foster mothers. This inspiring collection includes three heartbreaking, true short stories about the children who have passed through Maggie's care.

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