

Get involved with Foster Care Fortnight, 11–24 May

Foster Care Fortnight (FCF) is a national campaign taking place from 11 to 24 May, which aims to raise awareness of fostering, celebrate foster carers, and encourage more people to consider becoming foster carers.

As foster carers, you are our greatest advocates. Your experiences, insight and passion for fostering are incredibly powerful and play a vital role in encouraging others to consider fostering in their own communities. Thanks to carers like you, more children can grow up in safe, loving and supportive homes.

This Foster Care Fortnight, we would love you to get involved by helping to spread the word about fostering. By connecting with people and groups in your local area, you can start meaningful conversations in your community and help raise awareness of fostering.

To make it as easy as possible to get involved, a Foster Care Fortnight toolkit is attached. This includes a digital poster which can be emailed or printed, ready to use editorial, and social media images.

We also have event resources available, such as tablecloths, pull up banners, leaflets, and branded items like pens - which you may wish to borrow/use if you are attending or organising a local event.

If you have any questions or requests for resources, or would like to talk through ideas for getting involved, please contact **Michelle Mitchell, Communications Officer**, at michelle.mitchell@somerset.gov.uk.

Thank you for everything you do to support vulnerable young people, and for helping us make this Foster Care Fortnight a real celebration of fostering.

Helping to promote fostering in your community

Do you have a local newsletter or publication delivered in your area? – submit some editorial

Are you part of a school community or local group? – ask them to share a social media post or include editorial in their own communications

Is there a Facebook page for your town or village? – can they post about fostering?

Could you put a poster up on the local noticeboard?

Other ways to support:

- Contact your city, town or parish council to explore opportunities to promote fostering, such as helping to organise an informal coffee and chat event
- Speak at community groups, for example WI meetings or church coffee mornings, to share your experiences and encourage word of mouth conversations about fostering
- Asking a local business to display a fostering poster or outdoor banner
- Host or support a fostering stand at a summer fete, flower show or village day
- Use your social media channels to promote fostering by:

- Liking and sharing content from Fostering in Somerset's digital channels:
 - [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/fosteringinsomerset) - www.facebook.com/fosteringinsomerset
 - [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/fosteringinsomerset) - www.instagram.com/fosteringinsomerset
 - [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/fostering-in-somerset) - www.linkedin.com/company/fostering-in-somerset
- Filming a short video of yourself talking about fostering or why Foster Care Fortnight matters to you and sharing it with us to use on our socials
- Sharing posts about upcoming information sessions

Feel free to use any of the below editorial to submit to your local town or parish publications

Editorial #1 - Why Local Foster Carers Matter More Than Ever

Children in care are not strangers. They are local children from our towns and villages. When they need foster care, staying close to what they know can make a huge difference.

That's why local foster carers are so important.

Fostering locally helps children stay connected to their community, friends, and schools where possible. It gives them a sense of familiarity at a time when everything else may feel uncertain.

Those with experience of fostering know how powerful that can be. Simple things, like recognising a place name or knowing a local park, can help a child feel less alone.

Fostering is not about being perfect. It's about being consistent, kind, and willing to open your home to a child who needs support. You are given training, guidance, and financial support, but the most important thing you bring is yourself.

There is a real need for more foster carers in our area, especially people who can offer a stable home to older children and teenagers. These young people often get overlooked, yet they have so much to offer and gain from the right support.

If you have ever thought about fostering, even briefly, now is a good time to contact Fostering In Somerset and find out more. A conversation comes with no commitment, and you could make a lasting difference to a local child's life and future.

Visit fosteringinsomerset.org.uk or call 0800 587 9900 to find out more.

Editorial #2 - Fostering: A Local Role That Changes Lives

Across our communities, there are children who need foster care right now. These are local children who, for many reasons, are unable to live safely with their birth families and therefore need a stable, supportive home.

Fostering is about providing that stability. It offers children a safe place to live, routine, care, and the chance to feel part of a family while longer-term plans are made for their future.

There is often a misconception that fostering is only for a certain “type” of person. In reality, foster carers come from all walks of life. People can be single or partnered, working or retired, with or without children of their own. You don’t need to own your home to foster – many carers live in rented accommodation (private, council and housing association) and you can also have pets. What matters most is having the time, space, and commitment to care for a child.

There is a particular need for more foster carers locally, especially for older children and teenagers.

Anyone interested in fostering does not need to make an immediate commitment. Finding out more is simply a first step, and you can do so online at www.fosteringinsomerset.org.uk or by calling 0800 587 9900.

Foster carers receive training, ongoing support, and weekly payments to help support them financially.

Editorial #3 - Could Fostering Be an Option for You?

Fostering can sometimes be misunderstood, People may rule it out because they feel they are not “qualified” enough or worry they would not be suitable. While questions about suitability are entirely natural, fostering is less about qualifications and more about commitment, care, and stability.

Foster carers provide day-to-day family life for children who need support. This includes routines such as school, meals, and family time, alongside understanding a child’s emotional needs.

Somerset Council foster carers receive training before they begin, and ongoing support throughout their fostering journey. Financial payments are also provided to support carers and help cover the costs of caring for a child.

There is no single route into fostering, and no expectation to foster forever. Some carers offer short-term care, others longer placements, and some focus on specific types of fostering like weekend and holiday care to suit their own commitments and circumstances.

As more children need foster homes locally, raising awareness about fostering within our communities is increasingly important.

For those who are curious, the first step is simply to find out more. Asking questions does not commit anyone to fostering, but it could open the door to making a real difference to a local child’s life. For more information visit www.fosteringinsomerset.org.uk