

# Evaluation of the Enhanced Fostering Service

## Who we are

Kate, Laura, Jen and Mike are researchers at the UEA, we were asked by Norfolk County Council to speak to people who had been supported by the Enhanced Fostering Service (EFS), to find out what it was like.

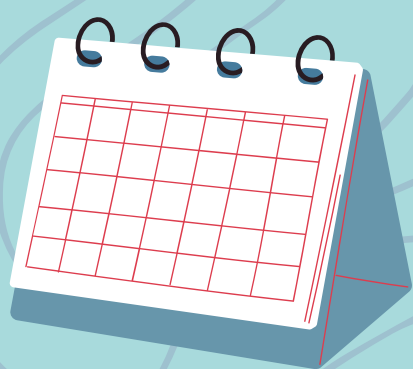
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## What we did

We talked to lots of people who were involved with EFS. We recorded what they said, wrote it down word for word and looked for the key themes, the things that lots of people said, the things we didn't expect, the things that were really important.



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## Things lots of people said

Foster care placements provide a family home environment which is quieter and more stable for children. However each child's needs are different and placements and transitions need to be planned with the individual child in mind.



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## Things we didn't expect

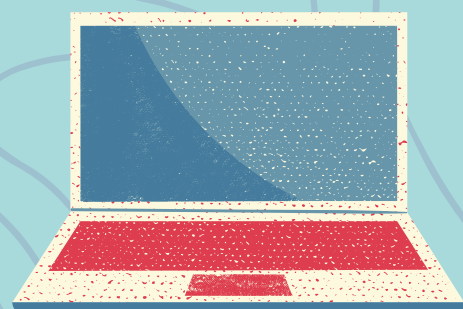
Being fostered by someone who knows you can feel very special, however it can still feel scary and it the child and foster care still needs a lot of support to get used to their new relationship and living together.



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## Things that are really important

Children are at the heart of this process, they need to be helped to say what they need and want at every stage. They understand that sometimes plans can be tricky and moves might be delayed, they would prefer to know what's going on.

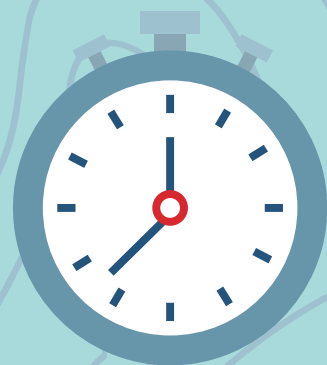


# Four key stages in the fostering process.

## Assessing readiness

Lots of different factors influence whether a child might be ready to move from residential care and it can look different for each person. It is important that children and young people are supported to say when they are ready.

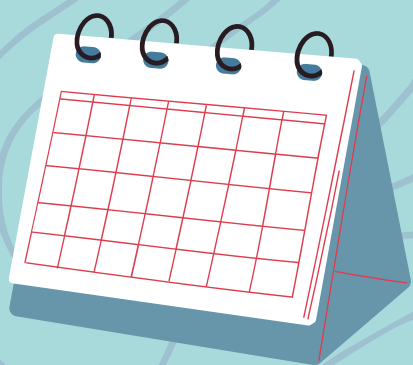
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## Matching

Some people decide to become a foster carer because they know the child through school or the residential home. This can be a brilliant match but careful planning needs to take place to make sure that both the foster care and the child know what to expect and how their relationship might change.



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## Making the transition

Lots of things change when moving from residential care to foster care. Both children and foster carers need help planning for this and managing the timings for the move. Sometimes things delay the move from happening, children understand this and just want to be kept in the loop.



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## Settling into placement

Being chosen by your foster carer can feel very special and a bit frightening at the same time. Foster carer and children need help settling in to day to day life together. It is important that the child can also keep friendships they have made along the way with other children or workers in residential care.



## Thank you

It is important to understand what is like to be a child in residential or foster care and to keep making things better. We could not do it without you sharing your time and stories with us.

if you want to find out more check out

<https://www.uea.ac.uk/groups-and-centres/centre-for-research-on-children-and-families>

