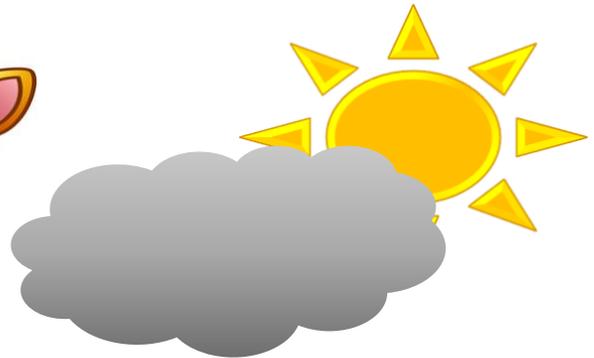


Vineyard Fostering



**A Children's Guide to
Foster Care**

Vineyard Fostering

A Children's Guide to Foster Care

Hi! I am Lacey
I would like to tell you about
fostering and being looked
after.

This booklet is yours to keep
and use, whenever you want
to find something out.



This booklet belongs to

.....

I amyear(s) old



Living at home

Sometimes mummies and daddies are unable to look after their children for different reasons. It could be they are unwell or need help.

If a mummy or daddy are finding things hard, other grown-ups are happy to help to make sure children are healthy and safe. This book will tell you about some of those other grown-ups and also tell you what to do if you are not happy.

Who is a foster carer?

Foster carers are special people who have been carefully chosen to look after children.

Foster carers do all the things mums and dads do, such as setting rules and helping you with things like going to school and making sure you eat the right food.

Your foster carers work for Vineyard Fostering and will look after you.

Your foster carers' names are.....

Why do I have to live with a foster carer?

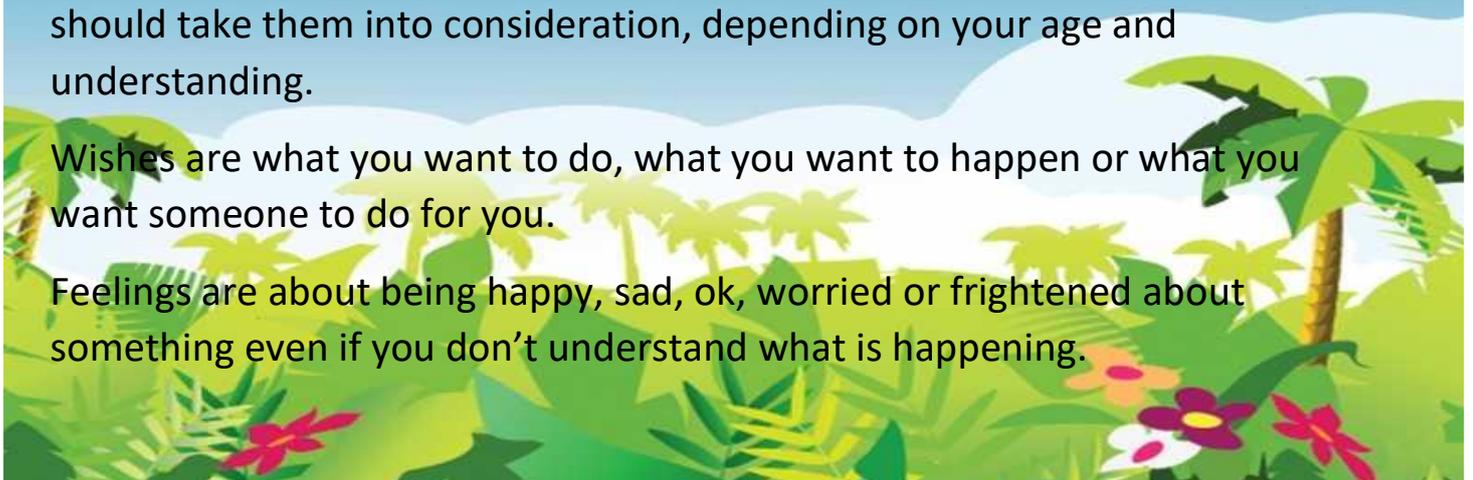
When a child cannot live with their own family, they can move into a foster home where they will be safe. Children live with foster carers for all sorts of reasons, but it's not because of anything you have done.

What about what I want?

Your social worker should find out what your wishes and feelings are. They should take them into consideration, depending on your age and understanding.

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

Feelings are about being happy, sad, ok, worried or frightened about something even if you don't understand what is happening.





Your social worker

What does my social worker do?

Your social worker is someone who works for Children's Services. It is their job to make sure you are OK, so you should think of them as someone who is there to help you.

Your social worker will visit you regularly and talk to you about what is happening in your life. They care about you, and you can talk to them about anything you are worried about.

What does the Vineyard social worker do?

Your foster carers have their own supervising social worker. Their job is to make sure your carers are looking after you properly and have all the help they need. They will also talk to you to make sure you are happy and well cared for.

You can write down the contact details of your own social worker and the Vineyard's supervising social worker on page 15, at the end of this guide.



How will people look after me in my foster home?

There are certain ways you should be treated no matter what; these are called your 'rights':

- You have the right to be safe, secure and protected.
- You have the right for adults to listen to you and treat you fairly and equally.
- You have the right to information, advice, healthcare and an education.
- You have the right to enjoy your religion and culture.
- If you have a disability, you have the right to any help you need with it.

Please let your social worker know if you think someone is taking away any of your rights.

Every family has house rules. These are about how to treat each other, listening to each other and keeping safe. What are your foster carers' rules? You can write them down to help you remember."

My foster carers' house rules are

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



"My foster parents are Susan and Billy. They have two daughters named Alice and Maddie.



Who decides what will happen?

While you live with your foster carers, there will be meetings called 'reviews', where all the important grown-ups in your life will get together and make a care plan for you.

Before the review, you will be asked what you think. You may be asked to write this down or to tell your social worker. If you are old enough, you may also take part in the meeting.

If you have any worries in between these meetings, you can talk to your social worker or the person who is in charge of the reviews, who is called the Independent Reviewing Officer or IRO for short.

These reviews are all about you so you can say how you feel or what you would like to happen."

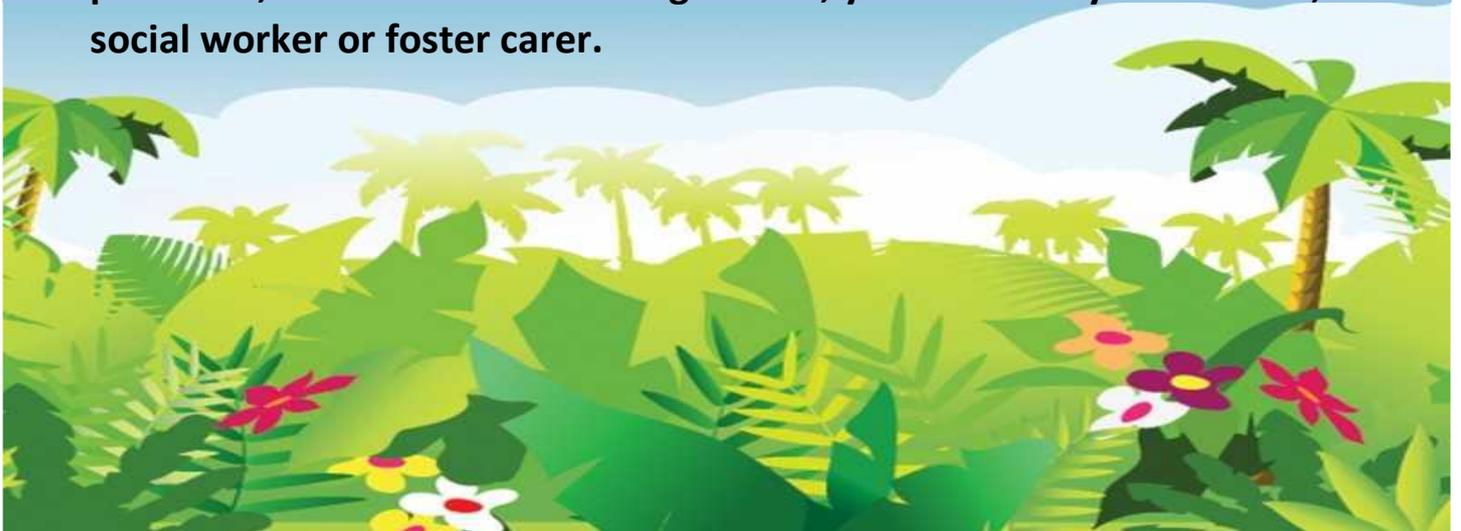


What about school?

If you are already at school, they will try to work out if it is best for you to move to a new school or stay at your old one.

School is very important because it's where you learn about subjects, growing up, making new friends and allows you to take part in activities and hobbies after school.

Your teacher will know that you have gone to live with a foster carer, but it is your choice if you want to tell other people. If you have any problems, difficulties or are being bullied, you must tell your teacher, social worker or foster carer.



When will I see my family?

Just because you live in a foster home doesn't mean that you have to lose touch with your family. Your foster carer understands how important your family is to you and will agree family time with your social worker. This may include seeing your brothers and sisters and other members of your family at a suitable place.

Your social worker will speak with you about when you can see your family and how often. Tell them who you want to see so they can try and make sure this happens.

What is the plan for my future?

Your social worker will make a plan for you. This is called your 'care plan' or a 'child plan' and includes everything that's important to you such as your school, your health and when you see your family and friends and how long you will stay with your foster family.

Tell your social worker if there is anything in the plan that you don't like as they may be able to change this. If you ever feel worried about your future, tell your social worker and they will do everything they can to help.

Sometimes you will feel happy, sometimes sad, and sometimes worried. That's OK!"

Your carers will not mind if you ask them all sorts of things...

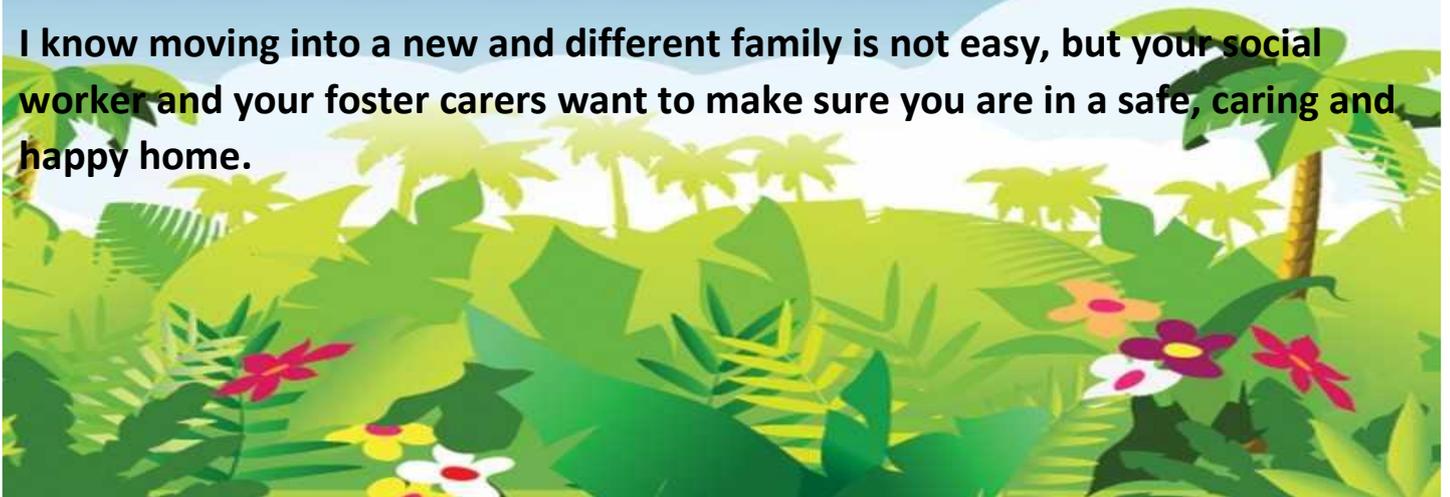
"What if I don't like the food?"

"Can I have friends over?"

"Will I have to move again?"

"What time do I have to get up in the morning and go to bed at night?"

I know 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.





Don't
Worry



What if I have a problem or I am unhappy?

We want to know if you have any problems at all, whether you are worried about something in your foster home or if you just don't like the food the foster carer gives you.

There are lots of ways you can tell us what you think or if you are worried or want to make a complaint and can't tell your social worker, foster carer or teacher.

You may want an advocate, who is someone independent and can help you to get your views across, for example in a meeting or to make a complaint about how you are being cared for.

If you have any concerns or complaints, you have the right to talk directly to the organisation called Ofsted if you live in England or Care Inspectorate if you live in Wales or Scotland.

You will find their phone numbers and the numbers of other organisations on pages 10 -12 of this guide that you can call to get help or advice.



Your foster carer is not allowed to hurt you in any way and nor is anyone else. If you are worried about anything at all, please don't be afraid to speak up as there are lots of people who care about you and want to help.

Who can I contact for help?

Write down their full names, telephone numbers and email addresses.

My own social worker is:

.....

My foster carer's social worker is:

.....

The Children's Officer for Vineyard Fostering is:

Name: Giovanni Varricchio

Tel: 01582 522308

Email: children@vineyardfostering.co.uk





There's always
someone who
can help!



Useful numbers

Here are some numbers that may be helpful for you to have. Some are for everyone; others are for young people who live in Wales and Scotland.

General advice and getting an advocate

ChildLine

24-hour helpline for children in distress.

Tel: 0800 1111 (freephone) / (Ask questions through the website)

Website: www.childline.org.uk

Become Charity

A national charity for children in care and young care leavers.

PO Box 151

Mailboxes Clapham Junction

264 Lavender Hill

SW11 1LJ

Telephone: 0800 023 2033

Email: advice@becomecharity.org.uk

Website: <https://becomecharity.org.uk/>

Coram Voice

Has lots of advice for children in care and provides help and support. They can take up your complaints too.

49 Mecklenburgh Square

London

WC1N 2QA

Telephone: 02075200305

Email: info@coramvoice.org.uk

Website: <https://coramvoice.org.uk/>



England

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

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street

Manchester M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Children's Commissioner for England

Sanctuary Buildings

20 Great Smith Street

London

SW1P 3BT

Tel: 020 7783 8330

Email: info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

www.rights4me.org (Email through website)

Wales

Care Inspectorate Wales

Welsh Government office

Sarn Mynach

Llandudno Junction

LL31 9RZ

Telephone: 0300 7900 126

Email: ciw@gov.wales

Website: <https://careinspectorate.wales>

Childrens Commissioner for Wales

Llewellyn House

Harbourside Business Park

Harbourside Rd

Port Talbot SA13 1SB

Telephone: [01792 765600](tel:01792765600)

Email: post@childcomwales.org.uk

Website: www.childcomwales.org.uk



Voices from Care Cymru (VFCC)

This organisation provides help for young people who are or have been looked after by local authorities in Wales.

45 The Parade Cardiff CF24 3AB

Tel: 029 2045 1431

Email: info@vfcc.org.uk

Website: <http://vfcc.org.uk/contact/>

Scotland

Care Inspectorate also known as SCSWIS (Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland)

Compass House

11 Riverside Drive

Dundee DD1 4NY

Tel: 0345 600 9257 (Lo-call) /

01382 207100 /

Email: enquiries@careinspectorate.com

Website: www.careinspectorate.com

Children and Young People Commissioner Scotland

Bridgeside House

99 McDonald Road

Edinburgh EH7 4NS

Telephone: [0800 019 1179](tel:08000191179)

Email: inbox@cypcs.org.uk

Website: <https://www.cypcs.org.uk/>

Who Cares? Scotland

40 Wellington Street

Glasgow G2 6HJ

Telephone: 0141 226 4441

Email: hello@whocaresscotland.org

Website: <https://www.whocaresscotland.org>

