

SOME DOS AND DON'TS

DO	DON'T
Accept that fostering means moving on	Try to make the child "your own"
Be mindful of differing material standards between yourself and the child's own family.	Set up unreasonable expectations for the child
Ask for the reasons for the move if they are not clear. Discuss them with your fostering worker	Make assumptions.
If you want to offer the child a permanent home, make this clear to the fostering social worker.	Offer a permanent home to a child for the wrong reason, e.g. don't feel pressurised by the lack of alternative resources.
Feel part of the process – ask what part you could / should play	Feel excluded.
Ask to talk to another carer who has gone through the same process of letting go of a loved child.	Ignore the feelings and wishes of your own partner and children. Don't bottle up your feelings. They are natural and should be acknowledged.
Recognised that some moves will not be entirely satisfactory (e.g. a young person moving to independence too soon; a return home to a chaotic family etc). The appropriate course of action is to discuss these with your fostering worker and the child's social worker. Ask for a meeting if necessary.	Make your reservations known to the child. It will not help the move or the child.
Give the child positive messages about the move	Lie to the child but choose your words carefully.
Make clear that you are helping the child to move on – i.e. "give the child your permission" to move on in a kind and confident manner.	Overwhelm a child with your sorrow, anger, uncertainty.
Take photographs and keep mementoes etc. for the child to move on with (see life story work). Talk naturally and happily about the move. Make the child feel it is alright to leave your home	Make this a sad occasion.

<p>Talk about problems, even minor ones, as they arise</p>	<p>Wait for small problems to become major.</p>
<p>Discuss with your social worker if you really cannot cope with a child – for whatever reason. Give as much time as possible for planning and preparing the child for the move</p>	<p>Ask for a child to be moved immediately.</p>
<p>Accept the fostering task for what it is; full of challenges, setbacks, frustrations and joys. Send a child onwards with all your best wishes and encouragement. The child can only benefit in the long run from your care.</p>	<p>Feel a failure if things don't go as planned.</p>