



The Fostering Team have chosen to write a 3 x yearly newsletter. This is a different way to keep you informed and up to date with what's happening with fostering. This newsletter is also an opportunity for somewhere for you to have your say too.

Introduction

Summer is now upon us and there are many activities you can take part in, in the Bolton area.

Summer Fun in Bolton

The Summer Fun in Bolton guide is available to you, outlining free activities taking place for all children across the borough during the school summer holidays.



To receive your Summer Fun in Bolton guide or for any more information phone 01204 332323.

There is lots of information about summer activities on the Bolton Council Website . Also have a look on the Plodge website.



Foster Carers' Maintenance

This has been discussed at support groups and carers have requested clarification with regards to what the maintenance allowance is for. The allowance is for all the day to day expenses in caring for a child, including clothing, pocket money and general activities.

(As stated in your foster carers' handbook)



Email Addresses

Can you please let us have your up-to-date email addresses so that we can email information directly to you. this is a more efficient and cost effective way to send information to you. Please email this to lena.berry@bolton.gov.uk (and don't forget to tell her your name!!)

Achievement Awards

If a child you are caring for has done particularly well in any area around education (i.e. good attendance, improved behaviour, award in school for anything etc) you should ask the child's social worker to fill in an Achievement Award form (on Plodge website) and send it to Frances Hamer and they may receive an Achievement Award.

Frances Hamer, Castle Hill Centre, Castleton Street, Bolton, BL2 2JW 01204 337479

Positive Chances

There are currently ongoing activities for Looked After Children arranged by Positive Chances



Football takes place at Castle Hill Centre on:

Tuesdays - 14-19 yrs – 6pm – 7pm

Thursdays 8-13 yrs – 6pm – 7pm.

(no need to book, just turn up with your children)



Other activities will be organised by Positive Chances and carers will be informed.

The Positive Chances timetable can be found on the Plodge Website, along with contact details.

Foster Carers Reception

All foster carers are invited to our annual Foster Carer Reception, it is to be held on Saturday 17th September at Castle Hill Youth Centre, behind Castle Hill School. You should have already received an invitation, please complete the reply slip and return to Castle Hill or to your supervising social worker so that we can make sure that we have catered for everyone. There will be indoor and outdoor activities so lets hope for sunshine!



Fostering Changes



We have run one Fostering Changes course this year and plan to run one this autumn. It is a twelve week intensive course, but those who have attended have found it very useful. The information about this course is below.

Fostering Changes is a new course designed to help Foster Carers improve relationships and manage difficult behaviour.

We would like to share some of the ideas from the course with you. We hope they're helpful.

Praise:

Using praise is one way of encouraging desirable behaviour and making it more likely that it will occur again. Research suggests that lack of praise leads to increased levels of misbehaviour, and that praise leads to increased self-esteem.

To be effective, praise must be:

Specific: I'm proud you're working so hard on your homework.

Describe exactly what it is you like: Thank you for doing as I asked straight away.

Sincere: Delivered with some kind of enthusiasm. Use eye contact, touch, smile, tone of voice.

Immediate: Following the behaviour.

Appropriate: Ignore behaviour that is inappropriate.

Be careful not to combine praise with a put down: Thank you for helping me clear up. I only wish you did it more often!

There are lots of different and subtle ways of giving praise. Here are a few phrases to get you thinking about how you might express your appreciation and thanks:

You've done a great job of

It really makes me happy when you

That's a really good way of

Thank you for



Support Groups and Training

Don't forget to attend your support group.

Support groups are run by:-

0-5yrs	Cath and Julie	23/09/11 @ UCAN Centre
5-10 yrs	Kerry and Pauline	15/09/11 @ Oxford Grove
10+ yrs	Darren and Lindsay	tba
Male foster carers	Laura	19/09/11 @ Red Lion Pub
Asian foster carers	Shenaz	13/09/11
Children's Support Group	Kerry & Julie	11/10/11 Bowling @ Middlebrook

Please ask your supervising social worker for the dates, times and venues of the support groups that would most suit you.

I know there has been a lot of confusion with the training calendar of late.

Some carers have not been ringing to cancel their places, and with places already limited please make sure you telephone to let someone know if you are unable to attend so we can offer the place to someone else.

Can you make sure that we have your correct email address. The Training Shared Service Centre will let you know if you have a place via email (if they have it). There are a couple of new courses running this year.

- Helping Children with Homework
- Fostering Changes



Mileage

There has also been some confusion over what mileage carers can claim for. Travel expenses can be claimed for journeys that are 'official business'. This would include attending reviews, court, case conferences and other meetings, facilitating contact between the child and her/his family; helping with introductions – either a child moving into your home, or moving on – regular trips to the hospital etc, because of a child's medical condition, long journeys to school (i.e. over two miles)

All other mileage for activities and travel that is part of normal family life is covered by the maintenance allowance for the child.

This is your newsletter!!

If anyone has any suggestions about what they would like to read about, or if you would like to write an article, please contact your supervising social worker.

We will take this opportunity to wish you a wonderful summer and look forward to seeing you at the Foster Carers' Reception.