



# Family First Fostering Summer Newsletter 2021!

## Happy summer everyone!

We hope you are all enjoying the start of summer so far and are adjusting well to the new change in government guidelines. At Family First Fostering we understand that we are living in challenging times and the guidelines are always changing. The team here at Family First are always here if you ever need any help or advice. Feel free to reach out to us whenever you are in doubt or need support as we are always happy to help and we are always happy to hear from our fabulous foster carers.

*“Change the way you look at things and the things you look at change”-Wayne Dyer*

We also want to take the opportunity to praise all our wonderful foster carers, you continue to provide excellent care despite the challenges that may arise. We would also like to thank those who managed to attend the recent trainings and for setting aside time in your busy schedules. Thank you to the young people who continue to show support to their carers in these difficult times.

The agency wishes you all the best during these upcoming summer months and we hope you continue to stay safe in the current climate.

Thank you once again for all your wonderful work!

### Coronavirus

As you are all aware the Government guidelines relating to Covid-19 have changed over the past few months. As restrictions continue to lift and life starts to resume to a bit of normality, please do continue to remain alert and vigilant. Still practice social distancing when out in the community and ensure that you are washing your hands when possible. It's always handy to carry hand sanitizer especially if you are travelling by public transport. It's important to note that face masks are mandatory unless you have an exemption in most public places such as shops and public transport. Majority of restaurants also require face masks to be worn whilst entering the premises and whilst accessing the restrooms. So if you are planning a meal out with the family this is just something to be mindful of. We do encourage everyone to get the vaccination to protect themselves but this is your choice entirely, if you would like to discuss this further feel free to speak to this with your supervising social worker.

*“The art of life lies in a constant readjustment to our surrounding”-Kakuzo Okakura*

### New Staff

Family First Fostering has opened its doors to a few new faces over the past month as you might already have noticed. We would like to give a warm welcome to the two social work students who are on placement with us, Joyce and Faye. We would also like to welcome to the team our new placements officer Jordan.

### New carers

We have also welcomed new carers into the agency this month. We would like to give a warm welcome to the following:

RT & RM, NA & JHL, AED & ED, CB & AJ, LG & SG

We look forward to joining you all on your fostering journey.

### Placement updates:

Over the last couple months placements have been busy, and we continue to see high numbers of referrals. There has been an increase in demand for sibling groups and parent & child placements. The number of UASC has decreased this year due to COVID. Our new placement officer, Jordan, has started the role with us and we wish him all the best on our placements team.

Also can we please remind foster carers to ensure you are informing your supervising social worker and the placements team of any holidays you are looking to book with at least one month notice.

### Recognition:

We at Family First Fostering find it important to recognize those who have gone that slight bit above and beyond so we would like to say a huge well done to young person HA who is placed with foster carer CO for being extremely helpful with the new young person who has moved into the home.

Also massive well done to our foster carer AH who has been extremely resilient and continues to do well with her placement.

Huge well done to newly approved foster carers AI and CM on managing their placement so well. You have exceeded expectations and doing so well.

We also would like to say a huge well done to new foster carers NA & JHL and LG for their brilliant can-do attitude in managing sibling groups and for the brilliant care they're providing. Well Done!



## Things to do over the summer Holidays

The summer holidays are just around the corner and we understand that finding activities to do can be challenging so below are just a few suggestions that you might want to try.

- Outdoor lido's and swimming. -Hampstead Heath has a great outdoor lido and Archway leisure center has an indoor pool with a slide and other fun activities
- Seaside day trips- its a great idea to take the family and young people to the seaside in the warmer weather to enjoy fish and chips and ice cream (Brighton is only a train ride and a car journey away)
- Barbecues'- its that time of year again! this is a great way to bond over a burger or two and also enjoy a friendly game of football or tennis whilst the sausages sizzle.
- The agency is also putting together a few summer activities for the young people so keep your eyes peeled for this as we shall be sending further information out via email.

REMEMBER TO SEND IN PHOTOS OF YOUR ADVENTURES.



## More things to do this summer:

- Outdoor Cinema: As cinema's have now opened back up why not sit outside in the sun and watch a movie.
- Crazy Golf: with the sun shining this is a fun game for all the family to enjoy and many branches over the UK
- Head to the park as a family for a game of rounders. This is always a fun and cheap way to have fun!
- Fundraising! A lot of charities unfortunately did not receive much funding due to covid-19.
- Restaurants and cinemas have opened back up too, some of the leisure's we have all missed is treating ourselves to a movie or food so get BOOKING!

ANY ACTIVITIES YOU DO PARTAKE IN PLEASE SEND PHOTOS



## Upcoming Training:

- ⇒ Understanding Trauma—14th July 2021
- ⇒ Creating placement stability and managing endings—23rd July 2021
- ⇒ Semi independent workshop for young people—03rd August 2021 & 04th August 2021
- ⇒ Semi independence workshop for young people—19th August 2021 & 20th August 2021
- ⇒ Understanding safeguarding & Child protection—12th August 2021
- ⇒ Foster carers roles and responsibilities—25th August 2021

## Holidays:

As the world is slowly trying to return back to normal we understand that everyone is keen to try and get a holiday booked therefore we want to give you a brief reminder of the protocol and steps when booking a holiday.

1. Please ensure you are informing your supervising social worker and the placements team **at least one month in advance**. Please let us know the dates you will be flying and returning back home.
2. Plan your back up carers in advance. As you know we do encourage foster carers to take young people abroad if they have the necessary travel documents, but if not please ensure you **have planned who will be staying with the young people** in advance so we can ensure an enhanced DBS and back up carers assessment is completed.
3. Vaccinations. We do try and encourage foster carers to have their vaccinations but this is your choice. If you do have your vaccination please ensure you send this to us!
4. The rules around isolation are still pretty unclear when travelling and with the traffic light system in place, the countries you can and can't travel to are changing constantly. On the government website there is a list of countries you can travel to with rules of isolation. **If you do need to isolate upon returns of your travels, please ensure you let the agency know** and plan ahead for how you will meet the needs of the children in your care.
5. And of course there is nothing wrong with a staycation! If you are planning a holiday in the UK, again please do let the agency know and ensure you send us lots of photos! If you are planning a holiday abroad and young people cannot travel with you, it is always a nice idea to plan a staycation upon returning, or beforehand, to allow the young people to feel included.

## Health and safety:

As you know part of your fostering role is to ensure the health and safety documents in your home are always up to date. This is not only to protect young people, but to protect yourselves in the role as a foster carer. We would like to remind carers that it is in their role and responsibilities of a foster carer and if something happens to the young people whilst in a foster carers home and a carer has not provided us with these documents, they can be held accountable. A reminder of the documents needed are:

- \* A valid medical
- \* A valid DBS
- \* Home Insurance
- \* Gas Certificate
- \* Electrical Certificate
- \* Car Insurance & MOT (If applicable)

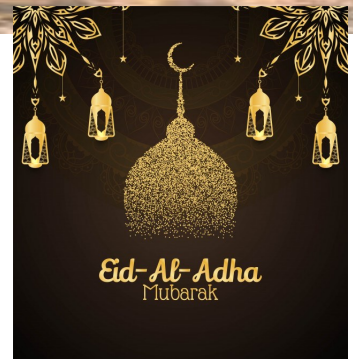
## Young people groups and activities :

There are a few groups and activities being held this summer. Monica and Bayley will be conducting a virtual quiz and games event that will be taking place on Zoom. This offers the young people a chance to get to know one another and cash prizes to be won! The first meeting will be held on the 10th August 2021.

We will also be organizing some summer activities for young people, foster carers and birth children so keep an eye out!



**Dates to remember:**



**Supervisions:**

When following government guidelines, we as an agency, put face to face supervisions on hold but due to vaccinations rising and the country slowly returning as normal we as an agency have decided to resume face to face supervisions to ensure we are covering all aspects in our role as an agency and to ensure we have the safety of young people at heart. We will ensure to put safety precautions in place as supervising social workers are taking lateral flow tests twice a week, have hand sanitizers on them at all times and will have face coverings too. Please ensure homes are well ventilated and social distancing is in place.

Can I please remind carers our supervising social workers are key workers and therefore do always have the best interest of young people and carers at heart therefore this is part of their job role. If you have any issues please speak to your supervising social worker or management.

**Documents :**

Please can we ask all carers to ensure they are signing off their supervisions on CHARMS. If you need a refresher with this please speak to your supervising social worker. Also we have a new admission form, please ensure you are using this template. All carers will get a copy of this when new placements move in.