

Urgent appeal for foster parents to ease strain on services As research shows fostering can give the same high as exercise

- National Fostering Group (NFG) has launched their “It’s because of you” recruitment campaign, an urgent appeal for foster carers
- 30,000 more children likely to come into care in the next 12 months, placing even more pressure on the care system
- New research from NFG shows that over three quarters (78%) of foster carers deem fostering to be a rewarding experience
- Foster carers say fostering gives the same feeling as ‘runner’s high’

National Fostering Group (NFG) is today launching a major recruitment drive calling for people to foster in the wake of unprecedented pressure on the UK’s care system.

More than 7,200 foster homes are needed across the UK, with 30,000 more children likely to come into care in the next 12 months¹.

While the challenges are acute, equally as important is the discovery that fostering is massively beneficial for the individual. Research among foster carers from the UK’s largest independent fostering agency, National Fostering Group, shows that fostering is a hugely rewarding experience (78%), that has a positive impact on carers’ lives (66%) and brings greater meaning to their lives (63%)².

The research, to mark the launch of the “It’s because of you” recruitment campaign, shows how fostering has helped carers develop new skills (66%), as well as experience a boost in self-confidence (27%) and happiness levels (25%). Fostering is even shown to match the feeling of ‘runner’s high’, the commonly known feeling of euphoria from exercising. Of those who claimed to have experienced ‘runner’s high’³, almost half (47%) consider the feeling of fostering to be the same or even better.

In recent news, celebrities such as Joe Swash and Stacey Solomon have shared their desire to foster in the future once their own children are older. And while it’s a common thought to initially delay fostering until birth children are older, the research reveals multiple benefits to birth children. Foster parents reported seeing greater empathy (36%), patience (24%) and enhanced life skills (21%) among their own children

when living alongside their foster children. Currently two thirds (65%) of foster carers are looking after both foster children and their birth children in their home.

Angela Golland, Group Head of Outcomes said: *“We know that our foster carers are extremely dedicated to the children they care for, and as well as helping to benefit a child’s life, you can also earn up to £24,500 on average per child. However, we know that financial gain isn’t why our foster carers love what they do. We’ve seen how beneficial fostering can be to an individual and their family, and we’d love to encourage people to get in touch with National Fostering Group, to hear more about how they can begin their fostering journey with us.”*

A child in care with National Fostering Group said: *“My mum doesn’t know how to look after me properly, so I live with my foster parents. They keep me safe and always make me laugh. My foster dad takes me to watch football and my foster mum said she will always watch over me to see if I am happy and feeling ok. For the first time ever, I have my own bedroom and I like to read stories at bedtime. The best thing about my foster parents is that they give me big hugs.”*

Notes to Editors

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1. Fostering Network, [Recruitment targets foster carers](#), accessed 5th July 2023
2. Foster carer data according to online research conducted by National Fostering Group, between 14th June and 30th June 2023. Total sample, 773 foster carers in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.
3. 63% of foster parents surveyed as having experienced ‘runner’s high’, with 47% of these considering the feeling of fostering to be the same or even better.

About National Fostering Group

With over 20 years of experience in foster care, National Fostering Group is the largest network of independent fostering agencies in the UK, with the largest community of foster parents. Across the country, we work with local authorities to provide high quality foster care to children and young people in need.

National Fostering Group is committed to building incredible futures for vulnerable children and young people in the UK by empowering them to be happy and make their way in the world. They achieve this by providing foster parents with excellent skills and genuine commitment, who can give children in need a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment where they can thrive and be happy.

For more information please visit: <https://www.nfa.co.uk/>