



To what extent does current policy and practice pay adequate attention to the needs of the sons and daughters of foster carers, particularly in the context of planned or unplanned placement endings?

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The Fostering Network

Childrens Workforce Development Council (CWDC)'s Practitioner-Led Research projects are small scale research projects carried out by practitioners who deliver and receive services in the children's workforce. These reports are based in a range of settings across the workforce and can be used to support local workforce development.

The reports were completed between September 2009 and February 2010 and apply a wide range of research methodologies. They are not intended to be longitudinal research reports but they provide a snapshot of the views and opinions of the groups consulted as part of the studies. As these projects were time limited, the evidence base can be used to inform planning but should not be generalised across the wider population.

These reports reflect the views of the practitioners that undertook the research. The views and opinions of the authors should not be taken as representative of CWDC.

A new UK Government took office on 11 May. As a result the content in this report may not reflect current Government policy.

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Abstract

The Fostering Network is a UK charity with a membership of approximately 60,000 foster carers. It represents the voice of foster care and all those involved in fostering. This research study originates from the historical and emergent knowledge base at the Fostering Network concerning the role that sons and daughters of foster carers play in fostering families. It has been particularly informed through the activities of the Leading Our Lives Project within the young people's team whose membership is young people who either have, or are being fostered, and sons and daughters of foster carers. The study is intended to be a scoping exercise of current knowledge, policy and practice in particular in relation to the impact of placement endings from the perspective of sons and daughters of foster carers. The study will also consider some of the implications of greater attention being paid to this group of young people for other members of the children's workforce, and in regard to the safeguarding agenda.

The study explores the extent to which the views and needs of sons and daughters are taken into account nationally, and locally. The original study outline was modified so that the focus primarily involved the analysis of secondary data. This was achieved through an examination of the literature, and the regulations and guidance – specifically the National Minimum Standards (NMS) 2002, which were contrasted with the UK Standards for Foster Care (NFCA 1999). The written policies of individual fostering agencies that were in the public domain were also analysed, specifically Ofsted reports, Statements of Purpose, Foster Carer Handbooks and website content. The study also drew upon the existing channels of communication of the Fostering Network to utilise the opportunities that were available to examine statistical data from *Fosterline* and the Fostering Network's Advice and Mediation service. Some primary data was also utilised through two existing forums of the Fostering Network, the London foster care regional forum and the independent fostering providers forum, as well as through two events, the **Channel 4 event** and a staff information session.

The findings substantiate the premise that sons and daughters are largely invisible within the fostering arena in every way, and at every level, especially in relation to addressing issues of separation and loss. This contrasts with the messages received through the primary data from foster carers and sons and daughters, of their needs and their wish to be acknowledged. The study highlights the research gap in this area, and the need for it to be addressed both in respect of the implications for sons and daughters themselves as well as those of children who are fostered.

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Introduction

There are just over 60,000 children and young people looked after on any given day in England of whom 78% (44,200) are in foster care (DCSF, 2009). Practitioners are familiar with how the profile of need of children requiring foster care has changed over the last 15 years. Rarely do children and young people become looked after due to what Sinclair (2004, p.34) defines 'practical difficulties of their parents', or due to 'their own troubles with the law or failure to attend school.' With the exception of some asylum seeking children/young people most who enter the care system do so due to severe family breakdown, serious abuse and neglect. As a consequence the task required of foster carers that has the building of relationships at its core, is increasingly complex in the context of a system where regulatory requirements are increasing. Moreover as Sinclair (2004, p.53) observes, 'an emphasis on relationship sits uneasily with a system in which foster children effectively have to leave at the age of 18 and in which the pain of partings – commonly felt by carers, carers' children and foster children themselves – may not even be acknowledged.'

It is a common feature in the day to day practice of fostering agencies that many children in foster care experience placement moves. Although a reducing pattern overall, the statistics for National Indicator 62 published by the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) show that 10.7% of children looked after by local authorities at 31 March 2009 had experienced three or more placements in the previous year. It has also been acknowledged (Sinclair, 2005, p.78 and Triseliotis et al 1995p.17 and p.18) that the way in which the fostering experience impacts within a foster carer's family, and in particular on their children, can be a significant determinant factor for successful placement outcome or otherwise. Given these factors it is surprising that more attention has not been paid to understanding the nature of the roles that children who are members of fostering families play. For the most part they remain largely "invisible" in terms of the degree to which they are acknowledged explicitly in the policy and legislative arena. This is true both nationally and locally although there may be examples of their involvement and inclusion at a day to day operational level within individual fostering services.

The Fostering Network has sought to raise the profile of children in fostering families through the publication of its policy for sons and daughters (The Fostering Network, 2008) and the launch of the first Sons and Daughters' Week in October 2009. There is a knowledge base about the impact of separation for fostered children in the context of their birth families and to some extent in relation to their foster carers. However overall, scant consideration has been paid to the needs and issues of sons and daughters of foster carers when they experience separation from children who have lived in their home.

The Fostering Network uses the term *sons and daughters* to represent this group of children, but it is recognised that individual fostering agencies may use different terms, birth children, natural children, children who foster, to name but a few. The Fostering Network's definition for sons and daughters is:

Those children born to or adopted by foster carers, or for whom foster carers have parental responsibility through some other court order (e.g. Special Guardianship Order). The circumstances of foster children placed on a permanent basis will vary, but in many situations they will see themselves, and be seen by other family members, as a full member of the family.
(The Fostering Network, 2008, p.3)

The definition seeks to be inclusive in recognition that there may be other children living as members of a fostering household such as nieces, nephews or grandchildren. Except in quotations the term sons and daughters as defined above will be used for this report.

The aim of fostering is to enable vulnerable children to have a positive, inclusive experience of family life from which they can derive a sense of belonging and experience stability and consistency. Through this experience many sons and daughters develop relationships that to them are akin to those of siblings. There are many aspects to a sons and daughter's experience that are worthy of attention but the overall objective of this research is to explore the separation and loss which is associated with placement endings mindful of the context and quality that may be associated with these relationships.

Aims of the project

Overall aim

To undertake an initial scoping study of current knowledge, policy and practice (including aspects of relevance to integrated working) in relation to the impact of placement endings for sons and daughters of foster carers.

Specific objectives

- To identify the extent to which the needs and views of sons and daughters are taken into account in the written policies which relate to day to day practice within local authority fostering services.
- To consider the implications of greater attention being paid to the needs and views of sons and daughters for the relevant members of the children's workforce and the safeguarding agenda.

Methodology

The study outline initially proposed a range of dimensions, such as focus groups, to enable an exploration of the issues and experience of relationships within the system when placements end, from the perspective of sons and daughters rather than fostered children/young people. On reflection and in discussion with the mentor it became apparent that given the tight timescale of the research study, combined with the logistics and associated governance requirements of reaching young people in fostering families, in multiple local authorities, -these aims would need to be modified. The decision was therefore made to incorporate an analysis of secondary data, as well as explore, where possible, primary data collected from key stakeholders.

The choice of the research question derives from the collective and historical knowledge base generated within the Fostering Network. Much of this has been derived from anecdotal and other data collected in the course of the activity undertaken by the Leading our Lives Project Team (See Glossary) In particular, the work of the team has highlighted the invisibility of sons and daughters in policy, research and practice in fostering services. The research project was designed to test this knowledge base more empirically.

The research study had four overlapping stages.

Literature Review

Utilising the resource library at the Fostering Network (see Glossary), a search was made of literature concerning sons and daughters and specifically within this where such literature made reference to issues of separation and loss. A comparative search was also undertaken of literature dealing with separation and loss for children and young people who are looked after.

Documentary Analysis

The National Minimum Standards (NMS) 2002; which are the regulations and guidance in relation to fostering; were examined to identify the extent to which the needs, considerations and perspectives of sons and daughters are taken into account in the policy domain of fostering. These were contrasted with the UK National Standards for Foster Care (1999) and the revised NMS regulations and guidance (2009) which were in the public domain for consultation at the time of writing of this research study.

Documents in the public domain pertaining to particular local authorities, specifically Ofsted reports, Statements of Purpose, Foster Carer Handbooks and website content were analysed. The aim was to examine the extent to which sons and daughters are considered in the operational guidance that is produced nationally and locally by individual fostering services. In order to ensure a representative geographical spread, one fostering service from each region of the country was selected on the basis of a good or outstanding Ofsted rating, based on the assumption that this would be an indicator of good practice. The exception was London where two local authorities, in north and south London, - were identified in this respect to take account of the size and diversity of this city (see Appendix 1).

Statistical Data

The researchers drew upon relevant statistics from *Fosterline* and the Fostering Network's Advice and Mediation service (see Glossary). These were analysed to ascertain the extent to which issues in relation to sons and daughters especially around placement endings were encapsulated within the data sets.

Consultation with Key Stakeholders

Existing channels at the Fostering Network were utilised and the forums and events that facilitate direct contact with foster carers and young people as means of supplementing the data collected through earlier phases of the research study.

Foster carer's views were sought directly as part of the programme of the London Foster Care Association (see Glossary) regional forum for foster carers on 27 September 2009 (see Appendix 2). The research project was explained to the group by a member of the Leading Our Lives Project who identified himself as the son of foster carers. The attendees were advised about the anonymity of their responses and that they were free to take part in the discussion but there was no obligation to do so. The foster carers were asked particular questions about their feelings concerning foster placement endings with regards to sons and daughters. The representative from the Leading our Lives Project facilitated the discussion and a summary was subsequently sent out to all forum attendees (see Appendix 3).

On 27 October 2009 the Fostering Network hosted a celebration event at Channel 4 to mark Sons and Daughters Week. The event gave the young people the opportunity to watch films made by, and about, the sons and daughters of foster carers, participate in a story-telling workshop and make short films about their experiences. It also provided an opportunity for the views of sons and daughters to be canvassed directly through digital voting on questions covering a mix of topics including celebrity fun and film, delegated responsibility and experiences of separation and loss. The aim of the mix was to hold the attention of the young people more effectively. The research was explained to the group and the young people were told that they were free to answer any questions but that they should not feel that they had to answer anything that they were uncomfortable with and that all results would be anonymised (see Appendix 4).

The scheduled forum for independent fostering providers on 19 November 2009 potentially provided another opportunity to gauge views from foster carers and workers from fostering agencies in regard to the topic area. A short questionnaire was available on a stall to which delegates were signposted to in the plenary session; unfortunately no responses were received so this route of research investigation was not fruitful in contributing this study (see Appendix 5).

Finally, the Fostering Network holds regular information sessions for staff. On 14 January 2010 one such session was held about the experiences of sons and daughters. Three members of staff whose parents' foster or have fostered, volunteered to share their experiences in an informal setting with questions being asked by colleagues. All the staff members gave their consent that the information could inform this research and have seen and agreed the contents of the report (see Appendix 6).

Literature Review

The literature review will consider the attention given to the role of sons and daughters in the context of what is involved generally for families who foster.

The context of the fostering task

Fahlberg (1994) writes about the concept of attachment and its applicability as the bedrock of the fostering task for foster carers in building relationships with children who have experienced trauma and rejection. Hughes (1997, p.198) refers to this as the concept of 'nurturance' which as many foster carers would testify is a challenge in the face of children who are hostile and defiant and who seem to want to 'give nothing back'. 'Nurturance', Hughes says 'means dealing with the

child's rejection by not taking it personally' 'teaching the child hundreds of times how to ask for help, how to live with the consequences of one's choices, how to learn to trust someone who has the power to abuse but will never do so, and how to begin to feel intensely the range of emotions that occur within a healthy family'. What is notable is that sons and daughters are explicitly bound up in this process too, a process which affects them in most aspects of their day to day and family life.

There is evidence as Jackson and Thomas (1999, p.32) summarise for example that 'placements where carers have children of their own, especially if they are close in age to the child placed, are more likely to fail (Trasler, 1960, Parker, 1966, George, 1970, Berridge and Cleaver 1987)'. Sinclair's (2004, p.78) analysis however points to a 'mixed picture 'whereby the presence of other children in a placement' (by which the writer also means other fostered children) 'can cause difficulties but can also help'.

As Walker et al (2002, p.10) summarise 'foster care is underpinned by the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child'. Its 'key requirements are that young people's views are taken seriously, their safety ensured and steps taken to maximise their life opportunities, both in the present and the future'. Although the context Walker et al are referring to is that of fostered children, the premises of the UN convention are equally applicable to sons and daughters.

General review of sons and daughters literature

The resources are split between those texts/packs that are aimed directly at sons and daughters as training and support, and those which are academic reports. Examples of the former are *My Family Fosters* (The Fostering Network, 2008), *Children who Foster* (Martin and Stanford, 1989) and *Fostering: the facts* (Essex Works, 2009). Examples of the latter are *The Social Work role in supporting the birth children of foster carers* (Tulley, 2000) *Who's at risk?: issues central to natural children in foster families* (Preston, 1993), *A Child's journey Through Placement* (Fahlberg, 1994), *Voices from Care* (The Fostering Network, 2003), *Forgotton Voices* (The Fostering Network, 2005), *Fostering Families – Supporting the Sons and Daughters of Foster Carers*, (The Fostering Network, 2008).

The academic reviews, with one exception, are based on consultation, questionnaires and focus groups across the UK. They are all based on relatively small sample groups. The ethnicity of the participants, where it is defined, is almost exclusively White British although the samples are more representative in terms of gender and geographical spread. The research sample groups are self-selecting as sons and daughters who are easily reached. It is therefore likely that they are those who are already engaged with fostering services in terms of having experienced some support and involvement, - more so than would be the experience of the general population of sons and daughters. Tulley's dissertation is slightly different, in that it was written in consultation with individuals involved in direct services provision, developmental policy, planning, advocacy and campaigning.

The training and support resources are also based directly on experience of sons and daughters. *My Family Fosters* (The Fostering Network, 2008) is based on consultation, questionnaires and focus groups across the UK while *Children who Foster* (Martin and Stanford, 1989) is based

upon consultation with a group of 10 – 17 year olds in Leeds. Finally *Fostering: The Facts* (Essex Works, 2009) used the experiences of a group of teenage sons and daughters whose parents foster for Essex County Council.

The messages from across the range of literature and training materials are extremely consistent. Both the academic and training literature express a strong sense that while there are many positive aspects to being part of a fostering family there are also significant difficulties which are unique to the role.

Most sons and daughters state that they are happy fostering and recognise the benefits of the experience. However, sons and daughters also report that the role involves substantial challenges for them and that some of their experiences are negative or difficult to handle.
(The Fostering Network 2008, p4)

There is a call for an increase in support groups and training in the entire range of academic and policy literature. ‘Foster families should be involved in the training process’ according to Preston (1993, p. 59) and in *Voices from Care* (The Fostering Network, 2003, p. 39) young people ‘expressed a wish to be trained in ways, which would make them better and more productive, sons, daughters and grandchildren of foster carers’. Tulley (2000) is more concerned about the specific role of the social worker but certainly asserts throughout her dissertation that increased support is imperative for sons and daughters.

Sons and daughters literature with reference to placement endings, separation and loss

Jewett (1994, p.vi) discusses the lack of attention that has been given generally to the impact of loss for children, and states that there is ‘growing evidence ‘that ‘links childhood loss with depression, alcoholism, anxiety and suicidal tendencies in adolescence and adulthood’. She suggests that the processes of denial that often accompany an experience of loss for adults perhaps accounts for the way in which they may ‘discount the severity of its effect‘ for children generally.

The literature search identified 29 sources that explore issues of separation and loss in relation to placement moves for children and young people in foster care (see Appendix 7). Four sources were identified as specifically mentioning the impact of separation and loss for sons and daughters (see Appendix 8) and one additional source mentioned the impact for foster carers.

Preston (1993, p.42-43) identifies that a period of preparation is ‘crucial to a more successful move’ and points out that a family who is very attached to a child can find it difficult to let go. Conversely where a placement that has not worked ends, sons and daughters are often left with a strong sense of guilt and failure. Tulley (2000, p.20) finds that there is limited (if any) one to one support for sons and daughters of foster carers when placements end and specifically comments upon the psychological issues of separation and loss on the sons and daughters. Triseliotis (cited in Tulley, 2000, p.7) notes that 10% of foster carers say their children experience strong feelings of sadness and loss when the foster child has left.

Fahlberg, (1994, p.192 -193) in discussing the support required by foster families in expressing their emotions about placement moves states, ‘commonly there is no-one to work with members of the foster family after a child leaves their home. Parents and other children in the home are

left to grieve by themselves'. Fahlberg notes that 'the birth children of foster carers may have a variety of reactions'. Bond (2005, p 2) also notes her book of case studies 'looks at issues around separation and loss, which can impact as much on carers as on the children they care for'.

Jewett (1994, p.12) highlights the importance of goodbyes stating that 'having the chance to say actual thought-out goodbyes to people, places or a familial family structure is among the most healing things a child can experience,' and that if children (p.65) 'are supported in their grief processes they are most likely to integrate losses in a healthy fashion and move through the stages of grief productively'.

An implicit aspect within this discussion in the literature about the impact of separation and loss for sons and daughters is that the essence of the relationships between them and fostered children can be those of siblings. As Jewett (1994, p.15) comments about siblings loss: 'they have lost a playmate, companion, and rival, and all the familiar interactions and expectations that were connected to those relationships.'

The literature search in totality reveals a lack of attention generally to the role that sons and daughters play within the fostering environment, and particularly in relation to addressing the impact of the separation and loss they experience when placements end.

Findings

Findings from secondary data

Key themes

1. There is limited reference to sons and daughters in the National Minimum Standards.
2. There is limited reference to sons and daughters in the local authority documents in the public domain and where it does exist it is often implicitly in language such as ‘foster family’.
3. Placement endings are almost exclusively ignored in relation to sons and daughters in fostering service public documents.
4. Recommendations by Ofsted do not reflect this gap in the documents.
5. Existing data records do not reflect the gap in research knowledge.

1. Reference to sons and daughters in National Minimum Standards

The UK National Standards for Foster Carers (NFCA, 1999) refer most often and most explicitly to sons and daughters as having needs in their own right. They highlight the need for their inclusion in the assessment process and on an ongoing basis through the placement, through clearly identifying a role for Supervising Social Workers (SSW) in relation to them (see Glossary). In contrast, the emphasis within the current and revised NMS is more implicit. The references to sons and daughters are predominately in the context of them as household members and in relation to the needs of the child placed. The revised NMS contain one specific additional reference in adding support to sons and daughters as an additional element to the strategy requirements for fostering services. There is no reference in any of the standards set in regard to the needs of sons and daughters concerning placement endings (see Appendix 9 for a full breakdown).

2. Reference to sons and daughters in local authorities and regulatory body documentation

As can be seen from appendix 10 there is very little reference to sons and daughters in local authority documentation. Of the ten local authority fostering services studied, four report, that they have sons and daughters groups or support services available, and three identify that they seek and monitor views of sons and daughters either at annual review time or otherwise. The Foster Carer Handbooks, where available, tended to show the most consideration towards sons and daughters with references to:

- support
- changes in the household
- training
- activities
- placement matching.

In two instances there were specific references to placement endings.

Of the 30 references to sons and daughters throughout all of the public documents studied only 14 refer to sons and daughters explicitly while the rest refer to them only implicitly in reference to the foster family in general.

3. Placement endings in public documents

The two references to placement endings mentioned above were in Foster Carer Handbooks. One explicitly details the support provided for 'you and your family' (Leicester City Council, p. 78) if a fostered child dies in the home. This is the only example of a written policy for action in relation to sons and daughters in case of a placement ending albeit only with reference to one very specific type of placement ending.

The second (Cambridgeshire County Council, p. 34) explains, 'any placement that ends, even if it is planned, can have a major impact on the carer as well as their family and the child or young person concerned', however, there is no follow up advice or information.

4. Recommendations by Ofsted

One of the Ofsted reports recommends that the fostering service must 'do more to consult and inform foster carers' birth children through forums and group activities.' (Ofsted, 2008, p. 7-8) This recommendation was made as the result of interpretation of NMS 21.1 ('the fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers'). This is the only case in which this interpretation was made and no other authority was recommended to make improvements to work with sons and daughters.

5. Data records

Fosterline and the Fostering Network's Advice and Mediation service split all data collected into 'reason for enquiry' subsets. Of these 53 subsets 2 directly relate to sons and daughters, 'tension/conflict between LAC & carers' son/daughter' and 'abuse of foster carer/son/daughter' (see Appendix 11). Specific data concerning sons and daughters in the latter set still potentially remains hidden as it is combined with that concerning foster carers. Amongst the remaining reasons for enquiry the researchers have identified 20 subsets that could concern sons and daughters. As these make up 32.2% of the total enquiries to *Fosterline* and 61.7% of the total enquires to the Advice and Mediation service it maybe that within a significant proportion of the Fostering Network's recorded enquiries there is hidden information about sons and daughters. Clearly there is potential here to develop the empirical knowledge base nationally in relation to the profile of sons and daughters and the issues that impact upon them.

Findings from primary data

This section draws together some of the key thematic findings from the primary data. This includes responses to the digi-voting with young people at the Fostering Film Showcase which consulted with 28 young people aged between 11 and 19, the discussion with 14 foster carers at the FCA forum and the discussion that took place at the Fostering Network staff sons and daughters session.

Key themes

1. There is a lack of consistency in the way in which placement endings are dealt with in relation to sons and daughters both in terms of preparation for placement and post-placement contact.
2. Anecdotal evidence suggests that lack of preparation for placement endings and lack of post-placement contact can have a significant emotional impact for sons and daughters.
3. There is a lack of training, counselling or support for sons and daughters in terms of how to deal with placement endings.

Consistency

Responses to question seven at the Fostering Film Showcase (*how much notice do you normally have before a child/young person moves on from your home?*) showed a wide spread of results across all the categories (see Appendix 12 for a full breakdown). Based on this it is clear that there is little uniformity in how long sons and daughters are given to prepare for the end of placement. This finding is supported by the discussion that took place at the staff briefing session where two young people commented on the fact that some placement endings were very sudden while others were better prepared (see Appendix 6).

The involvement of the sons and daughters in the preparation for the move seems to differ considerably with almost a third of the answers to question 8 at the Fostering Film Showcase (*How involved are you in the arrangements to say goodbye?*) saying, 'it depends' (See Appendix 12). The fact that 18% admitted to not being interested, suggests that some of this inconsistency may be attributed to the attitudes and preferences of individual sons and daughters; however it is likely that there is also a lack of consistent planning from parents and fostering services.

While there seems to be a general lack of consistency surrounding speed of placement end the primary data suggests that there is a worrying trend towards moves occurring without significant notice. 47% of the digi-voting respondents reported having one week or less to prepare for a placement ending, with almost a third of these stating that the fostered child/young person 'just go suddenly' (see Appendix 12). Two of the young people who spoke at the staff discussion session reported that they had experienced placement endings with little or no preparation, regardless of the duration of the placement. One recalled a case when a fostered child living with the family for two years was being moved with only one week's notice (see Appendix 6).

The evidence suggests that contact after a placement is similarly inconsistent. Question four of the digi-voting (*Do you usually have some contact with a fostered child/young person after they have left your home?*) reveals that 83% of the sample have contact either sometimes, mostly or often (see Appendix 12). This is a clear indicator of a lack of consistency in contact arrangements for sons and daughters even within the same families. The report of the discussion at the FCA forum also mentions that young people *often* lose contact with each other and that this is not taken into account by fostering services (see Appendix 3). Similarly in the staff discussion, one of the young people stated that they were never able to find out anything at all

about the young people who had lived with them in the past, while another young person reported keeping in touch with many of the people that their family had fostered.

Only 14% of the respondents to the digi-voting kept in contact with visits. Interestingly a total of 27% kept in contact via facebook, email, texting or phone calls suggesting that new technologies may make it easier for children/ young people to stay in contact without social services acting as a third party.

It is clear from the sample that consistency is lacking in terms of planning and implementation of placement endings both within different fostering and child care services and individual fostering families, and that the rise in social networking is likely to impact on this lack of formal planning.

1. Emotional impact of placement moves

One of the young people at the staff session described how the impact of unplanned placement moves caused them to take less and less interest in the children placed in their home as they were unable to cope with losing them. The young person also discussed how hard it was to never have follow-up contact with children with whom they had formed bonds.

This experience is consistent with a theme that has been emerging through much of the general work within the Leading our Lives Project, and is also reflected in the *Fostering: the facts* (Essex Works, 2009) DVD in which a number of the young people talk about placement endings. One suggested that staying in contact is a good way to make it easier; another described a baby leaving as 'heart breaking' while another still pointed out that when children have been part of your family and then leave it can be very upsetting.

2. Training and support

The young people at the staff session all reported having received no training since their families started fostering but recognised that training could have helped them to better understand and deal with placement endings (See Appendix 6). Similarly, the foster carers at the FCA forum identified a lack of training, support or counselling for their children surrounding issues of separation and loss. It was recognised by the foster carers that meeting with other sons and daughters may also be helpful in terms of sharing and coming to terms with their experiences (see Appendix 3).

Implications for practice

The premise that sons and daughters are 'invisible' as members of the fostering/ child care system has been borne out in this study. The study has highlighted firstly, a lack of evidence overall, in the literature, policy, regulation and practice, - of the role that sons and daughters play and the impact of fostering upon them. Secondly it has highlighted the consistency of the messages that permeate through from foster carers and sons and daughters themselves, as far as it has been possible for these to be ascertained through the existing channels of the Fostering Network.

The question is to what extent does this 'invisibility' of sons and daughters have relevance for practice and policy particularly in the context of expectations of integrated working? The reasons are twofold; those associated with the needs and rights of sons and daughters themselves, and those associated with the needs and rights of children who are fostered.

Children who are looked after experience multiple losses such as: parents, siblings, schools, friends, hobbies, places and people who are familiar. The need to avoid placement moves to reduce the cumulative effect of such losses has been underpinned in the DCSF National Indicators to which this study has referred. In terms of the remit of this research however, there is an unseen dynamic within this pattern and process. Sons and daughters are another group of young people who potentially experience multiple losses as compared with the experiences of other children within the general population. Some of these losses are also effectively those of siblings. The impact of such cumulative and particular loss upon sons and daughters is unknown as an area of research investigation, and is an area that may well have significant practice implications.

Another aspect in terms of the needs and rights of sons and daughters to be recognised is in connection with the acknowledged 'risks foster children may pose to others' (Walker et al (2002) p.16) Moreover there are particular risk factors for the foster care workforce associated with its isolated circumstances and low status of the job, in the face of the demands of caring for children with increasingly complex and challenging needs and behaviors particularly if foster carers are overburdened with too many placements and demands, and without effective support.

Data from *Fosterline* and the Advice and Mediation service indicates that issues around allegations are a key concern for foster carers and the fact that figures around disruption of placements also have a middle ranking in the data set may well be indicative of a significant correlation (see Appendix 11). This is certainly an area that would merit further exploration with a view to identifying the hidden dynamics for sons and daughters within such data, in respect of the ways in which allegations and placement endings may impact upon them.

The second category of reasons are associated with the needs of looked after children. In the light of what is known about the link between successful placement outcomes for looked after children and the positive or negative impact for sons and daughters, it would seem important for the perspective of this group of young people to be taken more into account particularly as an aspect of reducing the 'child related' and 'foster home factors' that contribute to placement stability or otherwise (Triseliotis et al, 1995 p. 17 &18).

As the primary data gathered has indicated there is a need for the perspective of sons and daughters to be acknowledged and understood in a more consistent way as part of the professional team surrounding the foster family, the child's social worker, the reviewing officer, the supervising social worker and the fostering panel to name but a few. Fahlberg's (1994) framework of the 'Child's Journey Through Placement' is helpful for thinking about how sons and daughters perspectives could be incorporated too as part of the fostering experience in a systemic way throughout and beyond the placement.

As practitioners will know from experience, the success or otherwise of a placement is often greatly determined by the extent to which a child or young person is 'matched' with a foster care family. Matching factors as Triseliotis et al (1995,p.125) categorise can be 'concrete' such as age and gender, and 'intangible' such as lifestyle patterns, and values and attitudes. Achieving such a match has a process of integrated working at its heart so that everyone's interests, anxieties and needs can be considered and understood including those of sons and daughters, in terms of commitment of 'nurturance' (Hughes, 1997, p.198) to be undertaken. The role of the placing social worker here is crucial as well as the supervising social worker.

The inclusion of sons and daughters in fostering services can happen in a number of ways. Informally through acknowledgment during visits by child care and supervising social workers as well as others such as guardians and reviewing officers. Formally, through such means as foster care reviews and the provision of learning and development opportunities. These routes as well as others are concrete ways in which the contribution that sons and daughters make to fostering may become more visible, and through which their particular views and needs maybe more clearly heard whilst placements are ongoing.

The findings of the literature review in relation to grief processes indicate that being included in the process of placement endings and the goodbyes may well be important in terms of sons and daughters own mental health. However the findings indicate that sons and daughters' views rarely form part of the process of arrangements around placement moves, and if they are it seems likely that this is only in so far as their perspective is communicated through their parents. This too is an area worthy of further investigation.

The final aspect of the placement journey is probably that to which least attention has been paid for foster carers generally with the exception of some circumstances where children move to adoptive placements. Butler and Roberts (2004, p.147) identify the psychological tasks of 'commemorating', 'finding ways to remember the person from whom they are separated' and 'going on', 'looking to and investing emotionally in the future' as latter stages of 'adjusting to loss and separation'. The importance of life story books, photos of a child's shared life with sons and daughters are all ways in which they can commemorate but there is no evidence from this study that keeping in touch through direct or indirect means is a formal part of the planning of placement endings. What is indicated however is that emergence of social networking has enabled contact to continue directly between children/ young people after placement irrespective of whatever the formal arrangements may or may not have prescribed. The research study also indicates that unresolved loss for sons and daughters can have an impact for other children in terms of the 'going on' and their engagement in nurturance for future fostering placements.

Conclusions and recommendations

The UK National Standards (NFCA 1999), published after extensive consultation 11 years ago, clearly outline the way in which the role of sons and daughters can be taken account of in the day to day practice and policy of fostering agencies. Whilst it is evident through this study and the knowledge base of Fostering Network channels, that there is evidence of some good practice within individual fostering agencies, the reality is that sons and daughters remain largely “invisible” both nationally and locally.

In order for this to be addressed we recommend:

- Further research to explore the impact of separation and loss for sons and daughters in terms of:
 - implications for fostering families
 - implications for placement stability of children and young people looked after.
- A move towards greater consistency nationally and locally in the ways in which the needs and views of sons and daughters are incorporated within the day to day practice of fostering agencies. This can be done by:
 - Fostering services utilising existing opportunities such as preparation groups, placement visits and foster care reviews to gather the views of sons and daughters within the context of the current regulatory framework.
 - Ofsted giving greater emphasis to the needs and wishes of sons and daughters within the context of the current regulatory framework and making recommendations to this effect.
- To enhance the level of knowledge and understanding generally about foster care, including the role of sons and daughters, within the social care workforce through:
 - incorporation as part of the induction training for social workers and teachers
 - incorporation as part of the programme of post qualification learning and development for all social workers in child care, including reviewing officers, guardians, and teachers.

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Glossary

Fosterline is a government funded confidential advice line for foster carers which provides independent, impartial advice about fostering issues.

The Advice and Mediation Service provides independent advice to foster carers, particularly during the investigation of allegations.

A Foster Care Association (FCA) is a local voluntary organisation set up and run by foster carers, usually together with social workers and sometimes with others involved with or interested in foster care.

Leading Our Lives is an England wide project, funded by the Big Lottery, which aims to increase the participation of young people in fostering services. The team is staffed by sons and daughters and young people who are or have been in foster care.

The UK National standards 1999 were produced by the National Foster Care Association (now the Fostering Network) on behalf of the UK Joint Working Party on Foster Care. Extensive consultation formed the basis of the standards and they were intended as a good practice guide for fostering services.

The National Minimum Standards (NMS) 2002 replace The Foster Placement (children) Regulations 1991. They are intended as minimum standards and are applicable to all local authority fostering services, independent fostering services and voluntary services providing services under Section 59 of the Children Act 1989. The regulations are mandatory and the standards are taken into account by the regulatory body- Ofsted, when inspecting fostering services. The NMS are currently being revised as part of the policy overall linked to the Every Child Matters Outcomes under section 23 of the Care Standards Act 2000. They were subject to consultation which closed on 19 December 2009.

The Fostering Network's Foster Care Resource Centre holds a library catalogue of 7,500 resources on foster care.

Literature Searches are run on the Fostering Network's library catalogue. The searches are run either using free text searching of the key terms or by using the approved subject heading, in this case "separation, loss and disruption" and "sons and daughters, foster care". The results are then sifted by a member of the Information Team so that only the relevant results are used in the final list. Members of the information team also run searches on NCB's Child data.

Supervising Social Worker (SSW) is a named social worker in the fostering team linked to individual foster carers and their families.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Local authority fostering services that were studied in the scoping exercise

Eastern

- Cambridgeshire County Council

East Midlands

- Leicester City Council

North East

- Durham Local Authority

North London

- Tower Hamlets

North West

- Rochdale

South East

- Brighton and Hove

South London

- Richmond-upon-Thames

South West

- North Somerset

West Midlands

- Warwickshire County Council

Yorkshire

Kirklees

Metropolitan

Council

Appendix 2: Context of the Foster Care Association Forum

The research was carried out using a sample of 14 foster carers from 13 FCAs who attended the London Regional Forum for foster carers, which was held at the Fostering Network's main building based in Southwark.

Each member was an elected person from their own borough's FCA, and was there to represent the views of others in their area. The group varied in ethnicity and religion. Not all the boroughs of London were represented here, though all were welcome to attend.

The meeting was one in a series of regular meetings where the carers discussed issues in relation to fostering. This short questionnaire took up 15 minutes of the meeting, but all who participated were interested in being part of any further consultation on the subject.

Appendix 3: write up of the feedback gained at the Foster Care Association forum which was sent to all those who attended

Meeting - London 25th September 2009

CWDC Research- Your Comments:

1. What are the main issues concerning sons and daughters that should be given attention? (by researchers, governments, fostering agencies and in general)

- Training for sons and daughters to deal with separation and loss- especially for those who have had long term placements.
- Use young adult S/Ds to get feedback on their experiences (This would provide insight into what issues have changed, improved or stayed the same)
- Foster carers are trained to deal with separation and loss, whereas their children aren't- this is overlooked by most authorities.
- Sons and daughters should be recognised by authorities in when separation occurs as well as when it comes to keeping in contact.

2. Opinions on our proposal for research on the impact of separation and loss on sons and daughters.

- Everyone seemed to agree that this was an issue worth researching
- There are a lot of important issues to pick up on over the course of this research project (listed above)
- A point was made to mention that this will hopefully lead onto a larger piece of research.

3. How sons and daughters are affected by placement are moves, planned or unplanned

- Children in care are often moved while S/Ds are at school, so they don't get to see them to say goodbye.
- Both groups of young people often lose contact with each other, which isn't always taken into account by fostering services.
- The wellbeing of sons and daughters isn't always considered when separation occurs, so no counselling or advice is given to them when they lose someone who they have lived with for any period of time be it years or even days.

4. Any thoughts on why so little attention has been paid to sons and daughters?

- Money
- Foster carers aren't taken seriously, so why would their kids?
- Lack of awareness (on part of the fostering service) of the issues relating to S/D
- Seen as extra work/hassle by social work staff?
- No information has been collected on S/D – this is disputed in the fact that social work staff have a lot of information on s/d (in the form of the Form F), but choose to disregard it as it holds no benefit for them.

If you have any further comments on this, please feel free to contact Ali Hossain on 020 7620 6412, or via email on ali.hossain@fostering.net.

Thank you for your input into this.

Appendix 4: questionnaire at the Fostering Film Showcase, 27 October 2009

1. How old are you?
 - 12
 - 13
 - 14
 - 15
 - 16
 - 17
 - 18
 - 19

2. How long has your family been fostering?
 - 6 months - 1 year
 - 1 - 2 years
 - 2 - 4 years
 - 4 - 7 years
 - 7+ years
 - As long as I can remember

3. Do you think that foster carers have enough say/can make enough decisions about the children they foster?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
 - On some things but not others

4. What is the name of Keanu Reeves character in the Matrix?
 - Neo
 - Theo
 - Leo
 - Reo

5. Do you usually have some contact with a fostered child/young person after they've left your home?
 - Yes, always
 - Yes, often
 - Sometimes
 - Never
 - Mostly

6. Which of the following do you think is the most important thing that foster carers (your parents) should be able to decide for a child/young person who is living with you without having to ask social services first?
 - Having a haircut
 - Getting a page on face book
 - Going on a school trip
 - Having a flu jab
 - Going for a sleepover with friends

7. How do you usually get to hear news of the children/young people that your family has fostered after they leave your home?
 - Via parents
 - Face book/email
 - Texting/phone calls
 - Visits
 - Hear about them from other people e.g. school
 - I don't usually hear anything

8. How much notice do you normally have before a child/young person moves on from your home?

- A week
 - A day or two
 - A month
 - Don't know
 - They just go suddenly
9. How many children do Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie?
- 5
 - 6
 - 7
 - 8
10. How involved are you in the arrangements to say goodbye?
- Completely
 - Not at all
 - Depends
 - As much as I can
 - I'm not really interested
11. Who talks to you about the child/young person you've fostered besides your parents?
- No one
 - Fostering Social Worker
 - Social worker for the child/young person
 - Other members of your family
 - Your friends
12. Have you received a thank you card from your fostering service this week?
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know
 - I'm expecting one
 - No, and I think it might be because of the post strike!
13. Which rapper sings the song "Hot in here"?
- Nelly
 - 50 cent
 - Ja Rule
 - T.I
14. What responsibilities do you take for children/young people you are fostering?
- Babysitting when your parents are out
 - Babysitting when your parents are in but doing something else
 - Taking them out
 - Taking them/collecting them from school
15. What have you enjoyed most about today?
- Films
 - Food
 - Using the cameras
 - Games

Appendix 5: information and questionnaire as provided at the IFP Forum on 19 November 2009

Information for the IPF forum
19 November 2009

The Fostering Network is undertaking a scoping study to explore the following question:

“To what extent does current policy and practice pay adequate attention to the needs of sons and daughters, particularly in the context of planned or unplanned placement endings?”

It is a practitioner-led study funded by the CWDC and is due for completion at the end of February 2010.

It would be helpful if any delegates who are interested could contribute to the process of our initial exploratory investigations by answering the questions on the next page.

All responses will be treated anonymously and no participants are required to

Questions to the IPF forum ■ Please answer as applicable
19 November 2009

(1) Are you a representative of a fostering agency? LA or IFP? (please state)

(2) Are you a practitioner/manager /foster carer/other? (please specify)

(3) What do you think are the main issues concerning sons and daughters that should be given attention – by researchers/governments /fostering agencies and in general?

(For example: training and support for sons and daughters, recognition, sharing, loss and separation.)

(4) To what extent do you think that issues of separation and loss for sons and daughters of foster carers are relevant for further research enquiry? (please tick)

- Very relevant and necessary
- Quite relevant and necessary
- Not really considered this aspect before
- Not relevant or necessary
- Other _____

5) To what extent do you think sons and daughters are affected by placement moves – planned or unplanned – of foster children, in your knowledge and experience? (please tick)

- Can be very affected
- Can be affected in short term
- Can be affected in the long term
- Not particularly affected
- Don't really know/never really considered this aspect

Thank you taking the time to answer these questions

Appendix G: Summary of information from the Fostering Network staff session on sons and daughters of foster carers on 14 January 2010

The session was designed to give the Fostering Network staff members an insight into the experiences of sons and daughters of foster carers. Three members of staff whose parents' foster or have fostered volunteered to share their experiences in an informal setting with questions being asked by colleagues.

The make up of the three volunteers is detailed below:

- Two male and one female.
- One male was seven when the family started fostering, one male was twelve and the female was eighteen.
- The female had experience of long term placements and had not experienced placement endings.
- Both the males had experienced multiple placement endings and had experienced a variety of longer and shorter term placements
- The three young people come from different ethnic backgrounds.
- One male has one brother, one is an only child and the female is one of five children.

Anecdotal evidence from the session is detailed below.

In response to '*what is the hardest thing about fostering?*':

- Making friends and then losing them suddenly.
- Never maintaining contact with the children and young people that the family had fostered – this impacted on the level of emotional attachment made to fostered children as the young person became increasingly unwilling to become attached to people they would never see or hear from again.
- Never able to find out anything at all about the people who lived with me in the past – it was mentioned that this was true even when information was specifically asked for.

In general conversation about placement endings:

- Often come home from school and the child was gone without any chance to say goodbye – found this really difficult and started to take less interest in the young people fostered to make it easier.
- Sometimes there was a build-up to saying goodbye but not always.
- One young person told an anecdote about a young boy fostered by their family for a number of years who suddenly left with only one weeks notice. They indicated the distress at not understanding why the move happened and at losing somebody they thought of as a brother.
- One of the young people reported that they keep in touch with many of the young people who have lived with them.

In general conversation about support and training:

- All three indicated that they had little to no contact with the social workers in any way.
- All three indicated feeling excluded by social workers and from the fostering process.
- None of the young people had any training of any description but acknowledged that this would have been useful (in the case of the two young people it was acknowledged that it may have been useful in terms of dealing with placement endings).

Appendix 7: literature searches carried out by the Fostering Network information team (as detailed in the glossary)

1. Result of literature search of the Fostering Network library catalogue on separation, loss and disruption.

- Title:** **A child's journey through placement**
Author: Fahlberg, Vera
Imprint: London : British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF), 1994
- Title:** **Understanding the separated child**
Author: Collins, Judith
Imprint: Campbell town: Hearsay Publications, 1985
- Title:** **Some traumatic effects of separation and placement**
Author: Littner, Ner
Imprint: New York : Child Welfare League of America, 1976
- Title:** **Learning from disruption: making better placements**
Author: Smith, Sheila
Imprint: London : British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF), 1994
- Title:** **Separation revisited: adolescents in foster family care**
Author: Downes, Celia
Imprint: Aldershot : Ashgate Publishing, 1992
- Title:** **Separation and the very young**
Author: Robertson, James
Co-author: Robertson, Joyce
Imprint: London : Free Association Books, 1989
- Title:** **Helping children to manage loss: positive strategies for renewal and growth**
Author: Mallon, Brenda
Imprint: London : Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1998
- Title:** **Grief in children : a handbook for adults**
Author: Dyregrov, Atle
Imprint: London : Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2008
- Title:** **The emotional healing strategy : a recovery guide for any setback, disappointment or loss**
Author: Lindenfield, Gael
Imprint: London : Michael Joseph, 2008
- Title:** **Helping foster parents cope with separation, loss, and grief**
Author: Edelstein, Susan B.

- Co-author: Burge, Dorli ; Waterman, Jill
 Imprint: [New York] : Child Welfare League of America, 2001
- Title: Who's in our family? An application of the theory of family boundary ambiguity to the experiences of former foster carers**
 Author: Thomson, Lorraine
 Imprint: London : British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF), 2009
- Title: Grief matters for children**
 Author: Penny, Alison
 Imprint: Colchester : Children's Legal Centre, 2007
 Reference: childRIGHT ; 239 (September 2007), p. 13-15
- Title: Understanding disruption**
 Author: Fitzgerald, John
 Edition: 2nd ed.
 Imprint: London : British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF), 1990
- Title: Recollections of disruption : a study of foster care breakdowns**
 Author: Aldgate, Jane, 1945-
 Co-author: Hawley, David
 Imprint: London : National Foster Care Association (NFCA), 1986

2. Result of literature search of the NCB library catalogue on separation, loss and disruption.

- Title: Coping with loss: how foster parents' children cope with foster care**
 Author: TWIGG, R.C.
 Imprint: *Community Alternatives*, vol.7, no.1 (Spring, 1995). pp1-12.
- Title: The emotional tasks of moving from fostering to adoption: transitions, attachment, separation and loss.**
 Author: LANYADO, M.
 Imprint: *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, vol.8, no.3 (Jul, 2003). pp337-349.
- Title: Coping with loss: separation and other problems that threaten relationships.**
 Author: WEISS, R.S. (1998)
 Imprint: *British Medical Journal*, vol.316, no.7136 (28 Mar). pp1011-1013.
- Title: Good grief: exploring feelings, loss and death with over 11's and adults: a holistic approach.**
 Author: BARBARA WARD AND ASSOCIATES
 Imprint: 2nd ed. London: Jessica Kingsley. 260pp. (1996)

- Title:** **Coping with loss: bereavement in childhood.**
Author: BLACK, D.
Imprint: *British Medical Journal*, vol.316, no.7135 (21 Mar, 1998). pp931-933.
- Title:** **A sense of loss.**
Author: BROWN, E.
Imprint: *Special*, (Spring, 1997). pp15-19.
- Title:** **Special issue: Children & loss**
Author: CONROY, A. (ed.)
Imprint: *Child Links*, no.2. 24pp. (2005)
- Title:** **Loss and grief in adoption: the impact of contact.**
Author: COURTNEY, A.
Imprint: *Adoption & Fostering*, vol.24, no.2 (Summer, 2000). pp33-44.
- Title:** **Without you: children and young people growing up with loss and its effects.**
Author: GRANOT, T
Imprint: London: Jessica Kingsley. 240pp. (2005)
- Title:** **Attachment and loss in child and family social work.**
Author: HOWE, D. (ed.)
Imprint: Aldershot: Avebury. 165pp. (1996)
- Title:** **The impact of bereavement and loss on young people.**
Author: JOSEPH ROWNTREE FOUNDATION
Imprint: London Joseph Rowntree Foundation. 4pp. (Findings informing change). (2005)
- Title:** **Helping children to manage loss: positive strategies for renewal and growth.**
Author: MALLON, B. (1998)
Imprint: London: Jessica Kingsley. 184pp.
- Title:** **Young people, bereavement and loss: disruptive transitions?**
Author: RIBBENS McCARTHY, J.
Imprint: London: National Children's Bureau. 86pp. (2005)
- Title:** **Understanding disruption.**
Author: FITZGERALD, J. (1990)
Imprint: 2nd ed. London: British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering. 48pp.
- Title:** **Disruption in foster placements - a review of research.**
Author: JOBLING, M.

Imprint: London: National Children's Bureau. 2pp. (Highlight series; no.69). (1985)

Appendix B: Result of literature search of the Fostering Network library catalogue on impact of placement endings on sons and daughters of foster carers

Title: The social work role in supporting the birth children of foster carers
Author: Tulley, Patricia
Imprint: [s.a.]

Title: Who's at risk? : issues central to natural children in foster families
Author: Preston, Victoria Franklyn
Imprint: March 1993

Title: A child's journey through placement
Author: Fahlberg, Vera
Imprint: London : British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF), 1994

Title: Delivering Foster Care
Author: Triseliotis, J
Imprint: London, British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF), 2000

Appendix 9: Representation of sons and daughters of foster carers within the national minimum standards

Standards	References to fostering families	Specific References to sons and daughters	Total Fostering families	Total Sons and daughters
UK standards for foster carers	7.10 Receipt of full information to enable foster care to protect 13.5 Include children of foster carer in assessment	14.2 SSW to identify training needs for carers and sons and daughters 14.6 SSW to meet with sons and daughters 14.8 SSW's reports identify support/ training needs of sons and daughters 16.2 Included in foster carer review	2	4
National minimum standards 2002	8.5 Placement decisions consider child's racial ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic needs and match as closely as possible with foster family. 8.7 Child to be placed has opportunity of introduction to carer's family. 9.7 Foster carer provided with full information to protect own family. 23.6 Appropriate training on safe caring is provided for all members of the foster household	23.7 Specific consideration is given to any help or support needed by the sons and daughters of foster carers	4 (2 are In context of needs of LAC child rather Needs of Son/ Daughter)	1
Revised national minimum standards (consultation 2009)	2.10 the fostering service provides foster carers with full clear written information – on safe caring guidelines appropriate to the needs and circumstances of the individual child and children in the household 2.11 disagreements between foster carer and others in the household are dealt with reasonably 3.8 and 3.9 Balance between needs, wishes preferences of each child in household. 11.5 Needs of the child and effects of their admission on existing household members are taken into account in placing decisions. 11.8 The fostering service ensures that foster children are not treated detrimentally differently from the foster carer's own children living in the household 15.5 The child being placed given relevant information , - including about foster carer's family. 20.9 Appropriate training on safe caring for all members of the household.	20.10 Specific consideration given to any help or support needed by sons and daughters 21.1 Strategy for working with foster carers includes support for sons and daughters	8 (5 in context of needs of LAC)	2

	26.4 The foster carer is given relevant information about the child and his/ her family which is needed for the appropriate care and safety of the child , other children in the fostering household and the foster carer him/ herself			
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Appendix 10: summary of findings from fostering service public documents

Service name	Region	Ofsted rating	No. of fostering households	Literature and dates	Where s&d mentioned	Terminology used	Mention specifically in respect to objectives?
Cambridgeshire	Eastern	Good	221	Ofsted report: January 2007	n/a	n/a	n/a
				Statement of Purpose: December 2007	p. 13 in relation to support offered (groups)	'children of the carer's family'	No
				Foster Carer Handbook`	p. 22 in relation to the responsibility of the fostering social worker p. 34 in relation to placement planning p. 39 in relation to placement ending	'the foster carer and their family' 'foster carer's family' 'the carer as well as their family'	No No yes
				Website	n/a		
Leicester City Council	East Midlands	Outstanding	231	Ofsted report:	p. 9 in relation to annual reviews	'the children of carers'	no

				February 2008			
				Statement of Purpose: April 2009	Section 9 in relation to safeguarding fostered children	‘about foster carers, or that of their family, or siblings’	no
				Foster Carer’s Handbook: 2008	p.36 in relation to changes when in the household when a placement begins p. 78 in relation to counseling if a fostered child dies p. 236 in relation to dealing with jealousy	‘your children’ ‘you and your family’ ‘your own children’	no yes (if a child dies in the home a worker will be made available to offer you and your family support and inform you about procedures’ no
				Website	In FAQs in relation to impact on own family	‘my own family’	no
Durham	Local	North-	Outstanding	Information	Ofsted	n/a	

Authority	East		not given	report: January 2008			
				Statement of Purpose: 2007 – 2008	p.5 in relation to the values of the service	‘foster carers and their families’	no
					p.6 in relation to providing advice, guidance and support	‘foster carers and their families’	yes – taking into account need for support at specific times
					p.9 in relation to services provided	‘children who foster’	no
					p.12 in relation to services to fostering support services	‘foster carers, children and families’	no
				Website	Section on sons and daughters group	‘foster carers’ own children’	no
Tower Hamlets	North London	Outstanding	Information not given	Ofsted report: September 2008	p.8 in relation to sons and daughters group	‘children of foster carers/sons and daughters’	no
				Website	Section on ‘room in your home?’ in relation to affect on	‘your family’	no

					family of fostering		
Rochdale	North West	Outstanding	121	Ofsted report: November 2008	n/a		
				Website	n/a		
Brighton and Hove	South East	Outstanding	Not given	Ofsted report: January 2009	p.10 in relation to sons and daughters' group and training course	'children of carers'	no
					p.12 in relation to supporting sons and daughters of foster carers	'sons and daughters of foster carers'	no
				Statement of Purpose: August 2008	p.9 in relation to annual review	'carers' own children'	no
				Website	In relation to activities for sons and daughters	'foster carers'	no
Richmond	South London	Outstanding	35	Ofsted Report: March 2008	n/a		
				Statement of Purpose:	n/a		

				2007			
North Somerset	South West	90	Outstanding	Ofsted report: January 2009	p.6 in relation to free leisure centre access p.7 in relation to Ofsted recommending that they must do more to support sons and daughters of foster carers p.8 as above	'foster carers and their children' 'foster carers' own children' 'foster carers' birth children'	no no No
				Statement of purpose: December 2007	p.6 in relation to providing high level support p.8 in relation to seeking their views in monitoring and reviewing p.10 in relation to services provided p.14 social worker to provide supervision and	'foster carers and their families' 'foster families' 'carers and their families' 'carers' own children'	No No No no

					support		
Warwickshire	West Midlands	Not given	Outstanding	Ofsted report: February 2008	n/a		
				Statement of purpose	n/a		
Kirklees	Yorkshire	Not given	Outstanding	Ofsted report: November 2008	n/a		
				Statement of purpose: December 2006	n/a		
				Foster carers guide	p.27 in relation to emergency placements and allowing time to consult with the family	'your children living at home'	No
					p.27 in relation to the importance of	'you and your family'	no

					good matches		
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Appendix II: Data records kept by *Fosterline* and the Fostering Network Advice and Mediation service (2008/2009).

The table below shows the percentage of enquiries that have been received by each of the services. The reasons for enquiry shown are all subjects that could potentially impact on or be related to sons and daughters.

	<i>Fosterline</i>	Advice and Mediation Service
Abuse of foster carer / son / daughter	0.1%	0.4%
Adoption	1.8%	2.2%
Allegation - all	6.0%	25.9%
Approval - changes	0.9%	2.2%
Approval - resignation	0.5%	0.0%
Approval - review	3.1%	1.1%
Approval - termination	3.3%	7.0%
Complaint against FSP (IFP)	1.1%	0.0%
Complaint against FSP (LA)	1.3%	10.0%
Complaint against RA (Responsible Authority for LAC)	1.3%	0.0%
Contact	1.3%	0.7%
Damages and theft	0.1%	0.7%
Death and bereavement	0.2%	0.0%
Disruption of placement	2.1%	1.5%
Housing	0.4%	0.0%
(Kinship) Family & friends care	2.9%	0.4%
Managing behaviour	0.7%	0.4%
Other	2.4%	8.1%
Placement planning	2.7%	1.1%
Tension / conflict between LAC & carers' son / daughter	0.0%	0.0%
	32.2%	61.7%

Appendix 12: Results of digital voting at the Fostering Film Showcase: Questions for the sons and daughters

The following table shows the results from the digi-voting (with the exception of the trivia questions). 28 young people aged between 12 and 19 answered the questions (although not all of them answered all questions) from a wide geographical spread.

QUESTION 1

How old are you?	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	18%	14%	32%	11%	11%	10%	0%	4%
	5	4	9	3	3	3	0	1

QUESTION 2

How long has your family been fostering?	6 months - 1 year	1 - 2 years	2 - 4 years	4 - 7 years	7+ years	As long as I can remember
	8%	24%	16%	24%	20%	8%
	2	6	4	6	5	2

QUESTION 3

Do you think that foster carers have enough say/can make enough decisions about the children they foster?	Yes	No	Don't know	On some things but not others
	12%	60%	12%	16%
	3	15	3	4

QUESTION 4

How often do you usually have some contact with your fostered child/young person since they've left your home?	yes, always	yes, often	sometimes	never	mostly
	9%	26%	48%	8%	9%
	2	6	11	2	2

QUESTION 5

Which of the following do you think is the most important thing that foster carers (your parents) should be able to decide for a child/young person who is living with you without having to ask social services first?	Having a hair cut	Getting a page on facebook	Going on a school trip	Having a flu jab	Going for a sleepover with friends
	26%	26%	18%	13%	17%

	6	6	4	3	4
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QUESTION 6

How do you usually get to news of the young people that your family has fostered when they leave your care?	Via parents	Facebook/email	Texting/phone calls	Visits	Hear about them from other people e.g. school	I don't usually hear anything
	32%	18%	9%	14%	4%	23%
	7	4	2	3	1	5

QUESTION 7

How much notice do you usually have before a young person moves on from your home?	A week	A day or two	A month	Don't know	They just go suddenly
	33%	0%	15%	38%	14%
	7	0	3	8	3

QUESTION 8

How involved are you in the decisions to say yes or no to a young person?	Completely	Not at all	Depends	As much as I can	I'm not really interested
	23%	9%	32%	18%	18%
	5	2	7	4	4

QUESTION 9

Who do you talk to you about the young person you've fostered besides your foster carer?	No one	Fostering Social Worker	Social worker for the child/young person	Other members of your family	Your friends
	11%	50%	11%	22%	6%
	2	9	2	4	1

QUESTION 10

Have you received a thank you card from your fostering child this week?	Yes	No	I don't know	I'm expecting one	No, and I think it might be because of the post strike!
	30%	55%	0%	15%	0%
	6	11	0	3	0

QUESTION 11

What responsibilities do you have for children/young people in your care?	Babysitting when your parents are out	Babysitting when your parents are in but doing something else	Taking them out	Taking them/collecting them from school
	22%	56%	16%	6%
	4	10	3	1

QUESTION 12

What have you enjoyed most today?	Films	Food	Using the cameras	Games
	62%	24%	7%	7%
	18	7	2	2

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