

LINX, Children in Care Council, questions for panel to ask on behalf of children and young people

<p>1. Do you have birth children and if so how would you ensure that fostered children feel as equal as any other children in your home?</p>	<p><i>Carers should include how they would love all their children (birth and foster) the same and would not do things like regularly send foster children to respite carers, go on separate holidays, buy different food, have different rules from the rest of the family.</i></p>
<p>2. How would you introduce extended family and friends to newly fostered children in your home?</p>	<p><i>Carers should include through conversations and joint activities like day trips, welcoming parties and meals together. Ask the fostered child/young person how they would like to be introduced before they meet other adults. Don't assume that the young person wants to go to events that involve extended family. If they are old enough to be left unsupervised then give them a choice as sometimes it is overwhelming meeting so many new people all at the same time.</i></p>
<p>3. Do you have regular family holidays and if so would you take any foster children in your care on holiday too?</p>	<p><i>Holidays should involve everyone, including foster children but special occasions like anniversaries etc. don't need to involve the whole family. Foster parents need a break like any birth parents do.</i></p>
<p>4. If a young person you were fostering had a history of criminal activity, how would you deal with this and show that you were not judging them?</p>	<p><i>That the carer understands that all young people need a second chance just like all adults should have a second chance. It is very important to be open and honest. Talk to the fostered child/young person about their criminal history. Do not assume that you know all the circumstances. Set clear boundaries for them. Don't jump to conclusions. Don't be afraid to ask challenging questions. Be prepared for difficult times. Most importantly be forgiving. Don't give up.</i></p>
<p>5. How would you keep young people occupied?</p>	<p><i>That carers are willing to invest time with their foster children doing things like going for walks, eating together and spending time together after school doing activities that the young person finds interesting. Carers should not just offer foster children a room to use in their spare time. Find out what the fostered child/young person is interested in. Introduce them to new activities. Do not assume that the fostered child/young person will enjoy the same</i></p>

	<i>activities that you enjoy.</i>
6. What sorts of activities do you feel are valuable?	<i>Family meal times spent together, family discussions and family holidays/ trips/ activities.</i>
How much does having a family mean to you?	<i>You can't buy children and that having a family and spending time together does not require lots of money but does require an investment of the carers' time.</i>
7. How would you invest the money you receive for being a foster carer?	<i>We would expect the adult to say that they would invest the money into providing positive experiences for the fostered child and not on practical issues for example having a new bathroom installed.</i>
8. How would you deal with challenging behaviour?	<i>Agreeing ground rules/ house rules with child or young person Taking appropriate action, imposing sanctions Restraining should only ever be a final resort. Talking Rewards charts/ incentives Work with the fostered child/young person to understand that actions have consequences.</i>
9. If you were to relocate how would you try to keep consistency for the foster child?	<i>The foster child should remain at the same school if that was possible as this is very important. Carers should also help foster children to maintain friendships they have made with other children.</i>
10. How would you ensure that you can deal with the challenges that lie ahead?	<i>The carers would go on all the available training and attend foster carer support group meetings. Talk to children in their care and try to address issues and problems Rewards charts/ incentives Work together with professionals like social workers, family support workers and Independent Reviewing Officers.</i>