

# Fostering Unfiltered



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Presented to: **North West Fostering Leads**

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**FOSTERING UNFILTERED**

## **DISCOVERY PHASE WAS KEY**

- Desktop research
- Stakeholder engagement
- Customer research (current and potential foster carers)
- Fact finds with interested parties
- GM / LA docs
- National reports
- Considered the competition

## UNDERSTANDING THE AUDIENCE

### Motivations to foster triggers:

- First-hand experience – personal experience of being in care, knowing someone who had been in care or a foster carer.
- A small number of participants had had difficult family backgrounds who felt they had a lot to offer to a child with similar experiences
- Wanting to start a family was also another reason for fostering ranging from participants with tokophobia (that being the fear of childbirth) to women who had never found Mr Right but always wanted a family as well as a participant from the LGBT community. One participant had been interested by a storyline portrayed on Coronation Street where characters Roy and Hayley Cropper had fostered a child.
- Another reason was making a positive impact or giving back by looking after a child who needed safety and protection.
- Wanting to share a happy family life was another reason to want to foster as was utilising or building on caring skills gained through professional work.

# CONVERSION CONUNDRUM

- **First impressions count** – you are judged on your response and it is regarded as a reflection of the support you offer foster carers.
- In their view websites supply basic information and are quite transactional with buttons urging you to apply. There's a **feeling of urgency that puts most off** but leaves an expectation of an exchange of information when an enquiry is made.
- One participant said: ‘...because there wasn't much **engagement**, I felt like if I did continue down this road - would I get the support I needed? When it's your first time you want to feel like your hands being held and you're informed and empowered.”

**“I’ve always been interested, and I’ve searched it and gone on the website, but I don’t feel like the content gives me enough information to take it further. It’s very much like okay so you’re interested ring up or fill out this form. I don’t want to give that commitment at this point or then be hassled on the phone. I’d like to read content in my own time.”**

# CONVERSION CONUNDRUM

- Participants were interested in FAQs on eligibility, allowances, types of children needing foster care as well as the 'softer experience' like case studies.
- They preferred an unfiltered version of fostering from foster carers themselves. They found this on Tik Tok and Facebook with foster carers from around the world preparing for a first night with a new foster child and felt this brought it to life.
- The success of other foster carers is a motivator, but they don't want just success stories. They wanted the chance to ask foster carers about the support available, how they handle traumatic situations, how they manage fostering around other paid work, how they manage the relationship with the child's birth family, what if things go wrong?
- They all regarded fostering as quite a solitary role and weren't aware of any wider community of foster carers or the existence of projects like Mockingbird.
- There is a real appetite for detailed and authentic depictions of foster carers but no one source of information seems to do it well.
- Transparency and access to information was high on the list of priorities for prospective carers. One participant said, 'You don't want to jump in with both feet without knowing the facts'
- The reaction to background checks on previous partners and family members was met with dismay by participants who didn't realise this was part of the process. the process of it being really intrusive and being turned down made some participants wonder if it was worth going through all that.
- There was also a mistrust that this level of honesty and transparency wouldn't be forthcoming from the local authority. One participant said, 'You'd need to make sure you got the information from the local authority so you are aware beforehand...I don't know why I don't expect them to tell you all the truth beforehand maybe it's just from tv programmes or things you hear – so you could be adequately prepared and give that person the best start.'
- Prospective foster carers need to know the requirements so there are no nasty surprises. Participants though information shouldn't be withheld so they could answer the question is this right for me?

# CONVERSION CONUNDRUM

## In-house foster carer survey findings

### What attracted you to the role of foster carer?

- 35.6%** Saw it as a rewarding career
- 29.3%** Were ready for a new challenge
- 24.9%** Wanted to give back to local community

### Where did you look for info about fostering?

- 50.2%** Spoke to a foster carer
- 29.3%** Google/other search engine
- 24.9%** Fostering Network
- 4.7%** LA website

### Why do you choose to foster for an LA rather than an IFA?

- 24%** LA support
- 24%** To support community
- 14.7%** IFA ethics

### What are the biggest challenges you face as a foster carer?

- 52.6%** Coping with challenging behaviour
- 40.7%** Financial pressures
- 40.7%** Not being provided with information on children in a timely manner




## DEVELOPMENT

- Incredible amount of competitor analysis
- Mystery shopping on IFAs and Las
- Josh MacAlister's Care Review – now is the best time to reset perceptions of foster care
- Researched and evaluated 3 phase model – particularly the exploration phase – address fears and obstacles
- Recognise the professional role of a foster carer
- Time to rethink the future of fostering
- Current online journey dated and difficult – digital behaviour changed since pandemic – they are searching the internet – build a site worth looking at




Website...



## TYPES OF FOSTERING

### SHORT-TERM FOSTERING


You can sleep in short-term fostering. Find out how you can become an approved short-term foster carer.



[READ MORE](#)

### LONG-TERM FOSTERING

Find out more about long-term fostering, also known as permanent foster care. Would you open up your home to a young person in need?



[READ MORE](#)

### WHAT IS IT REALLY LIKE TO FOSTER A CHILD?

Find out from the people that know – our foster carers. Enter your details to get access to our guide.

First name\*

Last name\*


First address\*


Why do you want to foster?

[SUBMIT YOUR ENQUIRY](#)

### SPECIALIST FOSTERING

What does specialist fostering involve? Learn more about complex needs and how you can become a specialist foster carer. Includes What's New?






## EXPLORE FOSTERING

Stories  Information

Search

### WHAT IS FOSTERING?


How do you define foster care? What does it involve? If you're new to the world of fostering, here's a handy guide to get you started.



[READ MORE](#)

### WHO CAN FOSTER?


Picture a foster carer, what do they look like? Do they look like you? If not, why not? Read more about what it takes to be a foster carer.



[READ MORE](#)

### WHEN DID YOU KNOW YOU WERE READY TO FOSTER?


The decision to become a foster carer can take months, sometimes even years. How do you know if you're ready?



[READ STORY](#)

### TYPES OF FOSTERING


There are different types of fostering depending on the different needs of children. Learn about what could work for you and your family.



[READ MORE](#)


### FOSTER CARER PAY

How much do foster carers get paid? Foster carers receive weekly allowances to cover the costs of taking care of children in their care. Learn more.




### TRAINING AND SUPPORT

What kind of support is available for foster carers? As a foster carer, you'll be part of a wider team of people working together to support the child.




### HOW TO BECOME A FOSTER CARER

The journey to becoming a foster carer starts with an enquiry to your local council, but there's more! Get the lowdown on the whole process.



### WHY IS THE FOSTER CARE PROCESS SO INTRUSIVE?

The process to becoming a foster carer can feel quite intrusive and it can make people hesitant to take the next step. Want to know what it's really like?



**FOSTERING UNFILTERED**

## THE RISE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

- Value our carers
- Modernise the notion of family
- Life isn't perfect
- Carers deserve recognition
- Our carers have been through the process and wanted to be here – they're our best asset.



## **KEY ACTIONS**

Attract - campaign / comms

Nurture – website

Convert – CRM

## **MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

- Increase in number of initial enquiries
- Increase in number of approved foster carers
- Increase in number of IFA transfers
- Improved conversion rate from expression of interest to approval
- Increased market share vs IFA placement
- Return on marketing investment
- Contribution to total enquires for all participating LAs
- GM performance compared to national picture / trends

**THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR TIME**