

# FosterWiki®



## THE 2024 INDEPENDENT FOSTER CARERS SURVEY

### Question 11 Additional Comments

## I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to The Independent Foster Carer's Survey 2024 powered by FosterWiki Ltd.

We appreciate all the Foster Carers/Carers' time in completing this survey as it is your voice that needs to be heard to help raise the outcomes for the children and young people we care for.

The survey was completed by current or carers who have left fostering in the last 5 years.

The question was as follows:

*“Do your foster children need mental health services which you/they have been told are not available (counselling, psychologist, psychiatrist, family therapist) - answer yes if they are on a waiting list or they have had some provision but it ended too soon or was inadequate.?”*

2348 people answered this question and left 466 additional comment responses.



All comments are the opinions of the people who have made them and do not represent the opinion of FosterWiki Ltd. FosterWiki has only supplied a limited number of comments. A full list can be requested for research purposes or official Government use. Any application will be considered on its merit. These comments or any part of this document cannot be used as part of any publication in any form either electronic, written or any other medium without the express written permission of FosterWiki Ltd.

## 2. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

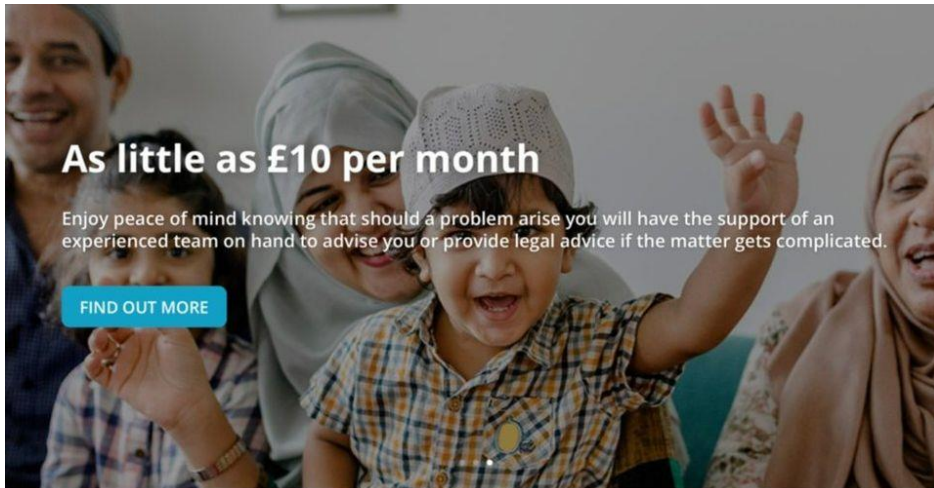
1. After doing the V I g video work back in May 2023 we have had no feedback from Young Minds Matters.
2. CAMHS, for ADHD assessment and as usual a long waiting list. The LA appears to be doing something.
3. He's only 1.5.
4. We currently pay for a private psychotherapist weekly and have done so for over a year as our YP couldn't live with the trauma.
5. CAHMS waiting lists are often 2 years it's disgusting.
6. There is no funding. Ask again in 3 months.
7. CAHMS is overwhelmed, we have a child that had a private ADHD assessment however CAHMS would not recognise it as they didn't do the assessment. Therefore, the child has no access to a child psychologist to assess whether medication would work. The child now believes "What's the point, they don't do anything anyway!"
8. We have had to wait months before for counselling, then the counsellor left and had to wait months again for a replacement.
9. Took 30 months to get urgent mental health support
10. Two and a half year wait for CAMHS in Surrey
11. It has taken six years to gain any assessments for our youngest child. we had to complain to the LA and on the advice of the children's commissioner the NHS before he was given any assessments, This child has been robbed of his schooling for years only attending school for a couple of hours a day until we gained a specialist school for him by threatening to place him in a private school.
12. Amazingly they very quickly found him a place where he really flourished. He was allocated a one-to-one at this school but still no assessments until I made a complaint against the NHS once again this time it only took a couple of weeks before he was seen and given ADHD meds. He's still going through the assessments at this time so can't fully comment about the outcome just yet, but I can say for the first time in six years he's more able to control his emotions and not be looked on as a naughty child. secondly, neither of our boys has received any kind of life story work in the Six years and nine years they have been with us. A sibling assessment was supposed to take place shortly after the two brothers moved into our home this didn't actually take place until we had given notice to them, it was done via their social worker who I'm sure wasn't qualified to do this. the boys were promised play therapy too, but this didn't happen for another couple of years of fighting for it to start. lastly after making them aware of a few red flags a sexualised incident happened with my then four-year-old grandson. the outcome was once the lockdown was over Better Futures who help children with this kind of behaviour would be sought. not only was it not sought his new social worker had not even been informed of it or in fact any other red flags. Serious safeguarding issues again. they hadn't passed on this information to the school either. This was the start of our 16 complaints against the LA.
13. Our eldest had input from CAMHS but has aged out, and now there is little provision for them at 19 years of age.

14. Awaiting CAMHS assessment and ADHD assessment.
15. CAMHS asked my kids 11 and 12 if they needed mental health support. With them being qualified psychologists and psychiatrists they said no so after years of waiting for help they were discharged.
16. The social services manager said it was the child's fault they don't have the services the children need, and they have declined what they can offer. 7 years with little to no help.
17. Waiting times are unacceptable.
18. Had some CAMHS input. We are on a waiting list for the next level of input.
19. On a waiting list.
20. They aren't on waiting lists. They've been deemed too young.
21. Exceptionally long wait.
22. Therapy assessment/request for developmental trauma/attachment disorders declined as the child was preverbal at age 4 so told options are too limited till, he speaks. I know this is untrue and am pursuing it.
23. Discharged from chams as previously didn't engage although this was before in care and was accompanied by a controlling adult. Now on the waiting list for assessment with little support from the school as they don't see any issues as there is a high percentage of children with needs in the school.
24. Other child on long waiting list for ADHD assessment.
25. This is true for all children not just those in care, children in the care system are, of course, by definition more likely to have mental health needs.
26. Not now, but in the past, there's been a scandalous shortage of mental health support.
27. Mental health is a HUGE area of concern.
28. It was always discussed over the years the two boys would need therapy when they hit puberty.
29. I actually had to pay privately for this as LA would not provide it.
30. Too young.
31. He self-harms so I managed to get a referral to CAMHS they spoke to me on the phone and I explained everything they said they couldn't work with him because the baseline of his harming was too low and wasn't harming himself serious enough for a referral. The LA then did some CBT work with him but not after I begged pleaded and begged again for him to get some work and support.
32. CAMHS.
33. Still awaiting a CAMHS referral 2 years in.
34. The last little girl needed help but is not getting enough and moving around the system after allegations of sexual abuse from foster carer. Mum died by suicide. Over a year no therapy.
35. Seven years of assessments no further forward.
36. All of the children in my care have had the same issue.
37. Got but was inadequate and counterproductive as they didn't understand developmental trauma.
38. I've asked numerous times. We always get told that everything is down to trauma and past experiences, however, how are these kids going to be able to come to terms with it or heal

without professional help? Instead, we as FC have to keep extending boundaries to accommodate them until we have no boundaries left to use.

39. Fought for 2 years for support. Nothing offered.
40. "It's not the right time to start" is the age-old statement.
41. He is seen by Learning Disability CAMHS.
42. Recent placement diagnosed with ADHD in late November and lived in a different area He came to us in early December but was told that CAMHS had discharged him LAAC nurse identified this and tried to fix it.
43. As he moved into a different area Both areas were in the XXXXXXXX NHS area and both departments were down the corridor from each other.
44. My last young person came from residential and had a counselling service there and they stopped that when he moved in with us. After a great year, his social worker turned up one day and handed him his mum's ashes with nothing said before or after and then she went on maternity leave and left us to try and support an extremely traumatised 9-year-old who spiralled very quickly and 2 weeks later the placement ended after he tried to stab us and himself and was clearly in the midst of a mental health breakdown but no support for him at all!
45. The IFA have provided a child psychologist within a fortnight of asking.
46. Was on the waiting list for three years. Thankfully now being seen by CAMHS.
47. Foster Carers need help to seek this support, rather than be told nothing and hope we won't ask! Also, just because the children seem fine, doesn't mean they don't need mental health support e.g. two children who have come across on small boats but who "seem fine" clearly have suffered unimaginable trauma, even if they show no outward signs.
48. I have been advocating for over 2 years, the change of CSW meant the child now has equine therapy.
49. Evidence that no action was taken until the new CSW in role.
50. Therapy ended at 17 because wouldn't fund it - coming up to leaving care. Was about the money.





<https://nupfc.com/>

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FosterWiki New Foster Carers Toolkit



FosterWiki Fostering Teenagers Toolkit



FosterWiki Toolkit for New Social Workers



FosterWiki Toolkit for Top Ten Tips

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