

FosterWiki®

The Independent Foster Carer's Survey Report 2024

Question 36 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:

“Would you recommend fostering to a friend, family member or colleague?”

2136 people answered this question and left 457 additional comment responses.



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2. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

1. They need to focus more on the current foster carers and what is wrong if they expect us to recommend. I don't know any of my friends who would recommend fostering right now.
2. We feel undervalued in our role
3. In recent years the service has been terrible. No one knows what they are doing. No handbook and 2015 policies not updated.
4. I can't at the minute, despite my LA offering me £500 to do so!
5. Not anymore
6. Most fostering agencies are running at 40% vacancies. Not the same support around. Lies are commonplace now
7. But not with my agency
8. I have in the past but wouldn't now. Not because of the children or teens but because of social services and the way they treat foster carers and the children
9. I may continue to foster if my fostering service makes that commitment. But I could no longer recommend it.
10. Over the years I've undertaken training courses train the trainer etc. Done a lot of talks etc. But won't do it anymore.
11. 15 years ago I would have. Not now.
12. There needs to be changes, children's mental health needs are being overlooked because there are that many children that need the help. This then complicates the placement compounding challenging behaviour and resulting in carers giving notice. The child moves and it happens again! The child then bounces around the system until they are old enough to leave care. Sort the mental health provisions for foster children you may then ease a lot of the issues.
13. Esp if they have their own children at home under 12
14. No is a bit strong. I would stress how challenging it can be and to think very carefully of the changes to your own life.
15. Friends and family think fostering is all about looking after kids like a babysitter, they have no clue about all the training, paperwork, meetings etc Not to mention the lack of any PR and needing to jump through hoops to get the consent for the most simple things like haircuts and holidays.
16. Services are stretched and support cannot be relied on
17. A lot needs to change before I can recommend the LA as they are failing both foster carers and the children we care for.

18. Would make some recommendations to protect them.
19. I put no because I feel people have to make their own choice about whether to foster or not
20. Not until things change. The system is broken.
21. I love fostering and I'm very proud to be a carer
22. I always used to say yes but now I would think twice
23. Would tell them the reality of my own experience
24. No there are too many fundamental abuses of foster carers. I have 3 children that I would walk over broken glass for which is why I continue. I love the children and hate the way the kids and us are treated. But as the social workers say if you don't like it you can walk away. hand the kids back like they were an unwanted gift.
25. My fostering agency do their absolute best already, it's the local authorities involved with the children that have a lot of work to make this better for the children we care for.
26. We have told several friends not to do it as you are treated appallingly
27. Defiantly no it is a crying shame but cannot because of the way carers are treated
28. I have asked the agency to stop bombarding us with promotional material and offers of cash bonuses for referrals (like some tacky game show!) They cannot satisfy or retain their current carers, do not meet NMS or provide the promised respite. They need to get their house in order and stop withdrawing services and support.
29. Having been subjected to a false allegation that destroyed my family and life I will always tell people not to foster. It's not worth it. You can lose everything even when innocent and get treated like a public pariah. A lot would have to change before I'd ever consider doing it again.
30. The kids are so worth it, but the system around them is broken and difficult
31. I've been treated very badly by my SSW but apart from that it's a lovely rewarding job
32. with some caveats.
33. Not now too many corrupt managers.
34. Too often, carers are just taken advantage of by providing cheap boarding and lodgings.
35. We are dictated to by local authorities and independent foster care agencies as if we were employees, but are in fact self-employed with none of the benefits.
36. Years ago, I definitely would have but not now after over twenty-two years of fostering many children I am deregistering.
37. Have recommended but been very clear of the failings and expectations

38. But I would ensure they knew the positives and negatives and allow them to make their own decision.
39. Maybe another LA but not ours.
40. Fostering has turned me from happy-go-lucky to a cynical untrusting person.
41. I will not because we are not safe
42. Also better & realistic training
43. Only if they asked- I don't believe in trying to recruit people who otherwise have no interest. And I wouldn't sugarcoat it either.
44. That's what makes me feel sad because it's the children who will suffer. None of my friends and family understand why we put ourselves through this. It has also been detrimental to family members outside of our household as they also welcomed these children as a family member then unfortunately things breakdown. I always dread people asking me if we recommend it, unfortunately, it is always a no.
45. Can break you if you are not strong. We are regularly discriminated against. Treated unfairly. Often blamed for placement breakdowns.
46. Do my utmost to dissuade them.
47. Only because of the impact of fostering on children.
48. sorry but I used to fly a flag for fostering but recent behaviours and the way we have been treated have radically changed our views and we now warn anyone to proceed with extreme caution before entering the service.
49. No way! I have actually had to put my parents off it having already had a stroke it would kill my mum off with the stress!
50. I would also make it clear that the impact fostering has on your life is much bigger than I anticipated.



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