



Housing (Foster Care)

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Introduction

Exploring the role of foster carers in caring for unaccompanied asylum seeking children:

- What a foster carer has to do when a child arrives to them late at night.
- How foster carers help the young person to feel relaxed.
- How foster carers communicate with the young person if they don't speak English
- Supporting around religion and diet.
- Managing expectations and establishing boundaries.



New Arrival To Foster Carers

- Keeping things simple by offering food and sorting out for the young person to get some sleep.
- Being sensitive to the young person being in an unfamiliar environment.
- Managing any immediate health or safeguarding concerns.



Helping To Relax

- Trying to say 'hello & welcome' in their language
- Cooking a dish from their country & eating together
- Playing simple physical games like Jenga, or boule in the back garden
- Googling pictures of their home country & town
- Showing photos of our family & different parts of the world where we've lived.
- Having their room look as nice as possible.

(words from Oxfordshire County Council UASC Foster Carers)



Communication

- Speaking slowly and using visual aids where needed.
- Google translate and telephone interpreting service.
- Being patient, respectful and encouraging.
- Supporting young person to contact family where safe to do so.



Religion and Diet

- Supporting the young person to practice their religion and to attend church or mosque.
- Understanding the young persons cultural practices and how to manage this in the foster carers household.
- Diet linked to religion and supporting with fasting.
- Cooking food that is familiar to the young persons home country.



Expectations and Boundaries

- Foster carers work with social workers to help the young person to understand UK laws and cultural norms.
- Clear rules and curfews are communicated to the young person to help them stay safe and settle in the UK.
- Foster carers are asked to adhere to the care and placement plans for the young person in their care.



Expectation and Boundaries Continued

- Foster carers are asked to monitor for possible exploitation. They are also informed of the processes of reporting the child as a missing person to the Police.
- UASC young people will often have a different view on risk given past experiences. This is closely monitored by foster carers.
- Building trust with the young person in foster care is often challenging due to past trauma and cultural and religious differences.



Conclusion

- Simplicity and sensitivity are key in helping a young person to settle and feel relaxed.
- Religion and culture is a comfort for young people when they first arrive in this country. Foster carers being supportive around this can help to build trust.
- Foster carers working closely with social workers helps to manage any risk.