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.