

IFCA'S NEW FOSTER CARE HUBS TO OFFER SERVICES FOR ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN FOSTER CARE IN KEY LOCATIONS ACROSS IRELAND

IFCA is delighted to launch its new Foster Care Hubs in key locations across Ireland. IFCA's Foster Care Hubs are designed to offer services for all those involved in foster care to come together and meet for a range of activities such as: peer support, social events, learning opportunities and information talks. Coordinated by IFCA, these events will be supported by IFCA staff and trained volunteers.

Foster Care Hubs have been identified in areas that do not currently have Branches:

1. Laois, Offaly
2. Dublin North City, Swords, Blanchardstown
3. Dublin South Central, Dublin South West, Kildare
4. Longford, Westmeath
5. Limerick, Clare, North Tipperary
6. Cavan, Monaghan

Foster Care Hubs are open to foster carers, those involved in foster care, and those who have an interest in foster care. There will be times when foster carers will meet as a distinct group together to seek and offer peer support to each other in a safe space which is facilitated by a trained IFCA facilitator.

IFCA's Foster Care Hubs will offer a variety of events including:

- Learning events
- Social events
- Information sessions
- Social events for children and families
- Peer support for birth children
- Peer support (foster carers only)
- Support consultations

Events will be offered to existing and potential members in the catchment areas and will not be confined to individual counties. IFCA's Foster Care Hubs will compliment the work of existing IFCA branches.

Speaking at the launch of the new Foster Care Hubs, Catherine Bond, CEO, IFCA commented: "We are delighted to see our new Foster Care Hubs going live. Our aim with these Hubs is that foster carers will have a secure space to come together and talk about their fostering experiences, have access to support when they need it and feel that someone is listening to them. Our members tell us that foster carers need support from their peers so they do not feel isolated in their role as foster carers. They also need specific information and learning supports, all of which IFCA offers and our new Hubs will enable us to bring this information to locations that suit foster carers."

If you would like to learn more about IFCA's Foster Care Hubs, please contact IFCA on 01 459 9474 or admin@ifca.ie or visit www.ifca.ie

Ends

For further information:

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Notes to Editors

The Irish Foster Care Association is the representative body for foster care in Ireland. Child-centred and rights-based, IFCA promotes excellence in foster care so that children have the best chances in life. We aim to accomplish this by providing information, support, and learning opportunities for all those involved in foster care through our direct work in Advocacy, Branch Development, Support, and Learning and Development. We are an independent, membership-led organisation. IFCA's National Support Helpline runs every week day from 11.00am - 3.00pm and can be contacted at 01 458 5123.