

Foster

Developments in foster care
practice, policy and research



Irish Foster Care Association

Foster

Published by: the Irish Foster Care Association (IFCA)

Dublin, 2016

Print edition: ISSN 2009-8790

Online edition: ISSN 2009-8804

Editor: Maeve Healy, Learning Development Worker, IFCA

Aim and scope

‘Foster’ aims to inform IFCA members and a wider readership of those with an involvement in foster care of current issues in foster care and of developments in policy, practice and research. It aims to be accessible to a broad range of readers. Two issues of ‘Foster’ will be published per year.

If you are a member of IFCA you will receive a free print copy of ‘Foster’. You can also view or download it in the members’ area of our website. It can be purchased by emailing info@ifca.ie, price €8.

You can find more information about IFCA on our website, www.ifca.ie.

We welcome journal articles from a range of practitioners, researchers and others with an interest in foster care. If you would like to contribute to ‘Foster’ please contact learning@ifca.ie.

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Registered no 281419 CHY no 12498

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Printed by Sattal (Dublin)

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Foreword

Diarmuid Kearney, IFCA Chief Executive Officer

I take enormous pleasure in introducing the first issue of 'Foster', our new journal on fostering in Ireland. It is an exciting initiative that we hope will make an important contribution to the world of fostering and help to stimulate debate, discussion and development in the field.

Those of you who have been following developments within IFCA over recent years will know that we have been anxious to develop a culture of learning within the sector, a culture where we are creative in our practice and where we review and evaluate that practice in a manner that fosters development, a culture where new ideas are introduced and tested against experience, and most importantly, a culture where we give credence to the Irish experience, to Irish research and to Irish thinking. Drawing on our understanding of international developments and applying this to an Irish context we hope to nurture an inquisitive and reflective approach that is supportive of foster carers, social workers, other health and social care practitioners, and academics alike.

The style of 'Foster' will, we hope, be accessible to a wide readership, avoiding overcomplicated language and ensuring that anyone involved in fostering can easily grasp the concepts presented. We will draw material from a wide range of sources and value the individual and collective experiences of parents or professors, managers or mums, social workers or carers. Our hope is that the unifying character of the articles is that they are fresh, stimulating, progressive, and rooted in experience.

'Foster' will issue twice per year and this first issue draws on the theme of our recent conference 'Fostering Well-being'. Many of those who presented workshops at the conference have generously committed their ideas to paper and a quick glance at the contents will evidence the wealth of fantastic material now made available to all. We are currently considering a theme for the second issue of 'Foster' and look forward to offering you a range of perspectives on another important area. This thematic approach is not rigid, however, and we may well include articles not related to the theme but of value to our readership. And now that I mention our readership, it is important that we develop