

Could you be a Short Break Carer?



Support a child with special needs or a disability
Offer a young person a new experience
Help a Somerset family

What is a Short Break Carer?

Short Break Care is a specialist fostering service for disabled children and young people. Teenagers or children might have a learning disability, a physical or sensory disability, significant health care needs, or a combination of these.

Skilled Foster Carers look after many of these children on a regular basis. Short Break Carers provide a respite service for a child's parent carers or guardians. They also offer on-going support for children and young people who are unable to live with their birth parents or families for whatever reason. Most are cared for on a respite basis for short periods, such as one weekend per month and one evening per week.

The aim of this service is to broaden the social lives and experience of these young people and their families.

We match up carers and children according to a carer's skills, and a child's specific needs. Through this process we will consider whether your accommodation is suitable, for example, for wheelchair access.

Who can be a Short Break Carer?

You can be young or old, married or single, unemployed or working, with or without children of your own.

People who have some experience of disability or helping children and young people who need tailored support, often express an interest in becoming a Short Break Carer. You might have only limited time to give, but still want to make a difference to a disabled child or young person.

What's the picture in Somerset?

We are hearing from more and more families in Somerset seeking a respite service for their child. A high number of children and teenagers in care in Somerset have specific needs, and would benefit from what you can offer them. Many have Autism Spectrum Disorder or Asperger's Syndrome, so if you have the skills to help them, please get in touch.



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What next?

To find out more, please phone our friendly Fostering Team on

0800 587 9900

or visit

www.fosteradoptsomerset.org.uk

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Why I Care...

Michelle, a Short Break Carer and Foster Carer from Mendip

“ I find it very rewarding to help families who need support, but also get a huge amount of enjoyment spending time with these very special children. ”

“ I have cared for children of all ages, from 4 to 18 years, who have had a variety of needs. Many have had autism, and many others have had varying physical disabilities. These have included cerebral palsy, epilepsy, Down's syndrome, genetic syndromes, varying degrees of learning difficulties, communication difficulties, and specific medical needs. ”

“ There have been some children who need feeding through gastrostomy tubes, some who have had quite challenging behaviours. I have cared for children with life-limiting diseases, mental health issues, and from many different types of family backgrounds. ”

“ The thing I most enjoy about Short Break Care is seeing the progress the children make, despite some of the challenges they face. They have great determination and courage, and with the right input and patience these children can achieve so much. ”

What do we offer?

- High quality training and professional development opportunities
- Payments for every Short Break Care session, reflecting the extra needs of the child
- Consistent and regular placements

How do I become a Short Break Carer?

Potential carers will be asked for references. We'll also make checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service and your GP, and invite you to attend training.



How to find out more

Please call us for a confidential chat on

0800 587 9900

or visit our information-packed website

www.fosteradoptsomerset.org.uk

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