swiis
foster care Scotland

Your guide

Hello

We hope this booklet will help you find out about us and the people who want to help you while you are here.

It tells you about us and about who you can talk to if you are not happy or if you have questions.

If you want to know things that are not in this book you can ask your foster carers, your social worker or anyone from Swiis.

Your carer will help you read this if you want them to, or if you can use a computer ask your carer to show you how to look at our website and visit:

www.swiisfostercarescotland.co.uk

What do we do?

Swiis foster carers look after children who need somewhere to live for a while that is not with their own family.

Sometimes children stay for a few days; sometimes longer.

Do you know how long you are going to stay with your foster carers?

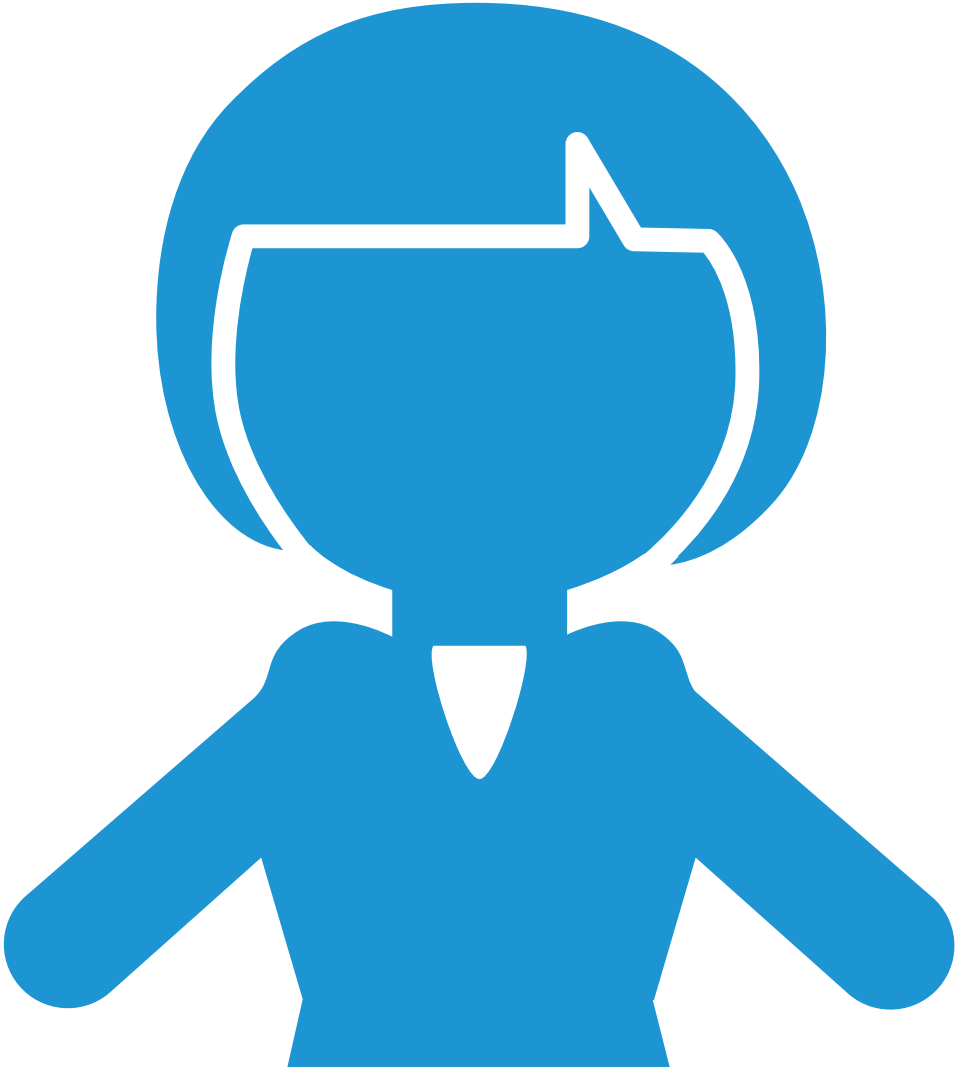
If you ask us, we will tell you as much as we can.

Our aim is to create the best opportunities for you. We think this means:

- Keeping you healthy
- Keeping you safe
- Helping you with school
- Having fun and enjoying being yourself
- Staying in touch with people you care about
- Making new friends
- Asking what you think and listening to you
- Helping you stay out of trouble
- Helping you grow up

How can we do better?

Please let us know



Your foster carers want you to feel welcome.

They will make sure you have everything you need because they want the best for you.

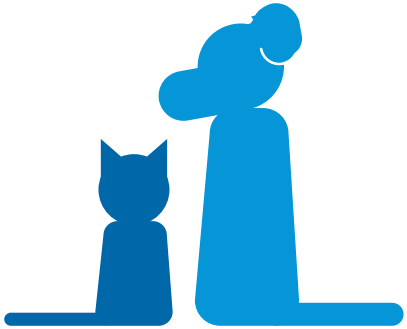
Your foster carers are

They live at

Their children are called

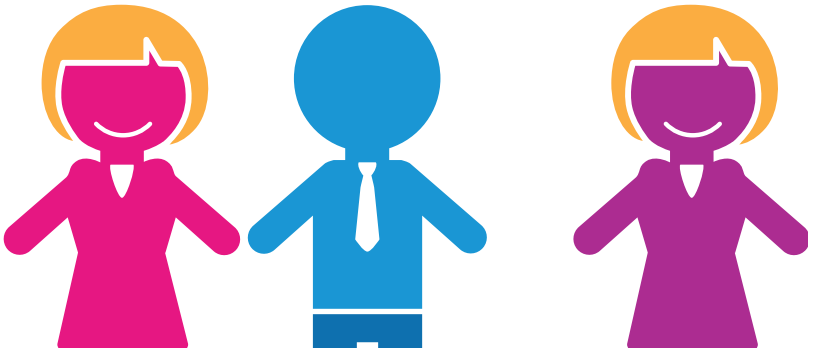
Other people in the house are

Their pets are

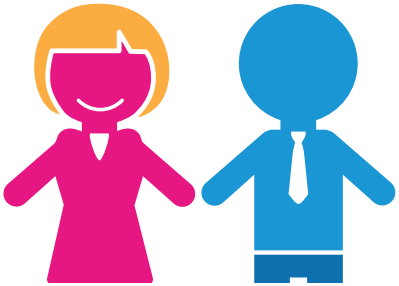


Foster Carer

Training and Development

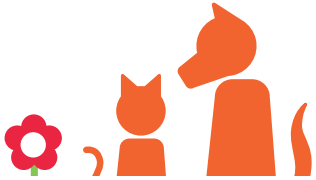


All Swiis carers have to do lots of training in order to be able to look after you properly. Even before they start to foster they come and meet us and we tell them about some of the things that are important to Swiis and some of the things we know are important to you.



Everyone who would like to foster attends a three day initial preparation training course. This training also involves young people who talk about what makes a good carer and the importance of communicating with young people. The young people will also answer general questions regarding fostering.

When they have been approved as carers we then ask that they complete more training so that they understand what they need to do and how they might help you.



While you're living with your foster carers, they will make you feel welcome and look after you every day.

There are other people you may meet whilst living with your foster carers such as...

Your foster carers' Supervising Social Worker

Your foster carers' supervising social worker will be helping them to look after you.

They will visit your foster home often to make sure things are going well. If you have any questions or just want to have a chat, you can ask the supervising social worker when you see them, or you can ring them if you like.

Their name is

Their number is

Education Worker

This person is a teacher and may visit you in school or at home to help you with your learning.

Your own Social Worker

Your own social worker will still be a very important person in your life and will keep in regular contact.

Resource Worker

This person likes to have fun with children and may take you out or look after you if your foster carer has to go to a meeting. This is another person you can talk to about things you want to know.

Their name is

Their number is

Your foster carer would like to know:

What is your favourite food?

Write your favourite foods here

Your Swiis

At Swiis we want to get you as involved as possible to ensure you get the most out of your placement with us. We hold regular participation groups so that you have the opportunity to put forward ideas and views about how we can make sure we give young people what they need and their experience in foster care is the best possible.

The groups meet regularly to share experiences and talk about issues that affect young people in your situation. You can choose activities you wish to do as a group, but also attend various skills learning clubs and schemes such as Cookery Clubs and Garden Schemes where you can learn a range of independence and social skills.

You may also be asked to be involved in various other activities such as helping your fostering team interviewing new staff members, or assist with panel training and initial training for new foster carers. Occasionally you may also be asked for feedback on a variety of Swiis documents, such as our policies and procedures, and information booklets for children, young people and carers.

We also arrange various trips and events during holidays for our support groups and carers that you will be involved in choosing.

Any new ideas are always welcome!!

The question tree

Everyone has worries about living in a new place. On these pages you'll find some of the things that other children have asked about.

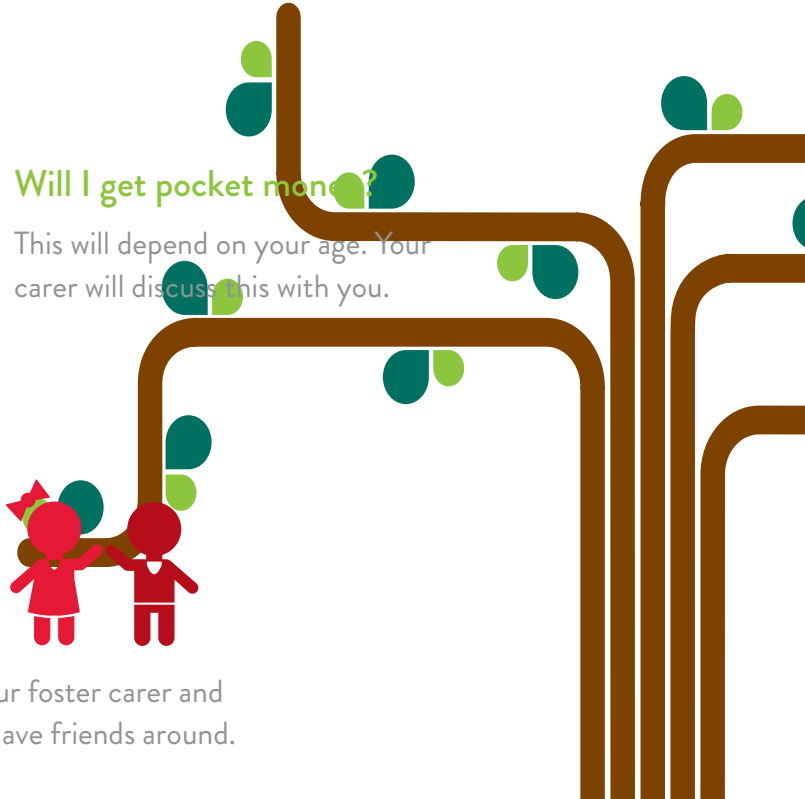
Your carers will not mind if you ask them about these sort of things. There are no silly questions. But if you would rather talk to someone else, you can contact your social worker or any one from the Swiis team.

What time will I go to bed?

You need your rest to stay healthy and to feel good. Speak with your carer to agree a sensible bed time. They might even read you a story!

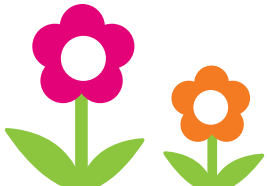
Will I get pocket money?

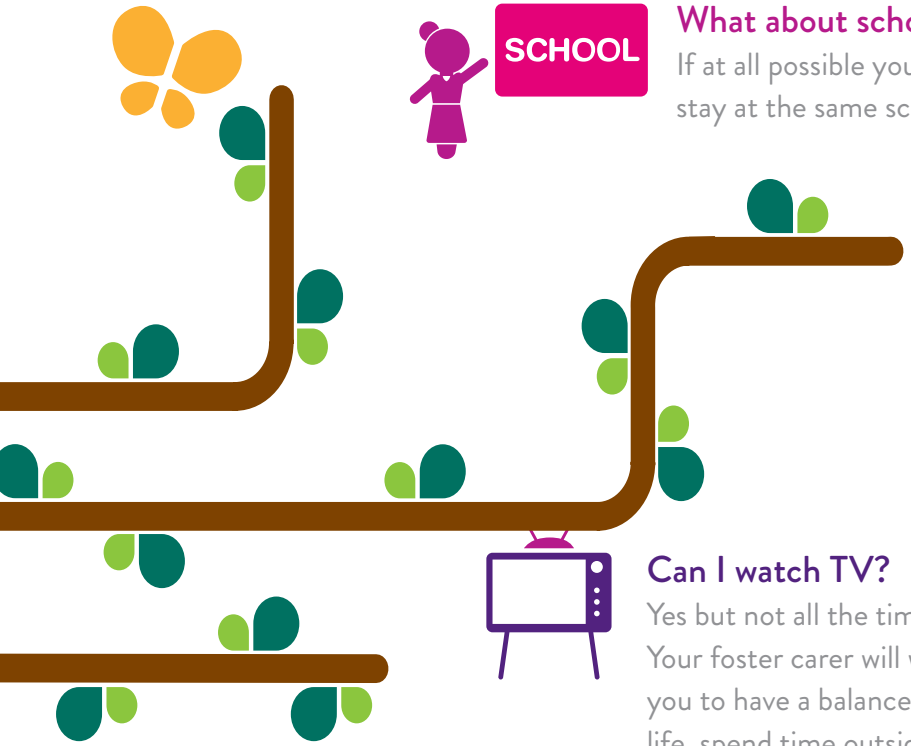
This will depend on your age. Your carer will discuss this with you.



Will I have a friend?

Friends are important. Your foster carer and family won't mind if you have friends around.





What about school?

If at all possible you will be able to stay at the same school.

What do I call my foster carers?

Speak to your foster carers to decide what you will call them, and make sure to tell them if you have a nickname.

Can I watch TV?

Yes but not all the time! Your foster carer will want you to have a balanced life, spend time outside and enjoying other things too.

Remember

Always ask someone if you are worried about anything.

More questions?

Will I have my own space?

We understand that it is important for you to have the right to privacy and personal space. You will have your own personal space, and people are expected to knock before entering your room. Your room will be a safe place to keep your belongings and a place where you can spend time alone when you want to.

Will I be able to do whatever I want?

Your foster carers have to promise to keep you safe. That means they might not always let you do everything that you want to.

Everywhere has rules. There are rules about how we treat each other, rules about listening to each other, keeping safe and taking care.

Sometimes there are rules about not going in other people's rooms or about looking after the home. There could be rules like, washing your hands and no running around at teatime because these make things better for everyone. As you get older you will have rules about going out and what time you come in.

Having rules doesn't mean your carers don't want you to have fun, because they do. They just want to keep you safe as well.

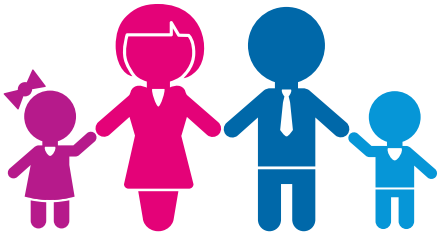
What rules do your carers have?

Use this space to write down the rules your carers have

When can I see my family?

Sometimes people get upset if they can't see their family or if they don't know what plans are being made.

Everyone understands that you want to know and we will try to find out and tell you what is happening as soon as we possibly can.



What happens if I go missing?

What does "missing" mean?

You are missing if you go away from where you are meant to be without permission and don't tell people where you are going, or who you are with.

What happens if you cannot be found?

We will keep looking for you because we want to be sure that you are safe.

What happens when you return to the foster home?

We will be really happy to have you back safely and we will want to make sure you are ok. This is a chance for you to tell someone what is troubling you.

Remember

If you are worried about something and just want to talk, call Childline on:

0800 11 11

Valuing diversity

Culture, religion and identity

While you are placed with your foster carers we will want you to feel good about yourself.

If you would like to go to the local church or mosque, your carer will arrange to take you.

If you eat special foods, your foster carer will prepare these for you.

Files and records

Your carers and the Swiis staff will keep notes and records about you while you are in our care. Ask if you want to see these.

My notes

My thoughts and feelings

Use this space to write or draw what you are thinking or feeling.

Who else can I talk to?

We hope you enjoy your stay with your foster carers but if you have any worries or muddles, or you are unhappy about anything, you can speak to the manager of your foster care team.

I have put a letter and envelope in with this booklet for you to send to us.

My notes

Useful numbers

If you want to talk to somebody completely separate from Swiis Foster Care or your own social worker, there are lots of other people who may be able to help. Call one of these numbers:

Care Inspectorate

The Care Inspectorate regulates and inspects care services in Scotland to make sure that they meet the right standards. We also jointly inspect with other regulators to check how well different organisations in local areas work to support adults and children.

0345 600 9527

www.careinspectorate.com

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

Childline

Childline is the free helpline for children and young people in the UK. Children and young people can call to talk about any problem - its counsellors are always there to help you sort it out.

0800 11 11

www.childline.org.uk

NSPCC

NSPCC is the leading children's charity fighting to end child abuse in the UK and Channel Islands. They help children who have been abused to rebuild their lives, protect those at risk, and find the best ways of preventing abuse from ever happening.

0808 800 5000

www.nspcc.org.uk

help@nspcc.org.uk

information

NYAS

NYAS offer information, advice, advocacy and legal representation to children and young people. If you feel you are not being listened to, not being treated fairly, experiencing difficulties at school or if you are not feeling safe you can contact NYAS for advice.

0808 808 1001

www.nyas.net

help@nyas.net

Coram Voice

Enables and equips children and young people to hold to account the services that are responsible for their care. They uphold the rights of children and young people to actively participate in shaping their own lives.

0808 800 5792

www.coramvoice.org.uk

help@coramvoice.org.uk

swiis foster care Scotland

www.swiisfostercarescotland.com

If you need to talk to anyone at Swiis about anything, here are our details:

Dundee | Team Manager – Sandra Howden
Unit 5, Gateway West, Luna Place, Dundee Technology Park, DD2 1XF
Tel: 01382 561 771

Fife | Team Manager – Louise Findlay
Glenelvan House, Enterprise Way, Carnegie Campus South, Dunfermline, Fife, KY11 8PY
Tel: 01383 842 284

Glasgow | Team Manager – Ailsa Thom
1115, 251 Springhill Parkway, Glasgow Business Park, Baillieston, Glasgow, G69 6GA
Tel: 0141 773 6730

Permanence Team | Team Manager – Paul Gaffney
Glenelvan House, Enterprise Way, Carnegie Campus South, Dunfermline, Fife, KY11 8PY
Tel: 01383 842 284

Sam Arnott - Director of Swiis Foster Care Scotland
Glenelvan House, Enterprise Way, Carnegie Campus South, Dunfermline, Fife, KY11 8PY
Tel: 01383 842 284
Email: Sam.Arnott@swiis.com

Education Scotland
Official Correspondence Unit, Education Scotland, Denholm House, Almondvale Business Park, Almondvale Way, Livingston, EH54 6GA
Tel: 0131 244 4330
Email: enquiries@educationscotland.gov.scot

Office of the Children's Commissioner
Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4NS
Tel: 0800 019 1179
www.cypcs.org.uk