A presentation from David Holmes, Chief Executive, BAAF

The future of recruiting foster carers

9th December 2010

From a volunteer based workforce to a modern, highly skilled, child centred service: what children need from foster carers today

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Children looked after at 31 March 2010 by Gender and Age

Gender	**64,400 (N)**	**100 (%)**
Male	36,100	56
Female	28,200	44
Age in years	**64,400 (N)**	**100 (%)**
Under 1	3,700	6
1 to 4	10,900	17
5 to 9	11,200	17
10 to 15	24,900	39
16 and over	13,800	21

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Children looked after at 31 March 2010 by Category of Need (1)

Category of need	64,400 (N)	100 (%)
Abuse or neglect	39,200	61
Child's disability	2,200	3
Parents illness or disability	2,800	4
Family in acute stress	5,800	9

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Children looked after at 31 March 2010 by Category of Need (2)

Category of need	**64,400 (N)**	**100 (%)**
Family dysfunction	8,000	12
Socially unacceptable behaviour	1,300	2
Low income	170	0
Absent parenting	4,900	8

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Children looked after at 31 March 2010 by Placement Type (1)

Placement type	**Number 64,400**	**Percentage 100%**
Foster placements	44,200	73
Placed for adoption	2,300	4
Placement with parents	4,200	6
Other placement in the community	2,300	4

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Children looked after at 31 March 2010 by Placement Type (2)

Placement type	**Number 64,400**	**Percentage 100%**
Secure units, children's homes and hostels	6,200	10
Other residential settings	970	2
Residential schools	1,000	2

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Children who started to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2010

- 27,800 children of whom
  - 5,300 under 1
  - 5,600 1 – 4
  - 4,500 5 – 9
  - 9,300 10 -15
  - 3,200 16 +

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What do children need from foster carers today?

- Someone to … (The experiences of children in foster care) project
- Collaboration BAAF/Voice/Children in Foster care
- Scripted and narrated by children in foster care
- Short animated film
- Available on YouTube via the BAAF website (www.baaf.org.uk)

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- “A foster carer is someone who listens to you”
- “Someone who understands you”
- “Someone to respect you”
- “Someone who treats you fairly and equally”
- “Someone who gives you guidance and advice”
- “Someone to help me when I’m being bullied”
- “Someone to treat me special”
- “Someone who sees the good in me”

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- “Someone who makes time for me”
- “Who helps me see my brothers and sisters”
- “Someone who believes in me”
- “Someone who cares about my religion and culture”
- “Someone who lets me use the facilities in the house”
- “Someone who treats me like a human being”
- “I’m part of the family, not just part of the scenery”

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Recipes for Fostering

- 10 Fostering households
- Mix of local authority & IFA carers
- Images of everyday life
- Exploration of own life story and experience of fostering
- Exploration of role food plays in building relationships with fostered children

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Food to welcome

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Food to welcome

"I go to shops where we can buy African food. When we get there, some will recognise straight away. Oh, my auntie used to cook this. Or, my mum cooked this before. I'll say, shall we try? I'll buy, and we'll come home and cook. We all share, the adults and the children. We'll all cook and eat together."

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Food to feel at home

"My son and daughter will say, mum let's have a 'roastie', even during the week. That's what we call a roast dinner. And the little ones use it as well now. They'll ask for a 'roastie' too."

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Food memories & making connections

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Food memories & making connections

“Then one morning I decide to make paratha. He was in the bathroom getting ready. Smelled the paratha and joined me in the kitchen. Said, the smell of the paratha cooking. My mum used to cook that in the morning for me. So I cooked him a paratha, and he stood watching me do it and told me, that smell reminds me of my mum. And you could see the tears in his eyes. I felt really sad for him. So I gave him the paratha and a tea, and I said, well, let’s talk about what you remember. Tell me what your mum used to do. Then, he began to talk. He did tell me about his mum and his life at home. And he did tell me about all the things that had happened on his journey. All of the secrets he’d been keeping inside.”

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Food as comfort

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Food as comfort

"And she'd come in, and when she came back like that she'd often want the chocolate. The first thing she'd do, drink it, then have a bath. I wouldn't ask any questions, just give her her drink, run the bath – just wait for her to be ready to talk."

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Food to promote self-esteem & independence

"The other evening I said, I'm going to use these carrots and these runner beans in a vegetable quiche. He asked if he could watch, and I showed him how to make pastry. Next time he'll be able to do it himself. And these are skills that will stay with him."

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Food as shared experience

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Fostering today

- Defining foster care in 2010
- The professionalisation debate
- The importance of relationships in foster care
- Recruitment / training / support
- The future of foster care

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