Local authorities and independent fostering providers working together

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Nationwide Association of Fostering Providers

- The Nationwide Association of Fostering Providers (NAFP) is the only UK-wide trade association that campaigns solely for independent and voluntary sector fostering providers (IFPs)

- NAFP is a not-for-profit organisation and a company limited by guarantee

- Our mission is:

To be the voice of the independent and voluntary fostering sector for children and young people, and to promote high standards of professional and business practice within the membership

- NAFP members represent around 75% of children placed in the independent and voluntary sector

Fostering services

- 65,520 looked after children in England (31 March 2011), an increase of 2% from 2010, 6% from 2009 and the highest number since 1987.
- 41,100 (63%) children were placed with foster carers, an increase from 39,490 in 2010; 13,670 children were placed through an independent fostering provider, up from 12,940 in 2010
- 16,171 looked after children in Scotland (31 July 2011), an increase of 2% since 31 July 2010. The number of children looked after has increased every year since 2001, and is at its highest since 1982.
- 24% of children in Scotland were with foster carers provided by local authorities, with a further 7% looked after by foster carers purchased by the local authority. The number of children looked after by foster carers or prospective adopters has increased every year since 1993.
- There are around 290 IFPs in England.
- Most IFPs are small and the largest 17 or 18 account for a majority of all placements.

Strategic commissioning

Commissioning is the process of translating aspirations and need into quality and cost-effective services which provide choice and support the whole community, through a defined process and a commonly agreed set of principles Blackburn with Darwen Children's Services

- Needs assessment – individual children, strategic, looking ahead
- Managing the market – sufficiency, relationships, workforce, shortage of foster carers?
- In-house first? Residential v fostering?
- Data/information collection
- Planning

Is it about the offer?

- Motivation to foster
- Customer care
- Support; supervising social worker
- Fees and allowances
- Short/long term, children with differing needs
- Holidays, respite
- Training and development
- Retention

Integrated campaigns

- Planning, goals, monitoring
- Relationships
- Response
- Traditional advertising v social networking
- Consistently high local profile - the value of drip drip
- Recognising the larger impact

The challenge...

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