



# Family and Friends Care



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## **Introduction**

Most children are brought up by one or more of their parents, but some are brought up by members of their extended families, friends or other people connected to them. It has been estimated that there are 300,000 children and young people who are cared for in these circumstances. These arrangements come under a range of different legal circumstances and are referred to in this policy as "family and friends care" although they are sometimes referred to as kinship care.

Family and friends carers play a unique role in enabling children and young people to remain with people they know and trust if they cannot, for whatever reason, live with their parents. These children and young people may or may not be looked after by the Local Authority, or even known to it. The majority of the relatives who provide care are grandparents, aunts and uncles, or sometimes others such as older siblings.

Many children and young people who live in family and friends care do well in life, but others are vulnerable and may fail to achieve good outcomes. Many family and friends carers both want and need support to enable them to meet the needs of the children and young people they care for.

The Family and Friends Care Guidance (2010) define a family and friend carer as someone who is a family member or friend of the child, or has some other pre-existing relationship with the child and who is living with the child full time.

This policy sets out how we, along with our partner agencies intend to deliver effective services to children and young people who are living with family members or friends, based on an assessment of their need, in any of the following circumstances:

- an informal arrangement with a close relative (grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step parent.
- an informal arrangement with friends or other family member from the extended family which lasts for a period of less than 28 days
- as a private fostering arrangement
- as a looked after child placed with foster carers
- under a Child Arrangement Order or Special Guardianship Order, or
- under an arrangement which may lead to Adoption.

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care will have overall responsibility for this policy which will be regularly reviewed and made widely available in a number of different formats.

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care will work with partner agencies to look at their responsibilities towards children and young people living with

family and friends carers and ensure that they are proactive in meeting their needs.

They will ensure that Local Authority staff have an understanding of the issues facing children, young people and family and friends carers and their duty towards them. They will work with partner agencies to ensure that their staff, including those working in universal services such as day care providers, schools and colleges, are also aware of the challenges which children, young people and families may face and have the knowledge to signpost to the relevant services.

Worcestershire County Council's Family and Friends Care policy sets out the services available to children and young people living with family and friends carers within Worcestershire. Many children and young people living with family and friends carers may only need to access universal services and information on those services can be found at

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/childrensocialcare>

[www.worcestershire.gov.uk/childcare](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/childcare)

[www.worcestershire.gov.uk/familysupport](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/familysupport)

Information about services available to families for children and young people who have Special Educational Need (SEN) or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans can be found at

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/thelocaloffer>

Some children and young people may need to access more targeted and specialist services and this policy sets out the services available and the criteria for accessing them.

### **Values and principles**

At the centre of this policy is the principle that the welfare of the child or young person is of paramount importance.

It is based on the underlying principles of the 1989 Children's Act and the key principle that children and young people should be enabled to live within their families unless this is not consistent with their welfare.

It seeks to promote permanence for children and young people by enabling children and young people who cannot live with their parents to remain with their extended family and friends where appropriate as a better alternative than growing up in the care of the Local Authority. By permanence it means the framework of emotional, physical and legal conditions that give a child or young person a sense of security, continuity, commitment and identity.

The policy is further underpinned by the principle that support should be based on the needs of the child or young person rather than merely their legal status. Each child or young person should be valued as individuals and their needs arising from gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual orientation recognised.

It sees children and young people as active participants whose wishes and feelings should be taken into account when adults are making decisions about them.

### **Why Family and Friends Care?**

There has been an increasing amount of research into family and friends care which supports it as a viable option for many children and young people.

Security of attachment and the continuity of care are important factors in children's long-term well-being and family and friends have the capacity to deliver this. Children and young people are generally reported to feel secure, happy and integrated into the family and family and friends carers demonstrate a high level of commitment with strong bonds to the children and young people they care for.

Research that has looked at the stability of placements for children placed with family and friends carers suggests a complex picture but the weight of evidence still supports the conclusion that children placed with family and friends remain in placement longer and have fewer moves than children placed with non-related foster carers.

In terms of a child's well-being the information available is broadly positive. Children placed with family and friends appear to do as well as those placed with unrelated foster carers in terms of their health, education, emotional and behavioural development.

Family and friends carers are often uncertain about what help is available and how to access it. Research suggests that better support services may prevent the breakdown of some placements and lead to better outcomes for children and young people.

Few children or young people want to be looked after by the Local Authority; most would prefer to live with their parents with support and when this is not possible they would wish to live with members of their extended family. However, young people did want there to be some assessment of where they were going to live as they recognised that not all family members would be able to offer them the care they needed.

### **The Legal Context**

The Children Act 1989 sets out a number of duties and responsibilities for the Local Authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need living within their area. There is no general duty to assess all arrangements where children are living with family and friends carers but the Local Authority does have a duty to assess when it appears that services may be needed to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child or young person.

Children in need may live with family or friend carers under a variety of different legal arrangements, both formal and informal. Some children will become "looked after" by the Local Authority whether they are accommodated with parental consent or the result of a court order. Set out below are the different

legal circumstances and the Local Authority's powers and duties in relation to each option.

## **Family and Friends Carers (Child not looked after)**

### Informal Family Arrangement and Children in Need

A child's parents or a child with the consent of its birth parents may choose to live informally with a person to whom they have a close relationship. The child's birth parents remain wholly responsible for their child in these circumstances, including ensuring that they are safe and their needs are being met (including financial).

If the child is not assessed as a Child In Need there is no reason for Worcestershire County Council to intervene or be informed of such arrangements.

Worcestershire County Council may provide support or services to the child or carers if the child is assessed as a Child In Need.

Section 17 of the Children Act defines a Child In Need (CIN) as a child:

- Who is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services or
- A child whose health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of services
- A child who is disabled.

Children's Social Care will work with other agencies and in partnership with carers to carry out the assessment building an understanding of the family's circumstances and the child's lived experience, whilst giving due regard to the child's wishes and feelings regarding the provision of those services (appropriate to their age and level of understanding).

Following an assessment of the child's needs Children's Social Care a range of support services may be provided. These include:

- Counselling, advice and information
- Help to maintain the relationship between the child and the carer through training, respite and mediation
- Help with contact arrangements
- Direct work with the child
- Financial support dependent on a financial assessment for equipment, activities or other expenses relating to the needs of the child.

Financial support will depend on assessment of the needs of the child or young person and a financial assessment of the carers. The expectation will be that

carers have accessed other allowances to which they are entitled such as Child Benefit or Tax Credits.

Team Managers who hold responsibility for the management of a child or young person's case can agree small amounts of funding for equipment, activities or other expenses relating to the needs of a child as one of payments or payments over a short period of time. Higher amounts of funding or payments over a longer period are agreed by Group Managers or the Assistant Director, Children's Social Care.

### Private Fostering

If a child lives with any person who is not a close relative (by blood, marriage or civil partnership – grandparent, aunt/uncle or brother or sister) for 28 days or more, unless they are looked after and the person is a foster carer, the child will be privately fostered. A child who is 16 or 17 and living with a relative or friend will not fall under the remit of Private Fostering Regulations, unless they have a disability. As with informal arrangements the child's birth parents remain wholly responsible for their child in these circumstances, including ensuring that they are safe and their care needs are being met (including financial).

There is a duty on parents of a child who is or will be privately fostered and on anyone who is or intends to foster a child privately to advise the Worcestershire County Council of such arrangements. Worcestershire County Council will need to assess and monitor any such arrangements. Further information on Private Fostering Arrangements is available at

[http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20523/fostering\\_and\\_kinship/1527/kinship\\_care](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20523/fostering_and_kinship/1527/kinship_care)

Worcestershire County Council may provide support or services to the child or carers if the child is assessed as a "child in need".

### Carers of a Child Subject to Child Arrangement Order

A child may become the subject of a Child Arrangement Order either through a Private Law Application or as the outcome of Care Proceedings. If the order is made as the result of a private application then Worcestershire County Council may not be involved. If the child or family is known to the Worcestershire County Council then they may be asked to provide a report to the court.

The person in whose favour the Child Arrangement Order is made will share parental responsibility with the child's birth parents and will, along with the birth parents, have responsibility for ensuring the child's care needs are met.

Worcestershire County Council may provide support or services to the child or carers if the child is assessed as a "child in need" and in particular, if:

- The arrangement provides an agreed alternative to the child becoming or remaining looked after and

- The arrangement has been agreed as the best permanence plan for the child and
- The family and friends carers have been assessed as suitable to care for the child long term.

An assessment of need and circumstances will be offered to the child and the carers if:

- the child is looked after at the time of application or
- the child was looked after immediately prior to the application or
- the child would have been looked after if not cared for by the family and friends carers.

In these circumstances Worcestershire County Council may consider assistance with legal costs to make an application for a Child Arrangement Order, and may provide a Child Arrangement Order allowance following a financial assessment.

Financial payments may be made:

- to enable the child to live with a family and friend carer where this might not otherwise be possible because of financial difficulties
- where the child has additional needs which require special resources.

Financial support can be made as a single payment or periodically to meet recurring needs. Financial support will be dependent on the assessment of the needs of the child and the circumstances of the carers.

Worcestershire County Council will always consider assistance with legal costs where:

- the child is looked after or would otherwise be looked after and
- Worcestershire County Council supports the application and
- it secures permanency for the child.

Worcestershire County Council may also consider financial support:

- To help with set up costs to enable the child to live with the carers
- To help with recurring contact costs
- In order to give foster families time to adjust, continue a level of payment for a period of time if the carers were the child's foster carers.

Child Arrangement Order allowances will finish:

- When the child becomes 18 or 19 for a child with significant disabilities
- The child ceased to live with the carers
- The child becomes looked after
- The child qualifies for benefits in his/her own right
- The agreed period for which financial support was offered expires.

In other circumstances, Worcestershire County Council may offer an assessment of needs and circumstances. If Worcestershire County Council decides that an assessment is not required, then they will write to the carers with the decision and allow 28 days for representations.

Agreement to any one off or discretionary payments, including Child Arrangement Order Allowance, is agreed by the Group Manager, Children Social Care following a financial assessment. It is expected that the carers will have claimed any benefits to which they may be entitled such as Child Benefit, Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit. Child Arrangement Order allowances are reviewed annually.

#### Carers of child subject to a Special Guardianship Order

A child may become the subject of a Special Guardianship Order either through a Private Law Application or as the outcome of Care Proceedings. Worcestershire County Council will have prepared a report for court on the suitability of the applicants prior to the granting of a Special Guardianship Order and must undertake an assessment of need to see if any support is required. A report will be made available to the court which is considering the making of the order.

The person in whose favour the Special Guardianship Order is made has parental responsibility to the exclusion of others with parental responsibility except another Special Guardian and is responsible for ensuring the child is safe and their care needs are met.

Worcestershire County Council will provide support services to those assessed as requiring such services. It will undertake an assessment when requested by the child, parent, Special Guardian or prospective Special Guardian if:

- the child is looked after at the time of application or
- the child was looked after immediately prior to the application or
- the child would have been looked after if not cared for by the family and friends carers  
and



- the arrangement provides an agreed alternative to the child becoming or remaining looked after and
- the arrangement has been agreed as the best permanence plan for the child and
- the family and friends carers have been assessed as suitable to care for the child long term.

The services available are set out in the section above on Child Arrangement Orders. Further information can be found on Special Guardianship Orders on Worcestershire County Council's website.

### Adoption

In some circumstances, especially for young children, it may be appropriate for a child to be adopted by family or friends. Adoption is the process by which all parental rights and responsibilities for a child are permanently transferred to an adoptive parent by a court order. As a result of this the child legally becomes part of the adoptive family.

Worcestershire County Council is part of Adoption Central England (ACE). ACE has the responsibility of assessing people applying to adopt and provides post order support to adopted children. They will review the Adoption Support Plan and if appropriate following assessment, will apply to the Adoption Support Fund on behalf of adopted children. Information on the services provided can be found on their website at [www.aceadoption.com](http://www.aceadoption.com)

Worcestershire County Council remains responsible for any financial support to adopters including any assessment for an adoption allowance. Prior to the making of an Adoption Order, a financial assessment will be undertaken and if financial support is agreed it will be paid as long as the adoptive family meet the criteria for financial support and this will be annual reviewed.

The financial assessment will take into account:

- the adoptive parent's financial resources (including significant income from any investments, excluding the adopters home) including any tax credit, grant, allowance or benefit which would be available if the child lived with them
- The financial needs of the child (e.g. because of special diet or need for replacement bedding), which is not covered by DLA if the child is in receipt of this.
- Any financial resources of the child (e.g. a trust fund)

Financial support may only be offered:

- where it is necessary to ensure that the adoptive parent can look after the child

- where the child has been assessed as having care needs which requires greater expenditure of resources
- where it is necessary for the Local authority to make any special arrangements to facilitate the placement or the adoption by reason of the age or ethnic origin of the child, or the desirability of the child being placed with the same adoptive parent as his brother or sister or with a child with whom he has previously shared a home
- where such support is to meet recurring costs in respect of travel for the purpose of visits between the child and a related person
- expenditure on legal costs, including fees payable to a court in relation to an adoption
- expenditure necessary for the purpose of accommodating and maintaining the child.

Financial support can be a single payment or a periodical payment to meet ongoing costs.

When adopters have previously been a child's foster carers, Worcestershire County Council may consider continuing any payments received by foster carers, from the date of the placement and for up to 2 years from the date of the Adoption Order. This will be possible regardless of the outcome of their financial assessment, where the child's specific needs would indicate that this is justified and where without such payments, adoption would not be possible.

The Adoption Regulations allow the Local Authority discretion to offer this to foster carers for the purpose of a two year transitional provision to give the family time to adjust to their new circumstance. This arrangement would be reviewed after the first year but will not normally be subject to change unless there is significant change in the financial situation of the adopter or child.

After the two year transitional period the adopter would need to request a further assessment of support needs and any financial support would be determined as outlined previously in this document.

Financial support ceases to be payable to an adoptive parent if:

- The child attains the age of eighteen, if the child continues in full time secondary education it will cease at the end of the academic year after the child's eighteenth birthday.
- In exceptional circumstances, if the child has severe disabilities and continues in full time secondary education, it may continue until the young person reaches the age of nineteen when it will cease at the end of the academic year after the young person's nineteenth birthday
- The child ceases full time education before the age of 18 years and commences employment or qualifies for a placement on a government training scheme or apprenticeship

- The child qualifies for Income Support or Jobseeker's Allowance in his or her own right
- The child attends a residential or boarding school; in these circumstances the assessed financial support will be reduced by at least 60% of the figure assessed
- The child becomes looked after by the Local Authority
- The child ceases to have a home with them
- The child dies
- The child receives a custodial sentence. The Authority will consider continuation of some payment, depending on individual circumstances.

The agreement to pay financial support based on the outcome of the means test and assessment of need lies with the Assistant Director, Children's Social Care.

### **Family and Friends Foster Carers (Child Looked After)**

A child may become looked after in a number of different ways:

- a) because the Local Authority has been granted Parental Responsibility via an Interim Care Order or Care Order
- b) because the Local Authority has agreed with the person with Parental Responsibility that it is in the child's best interest to become Looked After or remain Looked After on a voluntary basis whilst being placed with a relative/friend
- c) because the child has been remanded to the care of the Local Authority by the Youth Court in respect of criminal charges.

When a child is Looked After, Worcestershire County Council has a responsibility wherever possible to make arrangements for the child to live with a member of the family who is approved as a foster carer.

In exceptional circumstances, a child may be placed, as an immediate placement, with a relative, friend or connected person who has not been approved as a foster carer when this is seen as the best way of safeguarding the child and meeting his or her needs. Any such placement must be agreed by a Group Manager following the completion of a suitability report. The carers become temporarily approved foster carers pending a full assessment and are entitled to all services and support as are available to other foster carers.

For all planned placements with a family and friend carer, and any immediate placements likely to exceed 16 weeks, a full Fostering Assessment must be undertaken and presented at Worcestershire County Council's Fostering Panel for a recommendation to the Agency Decision Maker. The Agency Decision Maker will have the final decision on whether to approve family and friends carers as foster carers.

The Assessment will look at the specific needs of the child for whom they are being assessed and will take into account:

- relationship with and understanding of the child and his/her needs
- ability to promote and safeguard the child's welfare
- personal and relationship history and whether this is likely to impact on their ability to care for the child
- parenting capacity
- references including work, family and personal references
- medicals
- Criminal Records Check. A caution, conviction or negative information would not necessarily rule out an applicant being approved as a foster carer. The assessment would look at any possible impact on the child
- support needs.

Following approval, Family and Friends Foster Carers will be supervised and supported according to the Fostering Services Regulations and Minimum Standards to enable them to meet the needs of the child/ren for which they are caring. They will be entitled to the same support and allowances as non-related foster carers. They will be obliged to comply with guidance set out in the Fostering Services Regulations and Minimum Standards. Family and Friends Foster Carers will only be approved as foster carers for the particular child/ren for whom they have been assessed.

### **Supporting Family Time with Birth Parents**

Worcestershire County Council has a duty to promote family time for all Children in Need. There are differences in this duty depending on whether or not the child is looked after.

Where the child is not looked after, Worcestershire County Council will assist in promoting family time between the child and his/her family where it is necessary to do so in order to safeguard and promote his or her welfare. If it is identified that family and friends carers require specific assistance, it will provide information about local contact centres and mediation services.

Where a child is looked after, Worcestershire County Council endeavours to promote family time between the child and his/her family unless it is not practicable or consistent with the child's welfare. The overall objective will be set out in the child's Care Plan with the specific arrangements in the child's Placement Plan and these will be reviewed as part of the child's review process.

## **Family Meetings**

Family Meetings are meetings which are held between professionals and family members, they promote the involvement of the wider family to find solutions within the family network for the difficulties children are experiencing.

Worcestershire County Council offers Family Meetings as part of their Edge of Care Services to allow families to develop plans which will support the child, young person and their parents and prevent the need for the child or young person becoming Looked After.

Family meetings can also be held when:

- a family member or friend has offered/has been asked to look after the child away from the child's parents
- a child becomes looked after, perhaps following an emergency without a family meeting being held
- as part of the assessment process, or subsequent planning as part of a Children & Young People's Plan, Child Protection Plan or Looked After Child Plan
- whenever there is a need identified through the assessment or planning stage for a child
- where Care Proceedings are being considered.

The meeting will include family members, friends, the child as appropriate to their age and understanding and any other adults the family think can contribute to a plan for their child.

The welfare of the child remains paramount. Any family meeting arranged and any subsequent plan agreed, must ensure the child or young person is safeguarded and their needs addressed.

Consideration will be given as to whether the meeting is likely to pose any risk to the child or other participants in the meeting. In these situations, Worcestershire County Council will try to ensure that sufficient safeguards are in place for the meeting to proceed. In some circumstances this may not be possible and Worcestershire County Council will explain the reasons for not proceeding to the family, carers and child if of appropriate age and understanding.

During the meeting, the child's allocated worker and any other professional who is present will share relevant information, including their analysis of the strengths of the family and of any concerns they may have regarding harm/risk. They will explain their proposals for the plan for the child based on their analysis. They will make it clear to the family what support they are able to offer, the extent and limits of that support and any resources that might be available.

The family will also have the opportunity to share information and ask for any other information they feel they need.

The family will then be offered the opportunity to discuss the situation between themselves. They can ask to do this without professionals present or with those professionals they want present. The possible options will have been clearly identified and they will be aware that any proposals they make must safeguard and meet the needs of the child.

Unless it is felt the proposals place the child at significant risk of harm, even if there is a need for further agreement or negotiation of resources outside of the meeting, the plan proposed by the family should be agreed in principle.

The case manager has to endorse the plan and agree it is safe before it can be adopted as a plan for the child. If agreed, the plan must be incorporated into the child's Statutory Plan.

If the plan the family propose is not agreed by the case manager, the reasons must be stated clearly to the family.

### **Working with Partner Agencies**

Worcestershire County Council will work with its partner agencies in health, education, and housing and in the voluntary sector to ensure that their staff are aware of the needs of children and young people living with family and friends carers and the challenges facing those carers. They will work with partner agencies to ensure that they are clear about what services they provide and how family and friends carers can access these.

Worcestershire County Council will work with specialist services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), services for children with Special Education Needs and disabilities so that there is a shared understanding of the particular needs of children living with family and friends.

Worcestershire County Council will seek to engage with housing authorities and registered social landlords to ensure that their policies recognise the importance of the role of family and friends carers and that consideration is given, whenever possible, to family and friends carers being given appropriate priority to move to more suitable accommodation if this will prevent the need for a child to become Looked After.

### **Bibliography**

Farmer E and Moyers S (2008) Kinship Carer: Fostering Effective Family and Friends Placements.

Hunt J, S Waterhouse, et al (2008) Keeping them in the Family: Outcomes for children placed in kinship care through care proceedings.

Wade J, Sinclair I, Stuttard J, and Simmonds L (2014) Investigating Special Guardianship (Department of Education)

Wellard S, Mearling S, Farmer E and Hunt J (2017) Growing Up In Kinship Care (Grandparents Plus)

## LOCAL CONTACT DETAILS

### Children's Social Care:

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/childrensocialcare>

**Family Front Door:** 01905 822 666

**Address:**

Social Care  
PO BOX 585  
Worcester  
WR4 4AD

**Worcestershire NHS Health:** [www.worcestershirehealth.nhs.uk](http://www.worcestershirehealth.nhs.uk)

### Worcestershire Children Safeguarding Board:

[www.worcestershiresafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.worcestershiresafeguarding.org.uk)

**Kinship Carers UK:** 07714 531 802

## National Organisations and Information for Family and Friends Carers

### Action for Prisoners' Families

Works to reduce the negative impact of imprisonment on prisoners' families. Produces publications and resources and provides advice, information and training as well as networking opportunities.

[www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk](http://www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk)

### Addaction

Offers a range of support developed for families and carers affected by substance misuse.

[www.addaction.org.uk](http://www.addaction.org.uk)

### Adfam

Works with families affected by drugs and alcohol, and supports carers of children whose parents have drug and alcohol problems.

[www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk)

### Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

Offers free independent advice and information for parents and carers on a range of state education and schooling issues, including admissions, exclusion, attendance, special educational needs and bullying.

[www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

**Children's Legal Centre**

Provides free independent legal advice and factsheets to children, parents, carers and professionals.

[www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)

**Citizens Advice Bureaux**

Helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice through local bureaux and website.

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

**Department for Education**

Lists details of telephone help lines and online services to provide information, advice and support on a range of issues that parents and families may face in bringing up children and young people.

[www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families](http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families)

**Family Rights Group (FRG)**

Provides advice to parents and other family members whose children are involved with or require Children's Social Care services because of welfare needs or concerns. Publishes resources, helps to develop support groups for family and friends carers and runs a discussion board.

[www.frg.org.uk](http://www.frg.org.uk)

**Family Fund Trust**

Helps families with severely disabled or seriously ill children to have choices and the opportunity to enjoy ordinary life. Gives grants for things that make life easier and more enjoyable for the disabled child and their family.

**Address:**

4 Alpha Court  
Monks Cross Drive  
York  
YO32 9WN

[www.familyfund.org.uk](http://www.familyfund.org.uk)

Tel: 0845 130 4542

Email: [info@familyfund.org.uk](mailto:info@familyfund.org.uk)

**The Fostering Network**

Supports foster carers and anyone with an interest in fostering to improve the lives of children in care. Publishes resources and runs Fosterline, a confidential advice line for foster carers including concerns about a child's future, allegations and complaints, legislation and financial matters.

[www.fostering.net](http://www.fostering.net)



### **The Grandparents' Association**

Supports grandparents and their families, especially those who have lost or are losing contact with their grandchildren because of divorce, separation or other family problems, those caring for their grandchildren on a full-time basis, and those with childcare responsibilities for their grandchildren.

[www.grandparents-association.org.uk](http://www.grandparents-association.org.uk)

### **Grandparents Plus**

Champions the role of grandparents and the wider family in children's lives, especially when they take on the caring role in difficult family circumstances.

### **Mentor UK**

Promotes the health and wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the damage that drugs can do to lives.

[www.mentoruk.org.uk](http://www.mentoruk.org.uk)

### **Family Mediation Helpline**

Provides information and advice about family mediation services and eligibility for public funding.

Tel: 08456 026627

[www.familymediationhelpline.co.uk](http://www.familymediationhelpline.co.uk)

### **National Family Mediation (NFM)**

Provides mediation services to support couples who are separated and their children and others affected by this.

[www.nfm.org.uk](http://www.nfm.org.uk)

### **Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group**

Operates helpline and provides a variety of services to support anyone who has a link with someone in prison, prisoners and other agencies.

[www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk](http://www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk)

### **Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT)**

Provides practical and emotional support to prisoners and to their children and families. The Kinship Care Support Service provides support and advice to family members and friends who care for children whose parents are in HMP Holloway.

[www.prisonadvice.org.uk](http://www.prisonadvice.org.uk)

### **Parents Against Drug Abuse (PADA)**

Delivers support and services to the families of substance users, including a national helpline.

[www.pada.org.uk](http://www.pada.org.uk)

**Parentline Plus**

Provides help and support in all aspects of family life, including information, an online chat facility and a 24 hour helpline.

[www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

**TalktoFrank**

The government's national drugs helpline which offers free confidential drugs information and advice 24 hours a day. Information and advice is also available via the website.

[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

**Voice**

Advocacy organisation for children living away from home or in need.

[www.voiceyp.org](http://www.voiceyp.org)

**Young Minds**

Works to improve the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people and empowering their parents and carers.

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)