



## Recruitment of New Foster Carers

We are urgently looking for foster carers in Dublin South Central to enable children and young people to stay connected with their family & friends, community, schools & sporting clubs. Currently a large proportion of children in care in DSC are placed outside of the area in which they lived prior to admission to care. This means that many of these children are separated not just from their family but also from their community. Local children need local carers.

We in Dublin South Central have almost 200 Tusla foster carers who are transforming the lives of children every day, but we need MORE!

**We in Dublin South Central are hosting an online fostering information session's on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 19:30- 21:00hrs or on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April from 11:00 – 12:30hrs.**

This will be a place where those who have an interest in learning more about fostering can connect with experienced foster carers, social workers, and our inspirational care leavers.

### At our virtual fostering event we will explore:

- What is Foster Care? This includes explanations relating to respite foster care, emergency, short term foster care and long-term fostering.
  - Some common myths about fostering – including who can foster.
    - What do I need to foster?
    - The assessment, training, and support process.

**YOU CAN REGISTER YOUR INTEREST FOR THE ONLINE INFORMATIONS SESSIONS FOR FREE ON [EVENTBRITE.IE](https://www.eventbrite.ie)**



### **Navigating the re-opening of society following COVID-19.**

**By- Dr. Mariah Curtin**

**Hello everyone,**

My name is Dr Mariah Curtin, I am a Clinical Psychologist and I have recently taken up post with the Children in Care teams in Dublin South Central. I'm delighted to have taken up this post and I will hopefully get to meet some of you in person soon. As we navigate the re-opening of society following COVID-19 I thought I would share some information that you may find helpful. Life changed for many families during COVID-19 with school closures and remote working as we moved in and out of lockdowns. Families are now preparing for change

again as Ireland has eased restrictions and many families are returning to old routines. Families may have had different experiences over the course of the pandemic and it's important to re-engage in activities at a pace that feels comfortable for you and your family. The re-opening of society is a new experience for everyone. With any uncertainty anxiety can rise. When we don't know what to expect emotions such as fear, worry or confusion are normal during this time.

#### **As a foster carer these tips may be helpful for you and your family:**

1. Try to remain calm. If a child is apprehensive about re-engaging in an activity it is important that you stay calm in order to act as a source of containment for a child. As adults it is important that we manage our own feeling so that we can respond to children's feelings.
2. Confirm any concerns or worries. Listen to children's worries and acknowledge how they are feeling. Some children may be overly excited while others may be nervous and not want to go out. It is important to validate concerns before reassuring children that it is safe to get out and about.
3. Talk openly about plans. Help children prepare by being aware of the new government guidelines and talk about what people in the family would like to do. It is important to be honest about plans. If a child is anxious about going out, you can help them feel at ease by having an open conversation about what's worrying them and that it's normal to feel worried. Children may be reluctant to go out, especially if they have learned and played at home for a long period of time. It may be helpful to talk about the positives of being more connected with others again and remind children that they may be able to see their friends more and visit fun places.
4. Many children may be used to their foster carers being at home more during COVID-19 and some children may find it difficult when you leave the home upon returning to the office or re-joining social activities. When leaving the home, let children know when you are leaving, remind children when you will be back, do not hesitate when leaving and do not return until time agreed. It is important to follow the same routine everyday as much as possible as structure and certainty can help ease any worries.
5. If you are concerned about children heading out and continuing to follow precautions, encouraging frequent handwashing with your children doesn't need to be a scary conversation. Perhaps create a sing along with their favourite song or do a dance together to make hand washing fun. Remind children that they can help prevent the spread of germs by coughing and sneezing into their elbow. Right now, we all wait for more news from the government about wearing masks. For anyone that wishes to continue to wear a mask to do so comfortably. It is important to feel safe and comfortable.
6. After over two years of being in and out of lockdowns, it will take time to adjust again. Adjusting takes time. Remember to be kind and patient with yourself as you support.