Foster Carer Training Programme
September 2019—June 2020

Central Fostering Team
Oriel House, 2-8 Castle Street, Antrim, BT41 4JE
Welcome to the **Northern Trust training booklet September 2019—June 2020.**

These training opportunities are for foster carers, kinship carers, and concurrent carers with some core courses for those of you newly approved carers and a range of opportunities and new training for all.

It is recognised that you are caring for vulnerable children and young people and have very busy families. Therefore setting time aside for training can be difficult. However, the training, learning and development booklet is a resource to help support you with the demands of fostering and increase your knowledge and understanding of looked after children so you are better equipped to manage your role.

There is an expectation that you complete at least two pieces of training per year and this is assessed at your annual review. As you will see there are a range of courses and workshops as well as online courses and the fostering App. Please look over the booklet and let your supervising social worker know what courses you are interested in.

To apply for a course, simply contact your supervising social worker who will complete a nomination form and send it through to the training coordinator. You will receive an invitation usually no more than one week prior to training. **All nominations** are given a place unless there is unprecedented interest. In this case we will accept nominations on a first come basis and try to identify additional training at a later date. You will be notified should this be the case.
We would appreciate if you have registered for training and are unable to attend; that you contact the office at your earliest convenience.

You will receive an invitation usually no more than one week prior to training. There are also a number of courses which become available throughout the training year that are not in the booklet. The details of these courses are circulated to your supervising social worker but if you would like to have them emailed directly to you please contact me by phone or email with your details.

Please continue to discuss your training needs with your supervising social worker, so the courses sourced are meaningful and beneficial to you. Can I take this opportunity to thank you for the wonderful care you provide to our children and young people. I hope you find the training useful in helping you in your role and look forward to seeing you soon.

Deborah Thompson (Training Coordinator)
Specialist Fostering Team,
Oriel House, 2-8 Castle Street,
Antrim BT41 4JE
Tel: 0300 123 11 55
deborah.thompson@northerntrust.hscni.net
SUPPORTING SELF ESTEEM IN PRIMARY AGE CHILDREN.

Date: 10.09.19

Time: 10.30AM—1PM

Venue: Holiday Inn Express

The Junction

Ballymena Road

Antrim

BT44 4LL

This is a very practical workshop that aims to explore how foster carers can use simple resources developed by Dr. Karen Treisman to help children explore and build self esteem. The workshop will look at various creative activities that can be used to help build self-esteem, that encourages children to recognize their strengths and positive qualities, and reflect upon how this impacts on educational outcomes.
Emotional Resilience Training—Lightwork NI

Date: 01.10.19
Time: 10am—12pm
Venue: Lightwork NI
Unit 6, The Junction
Ballymena Road
Antrim

We aim to impact attitudes, knowledge and skills: Learning objectives for the foster carers session will be:

After this training carers will

1. Understand the stages of progressive brain development and the impact on behaviours
2. Recognise emotional dis-regulation in children and self
3. Evaluate realistic expectations for children's behaviours
4. Identify and practice using of a range of regulation tools and techniques
5. Have an opportunity to troubleshoot difficult situations and explore solutions for their unique family dynamic
Core issues in fostering

Dates: 09.10.19 and 16.10.19 (Other dates to be confirmed)

Time: 6.30pm—8.30pm

Venue: Holiday Inn Express Ballymena Road Antrim BT44 4LL

This course is to be completed by all foster carers within two years of approval and should be revisited by foster carers at least every four years. The areas covered are:

**Impact of fostering on the family and contact issues**

To raise awareness of the potential impact of fostering may have on the foster family.

**Legal issues and participation in LAC reviews**

To assist with knowledge and understanding of the law in relation to fostering

Reinforce foster carers valuable contribution to the review process.

**Safer caring, health and safety, allegations and recording**

To assess the impact of safer care guidelines on foster carers and their families.

To prepare for the possibility of allegations and how to handle these if they arise.

**Moving on, attachment and permanence**

To help foster carers and their families cope with feelings about a child moving on.
TELL ME ANOTHER ONE

Date: 11.10.19
Time: 10am—1pm
Venue: Sandel Centre
Knocklynn Road
Coleraine

This will be an interactive masterclass for foster carers using storytelling as a powerful and playful way of engaging learners in the education process and aims to build storytelling skills and help carers gain ideas and strategies to help children learn both at home and at school.

The masterclass will be facilitated by story teller Liz Weir, and explores how storytelling can: engage reluctant readers, introduce difficult to learn subjects and topics and inspire a love of reading.
FOSTERING FINANCE
DATE: 24.10.19
TIME: 6.30PM—8.30PM
VENUE: THE HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS
THE JUCTION
BALLYMENA ROAD
ANTRIM

GOT A LOT OF QUESTIONS ABOUT TAX, NATIONAL INSURANCE AND EXPENSES?

THIS WORKSHOP IS TO ASSIST YOU IN DEALING WITH FINANCIAL MATTERS ARISING FROM FOSTERING
THIS INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP WILL COVER THE FOLLOWING TOPICS

.INCOME TAX
.NATIONAL INSURANCE
.TAX CREDITS—CHILD TAX CREDIT AND WORKING TAX CREDIT
.BENEFITS, PENSIONS AND INSURANCE

IN THE MEANTIME, FOSTER CARERS WHO WANT TO FIND OUT MORE CAN COMPLETE THE HMRC FINANCIAL E-LEARNING MODULE INSTALLED ON OUR WEBSITE.
WWW.THEFOSTERINGNETWORK.ORG.UK
A brief introduction to psychodynamics

Date: 04.11.19
Time: 10am—12pm
Venue: Ballymena Business and Recreation Centre
Cushendall Road
Ballymena
Trainer: Philip Millar

After this training carers will
1. Understand the stages of progressive brain development and the impact on behaviours
2. Recognise emotional dis-regulation in children and self
3. Evaluate realistic expectations for children's behaviours
4. Identify and practice using of a range of regulation tools and techniques
5. Have an opportunity to troubleshoot difficult situations and explore solutions for their unique family dynamic

The course will be evaluated using our own feedback questionnaire, if you would like me to include any particular measures of learning outcomes or to include any additional content, please give me a call to discuss further.

I am looking forward to working with the fostering team to support carers and sustain placements, this work is very close to my heart.

Philip Millar

Central Fostering Team
DATE: 05.11.19
TIME: 10AM—2.30PM
VENUE: BALLYMENA BUSINESS AND RECREATION CENTRE
CUSHENDALL ROAD
BALLYMENA

DEVELOPING RESILIENCE FROM THE INSIDE WILL HELP YOU SUPPORT YOUR CHILD TO ENGAGE IN EDUCATION. AT THIS MASTERCLASS FOSTER CARERS WILL DEVELOP THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF RESILIENCE AND WHY IT IS DIFFERENT FROM PERSON TO PERSON AS WELL AS EXPLORING A RANGE OF SIMPLE PRACTICAL TECHNIQUES AND TOOLS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN IN DEVELOPING THEIR RESILIENCE IN A RANGE OF DAY TO DAY SITUATIONS
CORE ISSUES IN KINSHIP

This course will be delivered alongside the Kinship Team. Dates, venue and times to be confirmed.

Target Group:

Kinship Carers who have been recently approved, as well as long-standing kinship carers.

This is essential training to provide kinship carers with a greater understanding of the fostering task.

Objectives

- To assist kinship carers with their knowledge and understanding of the Law in relation to fostering.
- To highlight the central role of contact in kinship care
- To assess the impact of safe care

This is an informal course where kinship carers can talk to other carers about their experiences and gain support from others facing the same issues.
SUPPORTING PRIMARY AGE CHILDREN’S HOME-WORK

Date: 27.11.19

Time: 10.30am—1pm

Venue: Ballymena North Business and recreation Centre
Cushendall Road
Ballymena

This is a practical workshop for foster carers with primary-aged children who would like to gain knowledge of how to create a good home-learning environment and practical strategies that can be used to support children’s learning.

The workshop will consider the expectations of homework, learning styles and practical resources that can be used to support home-learning.
Men’s Role in fostering

Date: 28.11.19
Time: 6.30pm—8.30pm
Venue: Holiday Inn Express Ballymena Road Antrim BT44 4LL

This is a course designed to help to support male foster carers.

The course will

• Identify and highlight the importance of male foster carers.
• Examine feelings about abused children and their abusers
• Acknowledge risk of providing care to a child who has been abused
• Examine expectations and concerns for male foster carers
• Revisit and examine safer caring policy
• Illustrate the role of men working with the looked after children in foster care
• Examine gender issues in the child care domain
Autism NI: practical strategies creating and using visual aids to support your child at home.

Date: 16.01.20

Time: 6pm - 8.30pm

Venue: Holiday Inn Express
Junction One, Ballymena Road
Antrim

A practical session facilitated by Autism NI, where foster carers will have the chance to learn about and create visual aids to use at home to support children with autism with routines and their learning. Materials will be included on the day.
Mood matters

Dates and time to be confirmed:

This course looks at the basic Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, teaching participants how our thinking and behaviour can affect how we feel, physically and emotionally.

An awareness of how this impacts on children and young people will be explored and help look at strategies to support the young person. As well as helping you as a carer to adopt strategies to cope with stress.
Child sexual exploitation is a major concern affecting many children and young people in care and in the wider community. It is a potential issue for children as young as 10 years old.

This training gives an excellent insight into the issues around sexual exploitation to give foster carers the knowledge and understanding of the impact on children and young people and how to spot the signs and who to seek help and guidance from.

The course will explore:
- What is sexual exploitation?
- Who is at risk?
- How does it happen?
- The impact of CSE
- Tips on how to recognise and respond
A PRACTICAL MASTERCLASS SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH DYSLEXIA

Date: 04.02.20
Time: 10am—1pm
Venue: Holiday Inn
Junction One
Ballymena Road
Antrim BT44 4LL

Within this masterclass, facilitated by Let’s Expand Communication, carers will have the opportunity to learn about the impact of dyslexia upon a child’s education.

They will also be able to learn a range of practical ideas for supporting children with dyslexia at home including phonological awareness strategies, multi-sensory activities and insight into how to support reading and spelling.
Core issues in fostering

Dates and times to be confirmed early March.

This is a course to be completed by all foster carers within two years of approval and should be revisited by foster carers at least every four years. The areas covered are:

**Impact of fostering on the family and contact issues**

To raise awareness of the potential impact of fostering may have on the foster family.

**Legal issues and participation in LAC reviews**

To assist with knowledge and understanding of the law in relation to fostering

Reinforce foster carers valuable contribution to the review process.

**Safer caring, health and safety, allegations and recording**

To assess the impact of safer care guidelines on foster carers and their families.

To prepare for the possibility of allegations and how to handle these if they arise.

**Moving on, attachment and permanence**

To help foster carers and their families cope with feelings about a child moving on.

Understand the impact of moves on attachment
Contact issues

Date: 27.03.20
Time: 10am—12pm
Venue: Ballymena North business and recreation centre
Cushendall Road
Ballymena

The course will explore:
- How is contact decided?
- Why have contact?
- Benefits of Contact for the child
- How to prepare children for Contact
- How to handle disappointment
- Strategies for dealing with Contact
- Where foster carers can get support

The training will also include a DVD presentation from Health & Social Care Foster Carers across Northern Ireland describe their own experiences and highlight some of the challenges associated with contact.

A birth family also share their personal journey through foster carer and discuss the role Contact had in their lives.
CORE ISSUES IN KINSHIP

Date, venue and time to be confirmed.

Target Group:

Kinship Carers who have been recently approved, as well as long-standing kinship carers.

This is essential training to provide kinship carers with a greater understanding of the fostering task.

Objectives

- To assist kinship carers with their knowledge and understanding of the Law in relation to fostering.
- To highlight the central role of contact in kinship care
- To assess the impact of safe care

This is an informal course where kinship carers can talk to other carers about their experiences and gain support from others facing the same issues.
Attachment, Trauma and development

This course will be delivered by the TTLAAC Team in March 2020. Date and times to be confirmed closer to the time.

The course will cover the importance of attachment and the effects trauma and the impact on a child’s development.

Parenting is perhaps the most important experience children can have in terms of helping them develop the skills they need for life. It is through the parenting relationship that children learn to develop a healthy relationship with themselves, their family, peers and those who wish to be close to them and who wish to help them in life (School, health services etc.).

Children coming into care have experienced unhealthy parenting and often present with difficulties in their relationships.

This session will explore how neglect and abuse effects children's capacity for relationships and provides foster carers with some ideas for helping improve children's skills in this area.
First Aid courses

These First Aid courses are a flexible and informal workshops making skills simple to do and easy to remember using real life scenarios.

The course includes how to help someone who is

- Choking
- Are unconscious
- Bleeding
- Suffered burns or a scald
- Are having a stroke

**Basic First Aid**

Wednesday 3rd October 2019

Holiday Inn Express

Ballymena Road Antrim

6.30pm—8.30pm

**Paediatric First Aid**

Friday 31st January 2020

Ballymena Business and Recreation Centre

Cushendall Road

Ballymena

10am—12pm
**Basic First Aid**

Tuesday 24th March 2020

Carrickfergus Enterprise Centre

8 Meadowbank Road

Carrickfergus

10am-12pm

---

**Basic First Aid**

Wednesday 19th May 2020

Tweed Room

Robinson Hospital

Newal Road

Ballymoney

10am—12pm
More training opportunities . . . . Other courses become available over the year which are not in the booklet. Your supervising social worker will be informed about any courses or you can forward your email details and be informed of updates directly. Also feel free to contact the training coordinator with any queries or interest in any subject areas not covered in the booklet.

The Regional Fostering and Adoption Team

Regional Training

The Regional Adoption and Fostering Service will also be providing regional and sub regional courses throughout the training year. The type of training and courses provided by regional will be identified through the foster carers review and like all training in the booklet will follow the training pathway plan.

All of the other Health Trust’s have a training booklet published every year and it is available on the Regional Adoption and Fostering website. www.adoptionandfostering.hscni.net. If you wish to attend any of these courses please contact your supervising social worker and Training Coordinator.
South Antrim Community Network run number of courses in the Antrim, Newtownabbey and Carrickfergus area.

Courses include

‘Crisis intervention in self harm and suicidal behaviour.’ ZEST 10.09.19 Carrick town hall

‘Dealing with Toxic Stress Training’ workshop 20.11.19 Rathfern social activity centre

‘Understanding grief in children and young people.’ Supporting the family. Barnardos 21.11.19 Monkstown Village Centre

‘Compassion Fatigue Awareness’ Wave Trauma Centre. 03.12.19. Legal Island Training centre Antrim.

‘The person behind the behaviour.’ ZEST 18.02.20 Mossley Mill Newtownabbey

‘Understanding Self harm.’ ZEST. 27.02.20. Legal Island Training Centre

If you are interested in attending any of these courses please contact your supervising social worker or the training coordinator and complete a Training Expression of interest form.
Support Groups

Caring for foster children can be a difficult and stressful task with far reaching implications for both foster carers and children. It can create additional demands on a foster family. The foster carer support group offers protected time to talk and share feelings and experiences in a comfortable and non threatening environment, and one where foster carers can feel supported. Support groups are often attended by carers who have a wealth of experience, knowledge and expertise accumulated over many years of fostering. These carers can offer invaluable support to less experienced foster carers.

The group also promotes awareness on fostering issues with foster carers, supervising social workers and wider trust management. Foster carers who attend the group have said “The support group is a great way to make friends and exchange problems.” “It is great to meet up with likeminded people who truly understand the day to day realities of fostering.”

Many groups have a particular interest in training which will help to address and support the emotional needs of carers and children in
Training is also organised through your local support groups. Support groups are a great way of meeting other foster carers and becoming involved in a range of activities. Please see below details of your local support group.

Carrickfergus Support group - 028 93315111
Magherafelt Support group- 028 79366840
Ballymoney support group- 0300 123 1155
Ballymoney kinship support group—028 27661521

Some groups hold social events and trips for foster families throughout the year. Foster carers have expressed a need to bring foster families together in a fun and relaxed environment, one where they can get to know peers through play and social interaction.

Why Join a support group?

The foster carer support group offers carers the opportunity to:

- Be part of an active planning group
- Be a mentor to other foster carers
- Have protected time to share experiences and feelings
- Receive mutual support and encouragement
- Enjoy fun and laughter
- Improve the quality of foster care and be part of the recruitment drive for more carers.
- Receive continued professional development through training.

So Join today!!
The Fostering Newsletter will be delivered in two publications each year. The Summer and Fall editions will include events and information about fostering in the Northern Trust area.

The newsletter will also try to provide information about supports and training available. There will also be an introduction to the teams who are providing these services for carers.

Alongside this we hope to include some fun and to show our appreciation and recognise the amazing role you provide.
Fostering App

Helpful advice is only a screen tap away!

The ‘Fostering in a digital world’ App supports foster carers to empower, educate and protect children and young people in the online world.

-The App consolidates safeguarding training and resources, providing carers access to specific advice, functions and technologies guiding them through the digital environment.

The course content and resources will help break down barriers by providing knowledge, guidance, advice and the language required to aid discussion and engagement with the children and young people. ‘Fostering in a digital world’ app download today on:

To obtain a direct link to download the app to your phone/ipad/tablet from either the Apple App store or Google play store go to https://ineqe.com/fostering-in-a-digital-world-app/ Or contact the training coordinator at deborah.thompson@northerntrust.hscni.net

Tel: 0300 123 1155