

Council need more foster carers

Examples of how much carers are paid have been made available by The City of Edinburgh Council as part of a campaign to tackle the myths surrounding foster care. Caring full time for children, whilst being extremely rewarding, can also provide a good income and concerns have been raised that there may be a lack of awareness about this. Adverts were put out on TV during recent peak -time TV shows in an effort to attract some more recruits.

There is currently a severe shortage of foster carers in Edinburgh and more are needed to provide children with safe and caring homes while they are unable to live with their own families.

City Children & Families Leader Councillor, Marilyn MacLaren, said:-“A carer can have a huge impact on a child’s life, improving their confidence and helping them towards a happy future but we don’t expect that this comes without cost. We want to remind people that we do pay carers and, that for the right person, fostering could be a fantastic new career.

“Our foster care team are working hard to encourage more people to become carers but we still need lots of people from different walks of life to tackle the current shortage.”

Carers get paid as self-employed people by the Council and receive a fee, allowances, full training and ongoing support. Depending on the type of caring work taken on, the rewards can be around the level of a well paid full-time job. Carers also get funds to provide pocket money and to buy Christmas presents.

The Council offers a range of opportunities for carers to suit different circumstances. Foster carers could be single, in a

couple, married, straight or gay and may or may not already have children. They can be a tenant or a home-owner, live in a flat or a house and may or may not be in paid employment.

The most important thing is that carers have patience, resilience, a sense of humour and can offer a loving home to a child/children.

Carers are needed for babies and young children under five, over fives, teenagers, children with emotional and behavioural problems, children from ethnic minority backgrounds and children with disabilities. To find out more, including full information on allowances and fees please visit www.edinburgh.gov.uk/fostering or phone 0800 174 833.

Here are a couple of examples of how much you might expect to be paid if you are interested in becoming a foster carer:-

Foster care

Linda is a foster carer who looks after Billy, 5 and Andrew, 14. They both live with Linda and her family full time. Linda gets a weekly allowance and fee for each of the boys. As the two boys are different ages, with different demands, this is reflected in the allowances and fees.

For the care of Billy, she is entitled to an allowance of £113.46, which covers maintenance, his clothing and his pocket money. She also receives £151.36 as a weekly fee for Billy. For the care of Andrew she receives an allowance of £145.19 and a £189.21 weekly fee.

Linda receives £600.22 per week for caring for the two boys.

Specialist disability care

Dave is a specialist carer who looks after Joan, 11. Joan lives with Dave and his family full time. Joan has Down's Syndrome and requires a high level of care which is reflected in the weekly fee.

Dave gets a weekly allowance of £141.23, which covers maintenance, Joan's clothing and her pocket money. He also

receives £378.41 as a weekly fee for Joan.

In total, Dave receives £519.64 per week for caring for Joan.