

Who's Looking After You?



Information and advice for young people who are not being looked after by close family.

Think 
Private Fostering

Who do you live with?

Q: Are you living with someone who isn't your mum, dad or a close relative? (A close relative means a grandparent, brother, step-brother, sister, step-sister, aunt, uncle or the civil partner of a close relative).

Q: Will you be staying with them for 28 days or more?

Q: Are you under 16 (18 if you have a disability)?

What is private fostering?

It's when someone who isn't a close relative looks after you and you stay in their home for more than 28 days (about a month).

There are lots of reasons why your parents might need to ask someone they trust to look after you. You may know the person caring for you well – they may be a family friend or neighbour. But when this happens for more than 28 days it's called private fostering and there are things you need to know about it and how it affects you.

Some examples of private fostering arrangements are:

- If you have been living with your friend's parents for about six weeks because you aren't getting on with your mum or dad.
- Your dad has got a new job and works away, you still see your dad at weekends but you live with his girlfriend during the week.
- If your mum or dad lives overseas and they have asked a friend to look after you in the UK so that you can get a good education.

When you are living with a private foster carer, they have to make sure you are safe and secure, go to school or college, stay healthy and are well cared for.

What can you do?

Check that your mum or dad, or the people you're living with, have told us that you are going to be looked after by someone else. You can speak to someone you trust, like a teacher, doctor, school nurse, youth worker, young people's advisor or another responsible adult.

If you or your family need any help or support or have any questions you can contact Children and Families Service on 0300 131 2 131 email social.care@northyorks.gov.uk.

Why does the council need to know and what do they do?

We need to know that you are safe, being cared for properly and are happy with the people you are living with, so a social worker will come and see you and listen to what you have to say.

You will see them regularly and they are always available to talk to if you have a problem. We will also contact your parents to make sure they are happy too.

Having a social worker does not mean you have been taken into care.

Can I still see my mum and dad if I'm with a private foster carer?

Of course you can. Your mum and dad and the person looking after you should sort this out, and include you in making the arrangements. The social worker will also talk to your mum and dad to make sure they know you are being well looked after and give them any help they need.

What if I'm unhappy or have a problem?

If you have a problem, or are unhappy where you are living, you can talk to your social worker about your worries.

They will talk to your parents and your private foster carers to see what can be done to sort out the problem.

If they cannot sort things out for you, they will help you get extra support from the National Youth Advocacy Service: **(0808 808 1001)**.

If you are disabled and almost 18, we can look at different ways to support you as you become an adult.

What happens if I want to live back at home?

By keeping in contact with you, your social worker, parents and private foster carer, we will agree when this can happen – and we will continue to talk to you and make sure everything works out okay.

Contact us

Online: [northyorks.gov.uk/contact-us](https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/contact-us)

By telephone: **0300 131 2 131**

North Yorkshire Council, County Hall,
Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8AD

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