

**Being a foster carer can be challenging a job, but as one of our foster carers explains, one of the most rewarding...**

“My day normally starts, just most likely as everybody else’s by the alarm going off; the only difference is that I am already at work.

Most mornings are the same, making sure that school bags are packed, sorting out breakfast and preparing packed lunches. Before leaving the house to do the school run, I make sure that my teenager is up.

I return from the school run and make several journeys up and down the stairs to ensure my teenager is up and ready for college.

When the school day is over, I head off to pick the children up. We then run through the daily questions – how was school and do you have any homework? We make sure homework is completed before having tea and then heading out to the youth club.

I get home, tidy up and sort the washing out before going back out to pick the children up. Before bedtime we either watch television or play a board game together.

There are no two days the same in this job because there is always something new going on. You get good and bad days, but seeing the difference you can make to the life of the young person is rewarding. Watching them blossom and develop into young adults ready to embark on their own makes it all worthwhile. I hope that I have helped them to make decisions for themselves and given them skills that they will use throughout adulthood.

I have one long-term placement who has fully integrated within my family. This did not happen overnight however, there were many barriers to overcome as we had very little history about the family. With great perseverance and support from the fostering service the young person feels secured, loved and that she belongs to the family, which allows her to relax, have fun and enjoy being herself.

I would like to take this opportunity to say this has had a positive impact on my family and close friends who fully support my role and embrace every young person that comes to live with me. My nephews have built some very good relationships with previous young people and have maintained them since they have moved on.

This truly shows that no matter how small or big your contribution in the young person’s life it will always have a positive impact. My final piece of advice would be to make your home their home.”