

Do you know someone under 16* who is living away from their parents? **Private fostering**

(*or under 18 for a young person with a disability)



Children, Schools and Families

01438 737500

www.hertsdirect.org/csf





“Things are really bad at home, so mum’s agreed I can live with my best friend’s family”

Kelly, aged 15.



“Dad’s not around and mum’s been ill so her best friend has taken me in”

Luke, aged 12.



“My mum works abroad but I wanted to stay near my friends so I live with a family friend”

Henry, aged 14.

**Does this sound like a young person you know?
If the answer’s **yes**, then they are being privately fostered and you should read on.**



What is private fostering?

Private fostering is when a child or young person under 16 (under 18 if they have a disability) lives with an adult who is not a close relative for 28 days or more.

There can be lots of reasons why a child doesn't live at home and their parent has arranged for someone else to care for them. Maybe...

... they're living with a family friend because their parents are arguing or getting divorced

... they've moved in with the family of their boyfriend or girlfriend

... their parents work very late and cannot look after them

... they were sent to this country for education or health reasons and their parents live overseas

If a child is not living with their parents or a close relative, like a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt, the law says that Hertfordshire County Council must be told about the arrangement by the person looking after the child or the parent.

However, many parents and carers are not aware of this and therefore do not notify the council, even though this is against the law.

What will the council do?

The law says that we need to be told if a child or young person isn't living with their parents so that we can make sure that they are healthy, safe, happy, and doing well.

We will arrange regular visits to check that the child or young person is being well looked after and we can also give help and advice to the carers, the parents and the young person.

What do you need to do?

If you are a parent of a child who is being looked after by someone else, or you are looking after someone else's child you must let the council know.

The law says that we need to be told at least six weeks before the arrangement begins, or in an emergency within 48 hours. We need to know information about the child and where they are living, and we must also be told if the child moves and where they have moved to.

If you know of a child or young person who is not living with their parents please contact the council's customer service centre.

We can also give you help and advice if you are involved in a private fostering arrangement.

Hertfordshire County Council customer service centre
Call 01438 737 500 or 01923 471 500

Are you a child or young person not living with your parents?

If you're under 16 (or under 18 if you have a disability) and don't live with your parents, and you want someone to talk to about this you can contact one of the following organisations:

Hertfordshire County Council – the local authority needs to know if you are not living with your parents. They can also give you lots of advice and support. **01438 737 500** or **01923 471 500**

VOICE – a national charity that speaks up for and supports young people. Call free on **0808 800 5792**

ChildLine – a free independent helpline for children and young people who you can talk to about any problem. Call **0800 1111**

Or why not speak to someone you know like your teacher, youth worker or doctor.

For more help and advice about the information in this booklet, contact Hertfordshire County Council Customer Service Centre on 01438 737500. Callers from 01923 or 0208 dialling codes may wish to use 01923 471500 in order to be charged at local call rates.

If you would like help with translation or need this information in large print, braille or on audio tape, or if you need other help with this information please contact the Customer Service Centre.

Bengali: বাংলা, ভাষায় তথ্যাবলীর জন্য অথবা আপনার একজন দোভাষী অর্থাৎ ইন্টারপ্রিটারের দরকার হলে, অনুগ্রহ করে উপরে যে সব টেলিফোন নম্বর দেওয়া হয়েছে সেগুলোতে ফোন করে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Chinese: 如果需要漢語、版本，或需要口譯人員，請用上述號碼聯繫。

Italian: Per informazioni in italiano, o se desidera l'aiuto di un'interprete, contatti i numeri elencati in precedenza.

Portuguese: Para informações em português ou se precisar de uma interprete é favor telefonar para um dos números acima.

Punjabi: ਪੰਜਾਬੀ, ਏ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਲਈ ਜਾਂ ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰੀਟਰ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਨਿੱਘਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉੱਪਰ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਨੰਬਰਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Turkish: Sağlanan hizmetlerle ilgili bilgileri Türkçe, istiyorsanız ya da bu dillerden çevirmene gereksinim duyarsanız, lütfen yukarıdaki telefon numaralarını arayınız.

Urdu: اردو میں معلومات کے لئے، یا اگر آپ کا ایک انٹرپریٹر کی ضرورت ہے، تو برائے مہربانی اوپر دیئے ہوئے نمبروں پر رابطہ کریں۔