

Foster Care Association of Victoria Position:

Accepting a placement can be a difficult process and the FCAV believes carers should take time and careful consideration before making any final decision. It is important for carers to consider all factors regarding any new placement and how this will affect their family and personal situation to ensure the placement will be positive for everyone involved. Listed below are possible questions carers can ask so they make an informed decision when taking on a new placement.

It is also important to take into consideration that at the time of referral the foster care agency may not have all available information.

If the placement is going to commence, as much additional detail as possible should then be provided via your Community Service Organisation.

General Issues

- ? Have I fostered children with similar characteristics before? Are we a good match?
- ? Do I need additional training or support to make this placement successful?
- ? What is the sex and age of the child or young person?
- ? What is the expected length of the placement?
- ? Why does this child need a Foster care placement?
- ? If the child or young person is coming to this placement from another carer, is it possible to speak directly with the previous carer?
- ? Is there anything special I should know about how to support this child or young person today?
- ? Are there special religious or cultural requirements for the child or young person?
- ? Are there any sensitive key issues to be aware of? Do we have any information about their current emotional or physical state?

Routines, Court and Access

- ? What Court Order is the child or young person on?
- ? Are there any special Court Order conditions I need to know about?
- ? Are there any key meetings or Court dates I would be required to attend?
- ? What routines and access plans are in place? What is the frequency of any access plans? Will they fit with my family?
- ? Who is access with? Where are access visits to be held?
- ? Will I need to transport or support the child or young person with access?
- ? Are the access visits supervised, and if so, by whom?
- ? Does the child attend day care, preschool, school?
- ? Does the child/young person have extracurricular activities such as basketball, swimming, etc that I will be required to transport to/from?

Special Needs

- ? Does the child or young person require special care to manage any known allergies, medical condition or current illness?
- ? Are there frequent medical or dental appointments?
- ? Is the child or young person on any medication?
- ? Do you have the child's Medicare number?
- ? Does the child have a current Health Care Card?
- ? Any there any special dietary requirements or alerts such as lactose intolerance, allergies, Kosher etc?
- ? Do the birth parents have any specific requests?

Behavioural Issues

- ? Are there any behavioural issues that I need to know about? (aggression, sexualised activity, absconding)
- ? Is there a specific plan to guide how these behaviours are to be managed?
- ? Is there any known history of sexual abuse or specific sensitivity towards male or females?
- ? Is there a pattern of non-substantiated allegations of abuse made against previous Foster carers?