

Put yourself in the picture



Julie and John have been fostering for ten years and particularly chose to provide long term placements for sibling groups

Julie and John have cared for one sibling group of three until they reached adulthood and now are caring for a second sibling group of two, a brother and sister:

When we decided to train to become foster carers, I think we both thought that it would be caring for just one or maybe two children at the most. Then we happened to see an article in a newspaper about a sibling group that were going to be separated because there was a shortage of foster carers in that area who were prepared to take on a larger group. It was quite upsetting to read, not only were they being taken into care, but they were being separated from each other. I happened to mention the article to the social worker who was taking us through our training and she asked us to think about it.

There are some challenges to caring for siblings groups. The sheer number of people in the house, the noise (at times) and activity, trying to give each child some one to one attention, trying to remember each child's after school activities and sorting out squabbles.

However, there are also many positives, knowing that you're helping to keep them together, watching them grow and have fun together.

We have found that sibling groups tend to settle more easily as they have each other for comfort, to talk to and share things with in the early days.

I would tell anyone thinking of caring for a sibling group that it is hard work but very rewarding.

Try and be as organised as you can.

Try and remember to save some time for each other.

Accept help and advice from your link worker.

Take vitamins!