



## Priory Fostering Services

### Foster carer case studies - Amy's story

**When Amy had an accident, her whole life changed; she had to retire from a job which she loved and her relationship with her partner ended. She found herself wondering what direction her life would now take.....**

"After my accident I was worried about how my life would move forward and what I would do. A friend suggested I looked at foster caring, I had after all brought up 6 children, including 4 step-children, so thought I might have something to offer, after doing some initial research I decided to apply.

After a thorough application process I was delighted to be accepted by Priory Fostering Services and was pleased that being in a wheelchair had not impacted on my suitability to be a foster parent. To be honest, I found the whole application process interesting even my family were interviewed as part of my application but they were really supportive. I also enjoyed the courses and found them to be a real 'eye-opener', they made me look at things in a different way.

Once approved, I was asked to look after a girl who was leaving a secure unit. With some apprehension, me and my daughter, who was 16 at the time (and very much a part of the fostering family) met with the young girl, and immediately we felt that she just fitted in – she stayed with us for two and a half years. I also took on 'respite placements' for other carers in the agency, some of the young people ended up wanting to stay with me, which made me feel like I must be doing something right. One young person in particular, was so keen to stay that we decided to apply through the matching process and it was agreed they could stay – they stayed with me for eight years. I also had a young asylum seeker who came for respite and stayed. He is now a successful business owner, married with a child on the way and always pays me a visit on his trips back to the UK bearing flowers and chocolates. I found his stay really interesting as I spent a lot of time learning about his culture and religion and helping him learn to speak English.

Priory Fostering Services have always been supportive, there's always someone on the end of the phone when I need them. I have also been able to access the Priory on-line training which has been a really valuable tool as well as attending as many training courses as possible.

I currently have three fostered children, and two slightly older who are planning to stay on with me after they turn eighteen. It's a great family life, we all sit down to dinner every night – any issues are discussed and sorted. We work on trust and honesty and everyone does their share, it forms part of learning life skills.

I am thankful to have been able to provide a safe and stable home for lots of teenage girls over the years which, has resulted in me having an enormous extended family. I have regular contact with most of them long after they have moved on to independence. It's lovely to see how they achieve in life".