



Priory Fostering Services

Foster carer case studies – Jenny & Phil's story



Jenny and Phil have been Priory carers for over four years. They currently have three teenage boys on placement. Before they became carers, Jenny worked as a florist and Phil was a foreman for a scaffolding company. They had been thinking about fostering for some while but were not sure it was the right thing for them to do. Once the last of their four children had left home they contacted Priory Fostering to find out more...

"The first visit from Priory was relaxed but at the same time gave us plenty to think about. The assessment was thorough but interesting and included training which was easier than we thought and gave us the basic skills we needed to begin.

Our first placement was a boy aged 12 who had been excluded from mainstream school and attended a unit for children with behavioural problems on a part-time basis. He was very angry because his mother could no longer care for him and scared because he didn't know where he was going to live and what his new family would be like. At first he was difficult to care for and remained angry and defiant but even when he was being angry I could still see the little boy inside. Gradually his hours at the special unit increased until he was full time which has now resulted in him successfully to his mainstream school.

As he became more settled we were able to take in two more teenage boys. One boy was similar to our first placement and his progress has been equally positive. He now attends the same mainstream school and we are really proud of what we have achieved as a family. Our last placement was a boy with learning difficulties who attends a special needs school. He was emotionally frozen and would curl into a ball for hours at a time. We gradually gained his trust until he felt safe with us. He is now relaxed, more confident and says he wants to stay with us until he is 27.

All three boys have responded well to our routines and boundaries and over the last three years have learned respect and empathy. In return our own children and grandchildren regard themselves as part of the same family. Our boys aren't easy and we have had some tough challenges. It can be a bit of a madhouse here with everyone doing different things and sometimes I wish there were two of me, but Phil and I really wish we'd done this years ago!"