Fostering Fortnight is the annual awareness campaign run by the Irish Foster Care Association. We aim to bring awareness to fostering in Ireland and all the valuable work being carried out every day in our fostering families and fostering communities. Foster Care is the backbone of the Irish care system and we need to recognise and celebrate all who are involved in foster care in Ireland. Fostering Fortnight is a chance for all those involved and the communities that support them to tell their stories and share their experiences.

**Fostering Stories – What Is Your Story?**

The answer to this question can take a million different forms, and the story you provide will be different depending on who is asking, your mood at the time, and whether you feel like you are still at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of your most salient story.

We use stories constantly – to inform, to connect with others, to share our feelings and experiences, and even to sort out our own thoughts and feelings. Stories are used to organise our thoughts, find meaning and purpose, and establish our sense of identity in what can often be a busy and confusing world.

We chose the theme ‘Celebrating Foster Care and Fostering Stories’ to encourage all involved in foster care to tell their story and in doing so help to raise awareness for foster care in Ireland. We believe everyone has a story to tell, and everyone deserves a chance to tell his or her story and share their experiences.

**How To Get Involved?**

We are asking everyone to get involved this year by coming together and sharing your fostering stories. We will be hosting coffee mornings across Ireland offering you a chance to share your fostering story. We would love if you sent us your story, poem, art or photos so we can share these, anonymously, with a
wider audience through social media and our members. We believe in the power of words and that sharing your story and your experiences will help bring awareness to fostering in Ireland.

**How Branches Can Get Involved?**

We are hoping our IFCA Branches and Volunteers as well as other groups will join us and get involved this year by organising an event or activity or just simply holding a coffee morning which will help highlight Fostering Fortnight, allowing an opportunity for everyone involved in Foster Care to come together and share their stories.

Below is a suggested list of some events/activities that could potentially be organised and as always, the Branch Development Team are on hand to offer practical support and help to any IFCA Branches or Volunteers who are interested in organising an event.

Suggestions:
- Family coffee morning including a children’s colouring competition
- Members coffee morning bringing in a local author to share their story
- Story telling with children at a local library
- Members coffee morning book club
- Members/Family coffee morning sharing stories in foster care

Whatever event you organise, don’t forget you can share your foster care stories, poems, children’s art etc. from your events with IFCA which will be posted (anonymously) on social media to share with the wider fostering community!

And most importantly, if you are interested in running an event don’t forget to let us know what you are running well in advance so we can promote your event!

**Fostering Fortnight Packs:**

To help get you started and to make it easier for you to organise an event this year, IFCA has developed a branch pack which will include:
- **How to Get Involved document (this document)**
- **Fostering Fortnight Poster – with space to write in details of your event. This will be emailed to you and A3 poster version which we will send direct to you**
- **Fostering Fortnight General Posters & Coffee Morning Balloons**

To request a Fostering Fortnight Pack please feel free to contact the IFCA office at 01459 9474 or admin@ifca.ie

For more information about Fostering Fortnight follow us on Facebook and Twitter for all the latest updates or visit www.ifca.ie. You can contact us at admin@ifca.ie or 01-4599474

#fosteringfortnight
#fosteringstories
#bepartofit