



# What if I smoke?

## Some guidance on our policies for Foster Carers and Adoptive Parents...

As more and more evidence proving the damaging effects of passive smoking to children is published, so we have to prioritise the long-term welfare of each child placed for foster care or adoption.

That does mean that we're now looking to place the children in our care into smoke free homes wherever possible. Whilst we understand that being a smoker doesn't affect your parenting skills, the knowledge and awareness we now have about children inhaling second hand smoke means that we will take into account whether you or a member of your household is a smoker.

For your own health as well as for that of any child we'd place with you, we'll encourage you to try and quit smoking as soon as you can. We'd be delighted to help you find a suitable smoking cessation support scheme – we do understand how difficult it is to give up! However, the British Association for Adoption and Fostering [BAAF] has issued new guidelines relating to children in care and their carers and as a result of this:

- No child under 5 years of age will be placed for foster care or adoption if you or a member of your household smokes
- Children of any age with disabilities, who are physically unable to play outside, children with respiratory problems such as asthma, or with heart disease or glue ear will not be placed with families where smoking occurs
- If you'd like to foster or adopt an older child, we would still want to discuss with you the health implications of smoking

So if you are a smoker, don't let that prevent you from taking your application to foster or adopt forward. We'll provide all the advice and support we can to help you cut down and quit smoking which really would be of benefit to yourself as well as the children you'll be welcoming into your home.

