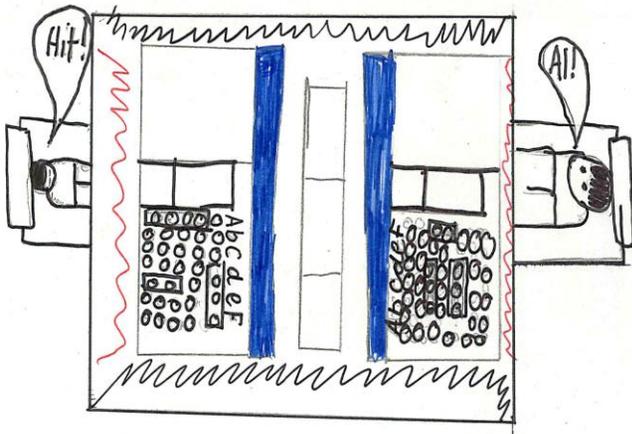


What advice would you give carers about this topic?

The advice given to me was to get to know the parents. This can be difficult especially in high school, but you can sometimes ask teachers as direct a question as, 'Who should my child be friends with?' They will usually tell you. Some other professionals have said to me seek out parents you like and introduce your children to each other. These will be friends you can trust.

If none of the problems of trust or security exist, have their friends over. Most times the young people already know what they want to do for entertainment; you will probably only have to supervise it. They will try to make it a success so it can happen again. It's best to trust the children as it is in their interest to make it a success. It's best to say yes generally but safety and protection are very important.



Produced by Ealing's Junior Council

Horizons Education Centre London W7 3HL

A guide for children and foster carers

Inviting friends
to play
at your foster home



Tips for persuading your foster carer to allow you to have a friend round to play:

- Introduce your friend to your carer
- Introduce your friend's parent/carer to your carer
- Choose a suitable time to ask your carer when she/he is not busy
- Discuss when would be a good time for your friend to come round
- Make sure you've done your homework!
- Suggest what you would play (if carers know you are not going to run round and wreck the home, they are more likely to agree!). Here are some ideas the Junior Council came up with:

Connect Four	Bingo	Cards
Battleships	Drawing	Crafts
Singing	Dancing	Hide & Seek
Chess	Football	Dressing up
Puppet show	Acting	Painting

Remember, it's ok if your friend only comes for a short time. If it has gone well, your carer is more likely to allow them back. If, after following all our advice, your carer still says 'no', there may be a good reason. You can always talk to your social worker about it.

The Junior Council interviewed one of the foster carers, whose advice is on the next page.

What did our foster carer have to say?

Have you ever allowed your foster child to have a friend round to play?

Yes, having local friends helped as it's more likely to happen when the child's friends are living nearby and when they attend local clubs like cubs, beavers, or brownies.

Have you ever said no to a friend coming round and if so, why?

Yes, because the child was too old and Social Services didn't consider the friend as suitable.

What advice would you give a child who wants to have a friend round to play?

The carer wants to know that it will go smoothly and that they will be safe and have a good time and not break things or fight. Foster carers consider rules to be important and they need to know that the 'rules of the house' will be followed and nothing bad will happen. In addition foster carers want them to tidy up after playing and not leave a mess.

