

## Family and friends care statutory guidance

# 10 questions to ask your local authority

1. Does your local authority have a **policy on family and friends care**? Is it easy for you to access? The guidance requires them to have a policy in place by 30th September 2011 and it should **be easy to find** (eg on their website).
2. Is there a **named person responsible** (the 'responsible manager') for family and friends care policy?
3. Is the support they provide determined by the **needs of the child**, not their legal status?
4. Does the policy include information about **sources of financial information and advice**, including benefits advice and support for family and friends carers and how to apply for financial help under section 17(6) of the 1989 Children Act? Is it clear how decisions are made and what criteria apply? Where support is offered, a written agreement should be drawn up setting out the level and duration of the support and the mechanism for review.
5. Does the policy identify services available to family and friends carers to support **contact arrangements** and set out what they will do to support contact arrangements where necessary?

6. Does it include information about **family group conferencing** including how they can be used after an emergency care order has been made?
7. Does it include information about local **support groups** or support provided by local or national voluntary organisations?
8. Does the policy include information about the fostering service for **family and friends foster carers** and ensure that they receive the same practical and financial help as other foster carers.
9. Does the policy include **advice and guidance on special guardianship, residence order and adoption** so that family and friends carers fully understand the implications of applying for such an order?
10. Does the policy include a clear **complaints procedure** for the service?

### Next steps

- Ask your local authority about their policy and practice on family and friends care
- Lobby your local councillors and MP to make sure they are aware of the issue
- Feedback their responses to us and/or to your local group

### Key Contacts

- Grandparents Plus advice line 0300 123 7015  
email [advice@grandparentsplus.org.uk](mailto:advice@grandparentsplus.org.uk)  
[www.grandparentsplus.org.uk/advice](http://www.grandparentsplus.org.uk/advice)
- Family rights Group advice service 0808 801 0366  
email [advice@frg.org.uk](mailto:advice@frg.org.uk)  
[www.frg.org.uk](http://www.frg.org.uk)
- Grandparents Association helpline 0845 4349585  
[www.grandparents-association.org.uk](http://www.grandparents-association.org.uk)
- National Association of Kinship Carers  
email [nakinshipcarers@gmail.com](mailto:nakinshipcarers@gmail.com)  
or post on <http://groups/nakc/home>