

HANDBOOK FOR FOSTER PARENTS





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of this Handbook would not have been possible without the support and expertise of various agencies, community representatives, and child protection and foster care specialists in and out of the country. We would firstly like to express our appreciation to the European Union for their technical assistance and support for the production of this Handbook under the project “Global Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Programme to Prevent Detention of Children and to Protect Children and Other Asylum-Seekers in Detention”.

As partners on this project, we extend our appreciation to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Malaysia Office, particularly the Child Protection Unit, who has provided technical assistance and support for project and materials development.

We are extremely grateful to the following persons who have extensively reviewed, commented, edited and contributed their technical expertise in developing this Handbook:

Mr Ng Chak Ngeng, a foster care case worker for 18 years and a former programme director of the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Programme of the Lutheran Community Services Northwest in Seattle, Washington. Mr. Ng also worked with the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service in Baltimore, Maryland to assist the Federal Government to resettle unaccompanied refugee children in refugee foster care programmes across the country.

Mr. James Nayagam, a child rights advocate who has vast experience working within a residential institution with children who have been abused or neglected. Mr. Nayagam is a former Commissioner with the National Human Rights Agency of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) and is currently the Commissioner for the Enforcement Agency Integrity Commission (EAIC) of Malaysia and a council member for the welfare and protection of children in Malaysia.

Mrs. Vijayakumari G.A. Pillai, a social work consultant with vast experience in the Department of Social Welfare of Malaysia, specializing in foster care, adoption, child protection and child rights.

Ms. Zoe Stewart, from the HOST International Candlelighters Programme, and who has over five years experience working with refugee children, families and communities in Nauru and Australia whilst in detention and awaiting resettlement. Ms. Stewart also has several years of experience working with children in care, supporting them through case management and family or parenting support programmes.

We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of the Rohingya community whose lived experiences and feedback have significantly contributed to the drafting of materials. Particularly, we would like to express our gratitude to the Rohingya Society of Malaysia (RSM), the Rohingya Women Development Network (RWDN) of Malaysia, interpreters, other community leaders, and the men, women and children who participated in the focus group discussions and community assessments.

Special thanks go to Ms. Wong Chen Li, who has tirelessly designed this Handbook on a very short timeline.

Finally, we would like to thank the unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) and foster families in SUKA Society’s case management programme who have inspired us to embark on this project to provide better care and protection for the UASC in Malaysia and better support for foster families who have opened their homes to provide safer placement for UASC.

We gratefully acknowledge all the contribution, support and assistance of persons named and unnamed. If we have inadvertently forgotten to acknowledge someone, please accept our heartfelt apologies and sincere appreciation for your valuable assistance.

CONTENTS

Why be a foster parent?	1		
How to use this handbook	3		
Things to note/keep in mind	4		
PART 1: A guide on the foster care process	8		
1. Screening	9		
2. Intake	10		
3. Training	13		
4. Selection	15		
5. Matching	17		
6. Placement - Orientation	19		
7. Placement - Care Planning	21		
8. Placement - Preparing for Exit	24		
9. Exit and Follow Up	28		
PART 2: A guide on key issues in a foster care placement	29		
1. Accidents	31		
2. Allegations/Complaints	33		
3. Arrest and Detention	35		
4. Behaviour Management and Corporal Punishment	36		
5. Belongings - Personal Property of the Child	37		
6. Boy-Girl Relationships	39		
		7. Bullying	40
		8. Changes in Circumstances	42
		9. Child Abuse and Other Forms of Violence	44
		10. Child Marriages	45
		11. Children with Disabilities	47
		12. Chores and Duties	48
		13. Criminal Activity	49
		14. Culture and Religion	50
		15. Education	52
		16. Employment	53
		17. Fire Safety	55
		18. Food	56
		19. Hygiene and Sanitation	57
		20. Infectious Diseases	58
		21. Leisure and Play	60
		22. Mental Health Concerns	61
		23. Missing from Care	63
		24. Money	64
		25. Physical Health Concerns – First Aid, Insurance, and Dental	65
		26. Substance Abuse	67
		Glossary	69
		Bibliography	74
		Appendices	80

WHY BE A FOSTER PARENT?

Fostering a child is a life changing experience. It makes an impact on both you and your family's lives and it certainly makes a big impact in the life of the foster child placed under your care. As you already know, many of these unaccompanied children who are here in Malaysia without their parents, struggle to survive. Many of them have experienced much trauma and are also currently treated badly and often taken advantage of.

By being placed in a family who is willing to protect, support and care for them, these Rohingya children have a chance to grow up in a safe and stable home environment. Particularly for an unaccompanied child who has been separated from his family home, being given the opportunity to be cared for and loved by adults who serve as their temporary parents makes a big impact in their lives. What you are doing by fostering a child plays an important role in securing the lives of the future generation of your community.

The impact, as mentioned, will also be felt in your own life as you foster a child. Here is an opportunity to help someone from your own community who is struggling to survive. As your community and your own family, especially your children, see you opening the doors of your home to protect and care for other children, it may help instil good values of helping one another especially when one is in need.

We believe that if the fostering relationship between you, your family and the foster child is done correctly, the foster child will be a positive additional member of your household. The child you are fostering will benefit from your guidance and care, and therefore have the potential of being a contributing member of your community.

We recognise that fostering a child is a big responsibility. There is a demand on your time, energy and resources. It also affects you and your family physically, mentally and emotionally. We also acknowledge that the community is already helping some of these unaccompanied children but have found that it is not an easy task.

However, through your involvement in our Foster Care Programme, you will not be alone. You will be supported by the Foster Care Agency that looks into your challenges and needs and would do the best to help support you in your efforts in looking after a foster child in your home.

We have prepared a foster care structure equipped with written standards and guidelines to ensure that the foster care process is carried out in an organised and systematic manner that is fair to both the child and yourself. We have also prepared a training programme and support groups to help equip you with the needed skills to foster a child so that you will feel prepared and supported to meet the expectations of the programme.

We believe that by working together we are able to do more for these children and ensure that the fostering experience remains a positive and impactful journey for both you and the child.

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

This Handbook explains the processes of the Foster Care Programme based on the “Manual on Foster Care for UASC”, which sets the minimum standards for providing foster care for children without parents or an adult to care for them in Malaysia. You will need to know the procedures in this Handbook that have been developed to help you provide good care to your foster child.

The Handbook is divided into two parts. Part 1 provides processes you will need to go through from the moment you apply to be a foster parent until the time a child leaves your care. Part 2 deals with specific issues that you may face when caring for a child. This part provides you with practical information and guidance on issues related to activities of daily living, physical health care, mental health issues, education, work, discipline, and other situations which your foster child may encounter as a refugee or an asylum seeker.

Both Part 1 and 2 are divided into the following sections to help you provide the best care for your foster child:

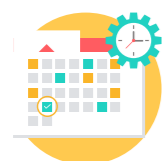
- Perspective section - mind-set you should have when going through a process
- Procedure section - step-by-step action to help you know what to do
- Responsibility section - how much you need to do to complete a process
- Support section - who can help you do what you need to do



**Perspective
(my thinking)**



**Procedure
(my action)**



**Responsibility
(how much to do)**



**Support
(who can help)**

While the Handbook cannot cover all possibilities or issues, we hope that it provides a basic guide to help you along your fostering journey.

THINGS TO TAKE NOTE/KEEP IN MIND

We recognise that different communities and cultures have differing standards and practices when it comes to providing care for children. However, for us to work together in this Foster Care Programme, all of us need to follow universally accepted standards when it comes to children. Here are some key points we must all agree to:

Note 1: The Definition of the Child

As foster parents in this programme, you will need to adhere to the international and national standard definition of a child. Therefore, any person under the age of 18, regardless of his/her physical build or sexual maturity, may be in need of your care and protection, e.g. from harsh adult working conditions or being given for marriage.

Note 2: The Child who is the Family Breadwinner

As children from your community may feel they have no choice but to work to be able to support their families back home, you and the Foster Child Case Worker will need to consider how work may affect your foster child. It is important that a child is given educational opportunities that will prepare him/her for adulthood.

Note 3: Practice of Child Marriage

If a girl is placed in your care, it is important that you take care to avoid the practice of child marriage which can have harmful effects. Training will be provided so that you become aware of the negative impact of child marriage and teenage pregnancy on the physical and mental health of children. You will also learn about the basics of child development and some good values for raising a foster child.

Note 4: Lack of Resources

Raising another child may be a challenge for you and your family in your current situation. We will try our best to provide some assistance to care for the foster child. This assistance will also help you meet some of the minimum standards of care required by the programme. However, as we believe that protecting children in a foster care programme should never be an opportunity for foster parents to financially benefit or profit from that care, any assistance given is only meant to reduce the additional burden on you and your family when caring for the foster child.

Note 5: Literacy Level among Foster Parents

We understand that your education level may prevent you from understanding some of the things we talk about in the programme. We will ensure that the training materials will be presented verbally and visually and in a language you understand. We will try our best to make concepts and procedures simple and easy to understand. The training programme and support group meetings will also make these concepts and procedures more practical for use in your daily life.

Note 6: Making Decisions for Children

As you are aware, children have a big role to play in your community as they will be the future generation. It is important that they are understood and given some space to share their thoughts and opinions. The training programme will guide you through the process of giving your foster child the safe space of sharing their thoughts and opinions. You will also be guided on the process of making decisions that are in the best interest of the child.

Note 7: Role of Women and the Girls in the Community

It is important to know that although the role of Rohingya women is traditionally limited, the female child under your care will need to be equipped with knowledge and skills for her to protect herself and live independently in the future. This is because the Foster Care Programme is time-limited, and you are not expected to be always there for her. Therefore, you need to ensure that your child is allowed access to education and other training opportunities provided for her by relevant agencies.

Note 8: Adoption and Fostering

As foster parents, you are looking after a child in a specific time frame. The child does not belong to you and you cannot make life changing decisions for the child (e.g. changing the name of the child) without the child's consent, and where possible, the parents' consent, and in consultation with the Foster Child Case Worker. A foster care arrangement will be very different from what you may be used to in your community and it is important to know the roles and expectations of all persons involved in the care arrangement.

Note 9: Access to Education

It is important to keep in mind that your foster child should be given the opportunity to obtain an education and to grow and develop into a mature adult who is able to care for himself/herself. Education will help your foster child adjust better in the country and help him/her find jobs when the child turns 18 years of age. Do encourage and support your foster child in obtaining any form of education whenever possible, including skills training, as provided by relevant agencies.

Note 10: Role of Culture and Religion in the Decision Making Process

The foster care process which you have applied to join is based on agreed minimum standards and processes that help a foster child obtain the best care possible that is in his/her best interest. However, you may come with a set of religious and cultural beliefs that influence your choices. It is important for you to keep in mind these minimum standards when faced with making decisions for your foster child, especially if they conflict with your cultural and religious beliefs. At every stage, do consult your Foster Parents Support Worker to ensure that you are making the best decisions for the child.

Note 11: Authority of the Agency

This Foster Care Programme is a UNHCR initiated programme and implemented by partners of UNHCR. As foster parents in this programme, your compliance to the programme requirements is very much appreciated.

Note 12: Gender and Age Constraints in Family Placement

Sometimes you may feel that taking in a child of a particular gender or age may not be suitable for your family dynamics. It is important that you raise this concern at the start with your Foster Parents Support Worker so the right child may be matched with your home situation.

Note 13: Child's Views about Care Arrangements

Although your foster child may have some set views and preferences about care arrangements, it is important to remember that your foster child will want and need a safe and caring home environment to live in. Your foster child, who is unaccompanied, may be missing his/her family and looking for a role model to follow. It is important for your foster child to understand what is expected from you in this foster care process. It is also important for your foster child to understand your challenges. The Foster Care Agency will work with you to manage expectations and views of your foster child about this care arrangement.

PART 1: A GUIDE ON THE FOSTER CARE PROCESS

1. SCREENING
2. INTAKE
3. TRAINING
4. SELECTION
5. MATCHING
6. PLACEMENT - ORIENTATION
7. PLACEMENT - CARE PLANNING
8. PLACEMENT - PREPARING FOR EXIT
9. EXIT AND FOLLOW UP

1. SCREENING

1.1 Perspective

We understand that in your community, taking in children who have no parents or family and caring for them has been a common practice. You too may have taken in children who are not your own and provided some care for them, either here in Malaysia or in your country of origin. A foster care programme looks at ways to organize such care arrangements to ensure that you, as foster parents, are supported and the fostered child is provided the best care possible. As part of this organized process, it is important to keep in mind that you may need to fill in some forms and follow other requests for information. This is to ensure that the right persons will be selected to participate in our Foster Care Programme. However, do not worry, you will be supported and guided through the process by a community representative.

1.2 Procedure

- 1.2.1 If you are interested in becoming a foster parent after hearing about the programme, you will need to fill up a Foster Parents Application Form (refer to Appendix A) and submit it either directly to the Foster Care Agency or through a community representative.
- 1.2.2 If you need help in filling up the form or in understanding the process, you should speak to your community representative or the person who gave you the form. You should not pay any money for help to fill or submit this form!
- 1.2.3 In the Foster Parents Application Form, you are asked to give details of two referees whom the Foster Care Agency can get in touch with to complete a written reference. The referees should not be related to you but have known you well enough to be able to recommend you for the programme. The referees you choose should have sufficient knowledge and are willing to be honest and open in providing comments about you.
- 1.2.4 Once both referees have returned the form, the Foster Care Agency will determine if you fulfil the basic criteria and safety requirements to become foster parents (refer to Appendix B for the Basic Screening Criteria for Foster Parents in the Programme).

- 1.2.5 At this stage, once you fulfil the basic criteria and all the safety requirements, you will be contacted by the Foster Care Agency to arrange for an intake interview with you and your family at your home.

1.3 Responsibility

- Fill up the Foster Parents Application Form, including the information on two referees for the Foster Care Agency to contact.
- Submit the Foster Parents Application Form to the Foster Care Agency or community representative.

1.4 Support

- A community representative, or the person who gave you the form will help you fill up the Foster Parents Application Form. They will assist you with any questions you have about the process.
- The two referees needed can be your religious leader at the place of worship you attend, the UNHCR officer/unit, a representative from your community-based organisations, or any other school or agency you have worked with.

2. INTAKE

2.1 Perspective

As part of this foster care process, it is important for us to understand you, your family and living situation in Malaysia. This is so that if you are selected to be foster parents we can continue to provide the best support for you to care for a foster child. It is important to keep in mind that we may ask some very personal information and will also visit your home. You may not be used to this and feel that some of the questions are unnecessary. However, your responses will be very helpful for us in providing all the support you will need.

2.2 Procedure

- 2.2.1 The Foster Care Agency will appoint a Foster Parents Support Worker to conduct an interview with you and your family members.
- 2.2.2 During the interview session, the Foster Parents Support Worker will be asking personal details about you and your family to get a clear picture of your family structure and dynamics. He or she will be interested in your family background, childhood experiences, medical history, education, work, relationship with spouse and children, and how you and your other family members feel about fostering a child.
- 2.2.3 The Foster Parents Support Worker will conduct a visual assessment of your home to obtain enough information to decide if it is suitable for a foster child to be placed in your home.
- 2.2.4 The Foster Parents Support Worker will advise you on what we are looking out for during the home visit. Some basic things that must be in place will include the following:
- There is a suitable place in your home for the child, with enough lighting and ventilation.
 - There is basic sanitation, water and electricity available in your home.
 - The cooking facilities in the home fulfil basic safety requirements.
 - The home is generally clean and suitable to live in.
- 2.2.5 Other things that the Foster Parents Support Worker will look at may include:
- whether you have the right to stay in that home that you are renting.
 - whether the neighbourhood is generally safe.
 - whether there are any medical issues in the household.
 - if the home is also used as a place of business.
 - if there are a number of people who drop by or live temporarily in the home.
- 2.2.6 If your intake application and the home assessment meets our criteria, you will be invited to attend a series of training sessions to further equip you for the role before you can be considered for the selection process.

- 2.2.7 If your intake application and the home assessment does not meet some of our minimum criteria, your application will be conditionally shortlisted until some changes are made. The Foster Parents Support Worker will clearly explain to you the reasons and work with you to make some of these changes so that you can continue with the next step.
- 2.2.8 If your intake application and the home assessment does not meet any of our minimum criteria, unfortunately, it will be hard for you to foster a child in our programme. The Foster Parents Support Worker will explain to you the reasons and also provide recommendations if you would like to continue with the process of application.

2.3 Responsibility

- Prepare a suitable place for interview with the Foster Parents Support Worker.
- Make sure that you and the people living in the home are present during the interview session.
- Be honest and answer all the questions truthfully.
- Show the Foster Parents Support Worker the layout of your home, where the foster child will be sleeping, and highlight any possible risks for the child in the neighbourhood.
- Where possible and needed work with the Foster Parents Support Worker to address any concerns/issues they raise.

2.4 Support

- An interpreter to help you communicate with the Foster Parents Support Worker, if necessary.
- The Foster Parents Support Worker will identify things that you may need to improve, provide advice and support to help you improve these things to be accepted for the intake stage.

3. TRAINING

3.1 Perspective

Providing foster care can be a challenging task requiring you to focus on the role you are playing in a child's life. Even though you may have looked after your own children, you will find that additional training and skills provided during the training can be helpful when providing care for a foster child who has been traumatised or has challenging behaviour. Since you will be working together with your Foster Parents Support Worker and the Foster Child Case Worker to ensure the foster care provided meets the minimum standards, it is important that you participate actively, ask questions and voice your needs during the training. The training sessions will be a safe place for you to share with other parents about your strengths and areas to improve.

3.2 Procedure

- 3.2.1 You will be informed by the Foster Care Agency on the date, time and venue of the training sessions.
- 3.2.2 If you have any difficulties attending or participating in the sessions for whatever reason, please inform your Foster Care Agency so that they are aware of your problem and can look for ways to assist you.
- 3.2.3 Some of the key topics which will be covered during the sessions include:
- Minimum standards of care in the Manual for Foster Care for UASC
 - Selected sections in the Handbook for Foster Parents
 - Basic listening and communication skills
 - First aid and guides to healthy living
 - Keeping children safe
 - Dealing with strong willed children
 - Helping children with trauma
 - Psychosocial development of a child, particularly teenagers
 - Maintaining healthy parent-child relationships and developing positive parenting skills.

- 3.2.4 During this training period, the Foster Care Agency will continue to assess and provide you feedback to ensure that you have acquired the basic knowledge and necessary skills to provide the best care for your foster child.
- 3.2.5 On completion of all the required training sessions, you will be awarded a certification of participation. This certificate does not mean you have been selected as foster parents. For this, you will have to go through a final selection process with the Foster Care Agency.

3.3 Responsibility

- Attend and complete all the training sessions organised by the Foster Care Agency.
- Participate actively in the training sessions and share your experience with other interested foster parents.

3.4 Support

- The Foster Care Agency will conduct the training sessions and provide you with training materials in a language you can understand.
- The Foster Care Agency will try to take into consideration your work schedule, safety and travelling arrangements, need for childcare, and other issues to ensure that you will have minimum difficulties in attending the sessions.
- You will also be provided with an interpreter during the training sessions, if necessary.

4. SELECTION

4.1 Perspective

The selection process is the stage where information obtained from the time you first applied for the role of a foster parent to the final interview with you will now be used to decide if you are suitable to be selected for the programme. The decision is made by a committee and is made in an objective and fair manner. Please note that the selection process is not a judgement on you and your family or your ability as a parent.

4.2 Procedure

- 4.2.1 Once you have finished the training, there will be a final interview with you and your family. Your Foster Parents Support Worker will also carry out a second visual assessment of your home to see if your home, living situation, and family circumstances is still suitable for the programme and if the changes suggested during the first visit have been carried out.
- 4.2.2 If there are more adjustments or improvements to be made, the Foster Parents Support Worker will explain what needs to be done and support you where needed to make the changes. You will be given as much time and support you need to make these changes.
- 4.2.3 The Foster Care Agency will also support you and your spouse in undergoing a medical check up to confirm that you are both free from any communicable disease that could affect the child. Communicable diseases that will be tested are those transmittable by air and through food such as:
- Tuberculosis
 - Hepatitis B & C
- 4.2.4 If the medical report shows that you do not have any communicable disease, and the Foster Care Selection Committee has approved your application, you will be given a letter of acceptance. You will then be placed in the pool of foster parents waiting to be matched with a foster child.

- 4.2.5 If you and/or your spouse have been found to have a communicable disease, the Foster Care Agency will decide whether to continue or withdraw your application for the selection process. If your application is withdrawn from the process, the Foster Care Agency will refer you to the relevant organizations that will assist you with your medical issues.
- 4.2.6 If the decision is made to continue with your application to the selection process, the Foster Care Agency will assist in obtaining necessary treatment, or provide further training on preventive guidelines to reduce the spread of the particular disease (when it cannot be treated).
- 4.2.7 If your application is not approved by the Selection Committee, you will be given a letter stating the reasons for the decision. The Foster Parents Support Worker will explain the letter to you, if necessary. You may appeal the decision by submitting a written response to the explanation provided in the letter, stating the reasons as to why you and your family should be selected for the programme. The decision of the Selection Committee after the appeal is final.

4.3 Responsibility

- Answer the interview questions honestly to the best of your knowledge.
- Allow the Foster Parents Support Worker to conduct a thorough assessment of your house and neighbourhood.
- Make improvements in your home or situation as recommended by the Foster Parents Support Worker.
- Go for the medical check-up arranged by the Foster Care Agency.
- If necessary, agree to receive treatment for any communicable disease and attend all follow up appointments.
- If necessary, practice preventive measures as recommended by the Foster Care Agency to reduce the spread of the disease.

4.4 Support

- The Foster Parents Support Worker will assist you in making any changes to your home and situation to be able to proceed to the next stage of the process.
- The Foster Care Agency will assist you for you to attend the medical check-up.
- If you and/or your spouse are found to have a communicable disease after the medical check-up, the Foster Care Agency may provide medical assistance and additional training to manage the disease, depending on the decision made on the situation.

5. MATCHING

5.1 Perspective

Once you have been selected to be a foster parent, we will ensure that we place a child who will best fit in your family, based on the needs of the child and what your family will be able to provide. It is important to keep in mind that if your family has not been matched to a foster child, it does not mean that you are not good enough to be foster parents. It just means that the Foster Care Agency was not able to find a good fit based on several factors, such as the child's age, gender, temperament, immediate and long-term needs, your family, home location, and many other possible factors. If a foster child has been matched to your family, some important decisions need to be made during this process and you should take time to decide if the selected child will suit you and your family.

5.2 Procedure

- 5.2.1 Once the child has been chosen to be placed with your family, the Foster Child Case Worker will contact you and provide you with a brief verbal description of the child to be fostered, such as his/her bio data and other important background information. The Foster Child Case Worker will also give you information on the risks and challenges in looking after the particular child to be fostered, and your strengths which can be of help to the child. You should ask the Foster Child Case Worker any questions or raise any concerns you may have.
- 5.2.2 Once you are ready to continue with the process, the Foster Child Case Worker will arrange for the child to meet you and your family at your home.
- 5.2.3 On the day of the child's visit, you and your family members will have the opportunity to meet and get to know the child better. Similarly, the child will need to get to know your family too. The child will need to have a look at your house and where he/she will be sleeping. There may be more than one visit organized if needed.
- 5.2.4 After the visit, take some time to discuss with the rest of your family members to decide if the child is a good fit for your family and if you wish to foster the child. Once you have decided, inform your Foster Parents Support Worker. At the same time, the child will also take some time to think if he/she feels it is a good fit with your family, and will inform his/her case worker.

- 5.2.5 If both parties are agreeable to the foster care arrangement, the Foster Parents Support Worker will explain to you the terms and conditions, including the resources the Foster Care Agency is committed to provide for you, based on your available resources and the needs of the child.
- 5.2.6 If you agree to the terms and conditions, you will then enter into an agreement with the Foster Care Agency by signing the Foster Parents Agreement Form (refer to Appendix C for the form). This form will be translated in a language you understand.
- 5.2.7 Once the agreement has been signed, the Foster Child Case Worker will prepare the child to move into your home.

5.3 Responsibility

- You should make a decision whether to accept the child into your home and care for him/her as part of your family. Feel free to ask the Foster Parents Support Worker as many questions as possible before making that decision.
- During the child's visit, take the opportunity to make the child feel welcomed and try to get to know the child without making him/her feel awkward or uncomfortable. Introduce yourself and your family to the child but do not ask questions that are too personal. Questions about likes and dislikes and general interest questions are usually quite safe.
- Discuss with the Foster Parents Support Worker and make sure you understand the terms and conditions of the foster care arrangement before signing the Foster Parents Agreement Form.
- Sign the Foster Parents Agreement Form to indicate your willingness to follow the terms and conditions of the foster care arrangement.

5.4 Support

- The Foster Care Agency through the Foster Parents Support Worker will try to assist you with whatever resources are needed, and where necessary, to make your home conducive for the foster child.
- The Foster Child Case Worker will provide as much information, where appropriate and relevant, about the child to help you make the decision.
- An interpreter will assist you with translating any forms or agreements.

6. PLACEMENT - ORIENTATION

6.1 Perspective

Caring for a foster child can have both a positive and negative impact on your family. Your family may be excited in having a new member of the family, but at the same time they may also be uncertain how the foster child may affect the family. Your foster child may feel relieved to have a proper place to stay under your protection but may also feel fearful and anxious in having to live with strangers. He/she may wonder if your family will be truly accepting and show genuine care. Therefore, the orientation process provides both you and your foster child an opportunity to work out some of your expectations, concerns and fears so that the fostering relationship starts on the right footing.

6.2 Procedure

6.2.1 Before your foster child moves in, the Foster Parents Support Worker will ensure that you have everything you need in the child's living space, such as bedding and a cupboard to store your foster child's belongings.

6.2.2 The Foster Child Case Worker will provide you with additional information about the foster child which you need to know to meet his/her needs and care plan. At this point, you will need to clarify your roles and responsibilities with the Foster Child Case Worker.

6.2.3 The Foster Child Case Worker will plan an agenda for the orientation session to be conducted on the day your foster child moves in with you. The orientation session is an informal event to welcome the foster child into your home and to help your foster child feel comfortable and at ease with his/her new family. A sample agenda could be as follows:

- Foster family helps foster child move his/her belongings into the room.
- Everyone gathers in the living room for some light refreshments.
- The Foster Child Case Worker makes some introductory remarks and outlines the agenda for the orientation.
- Everyone to introduce themselves, how they want to be called, and perhaps to say some fun facts about themselves.
- Icebreaker to encourage everyone to communicate and interact with one another.

- The Foster Child Case Worker can invite the head of the house, to say something to the child on behalf of the family.
- Depending on the age and personality, the foster child can also be invited to say something to the foster family.
- The Foster Child Case Worker may talk about hopes and expectations for the foster child through this programme while reinforcing the goals of foster care.

- Clarify roles within the family
 - a) Who does what in the family
 - b) Who to ask permission from, and for what purpose
 - c) How to introduce the foster child to people outside the family
- Clarify house rules, especially unspoken rules (which should be made explicit) including:
 - a) Access to food
 - b) Bed time
 - c) Meal times
 - d) Television viewing
 - e) House chores
 - f) Curfew

- Establishing routines
 - a) Family daily routines
 - b) Weekend schedules
 - c) Family rituals
- Health issues
 - a) Chronic health concerns or disability
 - b) Medication to be taken
 - c) Hospital appointments

- Clarify how the Foster Child Case Worker will be involved.
- Questions and answers
- Closing remarks

6.2.4 Before leaving, the Foster Child Case Worker will fix the time and date for the next home visit.

6.3 Responsibility

- Help make the foster child feel wanted and welcomed.

6.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will plan the orientation session to initiate communication, build rapport, and manage each other's foster care expectations.

7. PLACEMENT - CARE PLANNING

7.1 Perspective

As foster parents, you will help support your foster child in implementing his/her care plan and contribute to the overall development by attending to his/her:

- physical needs, such as food, clothes and shelter
- emotional needs, by giving your foster child attention, making the foster child feel valued, and helping the foster child fit within the refugee community
- behavioural needs, by managing behaviour and providing structure in the foster child's life.

You will also be supporting the Foster Child Case Worker, who is responsible for helping the foster child cope well in the host country, have access to education and health services, and to prepare him/her to live independently after leaving the Foster Care Programme.

7.2 Procedure

7.2.1 Once the foster child is placed under your care, the Foster Child Case Worker will help you and the foster child design and implement a care plan for the placement. A care plan provides a list of goals that the foster child needs to achieve and the action plan on how all parties will help the foster child achieve these goals. Each goal and action will be specific to the foster child. Once the goals are agreed on, they will be put in writing and a copy will each be given to you and your foster child.

Example: For Medical needs of a child, short-term goals may include supporting your foster child to obtain a preliminary medical screening or mental health assessment. A long-term goal may be to ensure the child remains healthy by providing a healthy and supportive environment.

Example: For Educational needs of a child, short-term goals may include finding a suitable school that meets the child's educational needs. A long-term goal may include following up with the child to ensure he/she is consistently attending school and gaining knowledge and skills for the future.

7.2.2 The Foster Child Case Worker will need your support to implement some areas of the care plan. The Foster Child Case Worker will conduct monthly home visits, review care plans, and meet with you and your family to discuss any issues pertaining to your foster child's personal development and the foster care arrangement. It is important that you update and share information related to the care plan with the Foster Child Case Worker. You may also refer to Part 2 of this Handbook on key issues for guidance, where relevant, for implementing some actions.

7.2.3 The Foster Child Case Worker will also separately meet with your foster child outside your home to allow the child to discuss more personal and sensitive issues. Your foster child's right to privacy will be respected by all parties. The Foster Child Case Worker will only discuss issues raised by the foster child if they are relevant and important for you to know and with prior permission from the foster child.

7.2.4 While the foster child remains under your care, there will be **continuous training sessions** available for you. The continuous training programme is an opportunity for you to update your current skills and gain new skills as foster parents. The training covers areas which were not covered during the initial training programme and focuses on contemporary issues that parents face today. The training will be periodically held and though not compulsory, we highly recommend that you make the effort to attend the sessions. If you are caring for a disabled child, specific training will be organized to help you with fostering this child.

8. PLACEMENT - PREPARING FOR EXIT

8.1 Perspective

It is important for you to remember that foster care is a temporary arrangement and the foster child will eventually leave your care. When foster care comes to an end, it can be difficult for you, the child, and your family, especially if a bond has developed between all of you. At the same time, it can also be exciting for the foster child to be independent and self-sufficient. You should feel proud in having played a significant part in your foster child's life. You may not have achieved everything in the care plan and sometimes things may not have turned out as planned. However, you should not feel guilty but accept that you have done your best and that some things are beyond your control.

8.2 Procedure

Aging Out

- 8.2.1 The Foster Child Case Worker will start preparing the foster child to leave foster care at least six months (or any other duration deemed fit) before the child's 18th birthday (or any other age as decided). The Foster Child Case Worker will inform you the date when the foster child is to leave your home.
- 8.2.2 The Foster Child Case Worker will be responsible for making sure that the foster child has a place to stay after leaving foster care and is able to live independently and support himself/herself accordingly. The Foster Child Case Worker may seek your assistance in finding new accommodation for the foster child.

Resettlement/Repatriation

- 8.2.3 If plans for the foster child to be resettled in another country or repatriated to the home country have come through, the Foster Child Case Worker will inform you the date when the foster child is scheduled to leave the country.
- 8.2.4 The Foster Child Case Worker will be responsible for liaising with the relevant agencies involved, such as the embassies, UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The Foster Child Case Worker may seek your assistance in preparing your foster child for resettlement/repatriation.

- 7.2.5 **Foster Parents Support Group meetings** will also be organized for foster parents like yourself while the foster child remains in your care. The Foster Parents Support Group is a regular meeting comprising other foster parents who are in the programme. It is an opportunity to meet together to encourage one another, share the challenges faced, and to support one another with tips and advice. The support group meetings are compulsory and are facilitated by a person appointed by the Foster Care Agency. The meetings are held once in three months and at a time that is suitable for the foster parents to attend.
- 7.2.6 In the event that you have some issues with the foster child that you are not able to resolve on your own, you may contact the Foster Child Case Worker at any time to seek advice or intervention.
- 7.2.7 If you feel that you are no longer able to provide foster care for the child, you should contact your Foster Parents Support Worker and explain the reasons for wanting to terminate the placement. Your Foster Parents Support Worker and the Foster Child Case Worker will work with you to try to help you resolve issues you may have. During this process, the foster child will also be consulted. If all efforts have been made and it is determined that the placement should end, the Foster Parents Support Worker will contact the Foster Child Case Worker to prepare for the foster child to leave your home.

7.3 Responsibility

- Support the Foster Child Case Worker to meet the care plan goals. Provide feedback to the Foster Child Case Worker so that he/she is aware of the developmental progress of your foster child.
- Attend the continuous training sessions and Foster Parents Support Group meetings.
- Continue to refer to the Manual for Foster Care for UASC to ensure that you are meeting the minimum standards of care and also to Part 2 of the Handbook to ensure that you are attending to your foster child's specific needs as per the guidelines provided.

7.4 Support

- The Foster Care Agency will continue providing support in terms of resources, continuous training, and support groups to enable you to meet the minimum standards stated in the Manual for Foster Care for UASC. Through your Foster Parents Support Worker, the Agency will assist you with any issues regarding your role as foster parents.
- The Foster Child Case Worker will develop a care plan for the child and with your help, work with the child in implementing it. The Foster Child Case Worker will assist you with any issues regarding your foster child.

Family Reunification

- 8.2.5 In some situations, the foster child's immediate family members may have arrived in the country after the foster child is placed in foster care.
- 8.2.6 The Foster Child Case Worker will be responsible for carrying out tracing activities, interviews and assessments to determine if it is in the best interest of the child to be placed with the immediate family members. The Foster Child Case Worker may seek your assistance to prepare your foster child to be reunited with his/her family members.

Termination by the Child

- 8.2.7 In some situations, the foster child may decide to leave foster care before the set time period is reached. The foster child may inform you or the Foster Child Case Worker about his/her intention of leaving foster care.
- 8.2.8 If the foster child informs you about wanting to leave foster care, and if he/she feels comfortable sharing this with you, try to determine the reason why he/she wants to do this. You should then immediately inform the child's Foster Child Case Worker. A meeting will be arranged by the Foster Child Case Worker who may seek your assistance in understanding the situation better.
- 8.2.9 If it has been agreed for the foster child to leave foster care after considering all the facts, and in the best interest of the child, the Foster Child Case Worker will inform you of the decision and the plan to help the transition of the foster child from your care.
- 8.2.10 While it is the responsibility of the Foster Child Case Worker to ensure that the foster child is capable of living independently on exiting the programme, you can play a supportive role whenever possible.
- 8.2.11 If the decision is that the foster child is not ready to live independently, the Foster Child Case Worker may seek your assistance to advise the foster child accordingly. If the foster child insists on leaving anyway, his/her wish will be respected, and arrangements will be made for the foster child to leave foster care.

Termination by the Foster Parents

- 8.2.12 Sometimes the foster child may prove to be beyond the capability of your family to manage and you may consider ending the placement prematurely. There may also be changes in your family situation that may make it difficult for you to care for the foster child.
- 8.2.13 Before you make the decision to end the placement, it would be beneficial for you to think about, or take action on some of the following:
- Identify how the foster child's behaviour is causing harm or distress to your family, or what issues about your situation that is making it hard for you to care for the foster child.
 - If the challenge is your foster child's behaviour, you could learn how to manage behaviours from experts and foster parents during the training sessions and the Foster Parents Support Group meetings and try them out at home. You could also contact the Foster Child Case Worker to have a clearer understanding of the foster child and to explore ways to manage the challenging behaviour.
 - If the challenge is your family or life situation that is making it hard for you to care for the foster child, discuss these challenges with your Foster Parents Support Worker who will try to assist/support you in reducing these challenges.
 - You could also try getting all family members involved to set up a plan to help mitigate the new challenges you face.
- 8.2.14 If you have done the above and still feel you should end the placement, contact your Foster Parents Support Worker and let him/her know your intention of terminating the foster care arrangement.
- 8.2.15 The Foster Care Agency will assess the situation by taking into consideration the well-being of your family and also the best interest of the foster child. If termination is found to be the best solution, the Foster Care Agency will make arrangements to find other options for the foster child accordingly.

Termination by the Foster Care Agency

- 8.2.16 If the Foster Care Agency finds that it is no longer in the best interest of the child to be placed with your family or to be placed in the Foster Care Programme, the Foster Care Agency will inform you of the intention to terminate the foster arrangement.

- 8.2.17 The Foster Parents Support Worker will explain the reason for the decision and you can clarify or discuss with him/her any issues or concerns that you may have.
- 8.2.18 You can make an appeal to the Foster Care Agency in writing if you do not agree with the termination. A committee will be formed to review your appeal in a fair and objective manner.
- 8.2.19 If the decision to terminate is upheld, the Foster Child Case Worker will make arrangements for the foster child to leave your care.

8.3 Responsibility

- Inform the Foster Child Case Worker if your foster child wants to leave foster care before the termination date set according to the placement goal.
- Inform the Foster Care Agency if you wish to terminate the foster care arrangement before the placement goal has been achieved.
- If necessary, assist the Foster Child Case Worker to help the child transition out of foster care.

8.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will assist in ensuring that the foster child has adequate skills and resources for independent living.
- The Foster Care Agency will find alternative placements for the foster child if the current foster care arrangement is not achieving the objectives of the care plan.
- The relevant embassies, UNHCR, and IOM will assist in the resettlement/repatriation process.

9. EXIT AND FOLLOW UP

9.1 Perspective

Although the child is no longer under your direct care once he/she leaves the Foster Care Programme, you can still continue to be his/her source for advice and guidance. Your experience of the foster care process will also be valuable input for the Foster Care Agency to evaluate their programme to provide the best support for foster parents and to improve in providing foster care for other children in the future.

9.2 Procedure

- 9.2.1 The Foster Child Case Worker will be present on the day the child leaves your care. You will be given a Discharge Form to sign, which signifies the end of your agreement with the Foster Care Agency (refer to Appendix D for the Foster Care Discharge Form).
- 9.2.2 You are encouraged to continue to keep in touch with your foster child after he/she has left your care.
- 9.2.3 The Quality Assurance Worker will conduct an exit interview with you and your spouse at an appointed time and date to record your experience in providing foster care for your foster child and to note down if there are any improvements that can be made by the Foster Care Agency to provide better support in the future.

9.3 Responsibility

- Sign the Foster Care Discharge Form.
- Keep in touch with your foster child to find out how he/she is doing and to provide encouragement to your foster child.
- Share about your fostering experience with the Foster Care Agency.

9.4 Support

- The Foster Parents Support Worker may be contacted if there is any issues arising after the child has left your care.

PART 2: A GUIDE ON KEY ISSUES IN A FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT

1. ACCIDENTS
2. ALLEGATIONS/COMPLAINTS
3. ARREST AND DETENTION
4. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT AND CORPORAL PUNISHMENT
5. BELONGINGS - PERSONAL PROPERTY OF THE CHILD
6. BOY-GIRL RELATIONSHIPS
7. BULLYING
8. CHANGES IN CIRCUMSTANCES
9. CHILD ABUSE AND OTHER FORMS OF VIOLENCE
10. CHILD MARRIAGES
11. CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES
12. CHORES AND DUTIES
13. CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

14. CULTURE AND RELIGION
15. EDUCATION
16. EMPLOYMENT
17. FIRE SAFETY
18. FOOD
19. HYGIENE AND SANITATION
20. INFECTIOUS DISEASES
21. LEISURE AND PLAY
22. MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS
23. MISSING FROM CARE
24. MONEY
25. PHYSICAL HEALTH CONCERNS - FIRST AID, INSURANCE AND DENTAL
26. SUBSTANCE ABUSE

1. ACCIDENTS

1.1 Perspective

While you should take precautions to ensure the safety of your foster child, accidents can still happen. You should not feel guilty when it happens as this is something beyond your control. However, you should know what to do if your foster child is injured. First, decide if the injury is serious or just a minor one.

An injury may be serious:

- when the wound does not stop bleeding even after applying pressure
- when you can see the bone
- if it is a head or eye injury
- when burns cover a large area, or there are blisters, or is white in colour, or multi-coloured
- if it is a stab wound
- if it is an animal bite
- if it is an injury with a metal piece
- if it is an injury which causes pain in the chest
- if there is confusion or change in the way the child normally behaves
- if your foster child is unable to walk/move
- if your foster child is unconscious.

1.2 Procedure

Serious Injuries

- 1.2.1 Immediately seek medical assistance from the emergency department of the nearest hospital or call for an ambulance if necessary (by dialling 999 from a public phone or 112 from a mobile phone).
- 1.2.2 If necessary, administer first aid to the foster child before sending the child to the hospital or while waiting for the ambulance to arrive. Basic First Aid training is part of the training given when preparing you to be a foster parent.
- 1.2.3 Inform the Foster Child Case Worker of the accident - how bad is the injury, how it happened, where the foster child is currently being treated, and the cost of the treatment.

- 1.2.4 The Foster Child Case Worker will promptly check with the Foster Care Agency supervisor to clear the charges for the medical intervention and will assist with follow up intervention if needed.
- 1.2.5 You should follow up on further medical attention if needed when the foster child is discharged from hospital.
- 1.2.6 If financial aid or any other assistance is required, the Foster Child Case Worker will also proceed to the hospital to assist the foster parents with payment or any issues with hospital procedures.
- 1.2.7 Assist the Foster Child Case Worker by filling up an Incident Report documenting how the accident occurred and what steps were taken.
- 1.2.8 You may have a discussion with the Foster Child Case Worker on how to prevent such accidents from happening in the future.

Minor Injuries

- 1.2.9 Treat the wound or injury with available items in a First Aid Kit.
- 1.2.10 If necessary, seek medical assistance from any Government Hospital outpatient clinic (if your foster child has a UNHCR card) or free community clinic (if your foster child has no UNHCR card). Inform the Foster Child Case Worker accordingly.
- 1.2.11 Monitor the foster child until the wound or injury is fully healed, adhering to any treatment plans provided by the doctor.
- 1.2.12 Inform the Foster Child Case Worker of any follow up appointments or medication that is required.

1.3 Responsibility

- Attend the First Aid training courses before the selection process.
- Seek medical assistance based on the seriousness of the injury.
- Inform the Foster Child Case Worker of the incident and follow up on medication and appointments, where necessary.

1.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will assist you in cases of medical emergency.
- The Foster Care Agency will provide financial assistance for the foster child's medical treatment.
- Medical treatment can be obtained from the Government Hospital, or free community or mobile clinics.

2. ALLEGATIONS/COMPLAINTS

2.1 Perspective

Your foster child may be unhappy about certain issues while staying with you but may be shy or hesitant to tell you about it. Instead he/she may choose to tell his/her Foster Child Case Worker. You should not feel angry or upset that the foster child has not trusted you enough but realise that building rapport with your foster child is an ongoing process. There are many reasons why foster children may complain about their foster family. It could be something in the family that reminds them of their traumatic experience in the past. They may misinterpret certain things that you or people in your household have said or done. It may also be their way of getting out of trouble by putting the blame on the foster parents. Or, it may be something serious that is happening at home, such as allegations of abuse. Please be assured that in any case, a fair and proper investigation will be conducted accordingly.

A foster child may also be unhappy with the Foster Child Case Worker or other persons in the child's life (such as teachers, community representatives, and interpreters). Your foster child may approach you to tell you why they are unhappy with these persons. It is important that you listen to your foster child and act accordingly.

2.2 Procedure

Complaints about you or your family

- 2.2.1 When your foster child complains or makes an allegation about you or your family, the Foster Child Case Worker will inform the Foster Care Agency. Depending on the situation, the Foster Care Agency will then inform you that an allegation or a complaint has been made by your foster child.

- 2.2.2 The Foster Care Agency will conduct an investigation of the allegations/complaint. The foster child and you/your family will be interviewed accordingly to gather enough relevant information.
- 2.2.3 Your foster child, you and your family's right to confidentiality will be respected. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis among the parties involved although sufficient advice and support will be given at the same time to handle the situation.
- 2.2.4 The Foster Parents Support Worker will continue to assist you and your family during the investigation.
- 2.2.5 The Foster Care Agency will inform you of the results of the investigation and advise you on what would be the best course of action to take.

Complaints about the Foster Child Case Worker or other persons in the child's life

- 2.2.6 If your foster child complains or makes any allegations about the Foster Child Case Worker, you should immediately inform your Foster Parents Support Worker who will then inform the Foster Care Agency.
- 2.2.7 The Foster Care Agency will conduct an investigation of the allegation/complaint and you and your foster child may be interviewed to gather more information. The foster child will be assigned a new Foster Child Case Worker during this time.
- 2.2.8 If your foster child complains or makes any allegations about any other person in the child's life, you should immediately inform the Foster Child Case Worker who will act accordingly. You and your foster child may be interviewed to gather more information about the allegation/ complaint.

2.3 Responsibility

- Provide relevant information to the Foster Care Agency during the investigation for the Agency to make a proper judgment.
- Contact your Foster Parents Support Worker if allegations are against the Foster Child Case Worker.
- Contact the Foster Child Case Worker if allegations are against other people in the foster child's life.

2.4 Support

- The Foster Parents Support Worker and the Foster Child Case Worker will advise you and your family on how to deal with the allegation/complaint.

3. ARREST AND DETENTION

3.1 Perspective

Just like any other refugee or asylum seeker in Malaysia, your foster child is constantly exposed to the risk of arrest and detention, especially when they are out in public areas. You should teach your foster child to be street- smart and to know how to respond accordingly to avoid arrest and detention. It is important to remain calm and gather as much information in situations when your foster child is arrested or detained by the authorities.

3.2 Procedure

- 3.2.1 If your foster child has been arrested or detained, inform the Foster Child Case Worker immediately. Let him/her know when, where, how, and by whom your child was arrested.
- 3.2.2 If your foster child has a UNHCR document, the Foster Child Case Worker will contact the UNHCR to intervene.
- 3.2.3 If foster your child does not have a UNHCR document, the Foster Child Case Worker will intervene on behalf of the child.
- 3.2.4 Once you have informed the Foster Child Case Worker, be assured that everything is being done to secure your foster child's release from detention.

3.3 Responsibility

- Make sure you have the Foster Child Case Worker's contact number and a working phone to make the call.
- Inform the Foster Child Case Worker immediately.

3.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will deal with the relevant authorities and contact UNHCR, if necessary.
- UNHCR will secure the release of children who are Persons of Concern to them.

4. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT AND CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

4.1 Perspective

No one is perfect. Everyone occasionally makes mistakes and will need to learn from these mistakes. As a foster parent, you are there to provide the foster child the guidance to help him/her make good decisions that is to his/her best interest. However, often times as children grow up and learn to assert themselves, they may disobey you and deliberately break the rules you have set for them. This may be the situation with your foster child.

You may be angry and upset but it is important that you remain firm, standing by your standards and rules. However, try to understand the reason why the child acted this way and try to help him/her make better choices the next time. The child has to understand that he/she has to be responsible for his/her own choices and be willing to accept the consequences of his/her own actions. Corporal punishment, which involves physically hitting the child in any manner, should be avoided in all circumstances. Screaming, shouting and threatening the child in any manner should also be avoided in all circumstances.

4.2 Procedure

- 4.2.1 If the foster child has broken a rule or has done something he/she should not, speak to the foster child to find out what led to his/her misbehaviour. Even if you think your foster child is lying, listen to the child's explanation before trying to disprove the things said.
- 4.2.2 If your foster child is displaying aggression or getting physical with you, it is important to not get into a confrontation with the child. Give your foster child the space and time to cool off if the child is emotionally charged. It would be also beneficial for you or others in the household to take some time as well to calm your emotions.

- 4.2.3 Once all parties have calmed down, reassure your foster child that you have heard his/her explanation and that you would like to resolve the matter calmly. Help your foster child understand the risk or danger he/she is putting him/herself or your family in by doing what he/she did.
- 4.2.4 Let your foster child know the consequences of his/her action and allow him/her to suggest how best to ensure that it does not happen again.
- 4.2.5 Try to manage your foster child's behaviour with the tools you have learnt from the training sessions. However, you may request for the Foster Child Case Worker to intervene if you feel the situation is beyond your knowledge and capability to deal with.

4.3 Responsibility

- Use your discretion as a mature and responsible adult to deal with your foster child and apply what you have learned during the training sessions and the Foster Parents Support Group meetings.
- Be flexible in your approach, keeping in mind that different children react differently to discipline. Your existing bond and relationship with your foster child can also guide you on how to manage your foster child's behaviour.

4.4 Support

- The Foster Care Agency will provide continuous training and organise Foster Parents Support Group meetings to build knowledge and skills in parenting and behaviour management of children.
- The Foster Child Case Worker can advise the foster parents on how to deal with the foster child's behaviour and to intervene directly if necessary.

5. BELONGINGS - PERSONAL PROPERTY OF THE CHILD

5.1 Perspective

It can be assumed that the foster child's belongings is an important part of his/her personal identity and gives a sense of worth and comfort as it holds memories of the past in his/her home country. You can help your foster child feel more at home by having a safe place for the child to keep his/her belongings. Nevertheless, you still have the right to decide what your foster child can place in your home, especially on things that may become a hazard to the family.

5.2 Procedure

- 5.2.1 Before your foster child arrives at your home, you will need to gauge what and how many things the child will be bringing along. If there are any items you do not want your foster child to bring into your home, let the child or the Foster Child Case Worker know. Depending on the availability of space in your home, you may advise your foster child on how many things can be brought and where those things can be kept.
- 5.2.2 On the day your foster child moves into your house, the Foster Child Case Worker will record all the child's belongings, including any cash your foster child may have. The foster child will acknowledge by signing on the list. This is so that there is a record of your foster child's belongings that can be referred to should something be reported missing.
- 5.2.3 As a foster parent, you and others in your household should ensure that you do not throw away any belongings of your foster child without first asking for permission.
- 5.2.4 When your foster child leaves the home at the end of the placement, the Foster Child Case Worker will once again take note of the things that the child has left with. Your foster child will acknowledge receipt by signing on the list. This is to avoid the situation where your foster child takes things from your home that belongs to you or your family. The list that your foster child will sign will exclude any things that you and/or your family have willingly given to your foster child.

5.3 Responsibility

- Provide space for the foster child to place his/her belongings and ensure that everyone at home respects the child's space and that the child's belongings are kept safe.
- Your foster child will be responsible for the safekeeping of his/her belongings, but the foster parents may assist if the child asks you to safely keep his/her belongings. This will be a private arrangement based on trust between you and your foster child.

5.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will advise you and your foster child on how to store the child's money or possessions, especially if it involves large amounts of cash or other valuable items.
- The Foster Child Case Worker will keep a record of the items your foster child brought with him/her and left with when leaving foster care.

6. BOY-GIRL RELATIONSHIPS

6.1 Perspective

As the foster child reaches puberty, it is natural for the child to develop feelings for another person. Within your community, there would be cultural and religious regulations and restrictions as to how a boy should interact with a girl. You will need to advise and guide your foster child in developing relationships, especially in the context of what it would mean for a refugee and asylum-seeker in Malaysia. It is important to keep in mind though that you are not his/her legal parents and therefore should be careful and sensitive when asserting your own will or thoughts on the matter. It is important to note that in Malaysia, national laws state that even with consent, sexual relations with a girl 16 years old and below will be considered rape, regardless of the age of the boy.

6.2 Procedure

- 6.2.1 If your foster child reveals to you that he/she is in a loving relationship with another person, listen to your foster child and find out more about the relationship and who the person is. Use your judgment to decide if the relationship is healthy or is detrimental to your foster child while considering both your foster child and the other person's age, level of maturity, and background.
- 6.2.2 Discuss with your foster child, his/her goals and expectations in this relationship and how this will affect the care plan.
- 6.2.3 Let your foster child know that in any case, you will need to inform his/her Foster Child Case Worker about the relationship and report any concerns you have on the nature of the relationship
- 6.2.4 Discuss with the Foster Child Case Worker how the relationship will affect the care plan and placement, and what action should be taken.

6.3 Responsibility

- Inform the Foster Child Case Worker about the relationship and how it affects the agreed care plan.

6.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will conduct interviews with the foster child and the other special person in the child's life to determine if the relationship is in the best interest of the child.

7. BULLYING

7.1 Perspective

The act of bullying can happen anywhere, including in your home, in school or at work. A bully is anyone who thinks they have greater power and uses strength to control, humiliate, or harm another person. Bullying can include physical harm, name calling, intimidating behaviour, emotional manipulation or any other behaviour that makes the child feel unsafe. Bullying can especially cause great harm to children. The bully usually will target the same person over and over again and unless some action is taken, the bullying will not cease. You may need to handle situations in which your foster child is the victim of a bully or your foster child is the bully.

7.2 Procedure

Your foster child is being bullied

- 7.2.1 If you suspect or find out that your foster child is being bullied, you should investigate and obtain details about who is involved, when the bullying started, how long it has been going on, how your foster child was bullied, and how he/she dealt with it each time.
- 7.2.2 Use your discretion and apply what you have learned in the training sessions or during the Foster Parents Support Group meetings on how to handle cases of bullying. If you feel your foster child is able to deal with the bully him/herself, empower him/her to manage it on his/her own.
- 7.2.3 If there is a need to confront the bully, you may need to approach the person in authority, such as the school principal, at the place where the bullying occurred, and who should then decide on how to deal with the bully and how to prevent the bullying from recurring.

- 7.2.4 If your foster child is being bullied by someone in your own family, you may need to confront the person about it. You should protect your foster child and be careful not to put him/her at the risk of retaliation by the bully. If necessary, you may request for the Foster Child Case Worker to intervene on your behalf.
- 7.2.5 If you feel that your foster child is traumatised by the incident and needs counselling, request the Foster Child Case Worker to arrange for sessions with a counsellor.

Your foster child is the bully

- 7.2.6 If you have discovered that your foster child has been bullying others, you should speak to your foster child and find out more about these incidences.
- 7.2.7 Try to understand what is the reason that your foster child is bullying someone else – what does he/she gain from bullying, and is it related to his/her own issues.
- 7.2.8 Use your discretion and apply what you have learnt in the training sessions or during the Foster Parents Support Group meetings on how to handle cases of bullying.
- 7.2.9 You may need to approach the victim and the family he/she belongs to so as to investigate and also encourage your foster child to make amends for the behaviour. If the bullying incident has happened in school, make necessary arrangements with the principal to discuss how to manage your foster child's behaviour in school.
- 7.2.10 If your foster child bullies other members in your family, you may need to decide if you are able to manage his/her behaviour on your own or if you will need the Foster Child Case Worker to intervene. Depending on the strength of your relationship with the foster child and how he/she perceives you, dealing with your foster child directly may make him/her think that you are supporting your own family members, and treating him/her as being less important than the others in your family.
- 7.2.11 If you think your foster child needs counselling to help him/her stop the behaviour, request the Foster Child Case Worker to arrange for sessions with a counsellor.

7.3 Responsibility

- Speak to your foster child to investigate about the bullying without making any judgment or accusation.
- Attend training sessions and the Foster Parents Support Group meetings to learn how to deal with bullying.
- Whether your foster child is the victim or the perpetrator, give him/her support to handle the situation or change his/her behaviour.

7.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will provide advice and intervene when necessary.
- The school principal or the person-in-charge of the place where the bullying occurs will assist with addressing the behaviour.
- A counsellor will provide counselling for your foster child.

8. CHANGES IN CIRCUMSTANCES

8.1 Perspective

While you may have been prepared to provide foster care until the termination of the placement, events may occur that cause you to rethink continuing care for your foster child. For example, you may receive news of your family, excluding the foster child, being resettled in another country; or your financial situation changes drastically and you no longer can manage to care for the foster child; or you are about to welcome a new child of your own into the family and lack the resources to also care for a foster child. It is unfortunate for the foster child, and you will probably feel disappointed in not being able to follow through with the care plan until completion. Gently break the news to your foster child in a way that will not make him/her feel as if you are abandoning or rejecting him/her.

8.2 Procedure

- 8.2.1 Before letting your foster child know that you are not able to look after him/her anymore, inform the Foster Parents Support Worker about your change in circumstances. Explain how recent events affect your ability to continue caring for your foster child.
- 8.2.2 Where possible, the Foster Parents Support Worker will try to mitigate the challenges you are currently facing and find ways to help you to continue providing foster care. If this is unsuccessful, the Foster Parents Support Worker will inform the Foster Care Agency, who will then look for alternative care arrangements for your foster child.
- 8.2.3 You and the Foster Child Case Worker should inform the foster child of the decision as soon as it is possible. Be sure to explain clearly to assure him/her that this is no fault of his/hers.
- 8.2.4 Support the Foster Child Case Worker in preparing your foster child to leave your home.

8.3 Responsibility

- Inform the Foster Parents Support Worker and the Foster Child Case Worker of your change in circumstances as soon as possible.
- Minimise abrupt changes for your foster child by allowing sufficient time before your foster child is moved to another foster home. While your foster child is still with you, give him/her enough attention to ensure that he/she does not feel ignored or neglected.

8.4 Support

- Where possible, the Foster Parents Support Worker should look for resources to enable your family to continue fostering the foster child.
- The Foster Care Agency will look for an alternative foster family for your foster child.
- The Foster Child Case Worker will assist you in informing the foster child.

9. CHILD ABUSE AND OTHER FORMS OF VIOLENCE

9.1 Perspective

As foster parents, you are to protect the foster child from all forms of abuse, neglect, and violence. Child abuse is a serious offence under Malaysian law. Anyone who has committed violence against children can be prosecuted regardless of their refugee status. Furthermore, witnessing any form of abuse or violence on another can have a very damaging effect on a child. Any form of child abuse, violence against children and/or corporal or physical punishment will not be tolerated, and the Foster Care Agency is required to report all forms of such violence to the relevant authorities.

9.2 Procedure

- 9.2.1 Any form of abuse must be reported to the Foster Child Case Worker, who in turn will report to the Foster Care Agency.
- 9.2.2 The Foster Care Agency will conduct an internal investigation first before deciding if the case warrants reporting to the relevant authorities.
- 9.2.3 Depending on the nature of the abuse, the Foster Child Case Worker may need to take the foster child for a medical check-up and treatment.
- 9.2.4 If the abuse happens in your house and it is no longer a safe place, the Foster Child Case Worker will have to remove the foster child to be placed in another temporary care arrangement.
- 9.2.5 If there is evidence of neglect leading to the foster child being abused or exposed to violence, the Foster Care Agency will recommend for the foster care arrangement to be terminated. Preparation for the exit process will be initiated accordingly.
- 9.2.6 The Foster Care Agency will report to the relevant authorities any persons who are suspected of abusing the child.

9.3 Responsibility

- Protect your foster child from abuse and violence.
- Report any incidence of abuse to the Foster Care Agency.

9.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker should report the abuse to the relevant authorities if there is evidence of abuse.
- The Hospital should assist with a medical examination and treatment, and referral to the medical social worker.
- The Police should receive the report of abuse and conduct an investigation.
- The Social Welfare Department should file the child's case report and provide necessary protection to the child.

10. CHILD MARRIAGES

10.1 Perspective

While child marriages are commonly practiced within your community, you should understand that not every child is physically or mentally prepared for it. Additionally, child marriages go against international laws, which states that the legal age of marriage is 18. As the child's foster parent, you will need to help the foster child understand the risk of getting married too early and protect him/her from any marriage attempt before he/she turns 18 years old. Furthermore, as your foster child is under our Foster Care Programme, any arrangements for marriage must first be discussed with the Foster Care Agency.

10.2 Procedure

- 10.2.1 Any request from individuals to marry your foster child must be rejected as long as the foster child is still under the Foster Care Programme. Inform the Foster Child Case Worker of all requests/proposals for marriage of your foster child.

- 10.2.2 To avoid any potential conflict of interest, while the foster child is in the Foster Care Programme, it is not allowed for that child to be arranged for marriage to the foster parent or anyone in the foster parent's household.

- 10.2.3 If the foster child expresses his/her intention of getting married, the Foster Child Case Worker will have to speak with the foster child to help the child understand the restriction placed on him/her under the Foster Care Programme and the risk he/she is putting him/herself in by choosing to get married early. Counselling will be provided for your foster child and for the person he/she intends to marry, highlighting the illegality of marrying a child. Options will be provided, such as maintaining a boy-girl relationship until your foster child attains the legal age of marriage.

- 10.2.4 If after exploring options and extensive counselling, your foster child still insists on getting married, your foster child will be allowed to exit the Foster Care Programme. After which, he/she is no longer bound by the rules and regulations of the Foster Care Agency and may choose to proceed with his/her own plans.

- 10.2.5 Preparation for exit will then be initiated.

10.3 Responsibility

- Reject any marriage proposal for the foster child.
- Inform the Foster Child Case Worker of any marriage proposals for the foster child.
- After attending continuous training sessions by the Foster Care Agency, you should be able to explain to your foster child the consequences of getting married early and the reasons why the programme cannot support the marriage of children.

10.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will help you in advising the child against early marriage.
- The Foster Child Case Worker will make arrangements for counselling for your foster child who insists on getting married.
- The Foster Child Case Worker will initiate the process for your foster child to leave foster care, if the foster child still insists on marriage after extensive counselling and advice.

- The Foster Care Agency will refer to any other agency, where possible, to assist the child after exiting the programme.
- The Foster Care Agency, where appropriate, should alert community leaders of the individual who made the marriage proposal, so that advice can be given about the risk of a child marriage.

11. CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

11.1 Perspective

Children with disabilities require special skills and facilities, depending on the nature of the disability. You should be prepared to spend extra time and effort to care for these children from the point you decide to foster a child with disabilities.

11.2 Procedure

- 11.2.1 Prior to the foster care placement, you will need to know the nature of the disabilities and if there is any need for additional facilities in your home.
- 11.2.2 You will then need to make the necessary adaptations to meet the needs of a disabled foster child in your home.
- 11.2.3 You may speak with your Foster Parents Support Worker if you need any additional assistance to ensure that your home is equipped to house a disabled child.
- 11.2.4 Speak to the Foster Child Case Worker for support related to your foster child's special needs including food, education, and follow up health checks where necessary.
- 11.2.5 Once the foster child comes under your care, ensure that there is necessary assistance for the child to move around or perform daily functions easily without putting him/herself in danger.

11.3 Responsibility

- Attend additional training sessions to learn how to handle a child with disability.
- Make necessary adaptations to your home.

11.4 Support

- The Foster Care Agency will provide assistance as and when necessary.

12. CHORES AND DUTIES

12.1 Perspective

Part of helping your foster child to develop includes giving the child responsibilities for him/her to carry out. This can be in the form of duties and chores that your foster child can do in the house. Having your foster child contribute to the household chores can also help your foster child feel like part of the family.

12.2 Procedure

- 12.2.1 During the orientation, you may discuss with your foster child the chores he/she is able to do. Depending on his/her ability, he/she may start with something simple and help out more later as he/she becomes familiar with your house and family.
- 12.2.2 If your foster child fails to do what has been assigned to him/her, find out what is stopping him/her from fulfilling his/her duties or doing his/her chores and try to help him/her overcome those constraints.

12.3 Responsibility

- Assign suitable duties or chores to your foster child.

12.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker to advise on chores that would be suitable for your foster child, and follow up during monthly checks when the foster child fails to comply with the assigned chores.

13. CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

13.1 Perspective

You may be faced with a situation where your foster child has been caught committing a crime. You should take such incidences seriously as the consequence of being involved in a crime can be very severe especially when the foster child is caught by the authorities. The minimum age that a child in Malaysia can be charged for a crime is 10 years old. You may need to advise your foster child or inform the Foster Child Case Worker to help protect your foster child from getting involved in any criminal or illegal activities.

13.2 Procedure

- 13.2.1 If you discover, or suspect that your foster child is involved in a criminal activity, find out from your foster child the nature and extent of his/her involvement. Then, inform the Foster Child Case Worker, who will then conduct an inquiry and decide on the next course of action for the foster child.
- 13.2.2 The Foster Child Case Worker may seek your support in continuing to advise or monitor the foster child's activities.
- 13.2.3 If your foster child has been caught by the police for a criminal act, you will need to inform the Foster Child Case Worker immediately. The Foster Child Case Worker will then deal with the relevant authorities directly.

13.3 Responsibility

- Inform the Foster Child Case Worker if you know or suspect your foster child to be involved in a criminal activity or if he/she is caught by the police for a crime.

13.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will handle the situation and decide on the next course of action.

14. CULTURE AND RELIGION

14.1 Perspective

Culture and religion may be very important to your family, especially in how it influences you in making decisions for you and your family. As your foster child is from the same culture and religious background, you and your family may already have some things in common with the child. Nevertheless, the foster child may not share the same specific beliefs and practices due to his/her own upbringing. Also, there may be some cultural and religious practices that go against the minimum standards of the Foster Care Programme. While you should guide your foster child in acquiring appropriate cultural values and religious knowledge, it would be best not to force your values and beliefs on your foster child.

14.2 Procedure

- 14.2.1 During orientation, you may explain to your foster child any cultural or religious rituals you practice at home. You may ask your foster child if he/she is familiar with those practices and if he/she is comfortable with participating in them.
- 14.2.2 If the child is willing, include him/her in those cultural or religious rituals along with the rest of your family. Otherwise, give your foster child time and space to become comfortable enough to want to be included.

14.2.3 If your foster child is unwilling to participate, find ways for him/her to practice his/her own cultural and religious rituals as long as it is safe and in their best interest to do so.

14.2.4 It is important to remember that the foster child placed in your care is currently under the Foster Care Programme. Cultural practices that may be common and acceptable to your culture but regarded as harmful by international standards must be avoided. Here are some examples of practices that are forbidden in our programme:

- Female genital mutilation
- Child marriages
- Selling of children for work or pleasure related purposes
- Corporal punishment

These, along with any other cultural practices deemed unsafe for your foster child, must be avoided. The Foster Care Case Worker will explain why these practices are not appropriate for your foster child.

14.3 Responsibility

- Include the foster child in your family's cultural and religious activities without imposing those activities on him/her.

14.4 Support

- The Rohingya community centre may have cultural or religious events the foster child could participate in.
- The Foster Care Agency will provide guidance on cultural and religious practices that should be avoided under the Foster Care Programme.

15. EDUCATION

15.1 Perspective

It is important for children to have a proper education. Irrespective of whether they are a boy or a girl, having an education empowers them to be less susceptible to being taken advantage of due to illiteracy and provides them with better job opportunities later on. It also enables them to educate their own children in the future. You should always encourage and support your foster child in getting any form of education, whenever possible, provided by relevant agencies.

15.2 Procedure

15.2.1 With the start of placement, the Foster Child Case Worker will arrange for the foster child to attend school, if possible.

15.2.2 If school is not an option due to financial issues, location, or the lack of facilities, the Foster Child Case Worker may source for private tutors to provide some form of education for the foster child, such as basic reading, writing, and simple arithmetic.

15.2.3 If your foster child is struggling academically, discuss this with the Foster Child Case Worker and look into the possibility of vocational education.

15.3 Responsibility

- Your role as a foster parent is to monitor the foster child's school attendance and to follow up on any report you may receive from the school.
- If the foster child is having home tutorials, you will need to prepare a place for the tutor to conduct the lessons.
- Provide feedback and updates to the Foster Child Case Worker on your foster child's academic performance.

15.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will source for a school or tutor for your foster child.
- Community Based Organizations, NGOs and other Institutions that offer education for refugee children will provide educational support.

16. EMPLOYMENT

16.1 Perspective

Your foster child may have a family in his/her home country who is financially dependent on them. They may need to work to be able to send money back. The Foster Child Case Worker and you as the foster parent will need to consider how work may affect the foster child, such as depriving them the opportunity to attend school, or having to combine school attendance with unreasonably long hours at work or extremely heavy labour. Under international and national laws, if the foster child is 15 years old and below, he/she should not be doing regular work and should be in school. Furthermore, working in Malaysia also puts your foster child at risk of arrest and detention by the authorities.

14– 15 years old	Light work	Work that is not harmful to health or development; does not affect schooling; no more than 14 hours a week.
16– 18 years old	Regular work	Health, safety and morals of child protected; not more than 7 hours a day.
Above 18 years old	Any work including hazardous work	Work any adult would undertake.

Taken from the International Labour Organization (ILO) Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Children and Young Persons (Employment) Act 1966 of Malaysia

16.2 Procedure

- 16.2.1 When the foster child enters placement, he/she may already have been working. If this is the case, you will need to discuss with the Foster Child Case Worker how to help the foster child find alternate ways to still be able to support his or her own family back home without the child having full time employment.
- 16.2.2 These alternate ways of supporting the family may include working weekends or doing part time work, especially if all other expenses in Malaysia for the foster child is covered by the Foster Care Agency.
- 16.2.3 If your foster child is in contact with his/her parents in the country of origin and faces pressure from them to work to send money, contact can then be made with the child's parents to advice them regarding the legal age of employment in Malaysia and the risk of arrest and detention when working.
- 16.2.4 If the foster child is not working but wishes to look for a job, you should discourage your foster child from working and suggest, together with the Foster Child Case Worker, some of the alternate ways as suggested above.

16.3 Responsibility

- Monitor the effect of foster child's work on his/her health and overall well-being.
- Work together with the Foster Child Case Worker and relevant agencies to support your foster child with an alternate plan to working full-time.

16.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will intervene if the foster child's work becomes too dangerous or overwhelming.
- Agencies that can help support the foster child so that he/she does not need to work to send money back to his/her family.

17. FIRE SAFETY

17.1 Perspective

For the safety of your entire household, you should ensure that your home is free from fire hazards and there is sufficient fire-fighting equipment in case of fire. All members of your household should know what to do in the event of a fire, such as having a working phone and knowing the number of the local fire department to call in case of an emergency.

17.2 Procedure

- 17.2.1 The Foster Parents Support Worker will assist you in conducting a fire risk assessment of your house and recommend necessary actions to take to reduce any risk.
- 17.2.2 If needed, the Foster Parents Support Worker will help source for fire extinguishers to be placed in strategic places in the home.
- 17.2.3 The Foster Parents Support Worker may conduct a fire drill to train everyone in the house on what to do in case of a fire.

17.3 Responsibility

- Conduct fire risk assessment with the help of the Foster Parents Support Worker.
- Store flammable items safely.
- Keep fire extinguishers in the house and make sure everyone knows how to use it.
- Have an evacuation plan and keep escape route free from obstructions.

17.4 Support

- The Foster Parents Support Worker will conduct fire risk assessment and assist in providing fire-fighting equipment.
- The Fire Department to assist in case of a fire emergency.

18. FOOD

18.1 Perspective

Food and water are the most basic needs that you must provide for your foster child. Your foster child needs a balanced diet and proper nutrition to develop normally. Food can also have social significance. Sharing food and eating together with your foster child can make him/her feel a part of the family. Food assistance from the Foster Care Agency will cater to your cultural needs and be enough for the child you are fostering. The food assistance is meant to supplement what you are already providing for your own family. The food provided can be shared with the rest of your family, similarly, you should share your food with your foster child.

18.2 Procedure

- 18.2.1 During orientation, the Foster Child Case Worker will discuss your meal arrangements with your foster child so that he/she knows the family routine and what is expected during meal times. This will include:
 - a) who prepares the food, who helps in the kitchen and how do they help
 - b) how the foster child can find food in the house
 - c) whether the foster child is able to cook on his/her own
 - d) family meal times
 - e) where in the home is the foster child allowed to eat
 - f) any other issues related to food availability, storage, preparation and use of kitchen appliances.
- 18.2.2 The Foster Child Case Worker will draw up a plan and confirm the type of food to be supplied and frequency of the supply.
- 18.2.3 As food and water is linked to the physical health and nutrition of your foster child, it is important that the food is prepared and stored safely and there is safe drinking water readily available for your foster child.

18.3 Responsibility

- Manage the food provision well so as to prevent wastage, e.g. having to throw away food that has turned bad.
- Your foster child should have the same food as the rest of the family and whenever possible, you should have your meals together as a family.
- Let your foster child know your family rules in terms of when, where, and how they can have access to food in the house.

18.4 Support

- The Foster Care Agency to assist in making sure your foster child has sufficient supply of food and water.

19. HYGIENE AND SANITATION

19.1 Perspective

It is important that you help your foster child look after him/herself in terms of personal hygiene and the cleanliness of his/her surrounding environment to avoid getting ill. If the foster child does not have a UNHCR card, access to health care services becomes more difficult. Even if the foster child does have a UNHCR card, seeking treatment can be quite expensive. Therefore, it is better to prevent the child from becoming ill by encouraging your foster child to practise good personal hygiene.

19.2 Procedure

- 19.2.1 You will need to monitor your foster child's hygiene practices, such as brushing of teeth, regular baths, washing of clothes, cleaning of room and other relevant practices. You will get a sense of your foster child's ability to keep clean by observing his/her appearance and how he/she maintains the living space.
- 19.2.2 If necessary, regarding personal hygiene, you will need to provide some guidance and instructions on what your foster child needs to do which is lacking.

19.2.3 Once in a while, you will need to check if your foster child has enough toiletries for daily personal needs, such as toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, laundry detergent, and sanitary pads for girls.

19.2.4 During orientation, you may inform your foster child how clothes are washed in your house and where to leave them to dry. You and your foster child may decide if he/she should be washing his/her own clothes.

19.3 Responsibility

- Check on your foster child to see if he/she is practicing good personal hygiene and keeping his/her room clean.
- Provide toiletries for your foster child.

19.4 Support

- The Foster Care Agency will assist in providing the means and material support for the foster child to maintain good hygiene.

20. INFECTIOUS DISEASES

20.1 Perspective

It is common for viruses and bacteria to be passed on easily with people in contact with one another and living in a close community. Diseases that are infectious must be contained and prevented from spreading to other household members.

20.2 Procedure

20.2.1 If anyone in the household is found to have an infectious disease, extra precaution must be taken to stop the spread of the disease. For diseases that are passed through bodily fluids, items used by the person must not be used by others in the family. For airborne diseases, face masks should be used. For blood borne diseases, open wounds must be cleaned and covered immediately.

20.2.2 If necessary, the Foster Care Agency can arrange for vaccination for the entire household for a particular disease.

20.2.3 The person with the infectious disease must seek treatment. The Foster Child Case Worker will be responsible to bring the foster child for treatment if he/she has an infectious disease. The Foster Parents Support Worker may assist a member of the foster family to seek treatment if the infectious disease puts the other members in the household at risk.

20.2.4 If a family member has a serious infectious disease and there is a high risk of the foster child being infected, the Foster Care Agency may request that the family member with the infectious disease be quarantined until the health issue is resolved. If the foster child has contacted the infectious disease, he/ she may be placed in temporary care until the health issue is resolved to avoid infecting other family members. Termination of the care arrangement will be used as a last resort if the medical issue affects the foster child's placement and if it is in the best interest of the foster child.

20.3 Responsibility

- Inform the Foster Child Case Worker if your foster child has an infectious disease.
- Inform the Foster Parents Support Worker if a member of your family has an infectious disease.
- Take necessary steps to prevent the disease from infecting others in the household. This includes seeking proper treatment or ensuring quarantine of the family member who has been infected.

20.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will seek treatment for your foster child.
- The Foster Parents Support Worker to assist your family member in seeking treatment.
- Hospital or community clinic will provide vaccination or treatment.
- The Foster Child Case Worker will monitor or intervene by placing your foster child in temporary care, if needed, or consider ending care placement as a measure of last resort.

21. LEISURE AND PLAY

21.1 Perspective

The concept of leisure and play may be strange to your foster child who may have already started working at a very young age. However, leisure and play are important aspects of your foster child's development. It will help your foster child heal from past trauma, and help the child settle into the present environment and form new relationships with you and your family. Leisure and playtime in your home allows the foster child to feel at ease and enjoy the presence of the other members of your household.

21.2 Procedure

- 21.2.1 Plan a time when all members of your household are able to get together just to do something fun and relaxing. Not only will this be helpful for your foster child, but it also helps your own family members to bond and it improves your relationship with one another.
- 21.2.2 Depending on the age of your foster child, you can arrange for your foster child to play sports with other people in the community, or have a family outing, or just spend time together at home over a special meal to celebrate an occasion.
- 21.2.3 You may want to check with your foster child on things that are of interest to him/her to decide what kind of leisure or fun activities you can carry out.

21.3 Responsibility

- Deliberately set time for the entire family to do something together.
- Find out from your foster child and also other members of your family what fun things they would like to do together.

21.4 Support

- Rohingya community centres may organise family or other events.
- The Foster Parents Support Worker and the Foster Child Case Worker may give some ideas on activities you can do together.
- The Foster Care Agency may also organise events for the foster families under the programme.

22. MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

22.1 Perspective

Children who have gone through extreme stress or traumatic experiences in life may try to cope in ways that are ineffective or harmful. They may react with unusual emotions or behave inappropriately. If your foster child's daily functioning is disruptive due to him/her displaying unusual emotions or behaviour, he/she may be suffering from a mental health issue. Caring for a foster child with mental issues can be confusing, frustrating and emotionally draining. You will need the help of mental health professionals such as psychiatrists, clinical psychologists and counsellors to assess and treat your foster child with emotional and/or behavioural problems. It is important for you to recognise the symptoms to know when your foster child may need such psychological intervention.

22.2 Procedure

22.2.1 Part of your training during the selection process will include recognising common symptoms of mental disorders and how to care for a foster child with mental health issues.

22.2.2 If you notice any of these signs in your foster child, he/she may need a mental health assessment and intervention:

- Behaviours that are out of control and dangerous
- Suddenly feeling very afraid and not being able to handle daily activities
- Suddenly feeling very anxious, scared, or quiet and not being able to handle daily activities
- Eating too much or not eating enough
- Sleeping too much or not sleeping enough
- Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than a few days

- Thinking about hurting his/herself and/or ending his/her life
- Having clear plans and/or actually hurting self or trying to end his/her life
- Any type of behaviour that hurts him/her, including scratching, cutting, or hitting
- Losing weight
- Seeing or hearing things that are not real or not there
- Sudden change in emotions or mood
- Low energy
- Cannot concentrate or remember things, poor performance in school
- Lack of interest to do things (for example, go to school, go out with friends, or join the family for meals)
- Waking up at night, after remembering things or having nightmares
- Complaining of physical problems, like body aches, tiredness and headaches, often when no obvious cause is found
- Taking drugs or alcohol.

22.2.3 Contact the Foster Child Case Worker and let him/her know how your foster child's behaviour is affecting the child and/or your family, how often you observe the behaviour, in what circumstances did the behaviour occur, and other details which may be helpful for the Foster Child Case Worker to make a referral.

22.2.4 The Foster Child Case Worker will then make arrangements for the foster child to see a mental health professional. The Foster Child Case Worker will accompany the foster child for the appointment, but if necessary, you and your family members may be required to attend certain sessions since you and your family will be closest to him/her and can be the most impactful in the treatment process.

22.2.5 If your foster child is suffering from a serious mental health issue with a high risk of self-harm and/or harming others, the Foster Child Case Worker will need to re-evaluate the placement if it is in the best interest of the child and within your capability to provide care. If the foster care arrangement is too risky for you, your family and/or the foster child, alternative care arrangements will be immediately initiated by Foster Child Case Worker.

22.2.6 If you feel that providing care for the foster child who is suffering from mental health issues is beyond your ability to do so, you can request for a termination of the placement. But, discuss with your Foster Parents Support Worker and the Foster Child Case Worker before reaching that decision.

22.3 Responsibility

- Attend foster care training sessions organised by the Foster Care Agency.
- Observe the child's behaviour for symptoms of mental health issues and inform the Foster Child Case Worker accordingly.
- Participate in your foster child's treatment process and assist with any follow up care (such as monitoring the child's medication) as required.

22.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will arrange and accompany the foster child for required mental health interventions.
- Counsellors or any other mental health professionals to assess and provide necessary intervention.

23. MISSING FROM CARE

23.1 Perspective

You may allow your foster child to go out on his/her own if you think it is safe for him/her. This will depend on the age, gender, possession of legal documents, the place where he/she is going to, and his/her level of maturity and sense of responsibility. Nevertheless, you need to ensure that the child does not stay out too late and put himself/herself at risk or in danger. As foster parents, you have the right to impose a curfew for your foster child and to be aware of his/her whereabouts. The Foster Care Agency may also impose a curfew for all foster children under their care. Your foster child must inform you where he/she is going, who he/she will be with, and what time he/she is supposed to be back. If the foster child does not return home at the appointed time or has gone missing, do not panic but know what you need to do.

23.2 Procedure

- 23.2.1 If your foster child does not return by the appointed time of the curfew, first try contacting him/her by phone. If your foster child has no phone, you may need to wait until midnight to see if he/she returns home. When he/she returns home, listen to your foster child's explanation and decide if it is a reasonable explanation. If it happens often, you should inform the Foster Child Case Worker about the child frequently missing the curfew.

- 23.2.2 If your foster child does not return home by midnight and you are not able to contact him/her, you should inform the Foster Child Case Worker immediately. The Foster Child Case Worker will be responsible in dealing with the situation.

23.3 Responsibility

- Set a reasonable curfew for your foster child if the Foster Care Agency has not already done so. The reasons for a curfew must be explained to your foster child, as well as stating the possible consequences for not maintaining the curfew.
- Your foster child should also be made to feel comfortable to contact you should they be running late.
- Monitor your foster child's whereabouts and ensure that he/she respects his/ her curfew.
- Inform the Foster Child Case Worker if your foster child goes missing or frequently breaks his/her curfew,

23.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will manage the situation where the foster child goes missing or when there is repeated breaking of the curfew imposed by you or the Foster Care Agency.

24. MONEY

24.1 Perspective

Your foster child may have money in his/her possession, especially if he/she is working. While your foster child should be responsible to keep and manage his/her own money, he/she should also have a safe place to store the money in your home.

24.2 Procedure

- 24.2.1 When the foster child is placed in your home, your foster child will need to declare all his/her belongings, including the amount of money he/she is keeping, to the Foster Child Case Worker.

24.2.2 If your foster child is working, he/she will manage his/her own money, including sending money back to the family. You do not need to be responsible for how your foster child spends the money earned. We do not encourage you to keep the child's money on his or her behalf. Contact the Foster Child Case Worker and discuss how to handle the child's money.

24.2.3 Your foster child may offer you some money out of gratitude or generosity, but it would be better for you to decline. Your foster child may buy things to share with the family, but should not be paying you for rental or anything that you do for him/her. As foster parents, you should not demand money from your foster child or make your foster child buy things for the home using his/her own money.

24.3 Responsibility

- Provide your foster child a safe place to store money.

24.4 Support

- If necessary, you may request the Foster Child Case Worker to provide you with a safe for your foster child to store valuables.

25. PHYSICAL HEALTH CONCERNS - FIRST AID, INSURANCE AND DENTAL

25.1 Perspective

Your foster child's physical health is related to food, personal hygiene, and environmental safety. In spite of taking the necessary precautions, your foster child may still become ill. You will need to discuss and clarify with the Foster Care Agency as to the kind of medical support the Agency will provide should your foster child fall sick or need medical treatment. The Foster Child Case Worker will be able to support and assist with such physical health concerns.

25.2 Procedure

- 25.2.1 As a foster parent, you will need to attend training organized by the Foster Care Agency on Basic First Aid, to treat your foster child when a medical issue arises.
- 25.2.2 Unless it is an emergency, you should check with the Foster Child Case Worker before sending the foster child to seek medical or dental treatment at a Government Hospital, private clinic or free clinic.
- 25.2.3 If the treatment requires an expensive procedure, you should get clearance from the Foster Care Agency before agreeing to it. In any case, the Foster Child Case Worker should be the one approving any medical or dental procedures to be carried out on the foster child.
- 25.2.4 You will also need to assist your foster child in obtaining REMEDI health insurance. The Foster Child Case Worker will assist you with this process.
- 25.2.5 Where necessary, you will need to assist the child in ensuring that they take their medication and go for any follow up treatment or appointments as required. You should inform the Foster Child Case Worker of such medication and follow up treatment so you can be supported through the process.

25.3 Responsibility

- You should be trained in administering First Aid and know when to seek further medical treatment for your foster child. You should also have a First Aid kit and make sure it is in good condition.
- Inform the Foster Child Case Worker before sending your foster child for any medical or dental treatment.

25.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will advice and approve obtaining medical treatment for the foster child.
- The Government Hospital, private clinic, free clinic, or dental clinic to provide treatment for physical health issues.

26. SUBSTANCE ABUSE

26.1 Perspective

Drugs are illegal in Malaysia and possession of drugs is a serious offence carrying the mandatory death sentence. Drug use can cause permanent damage to health. You and the Foster Child Case Worker should help your foster child understand the dangers and consequences of engaging in substance abuse. Children are not allowed to buy cigarettes and alcohol as it is against the law in Malaysia to do so.

26.2 Procedure

- 26.2.1 If you suspect your foster child is abusing drugs or other substance, you should inform the Foster Child Case Worker.
- 26.2.2 The Foster Child Case Worker will address the behaviour with your foster child directly. If it is found that your foster child is abusing drugs or other substance, the Foster Child Case Worker will decide on the appropriate action to take, such as the child attending counselling.
- 26.2.3 In the case of addiction, your foster child may need to be sent to a rehabilitation centre.
- 26.2.4 If the offence is serious, such as your foster child dealing or storing drugs in your house, you have the right to terminate the placement by informing your Foster Parents Support Worker.

26.3 Responsibility

- Inform the Foster Child Case Worker immediately if you suspect your foster child to be involved in substance abuse.

26.4 Support

- The Foster Child Case Worker will intervene and investigate.
- The substance abuse counsellor or therapist will provide counselling or psychotherapy for the foster child.
- The rehabilitation centre will assist if the foster child is addicted to drugs.
- The Foster Parents Support Worker will assist if termination of placement is needed.

GLOSSARY

Abuse	The act of causing harm to another. Forms of abuse can include physical, sexual, emotional, verbal and/or psychological violence imposed onto another. The World Health Organization defines child abuse and maltreatment as “all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.” <i>Also see Maltreatment; Neglect</i>
Adoption	Process of assuming the permanent care of and parental rights over a child from his/her biological parents. Under adoption, the responsibilities of the child’s birth parents are legally terminated and transferred to the adoptive parents.
Aging out	The process whereby a person reaches an age where he/she is no longer eligible to obtain specialized services usually related to care. Within a foster care arrangement in Malaysia, a child, upon turning 18, will age out of a foster care programme and move into independent living. <i>See independent living</i>
Asylum seeker	A person who is seeking protection and whose claim has yet to be assessed. <i>Also see Refugee</i>
Best interest of the child	A child rights principle taken from Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Article provides that all adults should do what is best for children. The principle guides decision making.
Biological parents	The birth parents of the child who share genetic similarities with the child.
Care plan	A written document that provides a list of goals that the foster child needs to achieve and actions on how all parties will help the foster child achieve these goals.
Care planning	The guided process to plan strategies to address a child’s safety, permanency and well-being needs.
Caregiver	A person who provides direct care to another. Also called a carer
Case Conference Committee	A team that gathers to decide on the admission of a child into the foster care programme. The team also decides on suggested interventions or goals related to the child that should to be achieved throughout the case cycle. Members of the Case Conference Committee should include the Foster Child Case Worker, the Case Supervisor, a community representative and an independent child rights advisor. Decisions by the Committee must be objective, fair and in consideration of the best interest of the child.

Case Management	A process of identifying and coordinating services to address the holistic needs of a person. Case Management processes include the screening, assessment, planning, care coordination, facilitation, monitoring and evaluation of a person’s risks, needs and related concerns. Case Management specifically related to children should look into the safety, permanency and well-being needs of a child.
Child Act 2001; Child Act (Amendment) 2016	The law in Malaysia that provides for the protection, care and rehabilitation of children residing in the country.
Child marriages	Formal or informal union of a person below the age of 18.
Child/Minor	A person below the age of 18 years old, unless if under the law in the country the legal age of adulthood for a child is younger.
Collateral contacts	A source of information that is knowledgeable about the persons situation and serves to support or corroborate information provided by that person.
Community Representative	A leader from a particular community that is identified as representing a significant segment of that community.
Community-based organisation (CBO)	A not-for-profit group that works from a society/community level and works to meet the needs of a particular community. Within the Malaysian context, CBOs are refugee community led and are typically differentiated based on ethnicity or nationality.
Corporal punishment	Physical punishment or punishment intended to cause pain. Examples of corporal punishment include smacking, slapping, hitting, or whipping. In recent times, corporal punishment has been extended to include any punishment that degrades, belittles or humiliates another.
Family reunification	The act of preserving a family unit. Family reunification is often needed when family members are separated within a migratory context. Within a foster care arrangement, reasonable efforts must be made to trace and reunite a foster child with his/her biological parents/guardian where appropriate and in the best interest of the child.
Formal foster care	Where the Court grants the State the right to take temporary custody of a child and to arrange for relevant foster care arrangements accordingly. The change of care and custody is legally authorized and regulated by the State or a foster care agency.
Foster care	Temporary care provided when a child’s parents, legal guardian or customary care provider is unable to care for the child. Foster care can take many forms – formal foster care as well as informal foster care.

Foster Care Agency	Organisations that recruit, select, and train foster parents to care for children requiring temporary care.
Foster Care Selection Committee	A team that is tasked with assessing information presented and deciding on whether potential foster parents are suitable to be selected as part of a pool of foster parents. Composition of the team is to be determined by the Foster Care Agency.
Foster Child Case Worker	The personnel of the Foster Care Agency that looks into the needs of the child.
Foster Parent	A person who is not a parent or a relative of the child to whom care and control of the child has been given by the relevant authorities to be cared for in a home or family environment.
Foster Parents Support Worker	The personnel of the Foster Care Agency that looks into supporting the foster parents throughout the fostering process.
Guardian	A person who has the right and responsibility of taking care of someone who cannot take care of himself or herself.
Home Study	A review of the foster parents, the foster home and family environment. The Home Study is completed by the Foster Parents Support Worker and will be used during the foster parents selection process.
Home visit	A visit to a person's home made by a case worker.
Independent living	The preparation for a child to achieve self sufficiency prior to or upon exiting the foster care programme. An independent living programme assists a foster child to develop the skills they need for adulthood.
Informal foster care	A private and temporary arrangement between a child's parents and another party which is usually a family member, a relative or family friend. The transfer is not overseen by the State or a family court and there is no change in legal responsibility of the child.
Intake interview	The initial meeting with either the foster parents or the child, during which the case manager asks relevant questions to gather information to identify the client's needs and risks.
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	An intergovernmental organization that provides services and advice concerning migration to governments and migrants. Within the Malaysian context, IOM assists with the resettlement process for refugees and the repatriation process for migrants.
Intervention	The action carried out to address a particular need or fulfil a particular goal.
Mahram; Non-Mahram	Kin with whom a person is forbidden to get married to at any time in his/her life and sexual intercourse would be considered incestuous. A foster child is considered a non-mahram unless he/she has been nursed by the foster mother from birth. Upon reaching puberty, the foster child cannot travel or be in seclusion with the foster parent of the opposite gender without the presence of the foster parent's mahram.

Maltreatment	All forms of abuse and neglect. Child maltreatment relates to all forms of abuse and neglect towards a child.
Matching Committee	A team formed by the Foster Care Agency to select a foster family that best fits the profile of the child. Composition of the Committee should, at the very least, include the Foster Child Case Worker, the Foster Parents Support Worker and an independent expert on child care.
Neglect	A form of abuse where a person's basic needs are not met. Child neglect will include a failure to provide for a child's safety needs, access to adequate healthcare, clothing and other material needs, emotional and social development needs, educational and housing needs.
Non-governmental organisation (NGO)	A not-for-profit organization that operates independently from the government and whose purpose is typically to address social or political concerns.
Quality Assurance Worker	A personnel of the Foster Care Agency that oversees case and programme evaluation under a foster care programme.
Refugee	A person who has been forced to flee his/her country because of persecution, war or violence. Such persons must have a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. As a result of this fear, such persons are also unable to obtain protection from the State authorities.
Repatriation	The return of a person to his/her own country.
Resettlement	The process of moving people, usually refugees, from an asylum country to another country that has agreed to accept them.
Risk assessment	A systematic process of assessing the potential and actual risks involved in view of reducing the harm that results from these risks.
Safety goals	Goals that ensure children in out of home care are safe from abuse, neglect, and maltreatment.
Screening process	Preliminary assessment to determine suitability of an applicant. Foster parents are screened mainly for safety requirements whilst a child is screened only for programme requirements. Screening allows for the right persons to be referred into the programme.
Separated minor/child	A person below the age of 18 who is separated from both parents/guardian or primary care giver but is in the country with other adult relatives.
Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV)	Any act - physical, emotional, psychological or sexual in nature - that is carried out against a person's will. The violence carried out is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships that can affect women, girls, men and boys.
Stability goals	Goals that look into reducing the number of disruptions in a child's life and to provide some form of stability that was lost through the migration process.

Support Groups	Groups of foster parents or potential foster parents coming together to share information and resources, offer support and tips for caring for a foster child. Support group meetings will be facilitated by the Foster Care Agency.
Trauma	A person's emotional and physical response to highly distressing experiences or events. Such events usually involve significant loss, emotional or physical harm or the threat thereof.
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a human rights treaty that sets out the civil, cultural, legal, health, political and social rights of children. Countries that have ratified the Convention are expected to advance the implementation of the Convention and the status of child rights in the country. Malaysia ratified the Convention in 1995.
Unaccompanied minor/child	A person below the age of 18 who is separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult who under law or custom has the responsibility to provide such care.
Undocumented persons	A person who does not have the appropriate documentation and/or legal right to reside in a country.
United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	The UN refugee agency mandated to protect refugees, asylum seekers, forcibly displaced persons and stateless persons.
Well-being goals	A holistic and broad way of describing how a person is doing. It is often related to the extent the basic rights of a person are being met. Child well-being goals will include goals related to physical and mental health, material needs, risk and safety, social support, education, housing, and child participation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cantwell, N.; Davidson, J.; Elsley, S.; Milligan, I.; Quinn, N. (2012). Moving Forward: Implementing the 'Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children'. UK: Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland. Retrieved from: https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/Moving_Forward_Implementing_the_Guidelines_English.pdf

Child Welfare League of America (2015), Children in Kinship Care Experience Improved Placement Stability, Higher Levels of Permanency, and Decreased Behavioral Problems: Findings from the Literature Grandfamilies.org. Retrieved from: <http://www.cwla.org/programs/kinship/>

Department for Education (2011), Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards, Standard 1-4,6-10,12,14,21-26 and 28. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/192705/NMS_Fostering_Services.pdf

Department for Education (2011), The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations: Fostering Services, Vol 4, Chapter on Children's wishes and feelings, p.19. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274220/Children_Act_1989_fostering_services.pdf

Department for Education (2011), The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations: Fostering Services Vol 4, Chapter on Identity and diversity, respect and individuality, p.21. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274220/Children_Act_1989_fostering_services.pdf

Department for Education (2011), The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations: Fostering Services Vol 4, Chapter on Behaviour management, discipline, control and restraint, p.29. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274220/Children_Act_1989_fostering_services.pdf

Department for Education (2011), The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations: Fostering Services Vol 4, Chapter on Positive Behaviour and taking risk, p.24. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274220/Children_Act_1989_fostering_services.pdf

Department for Education (2011), The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations: Fostering Services Vol 4, Chapter on Achieving healthy outcomes for looked after children, p.22. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274220/Children_Act_1989_fostering_services.pdf

Department for Education (2011), The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations: Fostering Services Vol 4, Chapter on Leisure activity, p.32. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274220/Children_Act_1989_fostering_services.pdf

Department for Education (2011), The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations: Fostering Services Vol 4, Chapter on Educational achievement, p.30. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274220/Children_Act_1989_fostering_services.pdf

Department for Education (2011), The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations: Fostering Services Vol 4, Chapter on Allegations, p.25. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274220/Children_Act_1989_fostering_services.pdf

Department for Education (2011), The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations: Fostering Services Vol 4, Chapter on Supporting foster carers, p.51. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274220/Children_Act_1989_fostering_services.pdf

Department for Education (2014), The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations: Planning transition to adulthood for care leavers, Vol 3. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/397649/CA1989_Transitions_guidance.pdf

Department for Education (November, 2017), Care of unaccompanied migrant children and child victims of modern slavery: Statutory guidance for local authorities, DFE-00298-2017. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/656429/UASC_Statutory_Guidance_2017.pdf

Department of Social Services, Australian Government (2018), Family and Assistance Guide: Formal & informal care of a FTB Child. Retrieved from: <http://guides.dss.gov.au/family-assistance-guide/2/1/1/85>

Essex County Council, Foster Carer Handbook – Adoption & Fostering in Essex. Retrieved from: <http://www.essexadoptionandfostering.co.uk/media/1299/fostering-handbook.pdf>

HM Government (2017), Working together to safeguard children, Appendix A: Glossary. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/592101/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children_20170213.pdf

Institute for Human Services for the Ohio Child Welfare Training Programme (2015), Family Interview Guide: A Guide for Foster Care and Adoption Assessors, 2nd Edition. Retrieved from: <http://www.ocwtp.net/PDFs/Trainee%20Resources/Assessor%20Resources/FAMILY%20INTERVIEW%20GUIDE.pdf>

Inter-Agency (January 2004), Inter-Agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children. Retrieved from: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4113abc14.html>

Interagency Working Group on Unaccompanied and Separated Children (2013) Alternative Care in Emergencies Toolkit, published by Save the Children on behalf of the Interagency Working Group on Unaccompanied and Separated Children. Retrieved from: https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/ace_toolkit_.pdf

International Labour Organization (ILO), Minimum Age Convention, C138, 26 June 1973, C138. Retrieved from: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/421216a34.html>

National Child Policy and Action Plan (Malaysia) (2008)

National Child Protection Policy and Action Plan (Malaysia) (2009)

Office of Programme Policy Analysis and Government Accountability an office of the Florida Legislature (November, 2004), Independent Living Minimum Standards Recommended for Children in Foster Care, Report No. 04-78. Retrieved from: <http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/reports/pdf/0478rpt.pdf>

Rochdale Borough Council (2017), Foster Carers Handbook: A guide for all foster carers. Retrieved from: <http://www.rochdale.gov.uk/pdf/2017-03-16-rochdale-foster-carer-handbook-2017-v3.pdf>

Save the Children (2007), Definition of Child Protection. Retrieved from: https://resource-centre.savethechildren.net/node/7586/pdf/sc_child_protection_definition_20071.pdf

The Child Act, Act 611, (Malaysia) (2011)

The Child Amendment Act, Act A1511, (Malaysia) (2016)

The United Nations, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 3 (2006). Retrieved from: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/Convention-RightsPersonsWithDisabilities.aspx>

The United Nations, Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Article 4 -5, 15-16, 18, 23-25, and 27-29. Retrieved from: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

The United Nations, Convention on the Rights of the Child: General Comment No. 6 (2005), Treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, Applicable Principles (e). Retrieved from: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/GC6.pdf>

The United Nations, Convention on the Rights of the Child: General Comment No. 6 (2005), Treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, VII. Family reunification, return and other forms of durable solutions. Retrieved from: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/GC6.pdf>

The United States Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Programme (2013), Guiding Principles and Promising Practices, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Retrieved from: <http://www.usccb.org/about/children-and-migration/unaccompanied-refugee-minor-programme/upload/united-states-unaccompanied-refugee-minor-programme-guiding-principles-and-promising-practices.pdf>

UN General Assembly (24 February 2010), Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children: resolution/ adopted by the General Assembly, A/RES/64/142. Available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4c3acd162.html>

UN Human Rights Committee (HRC) (29 March 2000), CCPR General Comment No. 28: Article 3 (The Equality of Rights Between Men and Women), Article 15, CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.10, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/45139c9b4.html>

UNHCR, Refugee Children: Guidelines on Protection and Care. Retrieved from: <http://www.unhcr.org/3b84c6c67.pdf>

UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean, Regional Minimum Standards for Alternative Care Services for Children. Retrieved from: https://www.unicef.org/easterncaribbean/ECAO_Regional_Minimum_Standards_for_Alternative_Care_Services_for_Children.pdf

West Sussex County Council (April 2015), Foster Care Handbook. Retrieved from: https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/4741/foster_care_handbook.pdf

Wiltshire Council (October, 2017), Foster Carer Handbook. Retrieved from: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/fostering-support-and-training-for-carers>

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: FOSTER PARENTS APPLICATION FORM

Name of applicant (Father)	
Age	
Legal status	<input type="checkbox"/> Refugee <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum Seeker <input type="checkbox"/> Undocumented
UNHCR Card No.; Community Card No	
Contact no.	
Ethnicity	
Religion	
Employment status	<input type="checkbox"/> Employed <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Employed <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/> Homemaker
Place of work (if applicable)	
Type of work (if applicable)	
Average monthly income	
Languages spoken	
Years in Malaysia	

Name of applicant (Mother)	
Age	
Legal status	<input type="checkbox"/> Refugee <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum Seeker <input type="checkbox"/> Undocumented
UNHCR Card No.; Community Card No	
Contact no.	
Ethnicity	
Religion	
Employment status	<input type="checkbox"/> Employed <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Employed <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/> Homemaker

Place of work (if applicable)	
Type of work (if applicable)	
Average monthly income	
Languages spoken	
Years in Malaysia	

Household Members (Please include every person living in the home.)

No.	Name	Age	Relationship	Legal Status	Employment Status*

* Employed/Self-Employed/Unemployed/Homemaker

House Details

Current address	
Type of house	
No.of years in the house	
Type of tenure	<input type="checkbox"/> Main tenant <input type="checkbox"/> Subtenant <input type="checkbox"/> Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Rent free
Rental per month (if applicable)	
No. of bedrooms	
No. of bathrooms/toilets	
Kitchen facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Health Status

Do you or any person in your household suffer from any known physical or mental illness?

(Yes/No) If yes, please indicate in the table below:

No.	Name	Type of Illness	Duration (Years)	Treatment

Criminal Record Check

Have you or your spouse been investigated for a crime in any country?

(Yes/No) If yes, provide details: _____

Have any members of your household been convicted or charged for a crime in any country?

(Yes/No/Not sure) If yes, provide details: _____

Have you or your spouse been accused or investigated for any violence against a child (abuse, neglect, maltreatment, exploitation)?

(Yes/No) If yes, provide details: _____

Have any members of your household been accused or investigated for any violence against a child (abuse, neglect, maltreatment, exploitation)?

(Yes/No/Not sure) If yes, provide details: _____

Motivation

Please tell us why you would like to foster a child.

References

Please list two referees who know you well enough to be able to recommend you for the programme. The referee must not be a family relation.

Contact information 1

Name	
Address	
Phone no.	
E-mail	
Occupation	
Organization affiliated with	

Contact information 2

Name	
Address	
Phone no.	
E-mail	
Occupation	
Organization affiliated with	

Declaration

1. I/We declare that the information given in this application is accurate and true to the best of my/our knowledge.
2. I/We understand that any incorrect or false information provided may disqualify this application from being considered.
3. I/We understand that information provided in this form will be kept confidential by the Foster Care Agency. However, I/we understand that the Foster Care Agency is unable to ensure confidentiality of information shared with the community representative that has assisted in the completion of this application.
4. I/We consent to the Foster Care Agency carrying out background checks and any other checks deemed necessary, based on the information provided in this application form.
5. I/We consent to the Foster Care Agency contacting the references named on this application form.

.....
Signature of Applicant 1:

Date:

.....
Signature of Applicant 2:

Date:

Did you have assistance filling in this form:

(Yes/No) If yes, please provide following details:

Name:

Signature:

Contact no.:

Date:

For Office Use

Date received:

Received by:

Name of assigned Foster Parents Support Worker:

APPENDIX B: BASIC SCREENING CRITERIA FOR FOSTER PARENTS IN THE PROGRAMME

1. At least one of the parents must be a Rohingya
2. At least one of the parents must be registered with UNHCR
3. Both parents must agree to foster the child
4. Both parents must be above the age of 21 years
5. Parents must complete and submit the application form
6. Applicants must be recommended by a minimum of two referees
7. Parents should already have an income to partly support the foster child
8. Both parents and others in the household must declare any physical/mental health illness, particularly if they have any known communicable disease
9. The foster parents or any of the other family members should not have any criminal conviction, pending criminal charges, or current investigations related to violence against children
10. The foster parents must be of good character and reputation
11. The home to place the child must have adequate space and basic facilities

ADDITIONAL FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR SELECTION OF FOSTER PARENTS

A list of additional factors for becoming Foster Parents in terms of Personal Characteristics and Attitude that is to be identified during Intake, developed during Training, and assessed during Selection. These factors will be assessed on the ability of foster parents to demonstrate the needed personal characteristics and attitude to the foster child.

1. They must demonstrate motivation and have good reasons for wanting to foster a child.
2. They must demonstrate the ability to support the goals of safety, permanency, and well-being for children.
3. They must demonstrate maturity in terms of meeting the child's best interest.
4. They should demonstrate the ability to deal with challenges or stressors by the willingness to engage with people who can assist with these challenges/stressors.
5. They should demonstrate adequate parenting skills and abilities to provide the necessary nurturing, discipline, and guidance appropriate to the age and functioning abilities of the child.
6. They should have a reasonably positive and harmonious family environment.
7. They must be willing to attend foster care trainings and support group meetings organised by the Foster Care Agency.
8. They must be willing to work together with the Foster Parents Support Worker, the Foster Child Case Worker, other Foster Care Agency personnel, partner agencies, and be open to receiving feedback and guidance when appropriate and necessary.
9. They must be willing to work towards meeting the standards and procedures in the Manual and Handbook.
10. They should have supportive community ties with friends and neighbours, at least within the Rohingya community.

APPENDIX C: FOSTER PARENTS AGREEMENT FORM

This Foster Parents Agreement is to be negotiated between the Foster Care Agency and the Foster Parents prior to the initial placement and whenever there are changes in the terms and conditions of the placement after subsequent reviews.

Foster Child Placement Agreement between:

The 'Foster Care Agency' AND The 'Foster Parents'

Name of Representative:

.....
Designation:
ID. No.:
Type of ID:

Name of Foster Parent 1:

.....
ID. No.:
Type of ID:

Name of Foster Parent 2:

.....
ID. No.:
Type of ID:

We, the Foster Parents (as per the above named parties) agree to foster and provide temporary placement for the following child at the agreed on timeframe determined by all parties:

Name of Child:

Case Referral No.:

Placement period: From _____ to _____

This Agreement is effective from _____ and will be in force until the end of the agreed on placement period or until a new Agreement is signed.

General conditions of this Agreement

1. Foster care is a temporary arrangement between the Foster Care Agency and the Foster Parents to provide a safe and nurturing home environment for the Foster Child.
2. This Agreement does not provide any legal relationship or interest between the Foster Parents and the Foster Child.
3. This Agreement is not an employment contract. The Foster Care Agency is not employing the Foster Parents to care for the Foster Child although it may assist them by providing resources for the purpose.
4. This Agreement is the entire agreement between the Foster Care Agency and the Foster Parents concerning the placement of the Foster Child. It supersedes all previous verbal or written agreements, promises, or statements. This Agreement can only be amended by writing a new Agreement, which must then be signed by the Foster Care Agency Representative and both the Foster Parents.

The Foster Care Agency agrees to:

1. Provide the following resources:
 - a. Rental : _____
 - b. Food : _____
 - c. Clothing : _____
 - d. Transportation : _____
 - e. Hygiene items : _____
 - f. School items : _____
 - g. Others : _____
2. Adhere to the standards prescribed by the Manual for Foster Care for UASC.
3. Guide and brief the Foster Parents and the Foster Child throughout the foster care process, and provide regular updates as and when necessary.
4. Develop a care plan for the child and work together with the Foster Parents to achieve the placement goals.
5. Allow the Foster Parents to directly contact the Foster Child Case Worker in case of an emergency.
6. Conduct a home visit at least once a month to maintain contact with the Foster Parents and the Foster Child.
7. Keep the Foster Parents informed on the child's school progress, refugee status determination, medical treatment, and other issues that may help the Foster Parents provide better care and protection for the child.

8. Assist the Foster Parents with getting medical or mental health treatment for the child when necessary.
9. Provide the Foster Parents with continuous training and support services.
10. Attend to the Foster Parents' needs and grievances related to foster care throughout the placement period.
11. Monitor and supervise all Foster Care Agency personnel to ensure the fulfilling of agency processes and ethical standards.
12. Give the Foster Parents at least _____ days of prior notice before terminating the foster care arrangement.

The Foster Parents agree to:

1. Accept the child for foster care placement and to provide care for the child in terms of food, housing, clothing, personal care items, recreation, and any additional needs based on the care plan, and in the best interest of the child.
2. Provide care for the child based on the Manual for Foster Care for UASC and the Handbook for Foster Parents.
3. Report or provide an update of the child to the Foster Child Case Worker as required.
4. Allow the Foster Child Case Worker to inspect your home during Home Visits.
5. Inform the Foster Parents Support Worker whenever there are changes in the family circumstances that may affect the foster care arrangement.
6. Consult the Foster Child Case Worker before making life changing decisions for the child.
7. Attend continuous training sessions and the Foster Parents Support Group meetings to increase knowledge and skills to care for the child.
8. Assist the Foster Child Case Worker in the implementation of child's care plan to meet the holistic needs of the child.
9. Keep the confidentiality of information about the child and to refer to the Foster Child Case Worker before disclosing any information required. No information about the child should be disclosed to unauthorised persons.
10. Give at least _____ days of written notice, except in an emergency, to request the Foster Care Agency to terminate the foster care arrangement.

I/We have read the terms and conditions above and agree to meet these requirements. I/We understand that this Agreement shall remain in force until amended by all parties signing a new Agreement or the end of the foster care placement.

Signing this Agreement signifies that the Foster Care Agency agrees to temporarily place this child in this home with this foster family and that the Foster Parents agree to provide care and protection for this child during the placement period.

.....
Name of Foster Care Agency Representative:
Date:

.....
Name of Foster Parent 1:

Date:

.....
Name of Foster Parent 2:

Date:

List of personal belongings and items (for cash, note down the amount and for medications, state the type and amount of medicine) with the child on admission into the foster care home:

No.	Item Description	Amount/Quantity
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

.....
Name of Foster Child:
Date:

.....
Name of Foster Child Case Worker:

Date:

.....
Name of Foster Parent Representative:

Date:

APPENDIX D: FOSTER CARE DISCHARGE FORM

Name of Foster Child Case Worker	
Name of Child	
Case Referral No.	
Name of Foster Parent 1	
Name of Foster Parent 2	
Address	
Contact No.	
Child's contact information	
Child's new address	
Date admitted into programme	
Date of discharge	
Length of stay in programme	
Age at discharge	

Reason(s) for discharge:

- Aged out - turned 18 years old
- Resettled
- Returned to home country
- Family reunification
- Voluntary exit
- Foster Care Agency termination
- Others _____

Living arrangements on discharge:

- To be reunited with parent(s)
- To live with other refugee youths or community members
- To live on his/her own
- To continue to live with foster parents
- Resettled in another country
- Back to home country
- Other arrangements: _____

Employment Status: Unemployed Employed

List of personal belongings and items (for cash, note down the amount and for medications, state the type and amount of medicine) removed by the child on discharge from the foster care placement. This list is to be matched with the list of belongings on admission:

No.	Item with Description	Amount/Quantity
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

I/We understand that this form marks the end of the Foster Child Placement Agreement between the Foster Care Agency and the Foster Parents to place the above named Foster Child under the care of the above named Foster Parents.

Signing this form releases the Foster Parents from the previous Agreement dated _____ and the Foster Child is formally discharged from the foster care placement. While roles and responsibilities under this foster care placement clearly end following the signing of this form, we recommend that the Foster Parents and the Foster Child continue to engage and maintain a relationship.

.....
Name of Foster Care Agency Representative:

.....
Name of Foster Child:

Date:

Date:

.....
Name of Foster Parent 1:

.....
Name of Foster Parent 2:

Date:

Date:

This Handbook was written and designed by Persatuan Kebajikan Suara Kanak-Kanak Malaysia (SUKA Society) in close collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Malaysia Office.

This publication was developed within the “Global Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Programme to Prevent Detention of Children and to Protect Children and Other Asylum-Seekers in Detention” project funded by the European Union. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union.

This Handbook may be freely downloaded, reviewed, quoted, reproduced or translated, in full or in part for non-commercial purposes only, particularly in application to ongoing work related to foster care and case management. Use for non-commercial purposes is subject to the material being; accompanied by a sufficient acknowledgement, reproduced accurately, and not being used in a misleading context.

The material contained in this Handbook has been prepared to serve as a guide to develop and enhance safe foster care arrangements of UASC within the Rohingya community. While SUKA Society and UNHCR Malaysia do not represent or warrant that the contents of this Handbook is entirely suitable for your specific needs, you may adapt the information and processes to suit your purposes and tailor it according to your available resources. You should also assess whether the information is accurate, relevant or complete for you, and where necessary, seek independent professional advice accordingly. SUKA Society and UNHCR Malaysia reserve the right to amend or withdraw material in this Handbook at any time without prior notice. For further information, please write to uasc@sukasociety.org.

First published: April 2018



