



Fosterline Confidentiality Policy

Policy Statement

This policy is designed to clarify when and how information can be shared by Fosterline, including Fosterline Advisors, in the course of their work with users of the Fosterline Helpline and Website. It has been developed in line with the Helplines Association Standards and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Fosterline is bound by the Data Protection Act 1998 which implements the EU Data Protection Directive. This protects personal data and places restrictions on the sharing of personal data within the UK and overseas. Personal data is defined as "information relating to an individual by which they can be identified" e.g. name, address, postcode, telephone number, email address etc.

Fosterline Advisors will often be entrusted with confidential information by an individual using Fosterline's services, such as information about situations in which they may find themselves, or information about children they are looking after.

Fosterline staff have a duty under the Data Protection Act 1998 and this Confidentiality Policy, to protect the confidentiality of all personal information, to process that information fairly, and not to disclose any such personal information without the person's consent.

Data Protection Act 1998

The Data Protection Act regulates when and how a person's personal data may be obtained, held, used, disclosed and generally processed. It applies to computerised processing of data and to certain paper based files and records, regardless of whether this information has been provided verbally or electronically e.g. by email

To comply with the law, information must be collected and used fairly, stored securely and not disclosed to any other person unlawfully.

Further information is contained in the FosterTalk Data Protection Policy and Procedure.

Confidentiality and Fosterline

Fosterline Advisors and Staff are bound by this confidentiality policy.

The following general statement about confidentiality will be heard by callers accessing the Fosterline Helpline and they will be reminded during the course of the call:

“The information that you give me will be dealt with confidentially and not shared with any third party without your consent unless you share information about a child or other person who may be at risk”

Breaking Confidentiality

Confidentiality may only be broken in the following circumstances:

1. To Protect Others, e.g.
 - Where this serious risk of harm to the individual as in the case of threatened suicide
 - Where there is a risk to a child, or if the caller discloses another safeguarding issue.
2. To prevent a serious criminal act, e.g. an Act of Terrorism (Prevention of Terrorism Act 1989, makes it an offence to fail to pass on information to the police which may help to prevent terrorism or apprehend a terrorist))

If a Fosterline Advisor feels that they need to break confidentiality then the Fosterline Manager **MUST** be consulted before disclosure is made.

Wherever possible the subject will be informed that information shared by them in confidence is going to be passed on the relevant statutory body and attempts made to persuade them to share this information themselves.

The Fosterline Manager will be responsible for making the final decision and ensuring that the correct action is taken.

Publication of this Policy

This Policy will be published on the Fosterline Website and Helpline users will be provided with a copy of the Policy on request.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with:

Data Protection Policy & Procedure
Safeguarding Policy and Procedure