**Dear friend and colleague,**

I wanted to send you a personal message and to reassure you that despite many of us working from home and the additional pressures of school closures from Friday that you are not alone throughout this global crisis. Self-isolation and social distancing are previously unheard of terms but no doubt will be the buzz words for 2020.

However despite the requirements to distance ourselves from other members of the community this doesn’t mean we have to be home alone. This is a time to rely on our support and bring us closer and into the fostering home virtually.

As you will be aware my wife and I are also foster parents and understand the additional expectations placed upon us at this time. I’m sure many of you will be asked about additional children and young people coming into your home and the capacity for you to stretch even further to provide what you can.

School closures will mean that not only will families already under pressure have those issues escalated but within the role we perform as foster parents, having our birth children at home creates greater demand on our time.

We will expect to see more statutory visits conducted virtually by telephone and some cases via skype and facetime, with the increased pressure on fostering services we may see that the time between contact for you and your social workers increase.

I want to reassure you that the FosterTalk Team are here for you. Linda and Kate are waiting to help with any membership enquiries and are happy to direct you to our support departments. You can contact Lesley and Ed direct if you have any concerns around allegations or standards of care, Sharon and her team of advisors including Kam, Shelley, Phil and our professional advisor Jackie are waiting to discuss any fostering enquiries you may have, but also and equally as important we have additional members of the team such as Sarah and Nichola who are happy to just talk to you if you are feeling isolated, it doesn’t need to be fostering related.

 These are definitely unprecedented times and there are lots of messages being circulated but the main one we want to express is that You Are Not Alone you are vital now more than ever and you will face situations that were unexpected when you became a foster parent but you are resilient, strong and resourceful (that’s why you are a foster parent). We are here to provide support and guidance, check out our links to education and latest information on our website, which will be regularly updated, and if you wish to share your thoughts and good practice then we have the platform for you.

I wish you all well and stay safe.

You are performing a vital and amazing role for our vulnerable children and young people.

Thank you

Steve Stockley

FosterTalk Managing Director

**Stay safe and take care**

**We are here to support you.**

[**https://www.fostertalk.org/**](https://www.pengower.net/FTMailshot/pageSwap.aspx?ref=0Nd2PnkPz0AAj2Plhnz0PkkkB86C5wqn&pge=https%3a%2f%2fl.facebook.com%2fl.php%3fu%3dhttps%253A%252F%252Fwww.fostertalk.org%252F%253Ffbclid%253DIwAR3nCF6fnKWghq03ZiMAGU311K-bAVmUg7nHaq_3ACAjF3TrHvkC3GPSsYA%26h%3dAT3ZF-hQE3ZCf0iXsfNvdGnGdhpMdM8zwuUvI3MTKH4d1T53CzI2F2fSd6IjmIulyqCBVCtdyxEfEHq7uEzrbSXQHO9TY5z4GLWjhNtGQPsj9GEEL0R7yHSl3NHaQCd-6tqlhfGLm1aisBZ1SDrDoKWHeKYtBxdIej-QmwtksjWuWY_g3MCx8a0Ig5ZBKL6uMOUOyvl93UHpgbafgDYqZA87SgZkZ_Tw3n4LGXWIt1znXCHB3ElTeeoyOC3ibFd9m1f68g9MFipxWJeVGRgROpEuR5tOvP3ZCdqn5vfnyqNUutlHT8F4mXa1rz6VEjyNgD6zeDmYhDeO6-T0_yNKKiDQYszceF312laxVE6ovCg5aLSu3xw1raz6249hhbKFKes24FN6Jo0v1F4SwiPWUIVth_i-dcL7lsw7k6Dptug3l3Xtpk2Q9gozLd_yHqmgDAmsEPfvJmRJHWdHy8zh0YKVTmcm_QqhWpQhSBezbcUhyFeBdSCA-a3DZ5Xmc-7WqgsXyBQs2_QnzA1OM4s1PH3VbrUD35reH1KpzeXrz04B4vvNTfmAc0K13j59m_Kuo34PMqH0mRFlOh_Y6PYcj8362riFMNtTXxe0L5EF2sNtwU9IS0hWBGC2tBohdhUeRFo)

To inquire, call us on **0121 758 5013** or email [**enquiries@fostertalk.org**](https://www.pengower.net/FTMailshot/pageSwap.aspx?ref=0Nd2PnkPz0AAj2Plhnz0PkkkB86C5wqn&pge=mailto%3atraining%40fostertalk.org)