

# MOAT: Mental Health

A photograph of a stone castle on a hillside at dusk, with its lights reflecting in a body of water. A stone bridge with arches is visible in the foreground.

National Foster Carers' Conference

# Foster Carers and Foster Kids

Foster families take a chance when fostering kids

Foster kids take a chance when being fostered

Child Protection takes a chance every day

It's good to "Take a chance"

What's missing from this kid's life?

- Safety
- Love
- Nurturing
- Belonging
- Care
- Support
- Connection

How is she likely to present?

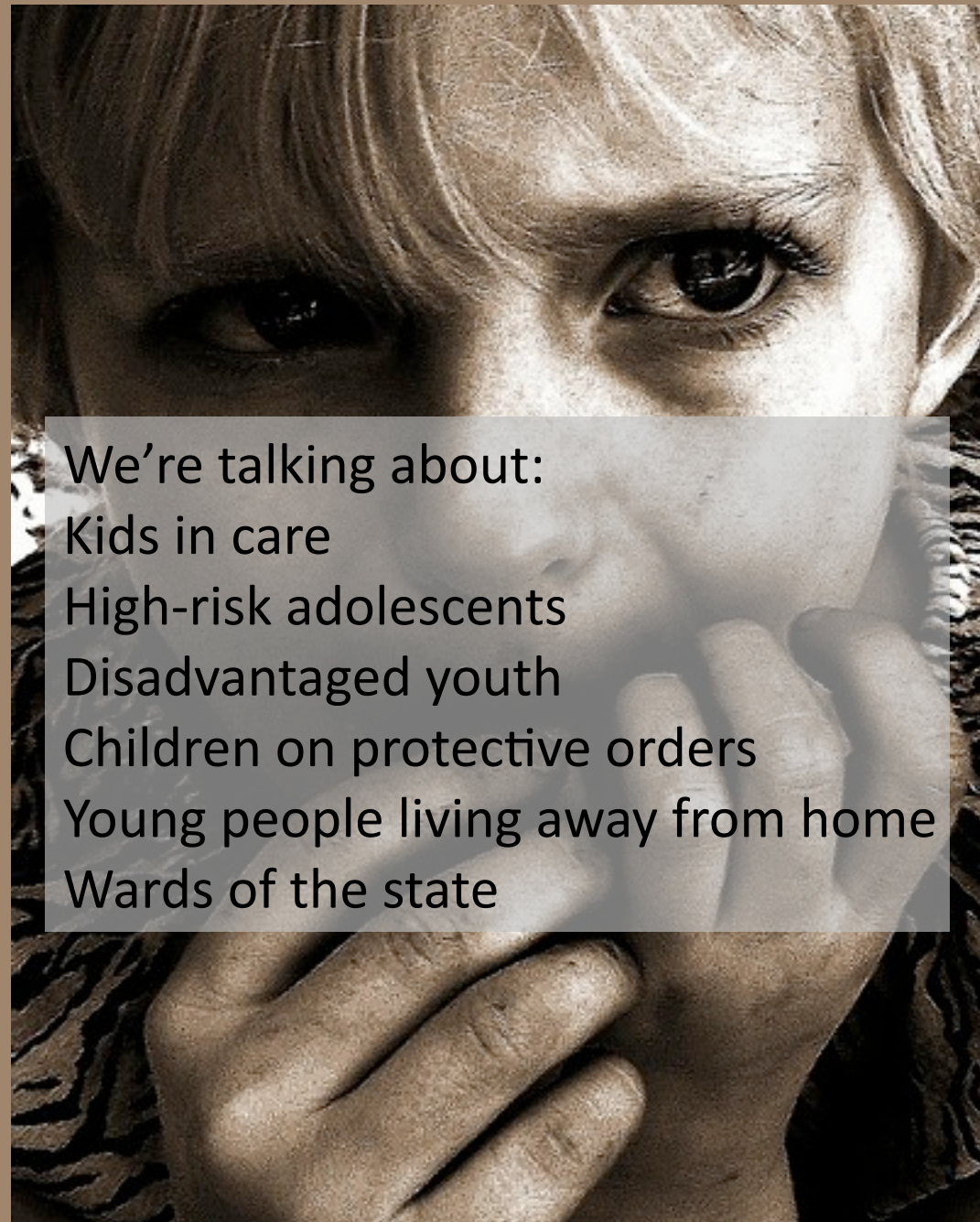
- Scared
- Emotionless
- Angry
- Alone

What does she need?

- All that's missing

What's the best Accom model for HER?

- A group of traumatised kids
- A loving home



We're talking about:

Kids in care

High-risk adolescents

Disadvantaged youth

Children on protective orders

Young people living away from home

Wards of the state

# Kids in Care



We need to provide them with all those things they've missed out on

# Single-parent family unit



# Traditional family unit



# Kids in Care

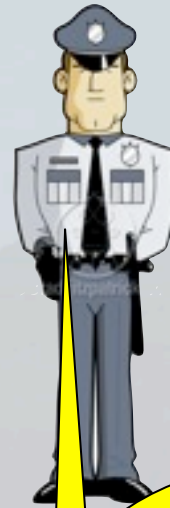


# Which roles do the Foster Carers play?





# What's involved for these roles?



D&A  
Worker -  
\$45k,  
1-2 years  
training

GP  
\$100k - 150k  
6 years at Uni

Psychiatrist  
\$150k - \$200k  
9 years at Uni

Social  
Worker -  
\$55k,  
3 years at Uni

Police Officer  
\$55k plus  
6 months at  
academy

Youth  
Worker -  
\$40k,  
Quals optional

Teacher -  
\$55k plus,  
3 years at Uni



# What training do foster carers receive?

Conferences

Occasional workshops

Lifetime in the “School of hard knocks”?

What Salary do foster carers receive?

What Professional Recognition do foster carers receive?

# Which Mental Health diagnoses are we likely to see?

Anxiety

Depression

Dysthymia

Oppositional Defiant Disorder

Conduct Disorder

ADHD

Emerging Borderline Traits

All Specialist areas of Mental Health

# Oppositional Defiant Disorder



1. often loses temper
2. often argues with adults
3. often actively defies or refuses to comply with adults' requests or rules
4. often deliberately annoys people
5. often blames others for his or her mistakes or misbehavior
6. is often touchy or easily annoyed by others
7. is often angry and resentful
8. is often spiteful or vindictive

The disturbance in behaviour causes clinically significant impairment in social, academic, or occupational functioning.

# Conduct Disorder

A scenic view of a stone castle on a hillside, reflected in a body of water, with mountains in the background. The castle is illuminated, and its reflection is clearly visible in the water. The background shows rolling hills and mountains under a clear sky.

1. Aggression to people and animals
2. Destruction of property
3. Deceitfulness or theft
4. Serious violations of rules

The disturbance in behaviour causes clinically significant impairment in social, academic, or occupational functioning.

# ADHD

Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder

An extremely debilitating organic disorder

Not to be confused with poor self regulation!

USA study:

4.5 million diagnoses in under 18s

AT LEAST 900,000 mis-diagnosed

# Borderline Personality Disorder

Female

Emerging Traits?

Splitting

Untreatable

Manipulating

Self Harm

Attention Seeking

What training **SHOULD** foster carers receive?

As much as they need

As much as they want

As much as they deserve

As much as we can afford

What payment **SHOULD** foster carers receive?

What Professional Recognition **SHOULD**  
foster carers receive?

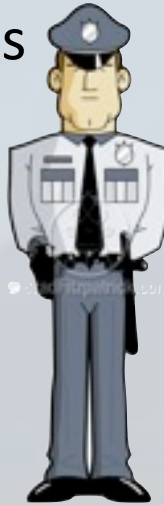


# What support can we offer?

When is it most likely to go “pear-shaped”?

- When the 9-5 supports have gone
- When kids feel unsafe
- When it's dark
- When you rely on “On-call”
- After midnight?

Foster Carers are NOT any of these roles



They are ALL of them - 24/7

But, when it's getting too hairy,  
we need you to ask for help



And make services accountable!!



Services - be accountable  
They don't ask for much!!

