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| **news release** **17 October 2024** **Fostering is… ‘Everything’ - new film hopes to inspire more to become foster carers in West Sussex** “What you do with your life can forever change someone else’s”That is the message of a new film, which raises awareness of the need for more people to step forwards and foster. West Sussex County Council is urgently seeking more foster carers to change a child’s life forever.**Relationships that can last a lifetime**West Sussex foster carers and young people who have experience of being in care gathered at Horsham’s Capitol Theatre on Monday (14) to preview the film, [*Everything.*](https://fosteringwestsussex.org.uk/everything-film) The screening was also an opportunity for them to share their experiences with county councillors, hailing the positive impact of fostering on their lives.The film follows foster carer Mike and his family on a journey through time with two of the children they have looked after, who are now adults. A surprise 60th birthday party for Mike gives Will and Zara a chance to reflect on how being fostered made a difference to their lives, thanking him for everything.The film was produced by a partnership of more than 100 councils and children’s trusts and is the seventh film collaboration of this kind, developed with the input and insight of foster carers and people with care experience.Describing the film’s key message, Project Director, Rachel Brown said: “Many people don’t realise how common it is for relationships made through fostering to last well beyond the ‘official’ caring role. This has a huge impact on the lives of those who have been fostered, giving them stability and security well into adulthood.Sam from Horsham has been a foster carer for over 23 years and attended the event. Speaking about her own experiences, Sam said: “We welcomed our first foster child into our family in 2002 as a tiny newborn, when my twins were five. He lived with us for two and a half years and my children still consider him a brother. He and his mum live abroad now, but I speak to his mum all the time. He is amazing and watching him continue to grow has been such a gift and benefits us all.”**Many children in West Sussex still need a home**The number of children and young people cared for by the council stands at over 900 across the county, with 20 currently waiting for a foster home.Cllr Jacquie Russell, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, Learning and Skills was also at the event in Horsham. She said: “The impact of fostering and kinship care can be profound and last lifetimes. Having spoken to so many involved in fostering, it is clear that it’s not only those cared for whose lives are changed for the better, but also carers themselves and their families.“We urge anyone who has a spare room and an interest in helping children and young people to think about becoming a foster carer in West Sussex. We are committed to keeping children and young people safe from vulnerable situations and helping them fulfil their potential, and our foster carers are critical to this. Get in touch with our team to find out more about our comprehensive support package.” **How you can help**Foster carers for West Sussex County Council receive comprehensive training, ongoing professional support and a competitive financial package of up to £30,393 per child per year, with additional fees for specialist roles.Find out more about fostering by visiting the [Fostering West Sussex website](https://fosteringwestsussex.org.uk/), by emailing fostering@westsussex.gov.uk or by calling 0330 222 7775.Watch *Everything* here: <https://fosteringwestsussex.org.uk/everything-film>**Notes to Editor**Foster carer Sam and her first foster child, Chey, 20 years ago and now.Image: Foster carer Sam and her first foster child, Chey, over 20 years ago and now.Sam (quoted in the release) is available for interview. **For further information please contact the news desk on 0330 222 8090 or email** **pressoffice@westsussex.gov.uk****. For urgent out-of-hours enquiries please call 07767 098415.** Facebook  Twitter |

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