

Every child and young person placed in care is unique and no two children in care are the same. They come from a wide range of cultures, backgrounds and family types. Many have been exposed to a wide variety of experiences, some of which may be completely unfamiliar to you. The majority of children and young people are brought into care because they have been harmed. Depending upon their family background and the reasons why they were brought into care, some children and young people **may** have some of following behaviours or characteristics. These things add to the challenges and rewards of being a carer.

- appear incapable of showing love, eg. not showing emotion, returning hugs etc
- be unusually clingy or alternately appear very distant or withdrawn
- be excessively demanding of attention or shy away from attention or affection
- engaging in experimental or dangerous behaviour
- have knowledge / behaviours in advance of their years, eg. sexualised behaviours
- be rebellious, stubborn or defiant
- steal or destroy property
- have difficulty adjusting to a routine or a family environment
- display a love/hate relationship to parents
- be overly emotional, get upset easily or have temper tantrums
- act in an immature way for their age or act in a too adult way, eg. play the role of parent
- not show fear when you would usually expect this of a child their age
- lack a positive attitude to school, perhaps a history of poor attendance, eg. wagging, suspension
- show low self-esteem, lack confidence in ability to perform age appropriate tasks.