

‘A picture
is worth
a thousand
words’





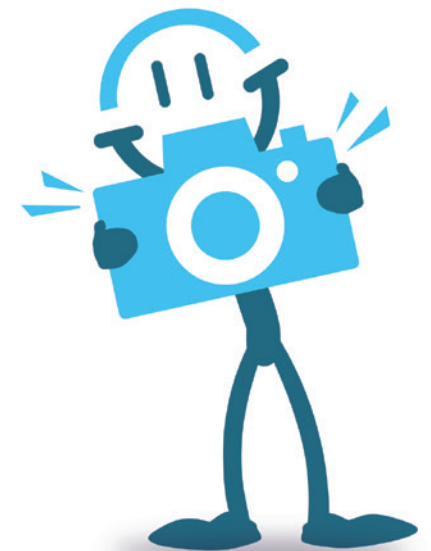
We have all heard the saying ‘A picture is worth a thousand words’, well this little book demonstrates the old saying perfectly.

Children can use creativity to explain a wide variety of emotions. To celebrate this creativity Fostering People held a photographic competition. The aim was to depict family life or foster care but without using people. The children’s imaginations flourished, each young person gave an explanation of their image. We were so moved by so many of the entries that we have compiled this little book to share.

It demonstrates the positive effects of foster care on so many young people, including children feeling safe, experiencing firsts such as a family holiday and above all having fun and being children.

All the entries were judged and appraised by professional photographer, Chris Gilbert, who kindly cast his professional eye over all the entries.

We hope you enjoy this collection of photographs the stories behind them as much as we did.





Family Fun Night

by Molly - Age 13

Molly said this photo made her think of family. Molly said she liked this photo because it shows that being in care is not just being looked after but that you get to do things together as part of a family, it was fun having the experience of melting marshmallows around the campsite.

Chris Gilbert:

'This is all about the marshmallows and the fire. You know what's going on here but everything else is irrelevant because it is outside the frame. The light from the fire makes the marshmallows stand out from the background. I also like the fact that the fire is slightly off-centre as it invites the viewer's mind to wander around inside the picture.'





Camping

by Ashton - Age 11

Ashton said this photo made him think about family life, being happy and having fun.

Chris Gilbert said

The tent is off-centre, which is very good because it invites the viewer to look at the other things inside the frame. If the tent had been in the centre then it would simply have been a photograph of a tent. By making it off-centre it makes it a picture of a tent, in a clearing, in a place where an adventure might happen. I also like the fact that is not a straightforward 4:3 frame but a deliberate crop.

Castle in the Woods

by Ashleigh - Age 16

An example of how man made structures can be complimented and enhanced by the beauty of nature at Witton Castle, Bishop Auckland, where I go to most weekends and breaks from college.

Chris Gilbert said...

There is a great tension between the title and the photograph. You know that there is a castle in the picture but the trees are what grab the attention first, meaning that you have to walk through the woods to find the castle. The tension means that you explore the whole frame to understand the photograph fully. I also like the fact that is not a straightforward 4:3 frame but a deliberate crop as it keeps the attention focused on the trees and the castle behind.





Wet and Wild

by Kiera - Age 11

Nature untouched with movement and colour, tranquil and eye catching on a nature trail at the holiday park where we have the family caravan.

Chris Gilbert said...

There's a lot going on in this frame but it has a clear foreground to background travel with the river coming in mysteriously from the top left, inviting the viewer to wonder about where it goes. It also makes it clear that the section of the riverbank is just a part of a bigger story. I also like the fact that is not a straightforward 4:3 frame but a deliberate crop, which accentuates the travel of the river through the frame.

"Aff yer bike!"

by Steven (Age 6) and Sophie (Age 7)

After a family cycle this is our driveway!



Chris Gilbert said...

This is an interesting picture. By filling the frame with the bikes the viewer is obliged to consider only them, how they sit in relation to each other and, most importantly, how they ended up like this. There is a story behind this picture but everyone who sees it will imagine a different story to everyone else.



Our fantastic life

by Molly & Tyler - Age 12

This represents all our bad memories floating away. The bubbles represent the freedom in our lives, the sea is washing away the bad feelings that we have felt in the past and the sky is how calm our lives are now and how clear our future looks.



Chris Gilbert said...

This is a great abstract. The disembodied bubbles illustrate the scene behind. The eye jumps back and forward between the bubbles and the sea, exploring the picture. And it is level. If the horizon had been slightly wonky it wouldn't have worked so well.



Shells

by Rubin - Age 10

Walking along the beach collecting shells and unusual stones with my family.



Chris Gilbert said...

The frame is filled with the shells and stones, making sure that the viewer's attention is drawn directly by them. They would not normally be seen like this and by putting a frame around them they are presented clearly and better understood.



My first holiday

by Pharrell - Age 11

I haven't been on holiday for my whole life, but this holiday has really helped me to see the wonderful views I have never seen before. I never knew nature could be so beautiful.

Chris Gilbert said...

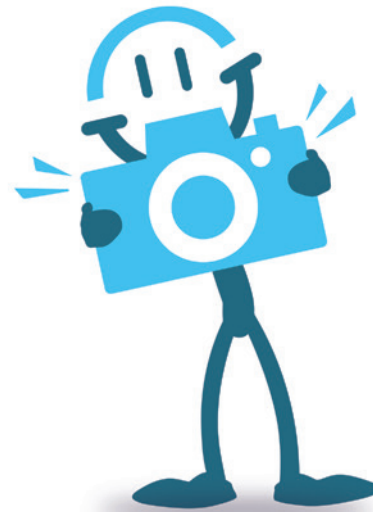
A great memory shot of some lovely countryside. By not putting anyone in the shot you invite the viewer into the scene. It becomes their own private experience and creates a stronger emotional reaction than if there were someone else already in the shot, owning the experience.

2nd
place



Chris Gilbert said...

A classic second frame image and I really like the fact that the second frame is circular. It works really well with what's within it. There's a lovely thirds thing happening with water, land and sky. A great shot.



Through the window

by Pharrell - Age 11

We decided to stop at the chip shop for dinner in the town of Looe. As we were enjoying our dinner we had an extraordinary view from the window we were sat next to. We could see all the old houses in Looe.



Life is a bike ride

by Logan - Age 7

Life is like a bike ride you never know what's over the hill, but you go over it anyway and deal with what is in front of you we stick together and smile.



Chris Gilbert said...

All of the bikes are inside the frame, which is excellent. Nothing important gets chopped off. The bikes are the obvious subject because they are clear, in the centre of the frame and the largest part of the composition. There is no confusion about what you want the viewer to see.

Life without friends

by Morley - Age 10

Life without friends is like a garden without flowers, my garden is now full of beautiful flowers.

Chris Gilbert said...

This is all about timing. At any other time of year this would be simply an empty garden. So much of photography is about choosing the moment to make the picture because that moment works better than all of the other moments. This is the moment when the garden is at its best and best conveys the message that the photographer wants to convey.





Solar System

by Lucy - Age 12

Every star in the Solar System is different just like everyone in my family but each of us shine bright in our own special way and that's what makes my family perfect.

Chris Gilbert said...

By putting the globe at one edge of the frame the photographer invites the viewer to consider it in context - its place within the space. If you had put the globe in the centre then it would have simply been a photograph of the globe. Putting it off-centre like this allows the viewer to see and think about all of the other, smaller, objects in the frame as well.

Sunset

by Hayden - Age 11

This is the sunset from my very first camping trip, I like my foster carers because I go places I've never been before like Shell Island and Bournemouth. I also went crabbing in the rock pools and collected crabs, shrimps and even a weaver fish. This photo reminds me of my first camping trip.

Chris Gilbert said...

Everybody loves a colourful sunset. The temptation is to simply sit back and enjoy it but when something lovely is happening the photographer has to have the presence of mind to record it before it goes away. This is important because you may never get another chance.





Home

by Tyler - Age 11

Life in care is like being a frog, you hop from lily pad to lily pad trying to find where you belong.

Chris Gilbert said...

This image draws in the viewer by using a collage of images to represent time. I really liked the technique of using a hand within the images, not only does this give the viewer a sense of care and vulnerability, but it also works well to provide a much needed contrast to what would otherwise be a camouflaged subject matter. Next time you are out with a camera, try taking photos of animals using a lower camera angle, to capture an animals eyes to see if you like the results.

Family Life

by Connor - Age 3

Family of cows working together and sticking together. The photo was taken in Sutton Park and the cows roam free in the park.

Chris Gilbert said...

One of the most pleasing things about this picture is that it has been taken by someone so young! It is a classic thirds picture with foreground, middle ground and background. And it is both level and wraps within the frame. Well done Connor! Brilliant!



Thank you!

To all of our young people that took part in the competition. Your photographs have inspired us!

Fostering People would like to thank Chris Gilbert, photographer and owner of the Ravenseye Galley, based in the Peak District for his kind involvement in this project through judging the children's lovely photographs and contributing feedback for all the young people taking part.

I would also like to thank our foster carers for encouraging and helping our young people to take part and every single carer for providing these family experiences.

Thank you.

Congratulations to the winners picked by Chris...

Molly & Tyler, age 12 – 'Our Fantastic Life'

Pharrel, age 11 – 'Through the Window'

Molly, age 13 – 'Family Fun Night'





fosteringpeople
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