

FOSTERING

What's it all about?



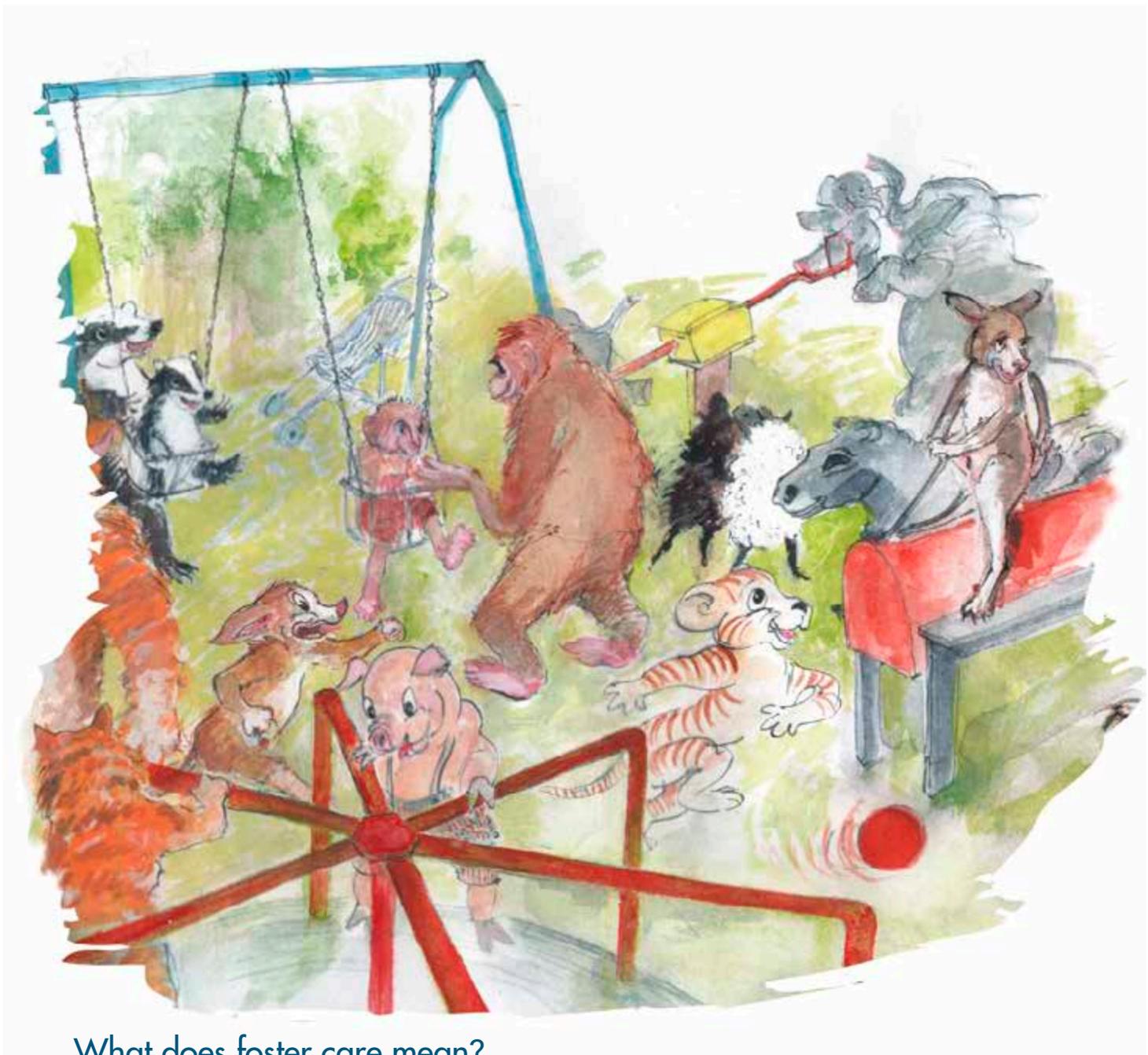
This book belongs to...



Draw a picture of yourself in this frame.



Hi, I'm Sam. I am
in foster care. I hear you're going
to be in foster care too! But what
is foster care all about then?
Follow me and find
me and see!



What does foster care mean?

Foster care is about growing up with a different family when you cannot live with the family you were born into.



Why am I in foster care?

So you might be wondering why you're in foster care?

All children need to grow up in a family with a parent or parents who will love them, look after them and care for them while they are growing up.

Sometimes your birth parents are not able to do this.

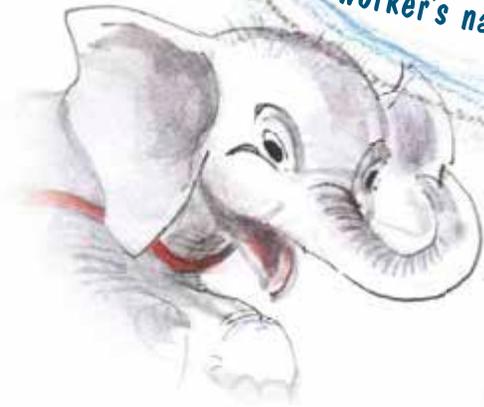
That is why a social worker will talk with you about where you might live instead and will make sure you are safe, well looked after and well cared for.



Social services have to help your parents who are having a difficult time.

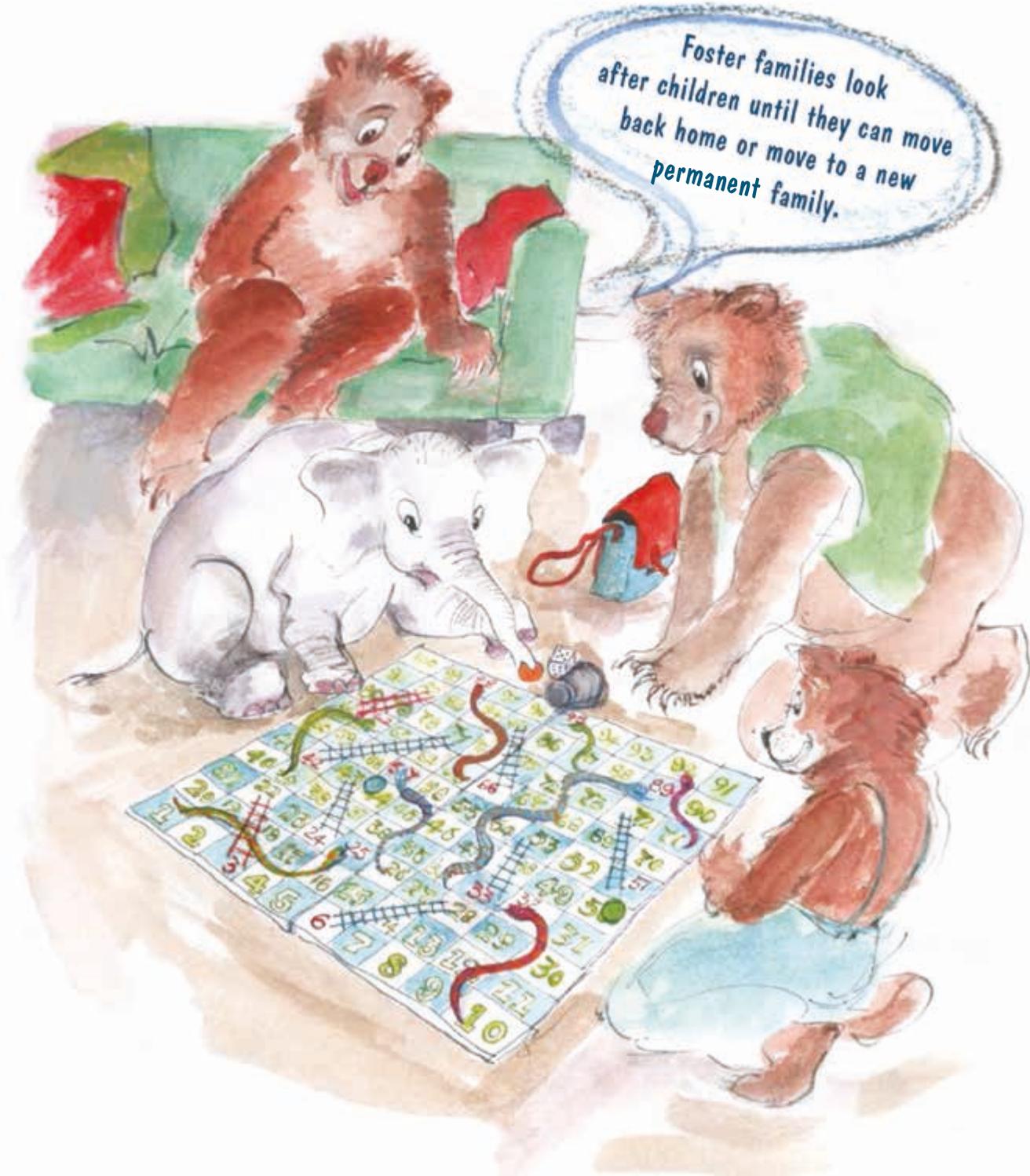
The people who do this job are called social workers. They try to help your parents sort things out so you can live together again. Sometimes, this is not possible. Social workers also come and check that you are ok too.

My social worker is called Jane.
She helped me and my family when things
were difficult for us. What is your social
worker's name?



Draw a picture of your social worker.

My social worker's telephone number is

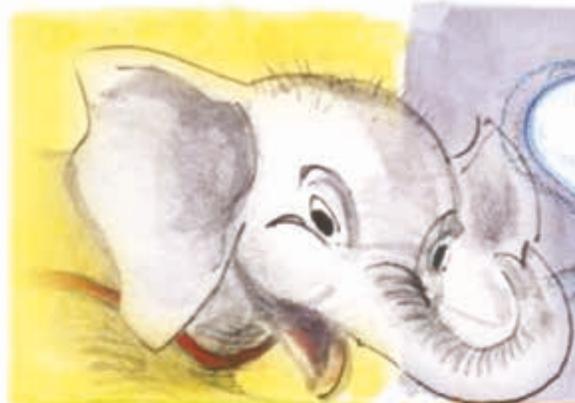




*My foster carers were
called Cathy and John and they had
two children called Tom and Sally.
Can you draw a picture of your
foster family?*

What about my brothers and sisters?

You might have brothers and sisters. Social workers will think really carefully about whether it would be best for you to stay together in your foster family or live in different families. Your social worker will talk to you about it and you should always tell them what you think and how you are feeling. You can stay in touch and they will always be your family.



How does
foster care work?

1) Social workers and your parents decide whether you can live with your birth family.

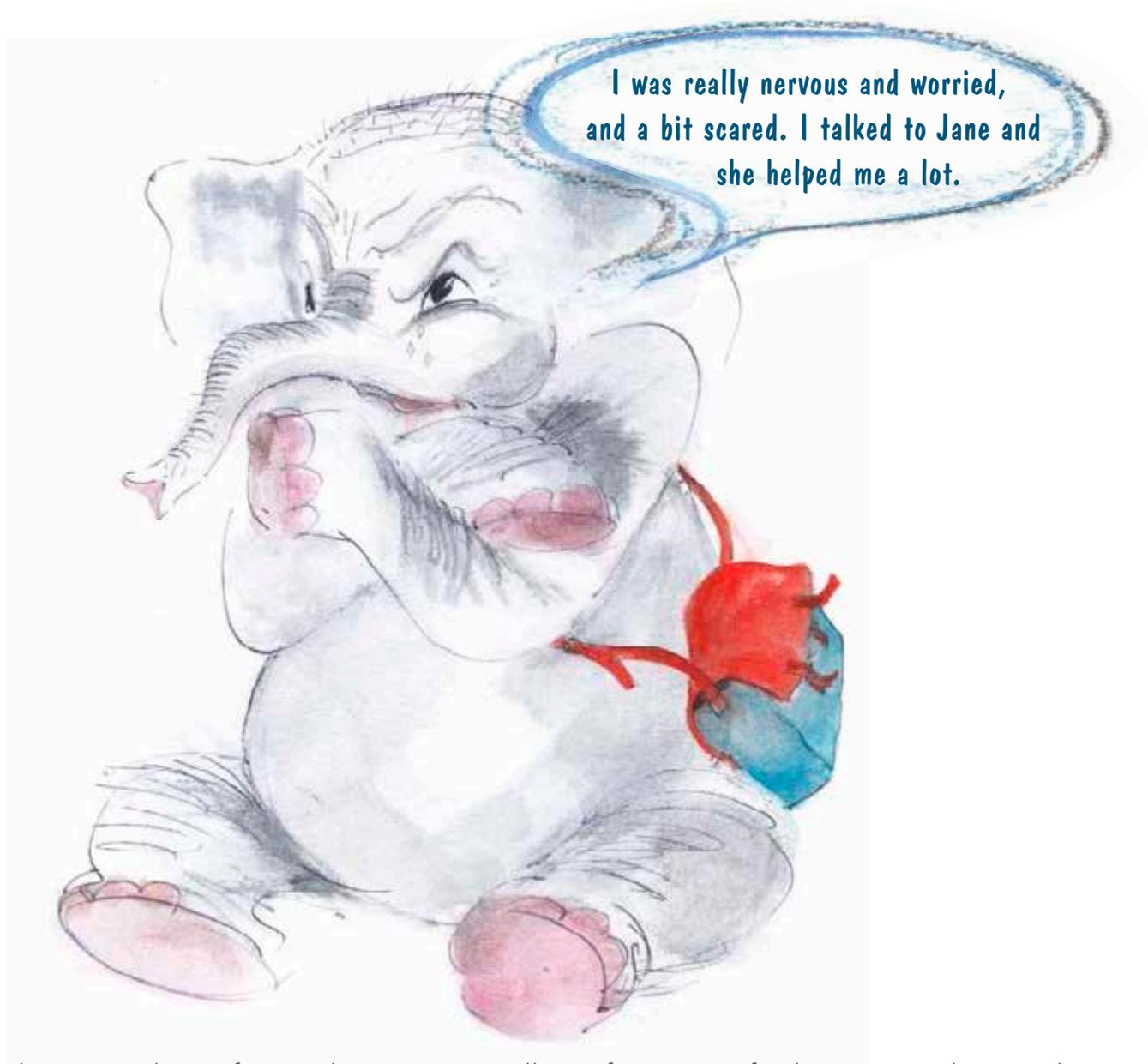
2) Sometimes a Court has to decide whether it is right for you to live with your birth family.

3) Social workers now start looking for a foster carer for you - they will talk to you about this.

4) When a foster carer has been found, you will see photos of your carer and their family and your social worker will tell you more about them. You may also be given a leaflet to tell you more about them.

5) Now it's time to meet your new foster family.

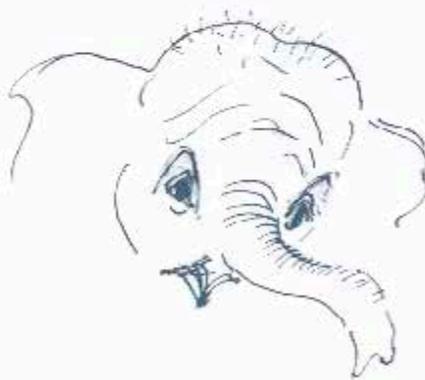
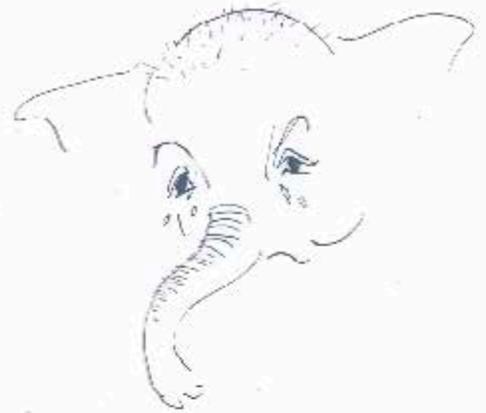
6) After you've moved in, your social worker will visit you and your foster carer to make sure you are okay.

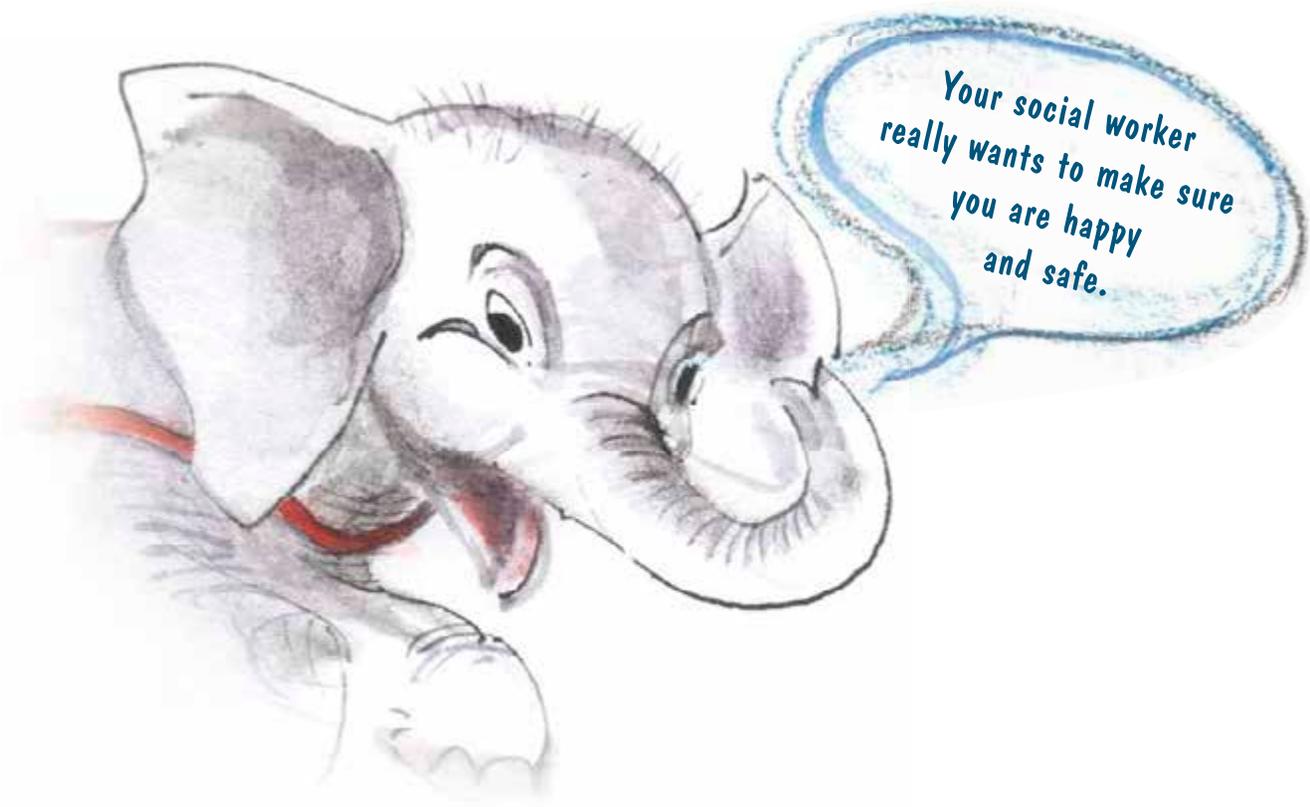


There are lots of people you can talk to if you are feeling scared or sad – your teacher or someone else you trust can also help you. Your social worker is always there to listen and talk to you.



How are you feeling at the moment? Colour or write in the different feelings you might feel, or use the space to draw your own picture.





*Your social worker
really wants to make sure
you are happy
and safe.*

People who want to foster children have to speak to a social worker and learn what fostering children is all about. This is to make sure they will be good foster carers. They must be able to keep you safe and help you to be happy.



Things your foster carer will like to know

How you feel is very important and everyone wants to make sure that the right foster family is found for you. If you are not happy about anything, tell your social worker and they will try to help.

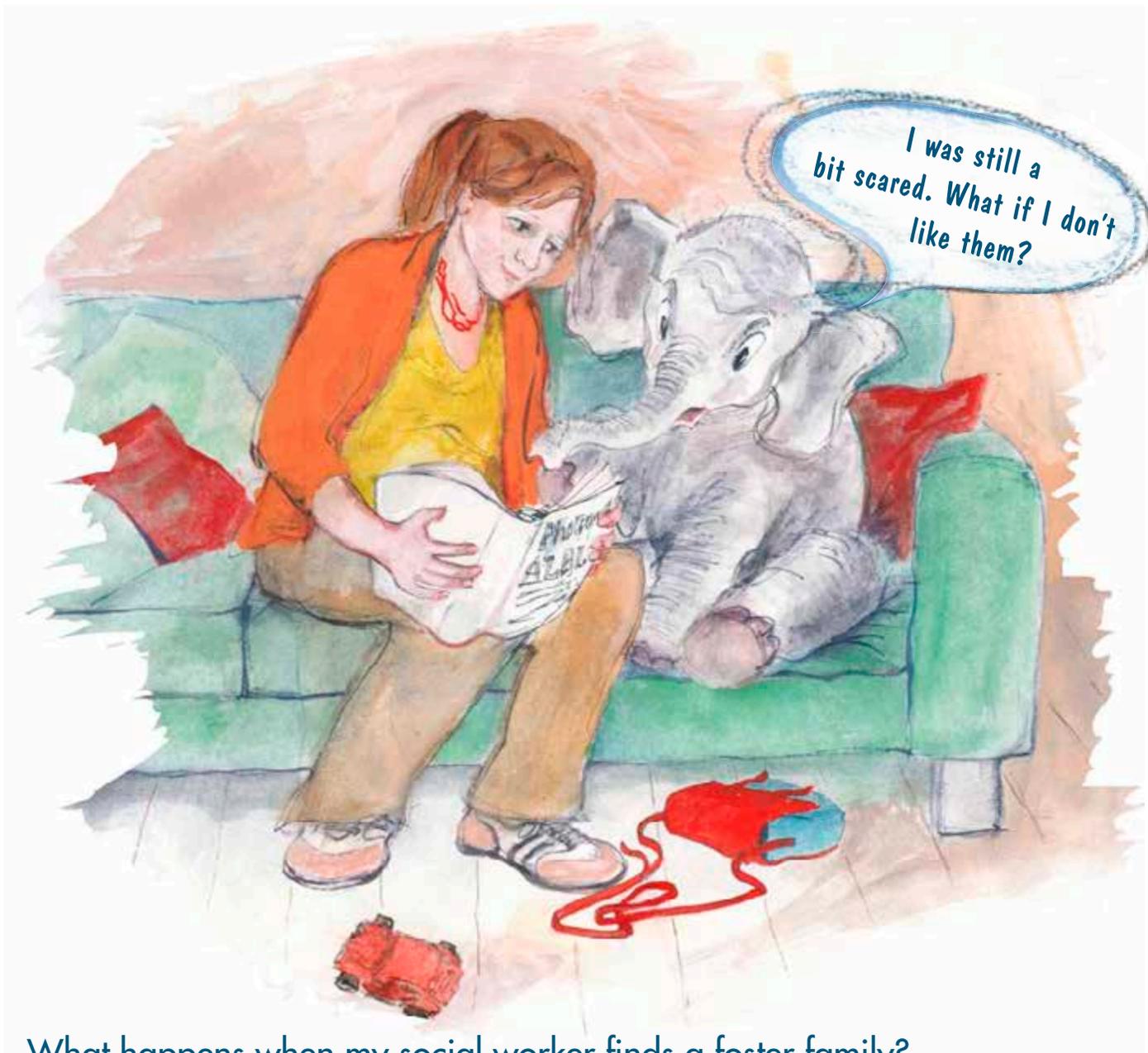
I like these things

I don't like these things

**My favourite food
and TV shows**

My favourite toys and games





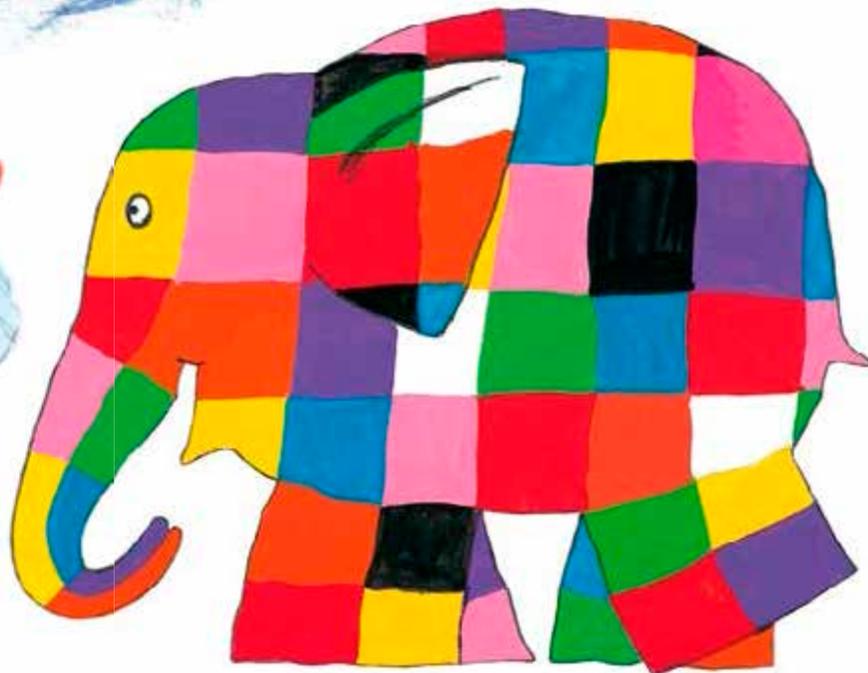
What happens when my social worker finds a foster family?

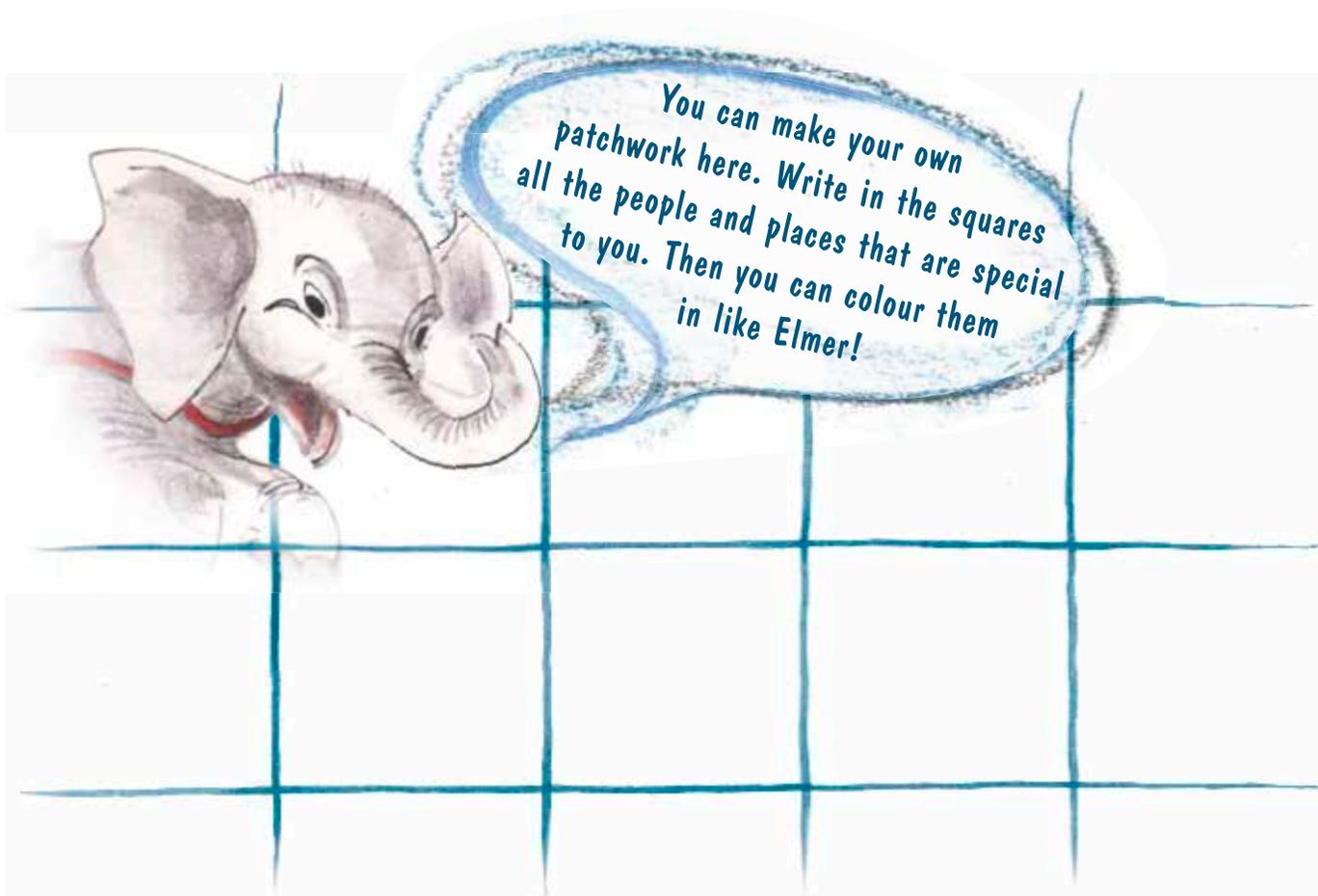
When your social worker finds a foster family, you will be able to ask lots of questions about them and their house. They might even show you some photographs.



This is a big change - it can be very exciting but can also make you sad and a bit scared. Don't be afraid to tell people if you are feeling worried, sad or frightened - they will listen to you and try to help you.

My friend Elmer is a patchwork elephant -
he is made up of all the colours of the rainbow.
We are all patchworks really, made up of all the people and
places that have been important
to us in our lives.

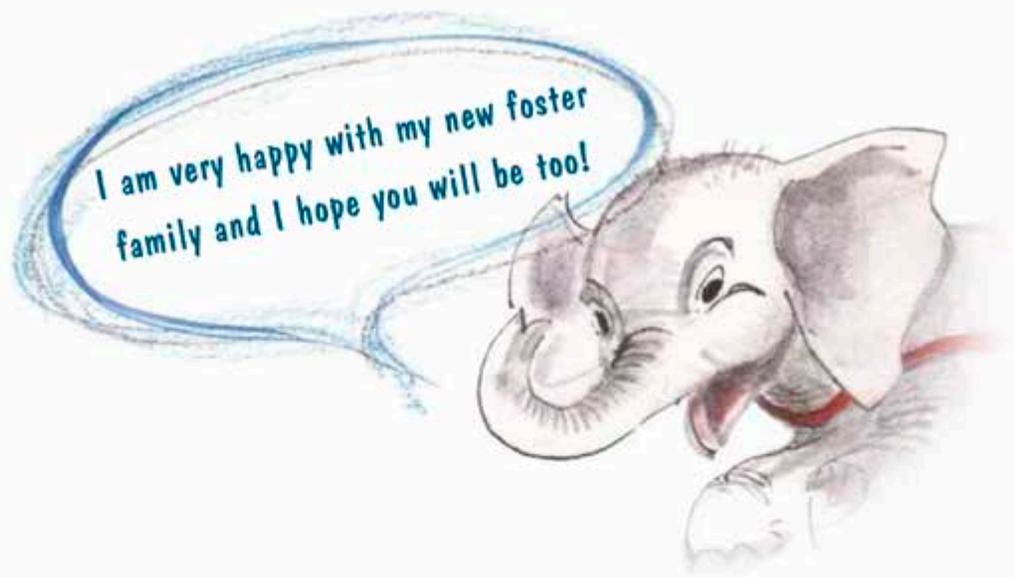




You can make your own patchwork here. Write in the squares all the people and places that are special to you. Then you can colour them in like Elmer!

Your birth parents will still love you even if you are not able to live with them. When you go to live with a foster family it doesn't mean that you will forget about your birth family. You will have something called a life story book which will have photos and other important things from your birth family and foster family. Your social worker, birth family and foster carers all help to make this book and you can too. You can look at this book and add to it as you grow up.

Nobody likes to forget the people who are important to them – your social worker will help you work out who you would like to stay in touch with.



People you can speak to

If you have any worries or concerns, you should speak to your social worker or another grown up that you like. If you do not feel you want to speak to your social worker or another grown up about any worries you have, there are lots of other people you can talk. They are listed here.

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Childline

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0800 1111

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