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Your submission for this review:

I have worked for the Department of Communities and Justice for the past 19 years but this submission is my personal submission and not on behalf of the Department. My belief is the rates paid to foster carers needs to increase to encourage a wider range of the population to consider foster carer as financially viable. Most families with children with both parents working would find it cost prohibitive to absorb another child into their lives if they wished to provide the same standard of care to every child in their home (fostered or not). For example, sending a child to an independent school, providing for extra curricular activities such as dancing, music lessons etc, or sending a child to child care or before and after school care, an additional flight for a family holiday - all of these items become blockers to people believing that they can afford to have another child in the home. It is important to encourage a wider group of carers as this increases opportunities for children in out of home care to have positive and stable connections and family experiences. Supporting families to live rich and fulfilling, child-focused lives, will inevitably reduce placement changes and therefore reduce costs over a longer period to the out of home care sector. Increasing the rate, with a level of focus on how carers plan to provide for more than the child's basic needs with the extra funds, would have a positive impact on the perception and expectations of caring. Children in out of home care deserve the very best and it is important we raise the standard of expectations of the kind of life they deserve to have, and provide their carers with financial capacity to give them well rounded and stable lives.