

HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS?

What did you tell us?



IMPORTANT!

Every Foster Carer's experience is unique. The only thing you all have in common is that you all are responsible for the care of one of our Children in Care.

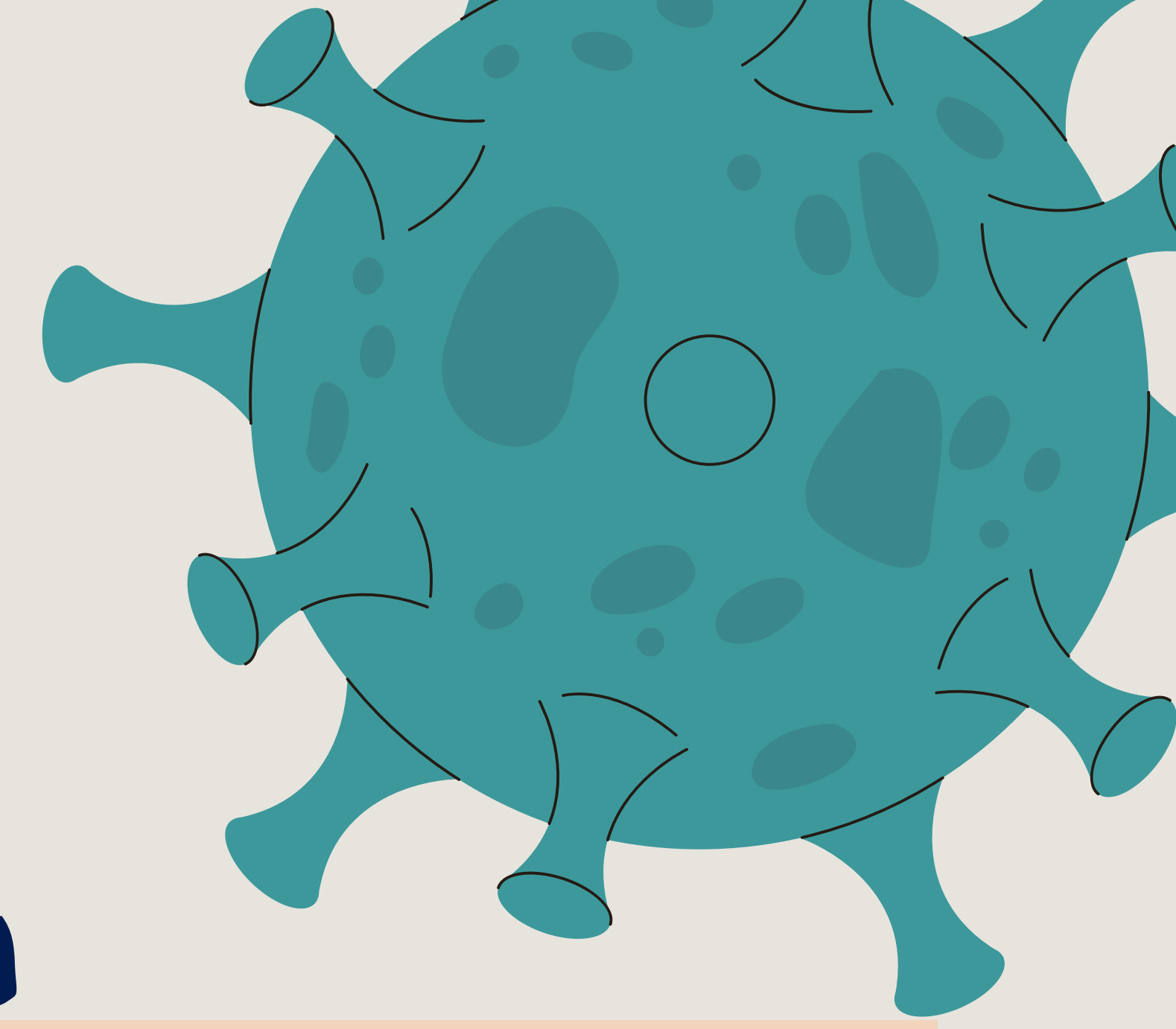
Even though you all have that in common, each of your experiences of Fostering is unique.

It is really important we don't assume you all have the same experience Fostering and that you all have the same opinions.

You may not agree with some of this feedback, but we hope that some parts of it will reflect your experiences of the pandemic.

IN GENERAL

Foster Carers experienced many of the same challenges brought by the pandemic as their parents across the country.



HOWEVER...

The UK's three lockdown periods generally impacted Foster Carers and their families more than most other families because...

KEY CHALLENGES REPORTED WERE...



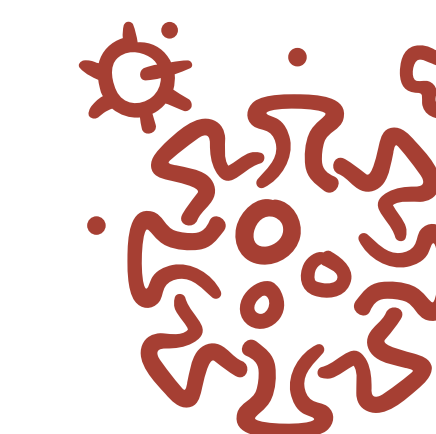
You became full time carers, cleaners, chefs and teachers overnight.



Lockdown was difficult for you too, not just the child that you foster.



Some felt that seldom were thank yous given by management to acknowledge the sacrifices your families made over lockdown.



There was confusion around what COVID-19 guidance was accurate and trustworthy.



Some experienced delays getting their children mental health support.



Foster Carer training wasn't always relevant to your child's needs and you'd like the opportunity to feed back about what training you'd like to do.

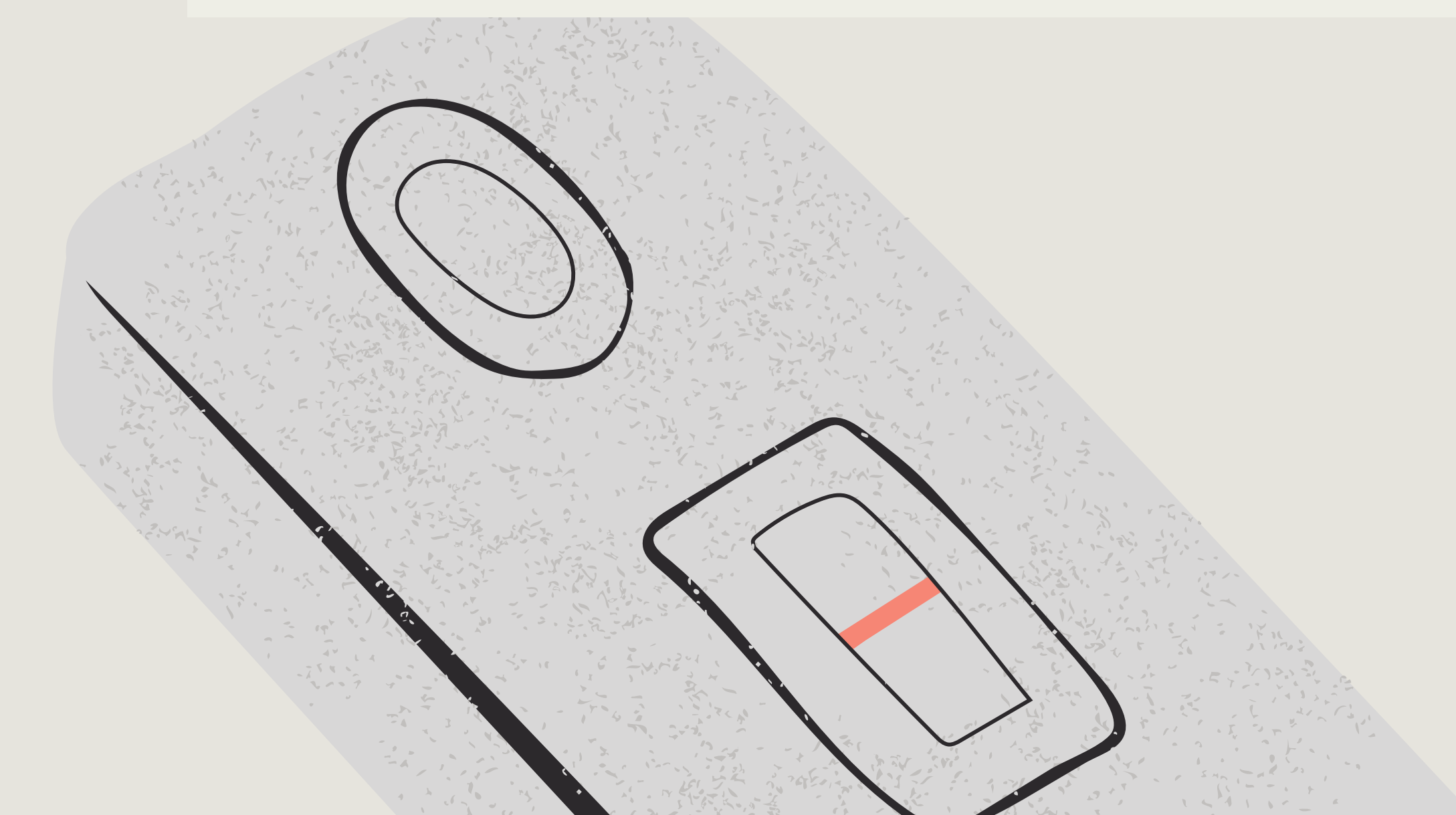
SO HOW CAN WE BETTER SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY?

We've come up with some recommendations of things we would like Newham to do to better support you and your family. We're hoping to achieve these by the end of this year.

Take a look at the next page to see what we're going to do improve the service and better support you.

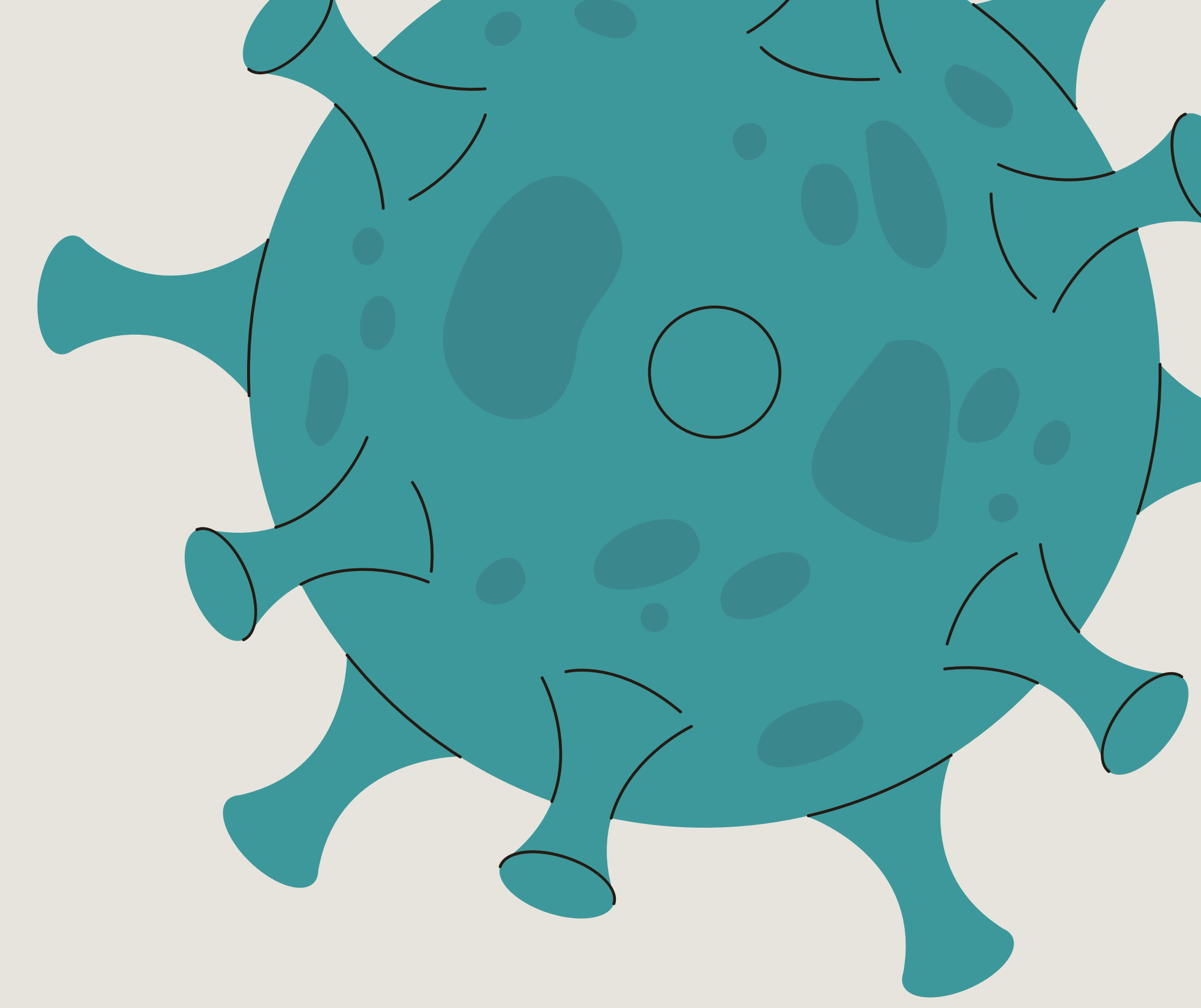
SOME UNEXPECTED BENEFITS OF THE PANDEMIC FOR YOU INCLUDED...

- Being able to give the young people you care for with special educational needs more 1-1 support
- Some of your Foster Children thrived in the cocoon of lockdown, especially those who social anxiety and who experienced sensory overload.



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How are we going to improve?



'WE HAVE TO DO 4 COMPULSORY TRAININGS A YEAR, BUT THEY AREN'T ALWAYS RELEVANT TO MY CHILD'S NEEDS.'

We are going to review the training you receive to see if we can offer additional trainings according to what you would like to do.

'IT WOULD HAVE BEEN HELPFUL TO HEAR ABOUT UPDATES IN COVID-19 GUIDANCE FROM NEWHAM SO WE KNEW WHAT NEWS TO BELIEVE.'

We are going to send you all our Newham Public Health updates around COVID-19 vaccinations, guidance and restrictions.

DURING THE PANDEMIC, SELDOM WERE THANK YOU'S GIVEN FROM MANAGEMENT

Foster Carer appreciation events are recommencing this year and we are going to look into ways we can better celebrate you and the Foster Carer community.

HOW ARE WE GOING TO BETTER SUPPORT YOU GOING FORWARDS?

'WE WOULD LIKE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR THE BIOLOGICAL FAMILIES OF FOSTER CARERS.'

We are going to look into ways we can offer support to your families around any issues and frustrations that may come up as part of the Fostering experience.

UPCOMING SURVEY OPPORTUNITY

Thank you all for your valuable feedback as part of this research report.

In order to continue to improve our service and seek your feedback, we will be conducting an annual survey to hear about your experiences.

Thank you all for your feedback.

'I EXPERIENCED DELAYS GETTING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR MY CHILD.'

We are looking into cases where young people in Foster Care experienced delays to their mental health support to find out what the cause of this was.

We have welcomed our new Emotional Health and Wellbeing Nurse who is providing increased support for Care Leavers.

