**Sandra and Rick transcript**

- My name is Sandra, and I've been a carer for 10 years.

- My name's Rick Ehlers, and I've been part of the foster care family for 10 years. We currently provide care for permanent children, but we've done emergency care and short-term care, prior to that. Just the knowledge of there being kids out there that needed a home and needed stability and love was the draw for me. We had physical room here and my biological children weren't as dependent on us anymore for things. So we had the capacity to be able to provide for other children.

- It's just rewarding. When you give a part of yourself and you get to see the child take it on, you know, it might be a little bit, or it might be a lot. But anything that you give to them, it just lights them up and you get to see that, and you know that you've helped somebody for as little as it may be, yeah, that reward that you feel yourself it's pretty good. Just the look on this little child's face watching my 15 year old play with toys on the floor and teaching this little boy how to play, it opened my 15 year olds eyes as to why we were really doing this. That it's not just about having little kids around. It's not just about the fun and the noise, and you know, that there's a genuine need for these kids.

- It's a tough world. It truly is. It's not easy. And especially when you're just a little person, it's that much harder if you don't have a family to support. By saying that, I'm not trying to say I'm replacing their family, but just to help that little bit and just to see them grow. It truly is a growing process. And that part of it is rewarding.

- There's been lots of challenges along the way, but you work your way through them. Our agency comes out to visit us, to make sure that everything's okay, that everything's tracking fine, that the girls are happy and healthy. They're also available by phone. They also email through upcoming and available training to look through, to see if there's any new training modules that would be helpful for our placement. It's not just about adding to your own family. It's the reward of seeing the other family succeed as well. You can't think that you'll be bigger than their family, or more important than their family. We all need to work together to be the family for the children. Every child deserves to be safe, to be fed, to be loved, to be clothed, the right to education, the right to medical care. Some people don't have the capacity to provide these things. It doesn't mean they don't love the children. They just don't have the capacity. So we can be a team, and together we can give the children all of their needs. Everything can be fulfilled.

- I just think if you've got fears of being a foster carer, being afraid to share part of yourself, don't be because whatever you give back to the children, you'll get back in tenfold. It might not be straight away. It's not an instant gratification, but you will get there. It'll put a tear in your eye one day, and you'll just look back and you think, "Wow, you know, I could have done a million things with my time, but what I've chose to do to help these children, money can't buy that."