# Transcript – Narelle Oliver and Vivienne Braddock

*Instrumental music in the background throughout the audio.*

**Narelle:** My name is Narelle.

**Vivienne:** And I’m Vivienne.

**Narelle:** We decided we’d get into fostering, it was really time and space and because we’re both social workers and we know what the system is like, so we know that there is a need for, we did know there was a need for foster carers, and we knew a lot of foster carers, so it gave us the impetus, I guess, because we knew the need, and we thought, well we’ve got something to offer, we’ve got skills we can give to a child and to families and here we are.

**Vivienne:** We talked to our family and our friends. We wanted to make sure that they would be there as a support for us as well, that they understood why we wanted to do this.

**Narelle:** We decided first of all that we would just do respite care and that way we could still have our lifestyle and provide some foster parent a respite for the weekend and look after somebody’s children, have fun and then give them back on a Sunday night, and as it turned out, our very first placement was a long-term young girl. We got a phone call from the agency saying this was the young girl that they had and they desperately needed a placement for and that we had the skills and the expertise to take her on. And within the space of two hours, we’d said, ‘Yes.’

**Vivienne:** That day she arrived I will never forget it. The agency brought her. She came for breakfast, and she’s a very small child and I know that we opened up the door and I was surprised at how small she was. I knew that she was six but she looked so tiny and I know I was anxious and frightened and didn’t know what we were doing if this was the right thing. But I reflect back on how brave she was to get out of the car and come into a house with two strangers and to try again to build a family and to this day I still think she’s incredibly brave to do that.

**Narelle:** Everyday something happens that causes me to laugh hysterically at something she’s done or said or something we do as a family. There’s been so many moments that have just brought such joy to us.

**Vivienne:** I think for me seeing her do well. She was a little girl who had changed placements very regularly, and she’s been with us for four and a half years now and over that time she’s settled into school, and made friends and just done normal kid things and had birthday parties and just to be doing those normal things I think for me is really special.