

Spotlight
on practice

Rights & Voice



Peterborough &
Cambridgeshire councils

Tackling mental health stigma

July 2023

The Children in Care council agreed to focus on the topic of mental health – over the period of one year they met services, shared experiences, attended events and deepened their understanding of this issue – they used all their work & insights to create a film for teenagers to try to destigmatise mental health and signpost to support.

This is a practice example from A NATIONAL VOICE

<https://coramvoice.org.uk/for-professionals/co-production-and-participation-with-young-people/>

Why? The ANV AMPLIFY awards aim to champion and recognise the work of children in care councils and care leaver forums. They were held in October 2022 ([Amplify - Coram Voice](#)) – Peterborough children in care council were nominated for the ‘Campaign award’.

What did they do?

The Children in Care Council (ages 12 to 21 years) chose Mental Health as one of their key focuses for the year; the group wanted to use their learning and experiences around mental health to create a short film aimed at teenagers to destigmatise mental health issues, improve services and signpost to available support. They have reached out to different professionals and attended meetings and events to deepen their understanding of issues affecting young people and services available, not just to children in care, but all children. After much research, discussion and activity, the group created a script and agreed together what the video should look like. You can watch the film, ‘Hope – a poem on Mental Health’, here:

<https://youtu.be/FbB2SsPiFSc>

What difference is it making?

The group are making a difference both nationally and locally. They have worked alongside other youth organisations to campaign and raise awareness e.g. attending a panel discussion with politicians & London Assembly members. They are also involved in developing the Children & Young People’s Mental Health Strategy for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough advising on what they think it needs to focus on.

It's normal to go through mental health struggles as a young person. We've created this animated poem to show you that you're not alone.



Here is the Peterborough CiCC entry to the ANV awards



What they did: The Children in Care Council (ages 12 to 21 years) chose Mental Health as one of their key focuses for the year. Members of the CiCC wanted to use their learning and experiences around mental health to create a short video aimed at teenagers to destigmatise mental health issues and signpost to available support. After consideration, they chose to focus on the issues of self-esteem, body image and healthy relationships.

**The Children in Care Council
Peterborough**
Thoughtful, inclusive, engaging!

Members of the Children in Care Council attended a regional youth voice conference hosted by the British Youth Council, alongside the Peterborough Youth Council. During the day, they participated in a mental health workshop and attended a panel discussion with politicians including MPs and London Assembly Members.

The CiCC were invited to take part in a workshop which included an outline of the play 'The IT'. The play's narrative had an underlying theme of mental health issues for the main character. Filmed extracts of the original work were shared and themes from the play were used to help the young people generate discussion and share their perspectives.



What difference they made: The Children in Care Council is involved in developing the Children and Young People's Mental Health Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. They attended a virtual workshop with mental health professionals to discuss what the strategy should include.

After much research, discussion and activity, the CiCC is now creating a video aimed at teenagers to destigmatise mental health issues and signpost to available support, that can be shared widely. The group has created a script and formulated ideas on what the final video will look like, and are now working with professionals to complete the video.

Why they should win: The CiCC has been working on their Mental Health Project for the last year, being open about their own experiences and showing a real motivation to improve services. They reached out to different professionals and attended meetings and events to deepen their understanding of issues affecting young people and services available, not just to children in care, but all children.

