

Coram Voice 'Stable Homes, Built on Love' Engagement Work - Feedback

Session 4 - Building Strong and Loving Relationships

**A
NATIONAL
VOICE**

Stable Homes, Built on Love
Relationships



Building Strong and Loving Relationships

The online session for children and young people took place on Tuesday 26 September 6.00-7.30pm.

The session focused on Mission 1 of 'Stable Homes, Built on Love': By 2027, every care-experienced child and young person will feel they have strong, loving relationships in place. We want to see significant progress in children in care and care leavers having and maintaining loving relationships with people who are important to them

Who we heard from:

A total of 16 young people attended the session. They were aged 15-25+ and were from across England.



WHAT does love mean to you?

"Supportive and always there for you when you need them"

"Unconditional"

"Not judging people"

"Being cared for and caring for others"

"Love to me means like a happy trustful and personal connection with someone that over time builds up and stuff"

"Feeling safe and warm and like I can be myself"

"Having a mutual understanding between people"

"Being able to talk to them without judge."

"I think love means to care and be affectionate towards other people
Someone to hug"

"Having supportive relationships"

"Um someone who actually listen and show they are also someone who helps in the moment with out causing harm"



Who is important to you now?

“Friends and family from other countries”

“My friends and family.”

“My son.”

“Pets”

“Partner and his family”

“My Gran”

“My friends and their family also certain teachers that I got on well with in school”

“My dad what a legend”

“My foster family”

“My friend group. Meeting up with these guys every month or so, where we can decompress and talk about whatever issues are bothering us.”

“My siblings”

“Care experienced Family and other young people and colleagues.”



Who would you want to be in contact with in 5 years?

“I would like to hopefully keep friends with my close mates and again teachers that I built a good relationship with”

“My family and friends.”

“My foster carers”

“Work Colleagues”

“I would like to imagine my current friend group will still be much as it is right now, even if we are middle aged”

“My partners Nan as I love her to bits she’s amazing”

“Some of my friends who have supported me through the years”

“As many care experience people as I can because I love helping others”



Who would you want to be in contact with in 10 years?

“My kids, family, work”

“My future kids”

“Family, friends, some foster siblings.”

“Other care experienced young people so that I can see if any change has been made within social care”

“My dad and nan and siblings”

“Professionals to see how far how I have come”

“In ten years time a lot of my family won't be around, so I would hope my friend group is still there.”

“As many care experience people as I can to help them.”

What can social workers do to support strong and loving relationships?



Hand - What training, resources or support do professionals need to support strong and loving relationships?

“Be there for you.”

“Supporting of transport”

“Listen you you!!”

“Training on engaging with young people- particularly SEND, and negative behaviours”

“Be there for a helping hand when they need them”

“Understand child’s wishes and support family time and contact with carers and teachers etc. despite changes”

“Linking with internal and external organisations”

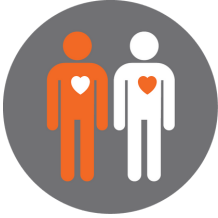
“Be given more time to spend with young people”

“Do good handovers to new workers”

“Not asking a young people to repeat their past”

“Let us take our time and if we need help we will ask”

What can social workers do to support strong and loving relationships?



Heart - What qualities or skills do professionals need to support strong and loving relationships?

“Listen”

“A shoulder to cry on”

“Patience” “Resilience” “Emotional vulnerability”

“Kind/bubbly” “Shows their personality”

“Empathy” “Be understanding”

“Proactive- if they express a wish to see someone then look into ways for this”

“Shows their wild side” “Goes out their way”

“Creating the right culture to develop good relationships - from the start to the finish”

“I'm still in care but for them to stop treating you differently to a "normal child" like not having the the same things or having to have your social workers permission for things”

“They want you to feel "normal" but they don't make you feel like that.”

What can social workers do to support strong and loving relationships?



Head - What do professionals need to think about when talking about or supporting strong and loving relationships?

“Stop thinking we can't handle some information.”

“Confidentiality”

“Past experiences”

“Mind language used”

“Don't force anything or guilt trip”

“How repeating peoples experiences can be upsetting”

“Don't lie.”

What can Personal Advisers (PA's) do to support strong and loving relationships?



Hand - What training, resources or support do professionals need to support strong and loving relationships?

“More support to access information about lost people and support young people to do this”

“Care leaver help”

“Knowledge of lived experience and moves”

“Knowledge of uni and careers”

“I’m not a care leaver yet I would like them to help me with every day adult things like how to budget properly”

“Celebration events”

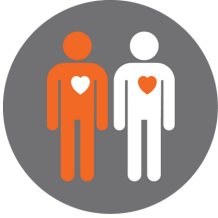
“More support given to yp in how to have/build good relationships both personal and professionally.. in turn yp get a better understanding of what is capable so they are aware of the standard it should be I guess”

“Including important people in the yp life. for example, the yp child”

Life skills - everyday life”

“If we say out of our personal life at this time just do it”

What can Personal Advisers (PA's) do to support strong and loving relationships?



Heart - What qualities or skills do professionals need to support strong and loving relationships?

“More knowledge”

“Supportive”

“Empathy”

“Good listener”

“Help with transport”

“Knowledge on how to connect with people for example family”

“A little hug every so often when you need it the most”

“Offer options to young people - what can you do? Simple things, don't overthink it”

What can Personal Advisers (PA's) do to support strong and loving relationships?



Head - What do professionals need to think about when talking about or supporting strong and loving relationships?

“Be mindful of how the YP left care- was it good or bad? Stressful or tense relationships?”

“Think about the care experience and how the young person views it- do they want to be reminded”

“How would they feel?”

“Being professional and keeping personal opinions to themselves”

“Be mindful of experiences with other professionals- were they consistent? Do they trust them?”

“Don't force or guilt trip anything- it's our life”



How often would you want to stay in contact with social workers, PA's and other professionals that are important to you?

“Professionally- every 6 weeks, socially- every month or two”

“Them to text you every so couple of days just to check up on you”

“I think more contact would be positive. Even e-mails or faxes would help”

“Every month or half month”

“Often”

“I think we should be able to stay in touch as much as we would like this is obviously fully dependent on weather social workers and teachers would like to keep contact and stay in their professions”

“I don't want to keep in touch with my social worker. (I'm in care still)”

“Depends on the issues Yp are facing at the time, should be up to each individual.”

“Every 6 weeks but if an incident happens as soon as possible”

“As much as I need too”



How would you like social workers, PA's and other professionals that are important to you to stay in contact with you?

“Text message, video call, coffee trips”

“I think social workers should be fully communicating with yp to discuss what they would like but also the social worker saying you know what I would feel more comfortable doing this”

“Just there if you need help just a simple as you need a lift to a doctors appointment or something like that”

“Support me through all my struggles with the contact”

“I'm not sure, just don't make it awkward I guess”

“Come to important meetings and meeting in different settings like hospitals, schools, and in the community”

“Help when we ask for it and listen to us and believe it all”

“Email or phone call”



What would help social workers and other professionals to stay in contact with you?

“Clear rules around GDPR and contacting”

“Keep your details up to date with each other”

“Have you email just incase if you change your phone etc”

“Even with texting you can create a dialogue”

“Exchange each others details”

“I don't know, I don't really want my social worker to keep in touch later in life.”

“Answering the phone as soon as possible”

“Have all types of communication for all types of person.”

“Wider recognition of that relationship”

“Asking where the person text the most so it's easier for them to contact their social worker”

“Use of social media ie WhatsApp”

What would you want to happen now (in the next 2 years)?

“All types of communication informed/ skills of how to help with all types due to deaf do not understand everyone who is talking”



What would you like to happen in the future (in the next 10 years)?

“British sign language taught to everyone and understand

“Listening to all and believe what we say is true

“Understand all/ most types of disabilities”

“Know how to help with our issues or know other that could be referred too for the help”



Additional Comments

“More support given to young people in how to have/build good relationships both personal and professionally. In turn young people get a better understanding of what is capable, so they are aware of the standard it should be I guess.”

“I'm still in care but for them to stop treating you differently to a "normal child" like not having the same things or having to have your social workers permission for things when they want you to feel "normal" but they don't make you feel like that.”

“Also If your showing your child like state your social care may not want to give you info cuz you're not "mature" when you are.”

“With my grandad- we had a really close bond but when I got put in care (9 years old) I wasn't allowed to see him anymore, I always got told he didn't want to sign this safety file (idk really) so I didn't really like him cuz I thought he didn't love me anymore and he died last year and only recently I got told my social worker at the time (I've had over 20 now) just wouldn't go to the house to see him. I hadn't seen him for about 6 years and I will never now.”

Key messages for policy teams:



Young people believe there should be more support given in how to have/build good relationships both personal and professionally.



Social workers and PA's are important to developing strong, healthy and respectful relationships.



Young people highlight barriers such as transport and red tape to keeping in contact with important people.



Young people also highlight that relationships take time, trust, understanding and empathy to develop.



Social workers and PA's should remove barriers to children and young people being able to have strong and loving relationships with the people that are important to them.

Further information

Check out other [online session](#) dates for future sessions

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch at: ANV@coramvoice.org.uk

