

A NATIONAL VOICE

coramVoice)))
getting young voices heard

Stable Homes, Built on Love

Activity Pack 1

Feedback

Stable Homes, Built on Love

What is Stable Homes, Built on Love?

The 'Stable Homes, Built on Love' strategy is the Government's plan for how to make children's social care work better. The strategy was published on 2nd February 2023 and sets out plans to:

- Address urgent issues facing children and young people
- Lay the foundations for whole system reforms
- Set national direction for change

A National Voice have been running a series of online sessions to talk to as many children in care councils and care leaver forums as possible about different areas of 'Stable Homes, Built on Love' and your ideas for an improved care system.

What we discuss will feed into the work the Department for Education (DfE) are doing to improve things for future children and young people.

We created three workshops, supported by the DfE, which explore different parts of 'Stable Homes, Built on Love'. We put them into an activity pack which was shared with children in care councils and participation groups so they could share their thoughts.

Stable Homes, Built on Love - Activity Pack 1

Activity pack 1 was launched on Thursday 6 July and includes activities on:

The 6 missions for children in care and care leavers

Mission 1: Strong and loving relationships by 2027

Extending corporate parenting principles

Who we heard from:

- Blackburn
- Cumberland
- Devon
- North Yorkshire
- Westmorland and Furness
- Wirral

87 children and young people aged 4-25.

Children and young people:

- Identify as LGBTQ+
- Are or were Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (or are migrants or seeking asylum)
- Have learning difficulties
- Have experience of kinship care
- Have experience of living in residential care
- Have experience of mental health issues



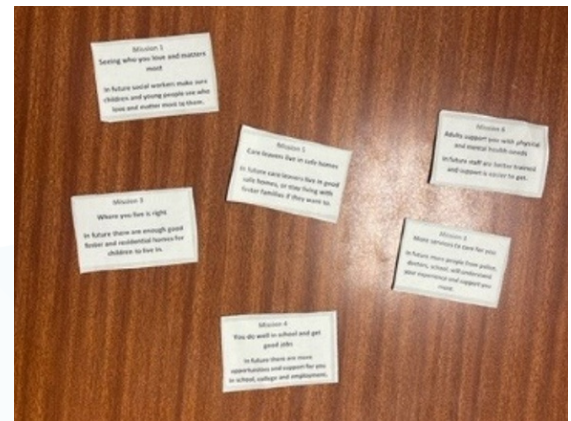
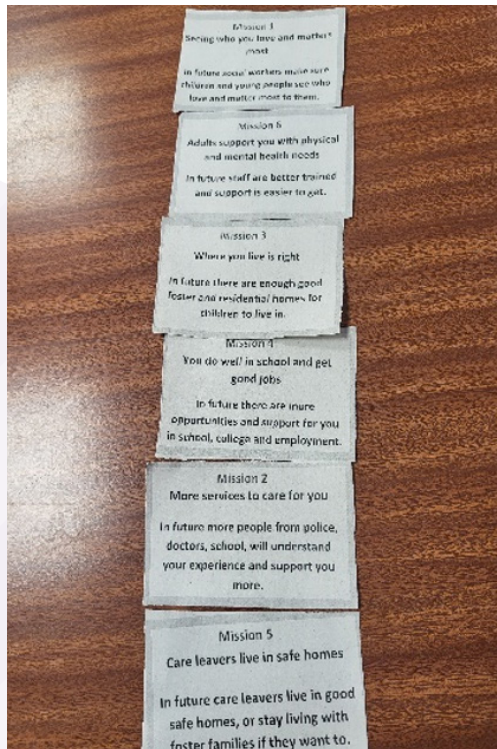
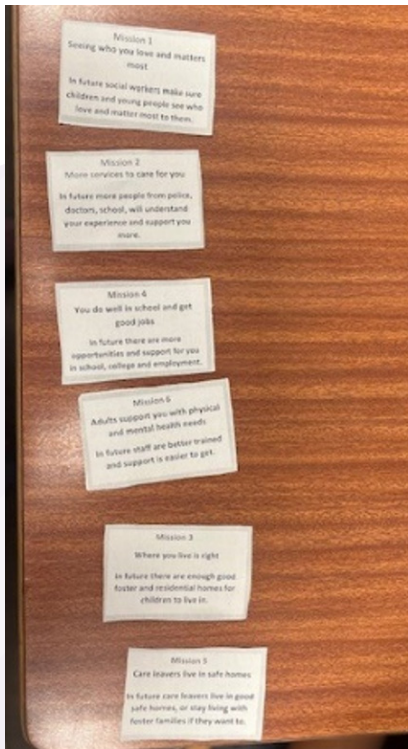
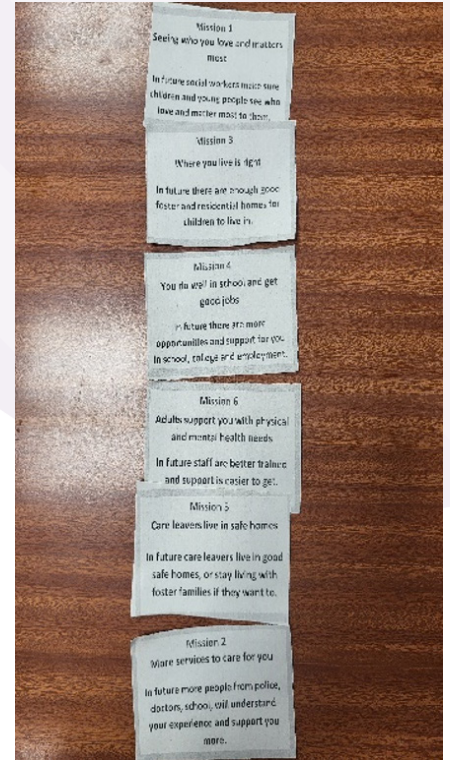
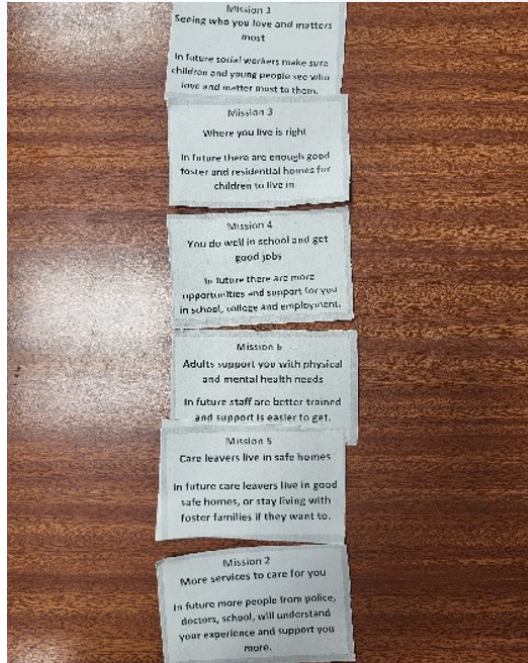
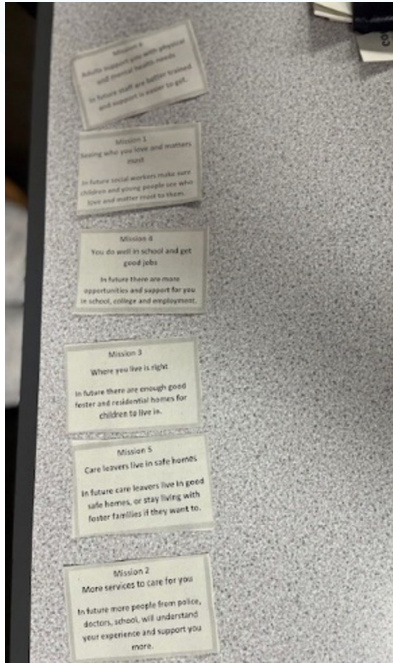
The 6 missions for children in care and care leavers

We explained that 'Stable Homes, Built on Love' has 6 missions to make care better for children in care and care leavers.

We asked children and young people to rank them in order of priority or to look at the 6 missions and discuss:

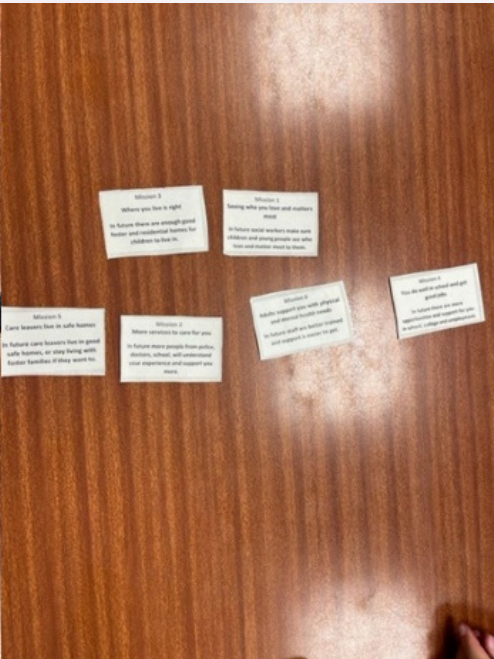
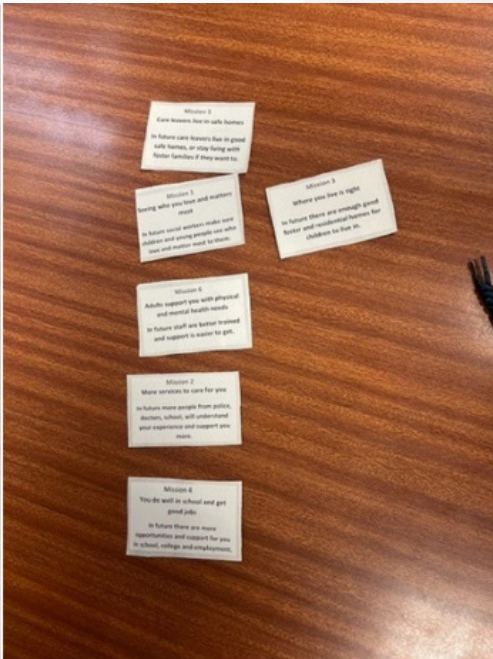
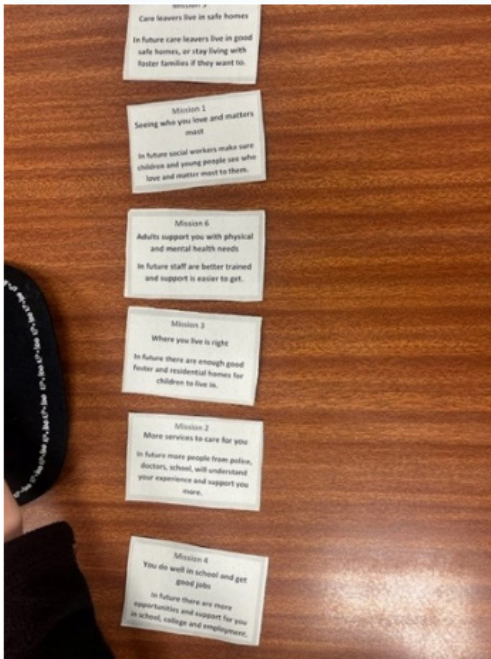
- What is good about this?
- What are you worried won't work about this?
- Any questions that you have for the Government about their plans?

For the groups that ranked the missions, mission one was a common theme to be at the top:



This activity opened up a lot of interesting conversations. Some young people struggled with some of the topics. The young people struggled to choose one thing which was the most important to them.

Two groups saw the 6 missions as equally important:



Missions for children in care and care leavers

Mission:	Welcome What is good about this?	Worried What are you worried won't work about this?	Wonder What questions do you have for the Government?
<p>Social workers and other practitioners make sure children and young people can see and spend time with the people who love and matter most to them.</p>	<p>Already felt supported – tried hard to keep care in family.</p> <p>Positive relationships.</p> <p>This has been evidenced already in are authority by some young people.</p> <p>Young people could feel more loved if they are surrounded by people who care about their wellbeing.</p> <p>Good that they are giving people the option to see the people they want to see (not just parents).</p> <p>As long as they are deemed appropriate.</p>	<p>Very optimistic time scale. Who decides who those people are?</p> <p>Will social works force ununhealthy relationships?</p> <p>Unrealistic expectations for social workers.</p> <p>Didn't happen, I lost contact with my grandparents. Not sure if they will track them down and if the grandparent (or whoever) will want it to happen.</p> <p>Time, place and money to happen? (eg what if the person lives a really long way away?).... Don't make promises you won't keep...</p>	<p>How will payments be distributed?</p> <p>Will young people be consulted?</p> <p>How will they help new families?</p> <p>How will this be monitored to ensure the young person is listened to and is followed on?</p> <p>Are they going to keep track and keep checking in/reviews.</p> <p>How will young people be kept safe?</p> <p>How you going to pay for it and how much money will be put into it?</p>



Missions for children in care and care leavers

Mission:	Welcome What is good about this?	Worried What are you worried won't work about this?	Wonder What questions do you have for the Government?
<p>We want to have more people and organisations act like, or be, corporate parents.</p>	<p>Good as some young people may feel like more support is given to them.</p>	<p>More support.</p> <p>Boost confidence for carer.</p> <p>Extra funding helps.</p> <p>Financial and responsibilities of additional organisations.</p> <p>Some young people may feel uncomfortable with more people knowing their personal information.</p>	<p>How will they keep the children safe?</p> <p>Could corporate parent be changed to another name (not child friendly)?</p> <p>How much authority outside of local authority and how much will this be monitored?</p> <p>Will there be enough staff, time, money, training for this to be done properly?</p> <p>How will you evidence this (locally and nationally) to an adequate standard in each region/county?</p> <p>Are you actually going to get this done?</p>



Missions for children in care and care leavers

Mission:	Welcome What is good about this?	Worried What are you worried won't work about this?	Wonder What questions do you have for the Government?
<p> We want to make sure there are enough good foster homes and children's homes for children to live in. We will do this by: </p> 	<p>Foster carers hard to adopt to new rules but overall good experience in foster care.</p> <p>Good for Wirral as there are new care homes being opened to a high standard.</p>	<p>Are foster cares doing it for the right reasons or not?</p> <p>Organisations making profits from children.</p> <p>Is the child being put first.</p> <p>Monitoring.</p> <p>Could the term 'corporate parents' be changed to Corporate Family – grandparents, sisters, aunts etc. I really can't see my PA as my 'Mum', she's only a couple of years older than me.</p> <p>People have different roles and not all of them are parental; its patronising.</p>	<p>How will this be achieved?</p> <p>Do you have enough money for this to be done properly locally and nationally to a good standard?</p> <p>What training will be provided to staff and carers?</p> <p>How are you going to monitor and ensure young people are properly cared for?</p> <p>Is there going to be enough support for neurodivergent/disable/mental illness and health children? (Statistically there's a higher number of young people that are neurodiverse/disabled or struggle with mental health).</p> <p>How are going to ensure they can be properly cared for and supported (training) and that everyone's needs are met so they don't have to move across the country because of their needs.</p> <p>This is why Care Experience should become a protected characteristic so we don't have so many 'mums and dads'. We want people to care for us and include us and understand us but not all try to be 'parents'.</p>

Missions for children in care and care leavers

Mission:	Welcome What is good about this?	Worried What are you worried won't work about this?	Wonder What questions do you have for the Government?
<p>We want to make sure children in care are supported to do well in school or get good jobs, including older children aged 16 to 19 years old. We will do this by:</p>	<p>I want to take all the advance education. I got a B and want to go to university.</p> <p>We like the support being offered with jobs and apprenticeships.</p> <p>Increase in bursary has proven to be appreciated.</p>	<p>I would have worried about cost [of university] but good that it's funded.</p> <p>If working cost of rent won't be provided in supported living.</p>	<p>How are you going to achieve this?</p> <p>Is there enough money to do this?</p> <p>What do they mean/what support is going to be given in schools/colleges?</p> <p>Are there enough staff/teachers to provide this?</p> <p>Will teachers have enough time to offer support properly?</p>



Missions for children in care and care leavers

Mission:	Welcome What is good about this?	Worried What are you worried won't work about this?	Wonder What questions do you have for the Government?
<p>We will make sure more care leavers live in safe homes by:</p>	<p>I live in a safe home.</p> <p>More money equals more opportunities.</p> <p>Can already see evidence of this (more money for young people when leave care).</p>	<p>If foster careers offer staying put placement lost for younger children.</p> <p>Increased money could lead to increased living expenses.</p> <p>Young people need more support leaving care, a one-off payment leaving care isn't adequate support to make more care leavers live in safe homes.</p> <p>What you say you are going to do isn't enough – what else are you going to do?</p>	<p>Why is rent so expensive in semi-independent causing young people to not look for jobs.</p> <p>Who is responsible for rental cost?</p> <p>How are they going to do this?</p> <p>How will they keep track of this?</p> <p>Are placements going to be regulated?</p>



Missions for children in care and care leavers

Mission:	Welcome What is good about this?	Worried What are you worried won't work about this?	Wonder What questions do you have for the Government?
<p>We want to make sure adults working with children in care and care leavers know how to support them with their physical and mental health needs.</p>	<p>Good to have adults to support you.</p>	<p>More money for mental health support – workers to be there weekly.</p> <p>Staff knowing the difference between supporting and enabling.</p> <p>This is really broad. Unrealistic? Support – will it be general or based on individual need?</p> <p>Will this actually happen? Equal support across the country?</p>	<p>How? How will they do it effectively?</p> <p>What level of training will adults need.</p> <p>What will this support look like?</p> <p>Staff qualifications and background checks?</p> <p>Who will provide the training? NHS?</p> <p>How will this be monitored/tracked?</p>
<div data-bbox="199 1317 359 1473" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>We will make sure children in care and care leavers can see doctors or nurses more easily.</p>	<p>No issues with dr/nurses appointments.</p> <p>Receive the care you need when you need it.</p>	<p>Practicality - What happens at the weekend?</p> <p>Equality and diversity should be recognised for their needs rather than the care leaver status.</p> <p>How? Why is this a mission.</p> <p>What is NHS response?</p> <p>Social imbalance.</p>	<p>How? Why is this a mission. What is NHS response.</p> <p>This is just too vague and fluffy...Surely the Government should be more ambitious for young people than this but if this is where we're at it shows what a mess the system is in; it should be a given that practitioners can support the young people they work with effectively.</p> <p>We know it doesn't happen though; practitioners definitely need more training but really the whole health system needs to work better, especially mental health.</p>

Other feedback comments:

- Throwing money at problems does not solve it
- Effective use of funding is important

Strong and Loving Relationships

The Government want every care-experienced child and young person to feel they have a strong, loving relationship.

It says 'Mission 1: By 2027, every care-experienced child and young person will feel they have strong, loving relationships in place. By 2027, 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.'



Cumberland
Council

A National Voice: Stable Homes Built on Love

Activity Pack 1

Strong and Loving Relationships: CORAM VOICE

Mission 1: Sets out to ensure that every care experienced child and young person will feel they have strong, loving relationships in place.

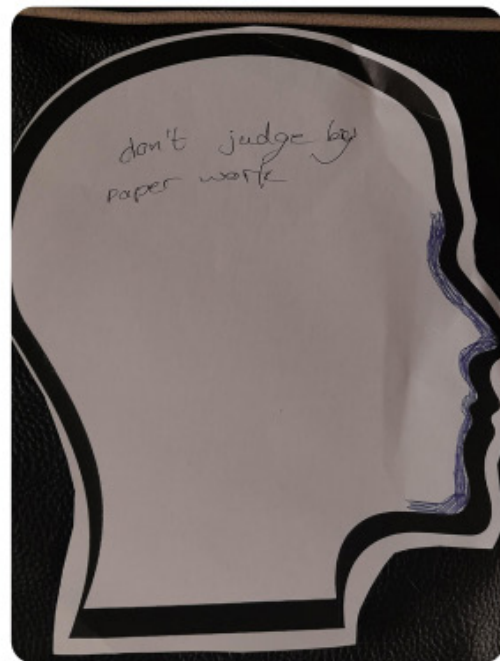
Heads Hearts and Hands: The aim of this activity is to find out how adults working with young people can help them develop strong, loving relationships by looking at what these adults need to think (Head), feel (Hearts) and do (Hands). This activity was completed by 22 young people from across Cumberland who attended an activity event on 25th August 2023.

Social Worker

Heads:

What do they need to think to make sure that every care experienced child and young person has strong, loving relationships.

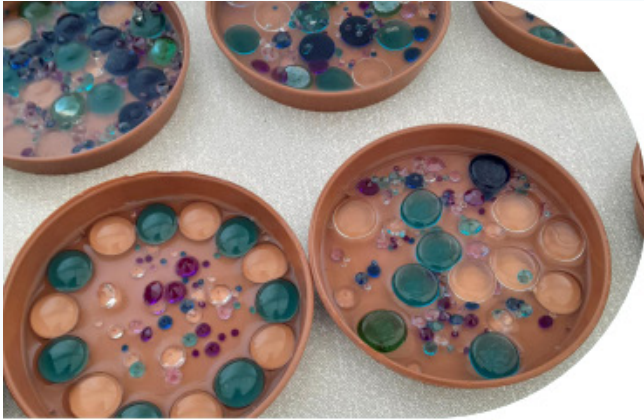
- Don't slow things down if I want something done.
- Listen and do.
- Talk to me.
- Don't interrupt.
- Understand me.
- Stay calm with me.
- Don't get angry.
- Don't judge.
- Want me to have a good life.



Hearts:

What should feel to make sure that every care experienced child and young person has strong loving relationships.

- Love.
- Care.
- Sympathy.



Hands:

What can they do to facilitate strong, loving relationships.

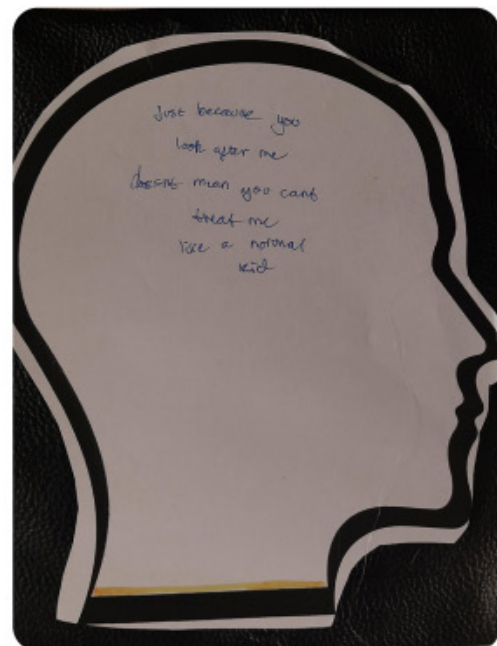
- Don't be annoying.
- Talk calmly.
- Listen to us.
- Do something about the problem you have and support you no matter what.
- Support me.
- Don't leave.
- Listen.
- Talk to you.

Foster Carer

Heads:

What do they need to think to make sure that every care experienced child and young person has strong, loving relationships

- Just because you look after me doesn't mean you know me.
- You must think that you need to listen to us.
- Don't talk about my needs to others.
- Remember I have been through a lot.
- If you buy me something I will think it's mine (my phone is mine).
- Remember to talk calmly.
- Listen.
- Be non-disrespectful.



Hearts:

What should they feel to make sure that every care experienced child and young person has strong loving relationships

- Love.
- Care.
- Sympathy.
- Encourage you to go out and play.
- Hope.
- Want you to have friends.
- That I need to see my mummy.



Hands:

What can they do to facilitate strong, loving relationships

- Take us to the park.
- Make me fish fingers (my favourite food).
- Support me.
- Love.
- Care.
- Help you with school and family problems.



IRO

Heads:

What do they need to think to make sure that every care experienced child and young person has strong, loving relationships

- That you should be happy.
- Not to make judgments based on paperwork.
- I need to sort things out.
- Do they have options about where they can live and do they know about them?
- What will help this relationship?
- I want them to know their sister as a sister not someone they see at birthdays.

Hearts:

What should they feel to make sure that every care experienced child and young person has strong loving relationships.

- Hope.

Hands:

What should they do to make sure that every care experienced child and young person has strong loving relationships.

- Sort meetings out before the last warning.



Teacher

Heads:

What do they need to think to make sure that every care experienced child and young person has strong, loving relationships.

- To have the want to teach.
- Don't always think that it's me because I'm in care.
- Help me.
- Try not to shout.
- HELP.
- If I must listen to you listen to me.
- I have lots of people to listen to so complaining to me won't work.

Hearts:

What should they feel to make sure that every care experienced child and young person has strong loving relationships

- Listen.
- Hope.
- Care.
- Talk to me.

Hands:

What should they do to make sure that every care experienced child and young person has strong loving relationships.

- Support me.
- Talk to me.
- Listen.



Strong and Loving Relationships: CORAM Voice

The Government want every care-experienced child and young person to feel they have a strong, loving relationship.

Mission 1: By 2027, every care -experienced child and young person will feel they have strong, loving relationship in place.

The consultation took place on Thursday 24th August and Monday 4th September a total of 27 young people from across Cumbria shared with us their thoughts on the questions below.



What makes good relationships?

Who are the important people in your life?	What are the things that are needed to make this relationship strong and loving?
Sisters	Sleepover with my sister
4 school friends at my old school	Playdates with my friends from my old school
Mum and Dad	Get to see them
Sister	Do an activity with them
Mum and Dad	Face time/What's app calls
Dad and Step-mum	Activity time with them
My mum	Spending time with her
Sister	To come and have tea at mine forever
Mum and Dad	Being able to love them still
Mum	I kiss my mum
My foster sister	To continue being allowed and able to be friends if one of us ever gets moved.
My old friend from my old school	Help to keep in touch with them
My other foster carer	Keep in contact with my old foster career
My granddad	Being able to call them
Mum and Dad	More time with them
My real siblings	See them more and do fun activities with them
My foster siblings	Being able to stay in contact with them
Friends	Go outside more with them
Girl friend	To be able to come to have a sleepover for 2 days
My foster mum	More one to one time with just her and me
My foster carer	She is the perfect match for me and I would like to stay there forever
My friends	Sleepover and play dates would help keep our relationship.
My mum	I only see her every 3 weeks and I would like to change that to more.



Working for Cumberland Council and Westmorland & Furness Council

Extending corporate parenting principles

The Government are thinking that this should apply to other bodies and organisations outside your local authority. They state:

Mission 3: By 2027, we will strengthen and extend corporate parenting responsibilities towards children in care and care leavers across the public sector

The Care Review highlighted that, while local authorities play a crucial role in delivering services to children in care and care leavers, other organisations also have an important role to play. The Government know that children in care and care leavers experience worse outcomes than their peers across a range of areas including loving relationships, health, education, employment and housing.

Our Promise: Home: Consultation



Working for Cumberland Council and
Westmorland & Furness Council

Working for Cumberland Council and Westmorland & Furness Council

Our Promise: Home: Consultation

Background

The Promise Ambassadors from across Cumbria for 2023 met on 12th April at Penrith Fire Station, 22 attended this meeting. The focus was on how young people can be supported in their experience of HOME, 1 of the 5 elements that makes Up Our Promise. They completed activities to find out what every HOME needs and what people supporting young people can do to support young people before during and after moving to a new home.

This activity was continued at the Cumbria CiCC: Activity Day: let's talk HOME, where 57 care experienced young people from across Cumbria came together to explore through opportunities designed to enable engagement, participation, and a dialogue around their experiences of feeling happy, safe and supported at HOME. Each group was supported and encouraged by adults in their groups to answer questions beyond yes and no, the format they were delivered in allowed this to happen. The activities included canoe raft, archery, enjoy a photo booth, and craft area and snakes and ladders. There was also the opportunity for all participants to help develop this years CiCC Celebrating Us awards by helping to design the day from the types of awards to the fun activities on offer.

Results

The Promise Ambassadors were invited to a virtual meeting on 24th May to go over the results from the HOME activities, they were challenged to think about what the results told them as well digesting and figuring out what they could do about what they have heard. The actions described below are all currently live and in the early stage of being developed and will continue to grow and change as they are developed further.

- My Family Leaflet: The majority of young people who attended the CiCC activity Day had not seen or knew what the My Family booklet was, the Promise Ambassadors would like to know if Social Workers are using it and if not why? They also wondered if the name could be changed to Our Home. Is there training around the use of this leaflet needed?
- Create a top tip/advice sheet for foster carers and social workers on ways to support young people moving to a new home
- Create an advice sheet for young people moving to a new home or recently moved to one.
- Create some short films that can be used about young people's experiences and to encourage people to find out more about fostering.

These actions were developed from the feedback from the events listed above, the Promise Ambassadors have used young people's voice to influence their actions. Please see below direct quotes from the activities.

What a young person needs to feel safe and secure in a new home:

- Home and family need to be welcoming
- To be confident carers will look out for them
- Emotional support from social workers
- Needs to know what the plan is
- One change at a time
- Meet the carer first
- Support to settle in
- Need carers number
- Short stays first
- Taken out to explore the area
- Needs to know where all the amenities are
- Needs to be told date when it is happening.. ..a heads up
- Mental support
- Needs own space
- Confident your social worker will do what they say.
- Needs to know you can ask questions
- Needs to visit the new home
- A quiet week to get know family/home before family and friends come to visit
- Time to talk
- Knowing your social worker will answer your calls and messages in the first few weeks
- Choices about who I can live with


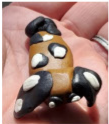


What a social worker can do to support a young person in a new home before during and after the move:






- Talk to them
- Tell them everything or we will imagine the worst
- Take them to meet the carers first
- Give us details dates, names, times
- Be nice and supportive
- Listen
- Keep in touch, ask us what is happening and if we like it there
- Move us if it isnt working
- Use the My Family Leaflet
- Be helpful
- Keep track of records
- Make sure all the paper work is complete
- In the first month do checks ups without telling foster carers
- Make sure it has all been risk assessed
- Help me sort my stuff into my new room
- Prepare them for the move ...lots of warning where possible.
- Don't say things your not going to do!
- Create a wellbeing plan with and for the young person involve the foster carer when making it.
- Don't tell us if this place doesnt work we could be put in a residential home anywhere in the country.
- Be there for us no matter what
- If the plan is for me to move in with my dad at 18 make sure you keep it on track to happening.
- Support a young person with what they need.... ASK THEM
- Don't say things your not going to do.

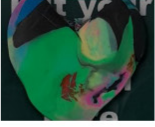

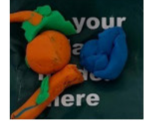


What foster carers can do to support a young person in their new home:




Safe Guarding training	Trust	Make Sure they have someone to talk to	T.V	Kindness
Give them space	Chill out space	To be someone to rely on	Kind and fair	Provide a nice room
Provide nice clothes	To have a pet or an option to.	Give emotional support	Make them feel loved	Understand why they are in care so they can talk to us about it
Someone to talk to	Wi-Fi	Distance	Social Space	Community
	Good personality	Dont be not normal and too nice.	A toy to snuggle into	

What every home needs (A selection of the models on recurring themes)

What Every Home Needs	Why does a home need this?	Why does it make it better?	Why have you made this?	What would you use it for
Bed 	So you can sleep comfortably	Comfort	Because sleep is good	Sleep
Dog 	So you have someone to help your mental health	It someone who doesn't judge you and cuddles you	Its important to me.	To talk to without judgement
Love and Trust 	Trust and love	Because then you can feel loved. Trust because if you can't trust the family then you will always be worried.	Because every family's needs and should have love and trust.	To make all of us feel loved
Peace 	When I'm stressed I need to be able to be peaceful	Because I will come round if you give me time and stop keep going on.	People don't understand when I'm angry I will stay angry. So leave me. Don't shout as I will shout.	To calm down

What Every Home Needs	Why does a home need this?	Why does it make it better?	Why have you made this?	What would you use it for
Love 	You want to feel loved	No love = depression and suicide.	Important to me	Boost confidence make me feel good.
People 	To be a family	When you are a family you can enjoy time together.	Because I have made 2 people and they are happy together	To be together as a family
Swing 	To let young people play on the swing.	To swing all of the stress out on the swing	It was the first idea that popped into my head.	To play with your family or something.
Sofa 	For family time	Some where to rest	I like to sleep on it	Sleeping and sitting on.
Trust 	You can tell them how you feel	You can tell them how you feel	A person to trust	Talking

What Every Home Needs	Why does a home need this?	Why does it make it better?	Why have you made this?	What would you use it for
Love 	You create relationships	You get bonding	Because every house needs it	To make friends
Heart 	Because	So it makes you feel loved.	Because some children when they go into care they may feel like their parents neglected them so they need to be shown love.	To give love and help others feel love.
Food/ Beanbag 	Because people need food and you need somewhere to sit	Food makes me feel happy, if we have no food I'm grumpy.	To live	Tree, beanbag, food all make me happy
Grape 	To survive	If you are fed you feel loved and cared for	It was my first thing I thought of.	To eat and feed people
Kindness 	So you can grow and become who you want to be.	So you can make a strong bond.	Getting to know each other.	

What Every Home Needs	Why does a home need this?	Why does it make it better?	Why have you made this?	What would you use it for
Love 	Because it is better if everyone feels loved.	Because I think every home needs love.	To show people that you care.	
Pets 	To have responsibility	Fun	Because it can feel like your in the ocean alone.	Constant and love
X-Box 	I like to play on it a-lot	So I don't get bored	I like X-Box	Play games

Snakes and ladders questions and answers

What would help you on the first day you came to live with your carers?

- Support
- Xbox games
- Sorting my stuff out into my draw
- Snuggling into toys
- Dog
- People you know

What would make you feel welcome in your new home?

- Friendly face
- Not sure
- Show you around
- Tea/drink

Have you ever been given my family leaflet by your social worker.

- No
- No
- No-Never!
- No

What are your experiences of introductions what could we have done better? what did

- No it was good
- CRAP!
- Being not normal advice be themselves/give them ice cream.

What are your experiences of introductions, what went well and why?

- Being a family
- Way too nice
- Good
- Not sure

If you were an inspector , what questions would you ask and to who, to find out what the home is like?

- What is it like to live here?
- Do you like your home?

If you were an inspector, what would you want to see?

- Is the house tidy- Is it fit enough for children to live and sleep in.
- Are they alive?
- Food that is not mouldy
- A nice house
- A nice room
- No bugs!
- PIZZA!

What makes you feel cared for at home?

- Sister and mum look after me and my health conditions
- Affection
- Told story
- Harry Potter
- That they love me/Show me with actions
- When you have a problem being able to speak to them.
- Supporting you
- Being there for you
- Dog

What makes you feel happy where you live?

- People talk to mum and dad
- See friends/family
- My mummy!
- Food
- Pets

What needs to happen to help a young person feel safe and secure when they move into a new home?

- Make sure your okay
- Get to know the person a lot better
- Don't move them
- Have own space
- Don't say things you're not going to do
- Being loved
- Prepare them lots of warning

What does a social worker need to do to help a child before and after they have moved into a new home?

- Reassure them
- Come and see them
- Like them being kind
- Prepare them lots of warning

What can a foster carer do to support a child/young person coming to live with them?

- Make sure your okay and that you want to live there
- Make them feel welcome
- Give them a hug
- Make you laugh
- Leave them alone for a while

Do you feel like you can talk to who you live with about why you are in foster care?

- Yes
- No
- No
- All ready know

We need to make sure that every child in care has a safe and loving home where they are happy. How could we do this?

- By inspecting
- Visits and know before
- Giving them time to adjust
- Better matching
- Own room

If you were Prime Minister, what would be the most important thing you would want to change in children's social care?

- Make sure everyone is looked after
- More activities
- Homework. Free school dinners
- Make social workers take lie detectors
- Making sure that they have good mental health
- To have more options of who you want to live with?
- See Family More



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