

# Coram Voice

## ‘Stable Homes, Built on Love’ Engagement Work - Feedback

### Session 1 - The Children's Social Care National Framework and Dashboard



**Stable Homes, Built on Love**



The Children's Social Care National Framework and Dashboard

## Children's Social Care National Framework and Dashboard

The first online session for children and young people took place on Thursday 20 July 6.00-7.30pm. The session looked at the Children's Social Care National Framework – what children's social care will do and who will do it. The policy team were interested in how they could create a version which children and young people could access and use.

### Who we heard from:

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



# HOW

do you find out about how local authorities and social workers should help & support children and young people?

## Answers included:

'social worker', 'foster carer', 'websites', 'local offer', 'PA/ support worker' and 'not sure' or 'luck normally'



"By arguing with social workers until they tell you"

"Anyone who works for the local authority should give you any information"

"By researching and having to try and translate legal jargon into English. Having to grow up as a kid reading adult documents to try and teach yourself"

"I go onto a government forum. You can request information and a member of the team send an email back to you. This however can take time to get a reply and you are never guaranteed a reply"



# WHO

do you ask about your rights and entitlements and questions about being in care?

The group said that there was a range of people that they ask questions about their rights and entitlements and questions about being in care including 'foster carer', 'IRO', 'Advocate/ children's rights', 'PA', 'teachers' and 'charities.

"I do my own research"



"Also, if you act like a kid they don't always seem to trust you with the info per say even though you are a kid it's so strange"



# WHEN you read/hear information what format is most useful? (e.g. website, video etc)

Young people said that there was a range of ways to make information useful including: 'website – national and local', 'social media – twitter, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook', 'short videos' and 'face-to-face'.



“My local authority make flash cards and stories for young children”

“Video or pictures are best- something eye catching and shorter (not huge paragraphs)”

“A face to face meeting where we can go over information. I find websites give too much info and it too much to take in // may not be relevant”

“Easy read which is suitable for autism, face to face to be able to ask questions, and websites such as advocacy”

“Having multiple access points like the internet or leaflets for the maximum engagement”



# HOW

would you tell children and young people about how local authority and its social workers should help children and young people?

Young people said that there was a range of ways to make sure children and young people know how their local authority and it's workers should help children and young people including 'face to face meetings', 'videos on social media', 'website that are easy read and accessible', 'story books for younger children' and 'text message with some information or live chat'

"A third party group like [A National Voice] ANV if you are uncomfortable with talking with the social worker"



"Everyone should be made aware of support they can get and services that should be offered to them by the local authority"

"I would make all children and any relive my personal aware of the duty number if they cannot contact the social worker, next steps, support systems that are available to them and housing options."

"Social workers go into schools from young ages (reception) and do playgroup presentations about who they are and how they can help. Give out a free text phone number for older children and websites which are bullet points so not overwhelming"



# WHO

would tell children and young people about how social workers should help children and young people?



Young people said that 'everyone that works with children and young people' should be telling them about how social workers can help children and young people. Other things included 'foster carers', 'IRO's', 'teachers' and 'safeguarding lead in nursery's, schools and colleges'

"Teachers, foster parents, adoptive families, care home// shared accommodation staff members, police officers, anyone who may work with children."

"Members of the public should be aware of some help and contacts to aid young people in a crisis/breakdown"

"All involved. First the school as the school would have a relationship with the child. They would also not have negative unhelpful bias views on SW which could put the child off talking to the SW. Then once a bond has formed then the SW can start to introduce new members to the child"



# WHEN

would you tell children and young people about how social workers should help children and young people?



Young people said that it should have when there was a change such as 'I needed it when I was pregnant with my daughter', 'I needed it when I wanted to go onto higher education' or 'when leaving care'. Where others believed that it should happen 'ASAP' or 'when the person is ready.'

"I don't think this should be a time frame. I think everyone should be aware no matter what. If someone needs to know the information and cannot get it because it is hidden// not provided it won't help"

"Throughout school it should be covered so everyone is aware and can support their peers and themselves"

"Universal credit have a care leaver work coach who works with care leavers. This information is not passed around enough and not a lot of people are aware the job centre provide this support. I was not aware until my YPA rang the job centre. They should support us more not keep the information from us."





# WHEN

would you tell children and young people about how social workers should help children and young people?



“When I first went into care I was given a leaflet and information BEFORE it was made official. So I knew my information beforehand. This really helped with me as I then knew what would happen, and nothing came as a surprise or just pushed onto me.”

In the context of timescales - “I like the fact that the info was broken into time frames [refers to young person] - maybe you could just give them the 1st week, 1st month”

Young person responded – “Yeah, it was really helpful that they broke it down but still had everything I would need in my time”

“Mine was with a choice. I had 2 leaflets given and had to choose a section 21 or something else? For me I handled it okay however I know others who said it is too much pressure at once.”



# WHAT should children and young people know about how social workers should help them?

Young people said there was a lot of information that should be shared with them including 'contact details', 'type of support and what is available', 'what they are promising' and 'signposting to other support'.



“They should know about the places they can access financial support”

“Slower and smoother transition and at the speed for all of the children and young person”

“Everything that they are entitled to at certain parts in their life because a care leaver has different entitlements than children in care have”

“I should have all the information and guidance for support to the plans off the moving forward plans in the appropriate age groups”



“We should be given phone numbers. The amount of time I can't contact my YPA because she don't answer or goes on leave with no notice and I try to find the duty number but can never find it. I think this should be more assessable.”

“I think each child should be given some sort of action plan with different branches so their is a plan in case if something may not happen // falls of the wagon.”



## Key messages for policy teams:



Children and young people want information which is relevant to their journey and information which can support them to plan for their futures



Children want age appropriate, accessible, bite sized and child-friendly information



Information should be available for parents, social workers, foster carers and other professionals so they can support children and young people to understand it



That not all children and young people have access to the internet and will require written information.



Having multiple access points like the internet or leaflets will support maximum engagement



Local and national websites are useful so young people can do their own research



All professionals working with children and young people will need to understand rights and entitlements for children in care and care leavers, this includes the general public



Financial support: As someone on ESA, SDP, PIP, housing benefit and student loans at university, the care leaver team can't help me, the job centre can't help me and nor can the citizens advice because it's too "confusing"



There are times when children and young people have to move from one home to another, it's not always their choice. There's the emotional side to consider and support available to help with that process.

## 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](mailto:ANV@coramvoice.org.uk)

