

Bright Spots findings: Friends and siblings



The Bright Spots programme

- Explores how children in care and care leavers (aged 4-25+) themselves feel about their lives
- Developed by Coram Voice & Professor Julie Selwyn (University of Oxford) with children and young people to measure what they felt made their lives good.

From Surviving to Thriving

- Our latest report pulls together findings from thousands of children and young people over the last 10 years.



27,000

responses

100,000+

written

comments

Background

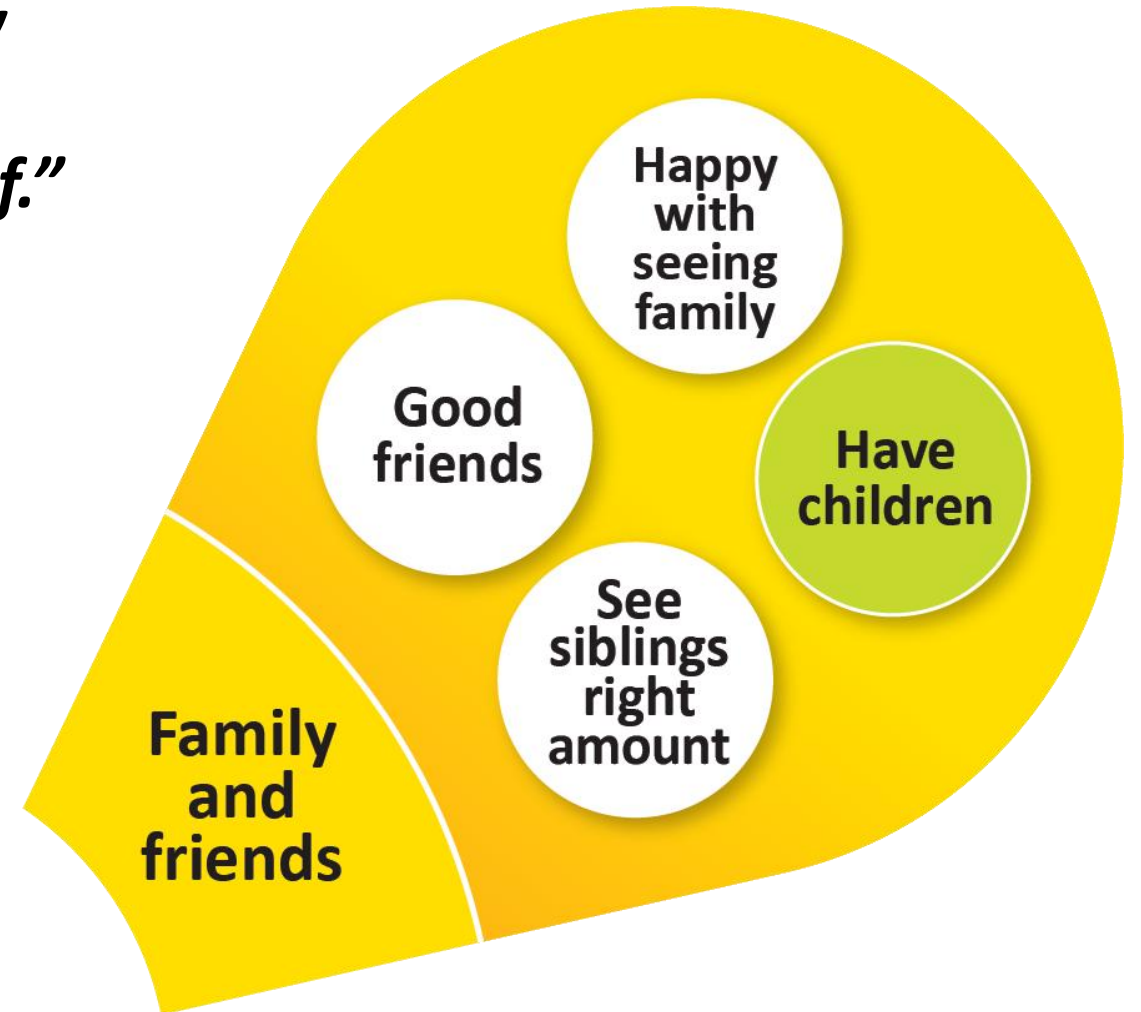
Our research
identified
Seven
drivers of
well-being



“My brother is my best friend and the only person in my family. Love him more than my self.”

16-25-year-old

Relationships with friends & family, especially siblings, is one of the seven drivers of well-being



"I would like to stay in touch with the children of my foster carer when I leave, because they are my friends and they also make me happy and we have lots of fun."

8-11-year-old

Children and young people have different experiences depending on where they live

Around **half** of children living with foster carers or family and friends feel they **see their brothers and sisters** the 'right' amount compared with less than a **third** of children in residential and other accommodation



“I live with 2 of my sisters and get to see one of my brothers for just the right amount. However, my younger brother and sister were adopted and I don't get to see them and I want to see them.” 8-11-year-old

Happiness
with family
time changes
as you get
older



8-11yrs

49%

**Amount
I see my
brothers and
sisters is
“just right”**

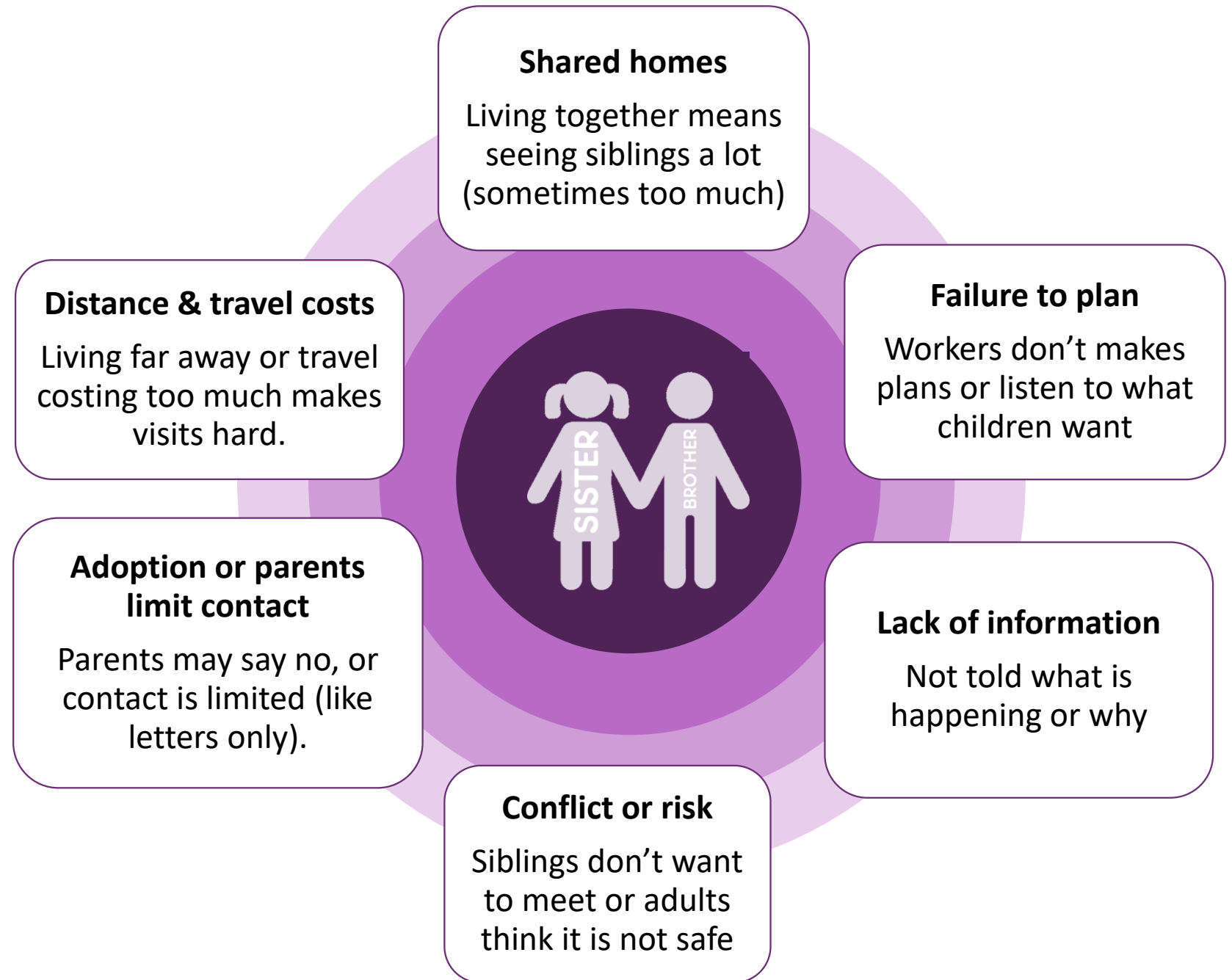


11-18yrs

43%

“I used to see Mum and older brother three times a week. It has been cut down to once a week and this makes me sad. I don’t know why contact was cut down.” 8-11-year-old

Things that can affect seeing brothers and sisters



Siblings are a source of emotional support for care leavers

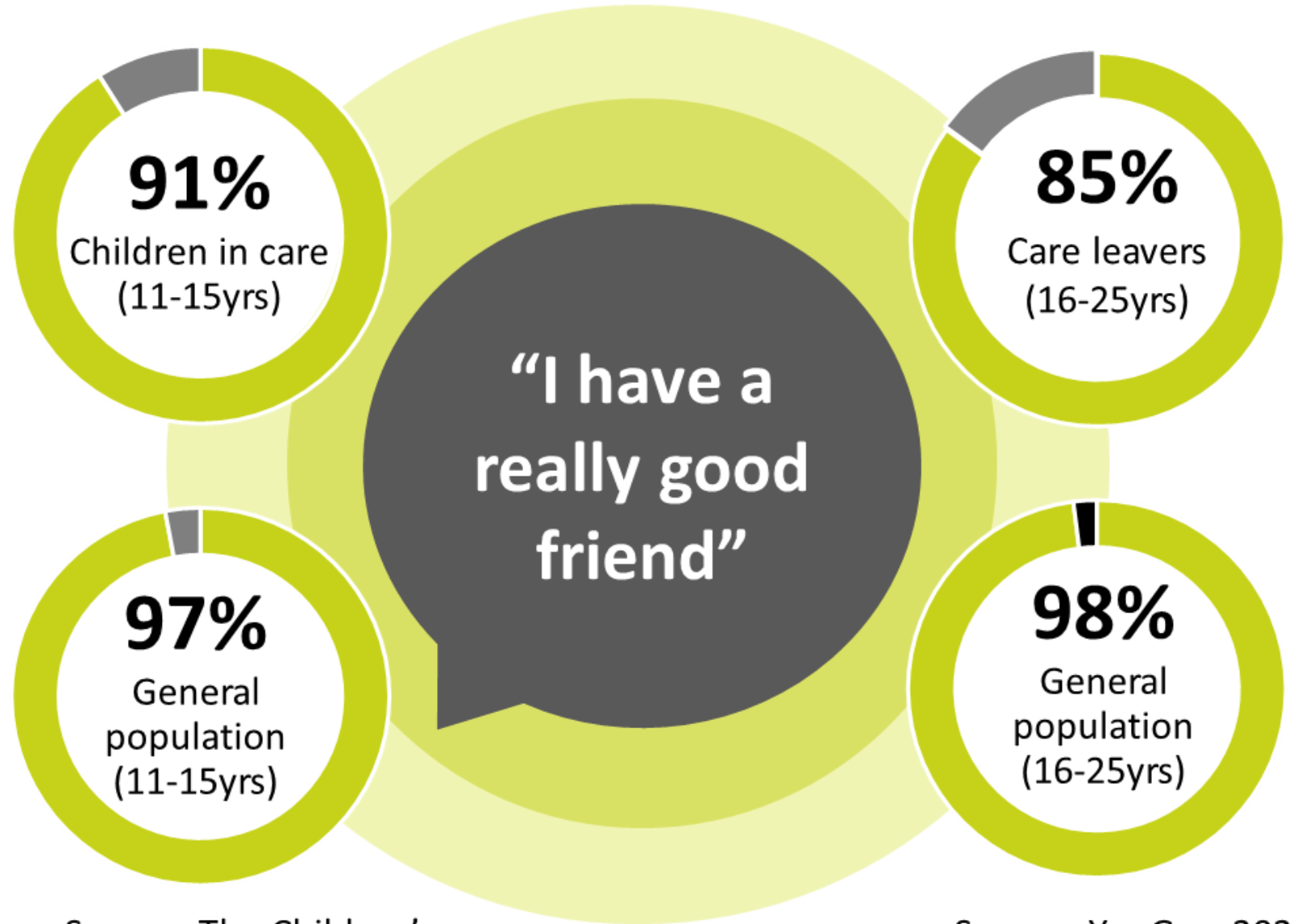


1/4
of care leavers
say their brothers
or sisters give them
emotional support

"I am really happy where I live, I'm so proud of myself with how I have got my house. Its on a new housing estate in an area where I want to be. I rent the house off my brother who I am very close too.

16-25-year-old

Although most had a good friend, fewer children in care and care leavers did, compared to those not in care



Source: The Children's Society, 2020

Source: YouGov, 2021

“Money stops me. I would like to go to concerts as I have never been and birthday parties for friends as I cant afford to go as cost of present something to wear and my meal is too much...”

16-25-year-old

Friends were the most common source of emotional support for care leavers



**2 out of 3
care leavers
say their friends give
them emotional
support**

"They are all amazing especially my two best friends (one of which is a care leaver). They both support me, believe in me and are always there."

16-25-year-old

Children and young people want to be like other young people

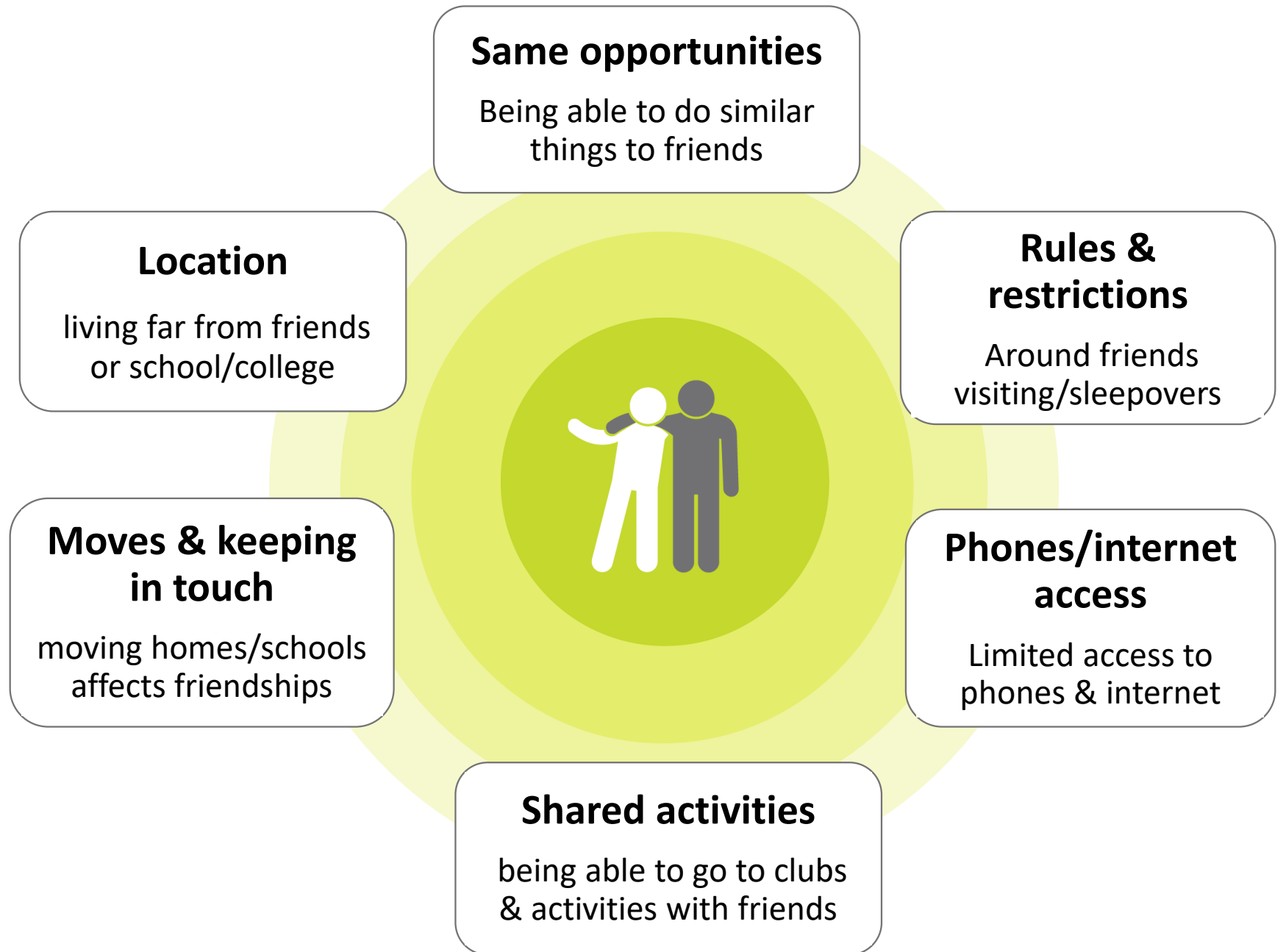


1 in 5

children in care felt that they could not hardly ever or never do similar things to their friends.

"I would like to use the Internet and Facebook to talk to my friends. I would like to be more independent and go out by myself and my friends like other kids do. 11-18-year-old

What affects children & young people's friendships



“I just want to be able to sleep at a friend’s house without having police checks.” 8-11-year-old