

# Supporting Young People Leaving Care

Work with children and young people to prepare them for adulthood, citizenship and independence  
CPD presentation slides.



# Course Objectives

**By the end of this course participants should:**

- Understand the legislative foundation for young people leaving care
- Have an understanding about their part in the Pathway Planning process
- Be able to signpost children to services and facilities, both locally and nationally that support transitions to independence
- Have an understanding of the development and complex emotional issues for young people leaving care

# Learning outcomes

## **The learner will be able to:**

1. Understand the issues affecting young people who are looked after, staying put or leaving care
2. Understand how to support young people who are looked after or leaving care
3. Know about the statutory and legal frameworks in relation to young people who are looked after or leaving care

# Training Support and Development Standards reference links

- **5.3 a:** Significant milestones that mark transition in the lives of children and young people, and the range of responses to them
- **5.3 b:** Understand how to support individual children and young people through significant life changes and challenges
- **5.3 c:** Be able to work with young people to develop skills, self-confidence and knowledge to prepare them for adulthood and independent living

# Care leavers struggle

- Care leavers struggle to reach the same levels of educational attainment as their peers and often find it difficult to make a successful transition to adult life. They are overrepresented in prison populations, and are more likely to be unemployed, single parents, mental health service users and homeless than those who grew up within their own families.
- Research shows that the longer a young person stays with their foster family, the better the outcomes – being able to stay with their foster carers until 21 will give them a better chance of succeeding when they do live independently.

# Mental Health of Children in Care

- Children who enter care in adolescence for abuse, neglect or family breakdown often have an established level of emotional and behavioural problems that make it less likely they will settle and do well in care (Sinclair et al, 2007; Ward et al, 2008).
- In this group are those who continue to experience placement instability, whose care careers are more likely to be marked by offending, substance misuse, running away, truancy and school exclusion. These young people leave care for independent living at a very early age, often as a result of the behaviour
- (Source: Promoting the Wellbeing of Children in Care: Messages from Research (2014: 242)

## Promoting the Wellbeing of Children in Care: Messages from Research 2014, NSPCC: 242

- One early English study of care leavers found evidence of a range of physical and mental health problems (Saunders and Broad, 1997; Broad, 1999).
- While almost half of the young people (48 per cent) reported at least one long-term physical health condition .... 245 had long-term mental health problems including eating disorders, depression or phobias. In addition, over a quarter reported heavy drinking and two-thirds used drugs regularly.

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# Preparing for adulthood

- Moving out of your pad to live independently' means giving up some of the protection and dependency and being responsible for your own behaviour
- For example losing your Oyster/travel card and having to fund a new one, running a bank account, paying mobile phone charges or buying cleaning materials for a home to shopping for the basics should be experiences young people should be prepared for.



# Think Back

Workbook page 1



- 1. To the first time you had a place to call your own and remember how you felt?**
- 2. Think about what help you during your first day, week months after moving on to live independently?**
- 3. What sort of things didn't you prepare for?**
- 4. Would you have like to stay put until you were 21 or did you leave home beyond age 21?**
- 5. What have you learnt, from your experience of moving on, that may help you to promote the needs and rights of a young person leaving care?**

# What Children in Care who have left care said:

- The amount of worry **young people** express towards leaving care **who have left care:**
- 61% - Yes I did worry
- 32% - No I didn't worry
- 7% - Not sure



## What care leavers' said (2)

- ❑ Those who are about to leave care said:
- ❑ 18% said, yes I am worried
- ❑ 64% said, no I'm not worried
- ❑ 18% said, I'm not sure

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# Fostering Standards (2011)

- ❑ 2.3) Foster carers meet children's individual needs as set out in the child's placement plan as part of the wider family context.
- ❑ 2.4) Children exercise choice in the food that they eat, and are able to prepare their own meals and snacks, within the context of the foster family's decision making and the limits that a responsible parent would set.

# Fostering Standards (2011)

- ❑ 2.5) Children exercise choice and independence in the clothes and personal requisites that they buy and have these needs met, within the context of the foster family's decision making and the reasonable limits that a responsible parent would set.
  
- ❑ 2.6) Children develop skills and emotional resilience that will prepare them for independent living

# Fostering Standards (2011)

- ❑ 2.7) Children receive a personal allowance appropriate to their age and understanding, that is consistent with their placement plan. **This sub-standard is not applicable to short break placements.**
  
- ❑ 11.5) Where children are leaving the foster family, they are helped to understand the reasons why they are leaving. Children are supported during the transition to their new placement, to independent living or to their parental home.
  
- ❑ 11.6) Foster carers are supported to maintain links with children moving on, consistent with their care plan.

# Responsibility

- **NMS 3.4)** Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour in a way that is appropriate to their age and abilities.



# Responsibility (2)

**NMS 12.1)** Children are supported to:

- ❑ a. establish positive and appropriate social and sexual relationships;
- ❑ b. develop positive self-esteem and emotional resilience;
- ❑ c. prepare for the world of work and or further or higher education;
- ❑ d. prepare for moving into their own accommodation;
- ❑ e. develop practical skills, including shopping, buying, cooking and keeping food, washing clothes, personal self-care, and understanding and taking **responsibility for personal healthcare;**
- ❑ f. develop financial capability, knowledge and skills;
- ❑ g. know about entitlements to financial and other support after leaving care, including benefits and support from social care services

# Understand the issues affecting young people who are looked after or leaving care

Workbook page 2

## Question

1. List several social, emotional and personal issues that might arise for young people who are leaving care
2. Describe four sources of information and support services which are available to support young people who are leaving care?

# Understand how to support young people who are looked after or leaving care

Workbook page 2

3. How do you (or intend to) enable young people to explore their views, choices and perceptions of their care situation or change of situation and to understand the potential consequences of their choices?

4. How do you encourage young people to maintain positive relationships and contact with family, carers and/or significant others?

## The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010

- The responsible authority must assess the needs of each relevant child who does not already have a pathway plan, and each former relevant child falling within section 23CA (*further assistance to pursue education or training*), in accordance with this regulation(a).

## Promoting the Wellbeing of Children in Care: Messages from Research 2014, NSPCC: 248

- Evidence shows that psychological and social changes during adolescence may lead to an onset of new mental health difficulties such as psychosis or eating disorders, or make existing difficulties worse (Brodie et al, 2011).
- Findings from the evaluation of the Staying Put pilot suggest, the opportunity to stay on will be more likely if the relationship between the young person and foster carer is familial, the young person wants to stay, and emotional or behavioural problems are minimal (Munro et al, 2012).

# Getting advice and information (Children's Rights 2007)

Where young people would go for advice about education:

- Carers (40%)
- School staff (31%)
- Staff of children's homes (12%)
- Connexions workers (10%)

# When to you start preparation for independence?

1. Is there such a thing as an age when you should start preparing a child/young people for independence?



# YOUNG PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO THE **I**NDPENDENT **R**EVIEWING **O**FFICERS' HANDBOOK (2013:11)

- **Planning for when you leave care should start long before you actually have to leave.** The "Handbook" suggests that this should be as young as 14 years of age for children who have special educational needs. Although ages for other children aren't suggested, **IROs** will want to begin looking at planning for children leaving care at an early stage.

# What is Pathway Plan and what areas are covered by such plans?

Workbook page 4



# PATHWAY PLANS

- Assessments and Pathway Planning
- Young people will be asked questions about their wishes and hopes for the future for different areas of their life, such as their education, family and social relationships and practical skills



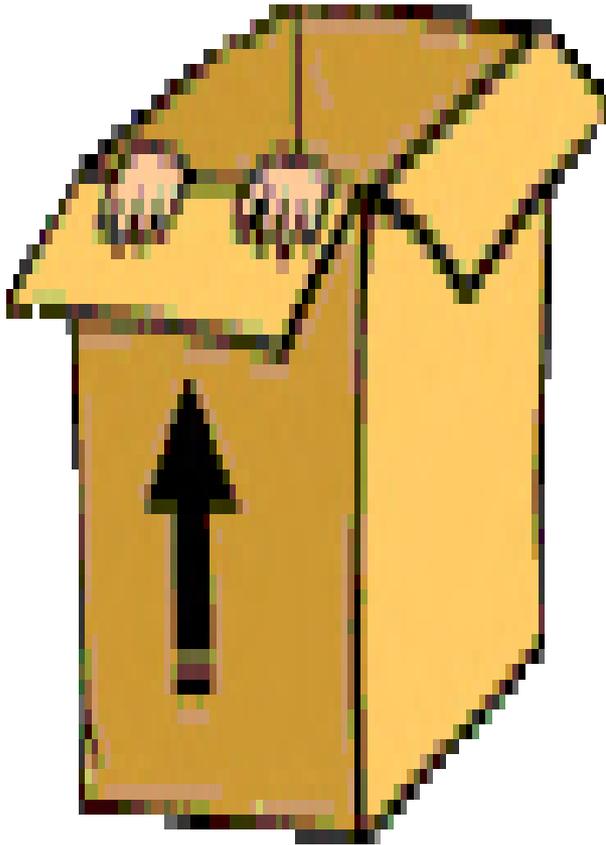
# Carrying on with education after school (Children's Rights 2007)

- Over two thirds (67%) **told us they were very likely to carry on**
- **with their education, either by staying on at school or by going to college. One in ten**
- **(10%) told us they thought they were not likely to stay on**
- The top three reasons given for wanting to stay on at school or go to college were (in order):
- **to get a better future, to get the qualifications needed for the job the person has already chosen, and because they like studying and want to learn more.**

## Why young people want to go on with their education (Children's Rights 2007):

- “I want to be able to give my children a better future when I have them”. “I enjoy learning and want to get a good job”*
- “I want to further my education to help further my life,*
- my career aspects, so to get myself out of poverty and so I can start a fresh life”*
- “I want to have a nice family and lots of money”*
- “I want to go to university because I know that this will open job opportunities that I have dreamed of. I know*
- other people in the home have gone to university and they have done very well”*

# Areas covered in a Pathway Plan.



- Staying put arrangements, if appropriate
- Personal Support
- Accommodation
- Education and Training
- Employment
- Family and Social Relationships
- Practical and Other Skills
- Financial support
- Health Needs
- Back-up Plans (contingency Planning)

## SSD Satisfaction with young people's involve in individual planning (National Childrens' Bureau, 2000)

- Very satisfied – 4 or 12%
- Quite satisfied – 20 or 61%
- Quite dissatisfied – 6 or 18%
- Very dissatisfied – 0
- Not answered – 3 – 9%

# Supportive Planning

1. We have just looked at areas of a Pathway Plan.
2. In your groups I would like you to flip chart the type of things you would expect foster carers/residential care workers to be doing with young people leading up to the Pathway Plan and beyond (Independent living skills)
3. Please state 'why' each listing is important?
4. Also consider what barriers may hinder young people accessing independent living care services?

# Planning (2)

- Daily Routines
  1. Washing Clothes
  2. Writing course assignments
  3. If a independent young person are having something delivered, someone would need to be present for the delivery
  4. Maintenance, for example: pluming, electricity (dangerous things)
  5. Security: locks on doors and windows, smoke alarms etc

# Planning (3)

- Cooking, for example planning menus in advance, buying fruit and vegetables, being careful when storing/reheating cooked food (bacteria like salmonella – which causes food poisoning)
- Clothing, for example checking labels for instructions (do not tumble dry, dry clean only)
- Washing and ironing
- Personal Finance

# Young people's views on what they think is useful information & advice

- ❑ Contraception, safe sex, decorating. 'I had courses on things like that from the Housing Association.
- ❑ What are the experiences I will face when I have left: friends, hazards
- ❑ Bills how to cope; - the reality



# Care leavers need financial support to help them go to university

- ❑ Children who grow up in care may abandon education at 18, but that does not mean they are not eager to learn.
- ❑ Eileen Munro spent her childhood in care. She left school at 16 and returned to education 16 years later. "I absolutely adored education. I used to steal library books as a child," remembers Eileen Munro, 47, who spent her childhood in the care system.



# Quiz

1. What is an eligible child?
2. What is an 'relevant child'?
3. What is a former relevant child?
4. What is a qualifying child?
5. What is an IRO?



Workbook page 6

# Over to you

- Please write a short reflection about what you have learnt from the EMPT course materials
- Use the assessment criteria to include each area that you feel competent in and give areas of the criteria that you think need further training around?
- Complete your evaluation form and return to the facilitator



# Children's commissioner 2018:7

- ❑ Stability can be the difference between children flourishing in their environment, or having the difficulties they have already had to endure further compounded. Instability makes it harder for a child to form positive trusting relationships with their carers, teachers and social workers, and makes them feel less safe.



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