



CHAMPS

Leadership
Group

2020: OUR EXPERIENCE, OUR VOICE

OUR PILLAR ASKS

2019 was a big year for Highland Champs. We formed a new Leadership Group and invited care experienced young people to come together, share their stories and identify their priorities for change to care in Highland. These priorities were informed by the young people's own experience of care and what they know about their family and friends who have experienced our care system. Young people spoke of challenging and often traumatising times in their lives where they felt there was a lack of support, poor provision, an absence of knowledge or understanding from professionals, and perhaps most important - a feeling that those who were there to care for them often appeared uninterested in building the relationships required to do so. They also spoke of the people who had been there and made a difference.

THE PROCESS



IDENTIFY

We identified issues under each of our six pillars which affected care experienced young people in Highland.

PRIORITISE

We spent time prioritising these issues, placing those most important to us at the top of the list.

SHARE

We have collated our 'pillar asks' and have started to share these with our corporate parents.

The six pillars are...

**RIGHTS & PARTICIPATION, EDUCATION & TRAINING,
HOUSING & ACCOMMODATION, EMPLOYMENT, YOUTH &
CRIMINAL JUSTICE and HEALTH & WELLBEING.**

Our priorities for change...

RIGHTS & PARTICIPATION

THE HIGHLAND CHAMPS WANT TO SEE
POSITIVE CHANGES TO...

OUR UNDERSTANDING
& EDUCATION ABOUT
THE CARE JOURNEY

OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH
STAFF AFTER CARE - AND
CONTINUITY WHILST IN CARE

ADVOCACY & OUR
INVOLVEMENT IN
DECISION MAKING

YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE
"FRINGES OF CARE" TO
BE SUPPORTED

THE "BAD KID"
STEREOTYPE AND
NEGATIVE IMAGES

FAMILY/SIBLING CONTACT

EDUCATION

THE HIGHLAND CHAMPS WANT TO SEE
POSITIVE CHANGES TO...

EDUCATION ABOUT
INDEPENDENT LIVING,
BUDGETING, DEBTS & BENEFITS

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION (OUTSIDE
OF SCHOOL) FOR
EXCLUSIONS/PART-TIME
TIMETABLES

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
WITH DRIVING
LESSONS

EDUCATION ON OUR
RIGHTS

BETTER TRANSITION
FROM PRIMARY TO
SECONDARY SCHOOL

SAFE SPACES OR HUBS
DEDICATED TO CEYP IN
SCHOOLS

HOUSING & ACCOMMODATION

THE HIGHLAND CHAMPS, WANT TO SEE POSITIVE CHANGES TO....

UNDERSTANDING OUR OPTIONS OF HOUSING VS STAYING IN CARE (COMMUNICATED TO US EARLIER)

KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

LESS PLACEMENT MOVES

SHARED TENANCIES AND GROUP LIVING FOR CARE LEAVERS

A WELCOME PACK TO BE INCLUDED IN FIRST NEW HOME

HIGHLAND COUNCIL HOUSING SUPPORT STAFF TO KNOW MORE ABOUT CARE EXPERIENCE

EMPLOYMENT

THE HIGHLAND CHAMPS WANT TO SEE POSITIVE CHANGES TO....

EMPLOYERS UNDERSTANDING US AND OUR NEEDS, INCLUDING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

MORE SUPPORT LIKE FAMILY FIRM; PROVIDING WORK EXPERIENCES & OPPORTUNITIES

HELP WITH CVS, APPLICATION FORMS & REFERENCES

I-TO-I SUPPORT TO FIND THE RIGHT OPPORTUNITIES FOR US - BASED ON OUR STRENGTHS & INTERESTS

MENTORSHIP PROGRAMMES OR SUPPORT

THE JOB CENTRE & CAB TO UNDERSTAND US BETTER

YOUTH & CRIMINAL JUSTICE

THE HIGHLAND CHAMPS, WANT TO SEE POSITIVE CHANGES TO....

THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN POLICE & YOUNG PEOPLE

BEING REPORTED MISSING

POLICE OFFICER'S KNOWLEDGE OF CARE-EXPERIENCE, AND THEIR REACTIONS TO A 'FLAGGING SYSTEM'

WE WANT TO KNOW HOW CHARGES WILL AFFECT OUR FUTURE

THE CUSTODY ENVIRONMENT

KNOWING HOW WE REPORT CONCERNS TO THE POLICE

HEALTH & WELLBEING

THE HIGHLAND CHAMPS, WANT TO SEE POSITIVE CHANGES TO....

MENTAL HEALTH PROVISION

MORE CONTACT WITH FAMILY & SIBLINGS

RAISING AWARENESS OF CARE-EXPERIENCE TO REDUCE BULLYING

A FLAGGING SYSTEM TO ALERT HEALTH PROFESSIONALS THAT WE ARE CARE-EXPERIENCED AND WHAT THAT MEANS

OUR ACCESS TO FAMILY HISTORY AND MEDICAL RECORDS

SEXUAL HEALTH & YOUNG PARENTING SUPPORT

OUR VOICE

QUOTES & COMMENTS FROM YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT ISSUES AFFECTING THEM

RIGHTS & PARTICIPATION

Relationships:

"Why can't I have a relationship with my old workers/carers?"

"They told me they're not allowed to say 'I love you'"

One Worker:

"As much as possible, we'd like to stick to ONE Social Worker."

"I feel like a ball in a game"

The "Bad" Kid:

"Why do you make me feel like the "bad" kid? I didn't do anything wrong."

Advocacy:

"Why don't we all get Advocacy? Preferably before we end up in Care."

EDUCATION & TRAINING

A Safe Space:

"Having a safe space or "hub" in schools would really help. Especially on days I might have a meeting or review. This space could be used as a place to go before or after meetings or if you're having a bad day."

Driving Lessons:

"If you can fund me to go to college why can't you help me to learn to drive?"

Being Independent:

"Why don't we learn about budgeting, benefits and debt before it's too late?"

"Leaving care without independence skills happens all the time. You're setting us up to fail!"

HOUSING

Friends:

"I can't have sleepovers at my friends unless they are police checked and no one can come to my house. It's so embarrassing."

Sibling Placements:

"Why is it ok for siblings to be split up and sent to different placements?"

Shared Tenancy:

"Why are there no shared flats or houses for us when we leave care? I would have liked to have lived with a friend."

Training:

"Key workers don't have enough training in supporting CEYP with additional support needs, such as, ADHD, autism or any other support needs/ requirements."

Funding:

"Sometimes I can't maintain contact with family/friends because of travel expenses or staff numbers."

Kinship Care:

"I don't feel like enough effort is made to find kinship carers."

Independence:

"Why can't we have a step by step guide for our first time home? Cooking, electric, gas, water, stop cock etc."

EMPLOYMENT

Stigma:

"The stigma around being care-experienced often follows you into the work place."

No support:

"I wasn't given any support to look for a job..And I had no idea how to write a CV."

No belief:

"I was treated like I would never be successful just because I'm care-experienced."

YOUTH & CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Try to understand:

"We get punished for kicking off, but were kicking off because we're not coping. People are just too quick to punish us for trying to survive. A little more understanding!"

Apprenticeships:

"Why can't Police Scotland offer apprenticeships just like the NHS do?"

Prison staff:

"Prison staff don't know/highlight care experience. We feel like it would help if they knew/ were aware of our situation."

Police Custody:

"'Tick' box for Care Experienced Young People being checked into the custody department - why isn't there one?"

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Age Limitations:

"There should not be an age limit on support (26)."

Mental Health:

"No provision or 18 months on a waiting list - Do we need to say more?"

Sibling Contact:

"Social workers don't prioritise sibling contact. It's not good enough."
"It always gets cancelled. Sometimes they don't tell you why."

Transitions:

"Why do I lose my worker, join a new waiting list, and have to start again when I move to adult services?"

Allowances:

"Be clear and consistent about money... Clothing allowance, pocket money etc. The rules change all the time."

I'm in crisis:

"Why do we all have to wait until we are in crisis before we get access to the right healthcare and support?"

OUR VISION, YOUR PLEDGE

Highland Champs met for their first Leadership Group of 2020 on the 13th January. They reflected on their frustrations and the sadness amongst them generated by a lack of action and progress from their corporate parents in 2019 (with regards to their pillar 'asks'). The group spent time exploring their 'dream corporate parent' and discussing their expectations of corporate parents with a view to producing a commitment pledge in the coming weeks that they can ask their corporate parents to sign.

OUR DREAM CORPORATE PARENT

When asked to explore their idea of a 'dream corporate parent' as a group, young people said...



The young people involved in this activity all agreed that they identified these qualities by thinking of corporate parents who had been or currently are a part of their care journey. They shared stories and anecdotes of great practice and reflected on positive experiences to identify what they'd like to see more of.

WHAT QUALITIES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Young people were then asked individually to pick the qualities which meant the most to them and add them to a word cloud using Menti (online interactive poll).



Young people were then asked "What do you feel corporate parents don't do well at the moment?"



FINALLY, young people were asked to complete the sentence
"As a corporate parent, I promise to..."

hear you
do my job as best I can
be there
support you
make sure you have a good life
always listen to you
really want to be there for you
help
be there when you need me most
work with everyone
make your meetings more fun
represent you
listen
try to understand
help if I can
care no matter what
see you
listen to your opinions
give the advice needed
be helpful
be human
be your voice
always be there
care
love you

And these are the words we will use to build our pledge of
commitment for Highland's Corporate Parents in 2020.

 Highland Champs Page

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