

Thursday 19th July 2018
Corporate Parenting Panel Update-
On behalf of the Children in Care Councils and Young Adult Council

Talent Showcase and Stigma:

As those of you who came along to our Talent Showcase in June know, a big part of putting this event on was to highlight some of the stigmas that children and young people have told us they face as a result of being in care or being a care leaver.

Stigma and Stereotypes associated with being in care is a recurring theme that comes up at all 3 Children in Care Councils (YAC, OCYPC and the Super Council. VSK holds annual achieve ceremonies that celebrate the achievements of our young people, these mostly focus on academic achievements. We decided to broaden these achievements to include the wider achievements of our young people and to put them into a showcase format to demonstrate that this group of young people are not being held back by the stigmas around being care and they are living full lives and have bright futures ahead of them.

This was the film about Stigma we made with the help of the Children in Care Councils – (show film)

Children in Care Countywide Event – 1st August 18

This is an opportunity to bring all 3 children in Care Councils together and to invite other young people to come along and find out about the great work of the councils. We hope this will encourage them to join up.

It would be really good if as many of you as possible could come along, we will be doing some activities to ask our young people what they think a local authority should be doing to ensure they are being a good Corporate Parent. We also have some fun team building games planned!

OCYPC/Super Council Update:

On the 30th May we met with our OCYPC & Super Councils in Margate, Thanet. We had the Looked After Children's Nurses attend to explain who they are and how her team can make the health assessments better for the young people. The group gave some really good feedback and suggestions that the LAC Nurses can take back as Ideas to the team. The OCYPC and Super Council said:

- More Toys in the clinics.
- Letterbox parcels (given to the young people on the day of their assessment).
- Have more choice in venue?
- Sweet/treat after the meeting for younger ones
- Progress certificate/ points for progress.



- Keep the Meeting Private - not at school for older ones

We also looked at the young person's section on the new Personal Education Plan and the groups came up with some great ideas and suggestions about what questions they would like to be asked about their education and how they were doing at school. This information has been fed back to VSK and MUI who are incorporating the feedback into this section of the PEP.

Young Adult Council Update:

On the 5th July our Young Adult Council met with Paul Startup, Head of the Care Leaver Service to discuss the Local Offer. Paul explained that the Local Offer outlines the services for care leavers available within Kent. It is now a requirement of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 that young adults are consulted about this Offer and it is published. It contains different areas like housing and accommodation, managing finances, looking after mental and physical health, making friends and developing social relationships, work and education.

Although the new Local Offer contains many things Kent County Council already does it will also set out some new ideas. KCC wants to find out what care leavers think about these ideas.

Paul told YAC that two of the new ideas within the Local Offer are:

- Rent guarantor scheme – an idea that came about from a YAC Challenge Card
- More Apprenticeship opportunities within KCC – YAC this suggestion was really important

The group were then asked to rank nine different possible ideas for the local offer in which each team in the 18+ service had looked are different area each. They ranked them from 1 to 9 thinking about which ones would help care leavers the most.

1. Promote independent living – financial support (deposit, one month rent and agent fees paid plus £2000 setting up home grant).
2. Counselling and support / culturally appropriate mental health support.
3. Financial support for IT equipment for those in higher education / further education.
4. Promote a healthy life style; possible help with gym membership and other costs associated with sports activities.
5. Support for young people leaving prison to help them resettle and find suitable accommodation – plan support for them 12 weeks before they leave.
6. A skills programme – CV writing, help with applications, advice with personal statements, help managing bills / council tax etc
7. Staying Close – young people who live in KCC properties, supported lodgings and other types of placements should have the opportunity to stay in neighbourhood / near people they know or have relationships with.
8. DoE award scheme offered to all care leavers – can be beneficial in terms of employment.
9. Drop in centres for care leavers which are starting in July throughout the county. Initially they will be used to encourage care leavers to meet.



The young people were also asked to think of a possible new name for the 18+ Leaving Care Service as he and his colleagues were unhappy of the suggestion that care is leaving young people. He suggested the Adult Support Service. The participation team will consider how this is can be done.

Sense of Belonging Activities:

Sense of Belonging Activity Days and Residential trips are a project run by fostering to give carers a little bit of respite from difficult places that are in danger of breaking down. For the past 5 months I have supported the sense of belonging activity days and residential at Swattenden and Bewl Water. the days and residential have given young people an opportunity to have some fun, try new experiences and enjoy the company of other young people.

The feedback from the activities has been positive with comments like “I met new people and had lots of fun!” “it could have improved by staying longer”. Because of my involvement we now have new young people that will be joining in with our activity day and the children in care councils. The young people attended have said they have found it beneficial having someone like me, younger and with some experience of what they are going through very positive so we would like to look at ow we can support this project more.

VSK Participation Team Update:

We have a new apprentice Tia joining the team in July, Tia is still in care and a bit younger than the rest of the team so we think she will bring a fresh and relevant voice to the team who has been through the care system more recently than we have. We are also hoping to take on a bit of an older care leaver apprentice soon as soon as employment checks are completed. Once they are trained up this will give us a bit more capacity in the team to look at some other workstreams we would like to focus on like Mentoring and Buddying young people, which is something we are currently looking into. A training course for tis has already been booked for team in September.

We are also doing some joint working with our Early Help colleagues and the young people they work with over the Summer to look at devising and delivering Participation and Co Production Training to ensure that all children and young people in Kent get a voice and that decision makers in the council are aware of the importance of this. We will update you further on this at the next meeting.

Summer Activity Days and Events:

- Sunday 22nd July 2018 – Supporting the Adoption Summer Picnic (Aylesford)
- Tuesday 31st July 2018 – DCS Summer Fun Day (Hythe)
- Wednesday 1st August 2018 – County Wide Children in Care Council Event (Maidstone)
- Thursday 2nd August 2018 – Young Adult Council
- Friday 3rd August 2018 – Gliding (Challock)
- Monday 6th August 2018 – Dover Sea Sports (Dover)
- Wednesday 8th August 2018 – Bettshanger Park (Deal)
- Tuesday 14th August 2018 – West Kent Family Fun Day (Aylesford)
- Wednesday 15th August 2018 – Howletts Zoo (Canterbury)



- Tuesday 21st August 2018 – Huckleberry Woods (Faversham)
- Wednesday 22nd August 2018 – Bewl Water (Lamberhurst)
- Friday 24th August 2018 – Howletts Zoo (Canterbury)
- Wednesday 29th August 2018 – Shorne Woods (Gravesend)
- Friday 31st August 2018 – Care Leaving Service Open Day (Maidstone)

