



Tuesday 29th January 2019

Corporate Parenting Panel Update-

On behalf of the Children in Care Councils and Young Adult Council

Team Update

We haven't held any Children in Care Council meetings since we last met with you in November but have had a very busy few months with the children and young people at focus groups, Pantomime trips, and facilitating young people's interview panels. We have also had a busy start to January looking at new and better ways we can engage with our children in care and young care leavers. We have lots of plans to help increase the awareness of the importance of Corporate Parenting in 2019 – so watch this space!

Two big pieces of work for the team have been the Girls and Boys Groups that we have been running in 6 week blocks -

East Kent Boys Group 'Get on Board'

Following on from the success of the Girls Group, 'I'm Worth It', during November and December, the Participation Team ran its first group for boys in care, 'Get On Board'. These groups aims are to meet up with the same group of young people aged 13 to 17 for a 6 week period. This time we went to the FAR Academy Trust in Whitstable for the sessions, who are a charity that aims to support young people, who have found mainstream education difficult, learn through designing and making skateboards.

As with our previous sessions for the girls, the aim of the group was to provide young people with practical, useable information about keeping safe and looking after their mental and physical health at the same time as having a fun experience in the company of other young people. Speakers from a range of charities, as well as the LAC Nurses spoke to the boys about drugs and alcohol, Sexual Health, Gangs, and Healthy Eating.

Alongside this, FAR Academy staff helped the young people design, paint and make their own skateboards which they were able to test out on the mini ramps at the centre and take home.

The evaluation showed positive results in both the knowledge the young people gained from the informative talks and the young people's self-esteem. All of the young people rated the talks as very informative and their levels of knowledge after completing the programme had increased dramatically.



Although some of the young people knew each other before the programme commenced, it was evident that these friendships developed as the course continued. The young people who did not know each other before the programme also developed new friendships and supported each other with the designing of the skateboards and the practical sessions on the skateboard ramps.

Two of the young people that attended the course are now regularly going to the FAR Academy to participate in their free skate sessions

We are now looking to repeat the course for boys in another part of the county later in the year.

North & West Kent Girls Group 'I'm Worth It'

At the start of January the Participation Team ran its second Girls Group. This time its being held at Mid-Kent College Maidstone Campus. So far, the girls have participated in a session about drugs and alcohol awareness which they were very engaged with on their first week. They then had a mindfulness session on their second which focused on breathing, staying calm and being in better control of their emotions in difficult situations. They have also had their hair washed and blow dried by the students and will having hand massages and manicures. We will update you next time on this groups progress.

Children in Care Council's Pantomime Trip

On 6th December, members of the Super Council, Our Children and Young People's Council and Young Adult Council came together in Maidstone to watch 'Aladdin' at the Hazlitt Theatre. The trip enabled our members to get to know each other and the Participation Team a little better, celebrate Christmas as a group and have a lot of fun too. It was fantastic to see the children, especially those who had never experienced a pantomime before, enjoying the story and laughing so much. In particular, we loved watching the reactions of one of our YAC members, who had arrived in the UK as an unaccompanied asylum young person. She was fascinated by the British pantomime traditions on show, such as pantomime dames, but quickly began joining in with the cheering, booing and audience calls of 'He's behind you!' We, and the children and young people, are already looking forward to our next pantomime trip!

Whitehall Takeover Day

In November, we were very excited to support two young people, Bradley and Chelsea, take part in the Whitehall Takeover, a month-long event. Before the Takeover began, Anne Longfield, Children's Commissioner for England said, "Children in care are this month taking over the Government and experiencing Whitehall's corridors of power first-hand." Young people from around the country got



to spend a day in London with Government Ministers or officials finding out what it's like to make decisions at the highest level.

We would now like to pursue our own 'Take Over' Corporate Parent Panel Day if the panel would be in agreement with this?

Young Adult Council

YAC will be meeting for the first time this year, next Thursday, where the main theme of the meeting will be the outcome of 18+ Service Care Leavers Survey. YAC have invited Paul Startup, the Head of the 18+ Service to the meeting.

YAC will also be looking at how they take forward one of their 2019 aims which will be fundraising in support of the Samaritans.

For their next meeting in March YAC will be meeting up with the Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Champions to see how both groups could work together on projects and initiatives.

Corporate Parenting Work:

We are still working hard to help promote the idea to of Kent County Council that they all have a Corporate Parenting responsibility to our children in care and young care leavers.

In December Chelsea and Rob went to the full county council meeting with Caroline and Jo, where they both spoke to all the Elected Members about their experiences and the importance of Corporate Parenting. They were made to feel very welcome and asked us to pass of their thanks to people taking the time to let them speak... and they said thank you for the nice lunch!

The Participation Team have also put together a presentation aimed at Services in Kent County Council that may not have much of an understanding of the term Corporate Parenting and the experiences of Children and Young People in Care. We debuted this at the end of December to the Fair Access Team who very kindly invited us along to their service development day. We caused a bit of mayhem, but also got our message across! We are hoping to receive invitations from other services later in the year.

Upcoming Events in February:

- 7th February – **Young Adult Council (Maidstone)**
- 18th February **Around the world in a day – Activity Day (Canterbury)**
- 19th February **Around the world in a day – Activity Day (Aylesford)**
- 20th February **OCYPC Extra (East Kent & South Kent meetings)**



- 21st February **TT Rock Stars – Making Maths Fun**
- 21st February **16+ Bowling Event (Maidstone)**
- 22nd February **Super Council & OCYPC Meetings (Maidstone)**
- 22nd February **Young Person Recruitment & Selection Training (Ashford)**