

Appendix 1 – collated responses to the public survey conducted between 20 July 2020 and 4 August 2020 by the No Wrong Door Task Group

Please note that only the responses of respondents who confirmed they are content for their responses to be published have been included in this document. Responses to introductory questions for the purposes of directing a respondent to the set of questions relevant to their identity have been omitted, as have unanswered questions, personal information (other than that of the respondent) and contact details.

A response dated 21 July 2020

As you answered 'other' to the previous question, please briefly explain why you are completing this survey. You may wish to identify yourself.

Surrey County Councillor

How do you/does your organisation support looked-after children and care leavers?

A home

What are the common needs and aspirations of looked-after children and care leavers?

Love

What commonly prevents looked-after children and care leavers from achieving their aspirations and having their needs met?

Families

What could be done to better support looked-after children, children at risk of entering care and care leavers?

Support for the family

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Yes

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No

Response dated 23 July 2020

If you wish for your response to this survey to be identifiable, please provide your name (optional)

Ruth Godden, Specialist nurse working with children and young people who are 'Looked after'

How do you/does your organisation support looked-after children and care leavers?

I am a specialist nurse working within a team of nurses who provide health assessments and support and advice for looked after children, young people, their carers and other professionals.

What are the common needs and aspirations of looked-after children and care leavers?

For all children and young people

To be looked after by their families; To feel wanted and cared about; To feel they matter; to have an allocated worker who stays in their post; not to be moved away physically from their friends and school; not to keep changing placements; for health care to be efficient and uninterrupted

For care leavers

To have somewhere to live; to feel free of bureaucratic and statutory oversight; to have a reason to get out of bed in the morning; to make decisions for themselves

For unaccompanied asylum seekers

To be in touch with their families at home; To live somewhere where they can have easy contact with other people from their home community; To be helped to stay in this country; To access education and work

For children with disabilities

For their parents to be allowed to continue to advocate for them once they are over 18;
To live as independent life as possible; To have stability in their living arrangements and for choice of facility not to be based on cost or location; to have a stable carer who knows and understands their complex needs

What commonly prevents looked-after children and care leavers from achieving their aspirations and having their needs met?

Negative view in the wider community of care leavers - labelling, low expectations

Frequent changes of placement

Changes of worker

Changes of carer

Changes of school

Health needs overlooked due to frequent transitions from one service to another when placement moves take place; loss of continuity in health care

Poor support for emotional wellbeing - frequent placement moves makes CAMHS support patchy; diagnoses are written in records through "word of mouth" but the initial evidence of the diagnosis is lost. Thinking about ASD & ADHD here. I've seen children labelled from no firm diagnosis.

Poor educational outcomes

Disruption of friendship groups

No community or social network which can support - children being removed from their background culture makes this worse

System which means children could be expected (or allowed!) to live independent lives from 18+

while most non care experienced 18 year olds continue to have support from their families for many years after 18.

Giving too much agency to the young person's rejection of follow up services instead of sticking with them. We wouldn't give up on our own 18 year olds even if they consistently told us they didn't need us and didn't want us

What could be done to better support looked-after children, children at risk of entering care and care leavers?

Setting up a system which creates trust in the young person. Having high expectations for every child. Making educational achievement and access to health care as important as a child's safety.

The suggested No Wrong Door model sounds ideal but in reality we know Surrey struggle to retain staff; there are frequent placement breakdowns/changes; communication between agencies can be poor; children's background health needs are consistently overlooked and health information is lost and care is interrupted when children move placements.

I have no idea how you can address these issues!

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Yes

Response dated 23 July 2020

How do you/does your organisation support looked-after children and care leavers?

I'm an adoptive parent.

I'm a sessional support worker in a residential home for children.

I run a local adopters' support group.

What are the common needs and aspirations of looked-after children and care leavers?

To have a trusted adult who they can attach to and who will do everything that they can to support them.

To feel safe.

To have a safe, stable home.

What commonly prevents looked-after children and care leavers from achieving their aspirations and having their needs met?

When their trusted adults leave or move on to different roles.

Lack of ongoing reliable support from a trusted adult/adults.

What could be done to better support looked-after children, children at risk of entering care and care leavers?

Every child should have a key group of trusted adults who know and understand them and who will do all that they can to support that child.

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Response dated 27 July 2020

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Foster Carer and Adopter Parent

How do you/does your organisation support looked-after children and care leavers?

We work with the children as a family, helping them settle into a family routine with routine and boundaries. This involves exploring new activities, sharing achievements, raising self esteem and ensuring they feel valued. Additionally working in a very therapeutic way bearing in mind separation and past trauma.

What are the common needs and aspirations of looked-after children and care leavers?

The need to build self esteem and feel valued

The need to belong and feel wanted, safe and secure

Regular meals and bedtime, routine as in to know what to expect

To arrive at school and not feel different, to have everything they need, have someone who values them go to parents evening, attend school trips

To feel they have a future, aspirations

Not to feel they are always 'different'

What commonly prevents looked-after children and care leavers from achieving their aspirations and having their needs met?

Uncertain future

Emotional upset, past trauma

irregular social workers, trusting relationships are often difficult to establish and change in social workers reinforces separation, lack of trust

Change in schools due to change in home settings, too much change to handle, too many new relationships

lack of choice,

when contact, cancelled too many times, inability to communicate their true wishes, often confusion around their feelings regarding contact

What could be done to better support looked-after children, children at risk of entering care and care leavers?

Trusted and lasting relationships

Ability to settle in a community even when this is not possible in the same family, i.e. same school, clubs etc

Early intervention to prevent children on/off plans from birth and then finally removed in teen years, up to the age of 11 we have seen you can change a child's future, after enter into secondary school this is a lot harder and more placement breakdowns

Transparency with children

long term social workers, if a social worker does leave a planned and therapeutic goodbye

If you would like to make any further comment about these matters, please do so here.

We have had experiences of all the above good and bad so speak from the heart

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Yes

Response dated 28 July 2020

As you answered 'other' to the previous question, please briefly explain why you are completing this survey. You may wish to identify yourself.

I am a Community Influencer Volunteer with HealthwatchSurrey

How do you/does your organisation support looked-after children and care leavers?

Healthwatch Surrey is an independent organisation that gives people a voice to improve and shape services and helps them get the best out of the health and social care services. We support looked-after-children and care leavers by amplifying their voices to service providers and commissioners to ensure accessibility to service that meet their needs.

What are the common needs and aspirations of looked-after children and care leavers?

Looked after children and care leavers need to feel valued individuals and have strong relationship(s) with community(s) and group(s) who are important to them. With the strength of being valued and support, children-in-care and care leavers can reach their full potential

What commonly prevents looked-after children and care leavers from achieving their aspirations and having their needs met?

Children in care need more than transactional support. By transactional support I mean being taken for health checks, being given a school placement, working through a checklist. We need to invest time with people children-in-care and care leavers can form strong relationships with to give them the opportunity and space to understand themselves and take steps to fulfil their potential as valued member(s) of society.

Investment in supporting children from birth to develop nurturing relationships ie prevention is important.

What could be done to better support looked-after children, children at risk of entering care and care leavers?

Reopen sure-start centres to support families and prevent children going into care.

Once in care, children in care and care leavers are children being looked after by the State.

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Yes

Response dated 28 July 2020

How do you/does your organisation support looked-after children and care leavers?

Preparing LAC young people for leaving care. A children's home.

What are the common needs and aspirations of looked-after children and care leavers?

Good aspirations for looked after children and then as they turn 18 people step back and say they care for young people but don't.

What commonly prevents looked-after children and care leavers from achieving their aspirations and having their needs met?

Lack of commitment and responsibility of post 18 workers

What could be done to better support looked-after children, children at risk of entering care and care leavers?

Actually care about them and don't use the excuse of they are 18 and I can't force them to engage as an excuse. See them as often as they need not according to your timescales

If you would like to make any further comment about these matters, please do so here.

I feel that care leavers get a poor service and that we set them up by giving a good service before they are care leavers and then we forget about them.

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Yes

Response dated 29 July 2020

What is the name of the organisation you represent?

Woodlands Children's Home

How do you/does your organisation support looked-after children and care leavers?

I am a Care Leaver myself so I have first-hand experience of the system.

We support Looked After Children directly as residential support workers. At Woodlands Children's home we support young people with individual tasks in a caring role to maximise their potential and opportunities.

What are the common needs and aspirations of looked-after children and care leavers?

- Patience
- Empathy
- Nurture

I'd say to be supported, cared for, and guided. Without the right level of support their aspirations/hoped outcomes can be impacted massively.

What commonly prevents looked-after children and care leavers from achieving their aspirations and having their needs met?

The lack of support and consistency from services due to timeliness and over run services that support our young people and care leavers. I know from experience how much services can impact your journey so it is paramount for services to meet their needs for them to achieve their aspirations.

What could be done to better support looked-after children, children at risk of entering care and care leavers?

Services to improve to ensure every child and young person receives the right level of support at the right time. It is crucial for services to be delivered in a way that is suitable for children and young people.

I have reviewed the proposed changes to the way services are delivered and these changes set out in the NWD look effective and driven by what is right for children in care and Care Leavers. Integrative services would not only save time it would also save money and reduce cross overs between services and improve timeliness. But most importantly improve outcomes by offering consistent support for service users.

If you would like to make any further comment about these matters, please do so here.

It is important to mention that being a former service user, my journey was impacted massively by the efficiency and timeliness of services supporting me. I always say that I am lucky to have had the right support to get me where I am today. However, for other Care Leavers their hoped outcomes are not always achieved and it is our duty as professionals to give every Looked After Child and Care leaver the best chance to maximise their opportunities and potential. It is our duty to improve services and outcomes and this can happen by services working together and offer them consistency. Quite often their lives in care are filled with different professionals leaving, moving

placements, not knowing who will be the next to leave. Therefore integrating services to me is a positive thing and should very much be something that should be implemented.

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Yes

Response dated 29 July 2020

As you answered 'other' to the previous question, please briefly explain why you are completing this survey. You may wish to identify yourself.

East Surrey Domestic Abuse Service (ESDAS)

How do you/does your organisation support looked-after children and care leavers?

we have supported CYP entering the care system and advocated for them at meetings.

We have supported Foster Carers in understanding the impact of DA on CYP and presented behaviours.

We have supported other professionals involved in the process in understanding the impact of DA on CYP and presented behaviours.

We have worked in partnership with other organisations (Camhs, Hope Service, NYAS) to support CYP through the looked after process.

We have provided DA training to multi agency professionals

What are the common needs and aspirations of looked-after children and care leavers?

To be understood - this is a significant factor in the context of DA as often CYP will feel that 'others' do not understand

To have a regular, consistent worker - significant to build a trusting working relationship

To not be judged - a significant factor given the powerful emotional feelings around shame and guilt that are experienced

To be listened to - this is described as 'being heard' rather than a worker assuming they understand and misinterpreting the narrative being used. Often a CYP will not challenge this and internalise the miscommunication, reaffirming an already existing belief system of not worthy of speaking out or not being believed, which comes from living with the power and control elements of domestic abuse.

What commonly prevents looked-after children and care leavers from achieving their aspirations and having their needs met?

In relation to domestic abuse -

Often CYP carry labels and hold destructive belief systems embedded by their experiences of neglectful parenting and disorganised attachments. For CYP living with domestic abuse, the distorted messages and unhealthy modelling of both victim and perpetrator behaviours can have significantly detrimental effects on abilities to relate to others.

The fear and coping mechanisms adopted of hyper vigilance, lack of trust, labels (angry, worthless, unlovable, ADHD/ASD, being to blame) can perpetuate barriers to engagement.

For some the struggles of feeling a sense of belonging and having a purpose and meaning in life can hinder the motivation to want to move forward if they struggle with the identity of being a 'looked after child'. In addition, feelings of rejection and abandonment, commonly experienced in domestic abuse cases, can foster resistance to change to protect from further hurt.

What could be done to better support looked-after children, children at risk of entering care and care leavers?

In relation to those who have experience domestic abuse -

It is important to understand the context and roles which may have been imposed on the CYP when living in domestically abusive households and the identity they may have adopted to survive.

For some this will be parenting siblings, taking on adult roles to get through the abuse alongside their non-abusive parent. When entering the care system there can be an expectation that these 'mini adults' become children and relinquish the identity they have been used to, leaving a feeling of uncertainty about where they belong in the world.

As the domestic abuse happens behind closed doors and over time, the psychological and emotional impact on CYP is often underestimated especially when incidents go undisclosed. For these CYP they experience adult situations and try to make sense of it from a child's perspective and the cognitive ability/capacity available to them, which can be impaired as a result of the trauma.

It is important for those caring for these CYP that awareness and training around DA is offered to better understand the learnt behaviours and distorted views of relating with others. Often CYP from DA backgrounds can be triggered by associated body language, words, tone of voice, sounds etc., which may not be known and can bring about problematic behaviours.

It is important to include CYP in the decision making process and for this to be transparent and communicated using language they understand. It is important to consider when systems and processes can mirror a familiar feeling of control for these CYP, particularly around authoritarian statuses.

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Yes

Response dated 29 July 2020

What is the name of the organisation you represent?

Surreyheartlands CCG

How do you/does your organisation support looked-after children and care leavers?

We support the health needs of looked after children. Consulting with care leavers and looked after children to work with health providers to commission services for them. We support the corporate parenting board to ensure appropriate health care and access to health care is available for looked after children and care leavers. We ensure providers are completing their statutory duties and their statutory health functions are quality assured.

What are the common needs and aspirations of looked-after children and care leavers?

Lack of continuity of care so that they need to repeat their story to multiple professionals. Lack of continuity of care is not conducive to building trusting relationships which in turn impacts on looked after children receiving trauma informed approaches to their care as trust is an essential component. Long waiting lists or complicated systems to access services. Complicated services that they do not understand and cannot see why they benefit them directly. Services that are far away from their community. Children placed out of county are disadvantaged when it comes to accessing specialist services such as mental health provision. Not enough support is offered when children transition from childhood to adult services, there is a lack of planning to ensure that the transition is made smoothly and with support from professionals they trust.

What commonly prevents looked-after children and care leavers from achieving their aspirations and having their needs met?

Lack of continuity of care so that they need to repeat their story to multiple professionals. Lack of continuity of care is not conducive to building trusting relationships which in turn impacts on looked after children receiving trauma informed approaches to their care as trust is an essential component. Long waiting lists or complicated systems to access services. Complicated services that they do not understand and cannot see why they benefit them directly. Services that are far away from their community. Children placed out of county are disadvantaged when it comes to accessing specialist services such as mental health provision. Not enough support is offered when children transition from childhood to adult services, there is a lack of planning to ensure that the transition is made smoothly and with support from professionals they trust.

What could be done to better support looked-after children, children at risk of entering care and care leavers?

Consistent support from a key worker who contacts them regularly and builds up a relationship, enabling trauma informed approaches to care. But has support themselves from other agencies to access support for the child / care leaver for mental health, SEND or physical health issues.

Better support for UASC to access services, ensure interpreters are available.

Key worker to plan ahead and support transition between services and from children to adult services.

Early access to mental health support and sexual health advice.

Services that follow the child and are available wherever they are placed in the country.

Support until age 25 for all care leavers.

If you would like to make any further comment about these matters, please do so here.

The following Designated Nurses would be happy to be approached by the task and finish group in addition to Dr Sharon KEFFORD Designated Dr for Looked After Children

[redacted personal information]

[redacted personal information]

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Response dated 4 August 2020

What is the name of the organisation you represent?

Young epilepsy

How do you/does your organisation support looked-after children and care leavers?

Young Epilepsy provides education and residential care to children and young adults with epilepsy and a range of other neurological conditions. Some of the children within our school and the Children's Homes are looked after children. Some of the young people attending our college are Care Leavers and may also reside in the onsite accommodation.

Young Epilepsy staff contribute to review meetings for Children who are Looked After and liaise closely with social workers and personal advisers for CLA and Care Leavers.

What are the common needs and aspirations of looked-after children and care leavers?

To develop their independence skills in all aspects of their life.
To have positive social interactions and relationships with family, friends and others.
To have improved health management
To develop communication skills
To develop life skills
To access their local community and have a good quality of life

What commonly prevents looked-after children and care leavers from achieving their aspirations and having their needs met?

- Their changing or declining health needs
- Requiring more bespoke living environments with fewer peers
- Lack of services in their local communities

What could be done to better support looked-after children, children at risk of entering care and care leavers?

Strong coordination between health, social care and education colleagues to provide person centered plans and placements, rather than those based on how budgets and teams are coordinated in the local authorities.

Better understanding and support for disabled children and young people across services, especially those who have epilepsy, so that they can be included in and choose to access a range of services.

Less changes in personnel supporting the child e.g. Social Workers.

Social Workers with capacity to really focus on the individual child.

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No

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