

Working with Care experienced young people in colleges

Training designed by:

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What is a care experienced young person (CEYP)?

Our definition of care experienced is someone who, at any stage of their life, and for any length of time, has been in care e.g. looked after by the local authority.

This includes: foster care or children's home, privately fostered, semi-independent living, independent living.



In England and Wales, the leaving care age is 18, although young people can leave care from the age of 16.

When the leaving care process formally starts, somewhere around the young person's 16th birthday, young people are assigned a **personal adviser (PA)** who will support them up to the age of 25 if they wish.

Facts

There are 585 looked after children (LAC) and 418 care leavers across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

213 care leavers in Leicester, 196 in Leicestershire and 9 in Rutland that are in touch with Local Authorities (records only to 21 years of age). Leicestershire Cares works with CEYP up to 25.

Total number of care leavers not in education, employment or training in Leicester 87 (41%), Leicestershire 79 (43%), Rutland 6 (43%)



Common Issues that Care Experienced Young People Face




- Low self-esteem and low confidence
- Lack of trust and difficulties building positive relationships
- Self-sabotage - Difficulty planning long-term or committing to deferred gratification
- Practical difficulties relating to suitable housing and finance

The screenshot shows a testimonial page for "KYLES". At the top, the name "KYLES" is written in purple. Below it is a small purple and green speech bubble icon. The main text of the testimonial reads: "As soon as I went into care, I had hot food. I was clean. It saved me". There are two small images: one of a doorway and one of a food counter. The page is partially obscured by a large image of birds flying in a grey sky.



- Some may also have experienced drug or alcohol abuse or issues with offending
- Long-standing poor mental wellbeing, with self-harm, suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts from an early age.
- Over thinking and Anxiety - Doing simple things like going into town, school can get too much
- Older than their peers in some areas, younger in others – CEYP due to ACES are more likely to be 2 years behind mainstream young people in education

"LET EVERYTHING HAPPEN TO YOU:
BEAUTY AND TERROR. JUST KEEP
GOING. NO FEELING IS FINAL"
RAINER MARIA RILKE



CASEY

The tree behind it was that the flower
and has gone from the world that
represents myself.

What is this for you and how it
the most obvious. These elements present
with you that have led to the point for
them back to grow.

Those roots came from myself so that,
in a way, I have made my own heritage.



What is the home life like for care experienced college students?



“Local authorities have a duty to house all care leavers aged 16 and 17. Once aged 18, young people’s accommodation needs are assessed under homelessness legislation and most will need to claim Housing Benefit”

Become



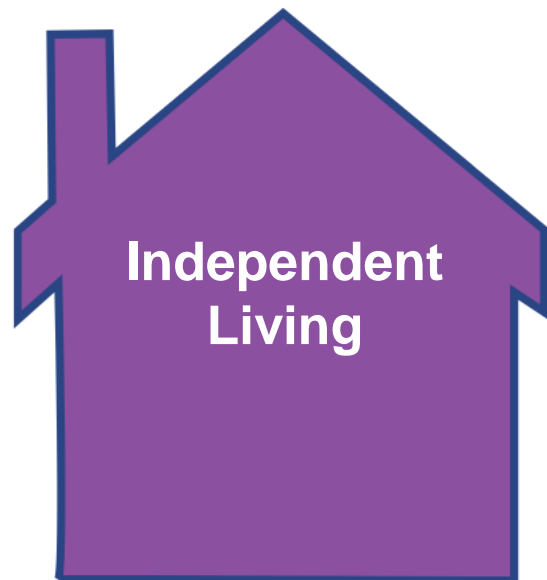
“Many care leavers had no control over where they lived when they left care, and many felt unsafe.

Only around a third of care leavers had a say in the location they’d like to live in and even fewer (a fifth) in the type of accommodation.

One in 10 care leavers never felt safe when they first left care.”

‘Ready or not’: care leavers’ views of preparing to leave care (2022)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ready-or-not-care-leavers-views-of-preparing-to-leave-care/ready-or-not-care-leavers-views-of-preparing-to-leave-care>



Independent Living

- As early as 16 year old
- No one to tell you what to do. To guide you. Get you out of bed
- Loneliness
- Money – but do you have the budgeting skills?
- Too much time on your own – leads to over thinking things
- Got to keep on top of cleaning, cooking, washing
- At risk of being exploited – from friends overstaying to potential Gangs



Semi-independent living / Hostel living



- Eyes on you all the time
- Shared bathroom and kitchen
- People come and go. You have to keep on getting to know new people, learning to deal with new things – tiring. Nothing is settled
- Staff there to support you with education – knock on your door in the morning. Help with homework. Can drop you off, pick you up.
- Hostel living can include living in an adult and mixed hostel – often with other residents suffering from alcohol and substance misuse
- Potentially far away from the young person's place of education

Foster Care

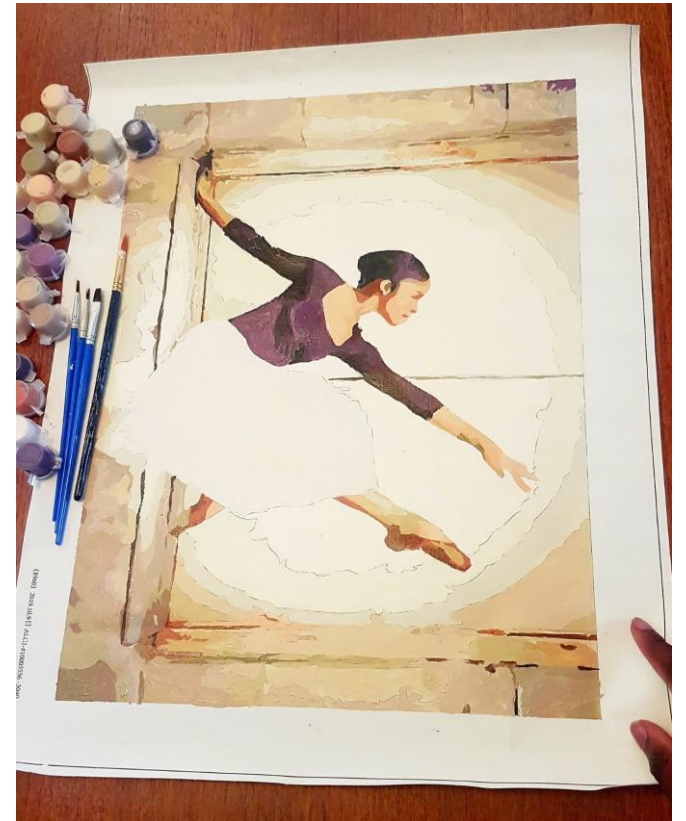
- Some good, some bad – Some foster carers do it for love, others for money
- Safe family environment (not always). You might establish a ‘new’ family
- Can establish stability
- Location is normally close to your education
- Support at home to help with education, life questions, plans and advice
- Staying Put Arrangement



The Care-Cliff

Many young people leaving care, particularly those who were in residential care homes, describe their experience as a 'care-cliff'.

They find themselves over the **cliff-edge of support into independent living**; on their own, managing finances, housing, shopping, cooking and other life tasks with no one to turn to.



Care experienced young people's thoughts of college life



“There is definitely a lack of awareness at colleges, of the home stuff we have to live with. Living on your own and being responsible for a home, means you need to be around for electricians, plumbers, dealing with broken fridges”

“We have less time to do assignments than other students. I receive a lot of counselling for my mental health, due to the stuff I’ve been through, so already, I am working with less time. I also have a part time job, meetings with my PA and other professionals and I have to look after my home.”



“Teachers need to adapt certain language and teaching. I’ve been picked out during online lesson before to share the results of asking my parents a question. There is a lot of assumptions that everyone has supportive parents.”

“There needs to be more support for next stages. General career and education advice usually comes from parents and I think we should be actively asked if we need support and made aware what that support can be.”



“Having a designated person to talk to if they needed help would be helpful. I'm not sure whether my teachers were told that I was a looked after child. I don't think they were aware.

I told one of my teachers but some people might not feel confident telling their teachers.”

“I felt like the odd one out, that I would never be part of the community there. I felt that the teachers looked at me differently.”



“The college didn’t interview me beforehand, so I’m not sure if they knew I was care experienced or not. I’m adopted, but I still faced a lot of the adverse childhood experiences as other care experienced young people, and still need wrap around support.”

I felt that there is a stigma about care experienced young people. They asked me: “Is there anything we need to know?” It might sound like a simple question, but I interpreted it as: “is there anything we need to worry about your behaviour?”

Takeaways from today's training



- Complexities of being 16,17,18 years old and care experienced – home life, professionals in your life, pressures and strains
- Every care experienced young person is unique – They need individual care
- Be more aware of the stigma care experienced young people face

Extra things to look at:



Leicestershire Cares <https://www.leicestershirecares.co.uk/>

Become <https://www.becomecharity.org.uk/>

Propel website <https://propel.org.uk/UK/>

Further and Higher Education advice for care experienced young people and professionals

Care Leaver Offer <https://www.careleaveroffer.co.uk/>

Compare different local authorities to discover how they support care leavers and encourage councils to improve support in multiple areas

Thank you

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