



SEPTEMBER 2020

A NEW TERM - A NEW START

Hi everyone,

Some of you are now starting to go back to college and university (see money and education article), others are going back to work and training. Whatever you're doing, well done for continuing to follow rules and guidelines around Covid.

The rules change constantly, and we must follow them to protect ourselves and other people. As things continue to change and infection rates go up and down, we must remember to protect ourselves!

Some things you can do to protect you and those around you are;

- Wear a mask whenever you go to a busy area or in a shop.
- Try to stay 2 meters away from anybody who you don't live with as much as possible.
- Carry hand sanitiser and use it when you have touched things outside or in shops.



- Wash your hands on a regular basis.
- Only go out when necessary.

Included in this newsletter is a survey about our City Pledge. It is really important that we get everyone's opinions about how we can support you best, so please complete the survey if you can. Stay safe, have a great month and be sure to complete our Pledge survey (see page 5).

Take care, we are only a phone call or an email away. If you can't get hold of your PA, call 0121 4641229.

kirstie.cotton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

*****NEED HELP ? CALL OUR DUTY LINE ON 0121 464 1229*****

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Musa's voice heard

Musa Nela is one of our care leavers. He is on his final year of his LLB and aspires to be a barrister.



Musa is a young campaigner with a passion for making a change towards a fairer and more equal society.

"I want to use my voice to create change and prevent others from experiencing hardship."

Musa is a member of the Youth-Led Commission on Separated Children.

He said: "We are currently campaigning for all unaccompanied young people arriving in England and Wales to be given a legal guardian during their asylum process."

They have launched a short documentary, telling their story about why this campaign is so important alongside meeting and interviewing professionals and decision makers and conducting our own research.

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/guardians>

They have launched a petition for the government to institute the same system in England and Wales which has rapidly gained thousands of signatures.

This summer he has been awarded the Star Award 2020' for his hard work, time and determination he has put in this campaign.

We wish Musa all the best in this aspiration to be a barrister and we are very proud of his achievements.

IMO Hackathons

Together with Accenture UK, IMO are running a series of virtual Hackathons this autumn, exclusively for children in care and care leavers.

These will be held via video-call so that everyone can access them. You will get the opportunity to work directly alongside Accenture experts to learn design thinking, marketing and pitching skills, and also solve real-world problems.

It's an excellent opportunity for attendees to try something different, gain new skills, and enhance your CVs.



The event runs as follows;

- **Design Thinking Hackathon**
Wednesday 16 September 2020, 4:30pm
- **Marketing Hackathon**
Wednesday 30 September 2020, 4:30pm
- **Pitching Hackathon**
Wednesday 14 October 2020, 4:30pm
- **Ask Accenture: Live Careers Panel**
Wednesday 28 October 2020

Spaces are limited and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Please email:
michelle.browne@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk
to secure your position.

IMO
write, speak, share

Suicide prevention

If you, or anyone you know is feeling suicidal, there is always help available to make things easier.

However bad you are feeling right now, there is always another way!

Lots of people have felt like this and - with help - managed to get through it.

Here are some numbers and links to supportive professionals and organisations who offer help to those feeling suicidal.

These links will be included in all future newsletters so they will always be here for you to access.



- Papyrus has a lot of useful advice and also a suicide prevention helpline.

<https://papyrus-uk.org/>

- Samaritans helpline **116 123**
- SANE helpline **0300 304 7000**



- Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) (for men) **0800 58 58 58**
- Help Guide suicide prevention

www.helpguide.org/home-pages/suicide-prevention.html

Good news to share



- **Chelsea**

Chelsea has successfully passed her Psychology degree with a 2:1.

- **Aisha**

Aisha has successfully passed her nursing degree and has also started a new job as a Registered Mental Health Nurse (RMN) in London.

- **Renaë**

Renaë will be starting Sandwell college to do her Level 2 in Health and Social Care.

- **Connor**

Connor has become a father to a baby boy

The Local Offer

The 18+ Care Leavers Service is here to help young people make the move from living in care to enjoying independent life as an adult. We support young people from ages 18 to 21, and this can continue up to the age of 25 if you wish.

We understand that leaving care is a time of big changes in your life, and you will have lots of questions about the support you can get and the services available to you.

These sorts of questions are so important that the government asked every local authority to produce its own Local Offer, to include all of the services and information that care leavers would need.

The Local Offer was produced with the support of the Birmingham Care Leavers' Forum. You will find the Birmingham Local offer via the following link:

www.birminghamchildrenstrustco.uk/birminghamcareleaversoffer

Juliette's Money and Education update

Money and education – important things to know.

If you are going back into education this September, there are some important things you need to know about money:

Further Education (FE) means courses from entry level up to level 3 (A level or BTEC level 3). Sometimes this is called 'non-advanced education'.

These are rules that apply to care leavers – not to everyone:

- You can go into Further Education and stay on Universal Credit up to the age of 21. Not all job centre work coaches know this, so any problems, tell your PA or me:

Juliette

07825 117 381

juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

- 16 – 19 Bursary Fund is up to £1,200 per year and you need to go to Student Services in your college to apply. You will also need a letter from your PA stating you are a care leaver.
- You can get the bursary if you are over 19

but started your course when you were under 19.

- If you are starting a new course aged 19, 20 or 21, you could still get some financial help from the college - but this is up to the college and they all make their own decisions. Go to Student Services and ask what you can apply for – the sooner you go the better.

- Course fees – there are no course fees for English and Maths.

- If you are starting a new course age 19,20 or 21, you may be asked to pay course fees – you shouldn't have to pay if:
 - 1.It is your first level 1,2, or 3 qualification
 - 2.You are on benefits

Colleges have their own budgets and may ask you to pay anyway - the Advanced Learner Loan is available if this applies.

<https://www.gov.uk/advanced-learner-loan>

Higher Education (HE)

HE means courses from level 4 upwards (HNC up to Masters). Sometimes called 'advanced education'. These rules apply to care leavers, not to everyone:

- You will have to come off benefits when you start your HE course. You will have to get a tuition fees loan from Student Finance England

<https://www.gov.uk/student-finance/new-fulltime-students>

- As a care leaver you should be able to apply as an independent student and receive the maximum amount of maintenance loan.

<https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/student-advvice/applying-to-uni/applying-to-university-as-a-care-leaver>

- You don't have to pay back your maintenance loan and tuition fees loan until you are earning more than £26,575 a year.
- You will be eligible for a £2000 bursary from the care leavers service – paid over the lifetime of the course.
- You will get some assistance from the care leavers service with your accommodation costs.
- You will get a weekly personal allowance from the care leavers service.
- You may be able to get some money from your university as well – this website will tell you if your uni gives grants to care leavers

<https://www.becomecharity.org.uk/for-young-people/propel/>

If you have any questions about any of this, just ask. We really want you to learn and achieve, and will help you as much as we can.

PLEDGE SURVEY

COMPLETE OUR SURVEY AND GET ENTERED INTO A PRIZE DRAW TO **WIN**

- One of 6 Madlug backpacks
- One of 40 cricket bat and ball sets
- A high-street voucher



Madlug[™]



Details: We welcome you to join us in our Prize Draw on completing the Birmingham Children's Trust Pledge Survey 2020. As part of the survey you complete we want to give something back to you, and to do this we are hosting a **FREE** prize draw.

Website: <https://bit.ly/35yKHYP>

When: The survey is open from **14 September 2020** to **23 October 2020**.

How: To enter you must complete the Birmingham Children's Trust Pledge Survey 2020, including completing the submission page at the end of the survey.

Once entered you will receive an email after the closing date (23rd October 2020) to let you know whether you have won anything, if you have won a prize we will contact you on your chosen method to get your prize delivered to you. Please note prize draw winners will be chosen at random once all submissions have been received. To view our terms and conditions, or for further information contact:

Abba.loughran@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk



**BIRMINGHAM
CHILDREN'S TRUST**

Become a National Voice Ambassador - apply now



Some of you were sad to have missed the deadline for this opportunity so we have been provided with an extension giving you another chance to go for it.

Who are our ambassadors?

We're looking for 18 care-experienced young people, aged 16-25 from across England to be our 2020 – 2021 Ambassadors.

We are looking for motivated and driven young people who share our vision and values and have the skills to make A National Voice the best it can be.

Find out more about the role and apply here-

<https://coramvoice.org.uk/latest/a-national-voice-is-recruiting-ambassadors/>.

Deadline for applications is Wednesday 30 September 2020.

Heal Hub helps

Heal hub offers free online mental health support. Get support with:

- Understanding your emotions
- Managing your anxiety
- Dealing with low mood
- Working through past experiences

Therapists can help you with;

- Stress at home
- Increased anxiety
- Building a routine
- Talking things through without judgement

To sign up for this service contact MH@lyfeproof.co.uk or DM on Instagram [@lyfeproofUK](https://www.instagram.com/lyfeproofUK)

Civil Service Internships



Administrative Officer

Salary: £17,489 per year

Executive Officer

Salary: £20,775 per year

Tasks will vary depending where you work, you will be working in a supportive administrative role with no line management responsibilities, and typically within a team structure.

Responsibilities

A major part of the role will be computer based tasks and will use your communication and organizational skills in your everyday work. In the job you may be asked:

- to take your own initiative with minimal supervision, knowing when to seek help.
- to identify priorities, resolving issues
- support the team to secure the most effective outcome.
- Arrange meetings and book meeting rooms
- Use multiple Microsoft applications

If you want to apply, you need to click on this link and then follow all of the steps of the application

<https://www.careleaverinternship.co.uk/>.

It would be really sensible to have your personal statement written in draft before you start the application.

If you need some help please contact Juliette Walton on **07825117381** or email Juliette.Walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Under the sky with Jon



Jon Phillips describes his camping experience.

Well where do I start, I went on a trip with a charity called Under the Sky, to gain some experience in camping and the outdoors.

The first night of the trip was an experience itself, having to sleep through the big storm.

I made it through the night.

The second day was better and we had some lovely walks heading across to Ludlow Castle and the surrounding environment.

After the walks, we had made some camp fires and had some experiences shared on the leaders camping experience.

The final day was good and It was tidying up and making sure no kit was left behind in the camp site.

It was a great experience and was designed to make people feel better with the environment and learn more about themselves.

Overall, it was a really good experience and I would fully recommend attending one of the camps.

There is not just camping, there is loads and young people with children are welcome.

If you are interested in getting involved with Under The Sky go to their website:

<https://www.undertheskyevents.org>

Become - Charity

Here is a message from Become which includes some really useful links.

The global pandemic has changed everyone's lives and we hope this message finds you and your loved ones safe and well in these extraordinary times.

The lockdown and social distancing measures has had a profound impact on many care-experienced young people.

Demand for our care advice line has increase by 75% since March and we've been working hard to make sure young people have the support they need and are heard throughout this crisis.

Hear young people share their lockdown experiences:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-238728684/become-advisory-group-lockdown-experiences>

Read reflections on meeting with Gavin Williamson MP:

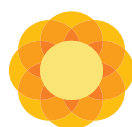
<https://www.becomecharity.org.uk/news-and-opinion/our-three-messages-for-gavin-williamson/>

BECOME.
THE CHARITY FOR CHILDREN IN CARE
AND YOUNG CARE LEAVERS

The final word

Thanks to all of our contributors this month. We look forward to hearing all your good news in the next month.

Stay safe and keep in touch.



**BIRMINGHAM
CHILDREN'S TRUST**