



# THE TRUST TIMES

18+ Care Leavers Newsletter

OCTOBER 2020

## DON'T GET SPOOKED BY COVID

Hi everyone,

I hope you are all doing well. Another month brings more changes and rules.

We must wear a mask where possible whenever we are outside, and we are now only allowed to meet up with friends and family outside of our homes in maximum groups of six.

It is important that you stick to these rules for your own safety as well as that of others. The police are now working much harder to enforce these rules, and they will be handing out fines for anyone caught breaking them.

It is extremely important to look after ourselves and each other during this pandemic. If you live alone make sure you research support bubbles to see if you are allowed one.

Pick up the phone to check on friends and family, and above all, look after each other in these strange times.

We have some fantastic opportunities in this month's newsletter so make sure you check them out and get the most out of them that you can!



Take care, and **Happy Halloween** for later in the month.

We are only a phone call or an email away. If you can't get hold of your PA, call **0121 464 1229**.

[kirstie.cotton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk](mailto:kirstie.cotton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk)

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

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# MAYOR MEETING



Birmingham Children's Trust apprentices and our young health mentor worked with Jacobs to pitch themselves to Andy Street, the West Midlands Mayor.

The 'Mayor's Giving Day' was used as the catalyst to reach out to young people and develop their employability skills.

The aim of the day was to take part in a workshop to develop a better understanding of yourself and create a 29 second pitch that can be used in combination with your CV or LinkedIn profile to support in developing chosen career routes.

Our apprentices did a fantastic job of drafting their own 29 second pitch about themselves and presented this to the Mayor Andy Street.

This was a great opportunity for them to pitch the work they had been doing and to learn about each other, we are immensely proud of everyone for taking part and would like to say a huge well done!

## Quotes from the day

"I am so grateful to BCT and Jacobs for giving us such an amazing opportunity, it was invaluable to receive feedback from Andy and it is an experience I will never forget" - **Kirstie**

"I think it was good that we all had that experience. It was good how they gave us some things to look at so we could create our 29 seconds pitches. At first when I was creating my pitch, I wasn't sure about it but in the end it was one of the best days" - **Emily**

# 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](http://www.birminghamchildrenstrustco.uk/birminghamcareleaversoffer)**

## Women & Theatre Opportunity

There is a fantastic opportunity for you (male and female) to get involved in meeting others to work together to produce theatre productions, short films, podcasts and workshops.

Your interest and passion towards music, storytelling, drama, or whatever it takes to tell a '**story**' is what we are looking for. See more detailed information on **page 5**.

For more information, or to get involved, please contact Women & Theatre's General Manager, Jess Pearson:

**[jesspearson@womenandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:jesspearson@womenandtheatre.co.uk)**  
or **07956 773 196**.



# 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](http://www.helpguide.org/home-pages/suicide-prevention.html)

## Good news to share



- **AR**

AR has just been offered a one bed house in Bromsgrove, which she is very excited about.

- **CH**

CH has just started a nursing degree at UCB.

- **James**

James has been interviewed and accepted for a one year business enterprise traineeship through Skills Training.

They are an excellent training provider.

As you know James' focus is everything football.

On this programme he will be able to improve his maths and English, possibly even do some work experience with a Premier League football club.

- **Atashera**

"Atashera absolutely smashed it today.

"She began to open up brilliantly, throwing conversation and laughs out with everyone.

"She has a massive amount of potential that we can already see. She began to open up from her shell very efficiently."

– **Miss Macaroon**

Well done AR, CH, James and Atashera!

**We are so proud of you!!**

# Juliette's **Monthly** update

## Care leavers speak about their experiences in foster care

A couple of months ago I was asked by the Birmingham Children's Trust Fostering Service if any of our young people would like to work with them to develop and improve services.

So, I put the call out and a number of you replied.

In the last few weeks you have been speaking at their team meetings about your experiences of foster care.

There are also plans to get you involved in training of foster carers.

The partnership has so far proved really valuable for staff and young people. Below is some of the feedback.

## Fostering service staff feedback:

"What amazing young people. I had a discussion with my team after and everyone was so emotional it has really given them something to think about in respect of what changes they can make to their practice."

"He was very articulate about his experience with social workers and I am sure they all got something from listening to him."

"It was a very positive experience for the team, we had even invited our colleagues from the assessment team along to join our support team meeting. Everyone listened very attentively to him talking, I wish they listened to me like that when I talked."

"She was a little nervous to begin with but as the meeting got going she was fine. Her passion for wanting to help support young people is clear and it was lovely to hear."

## Young people feedback:

"I tried my best to be logical and thoughtful with what I said, I really care about all of the care system social workers and others alike, they were good at asking the right questions and I would love to continue to work with them and build new strategies and leadership in how to best help everyone in the care system."

"By the end of the meeting I felt that I said what I wanted to say for such a long time. I felt it from their reaction that they did not expect me to be so honest, but they thanked me for telling how I actually felt during my time in the care. I am happy that I attended the meeting, as I think the more voices they hear from, the better they shape the service."

"It was a good opportunity to speak about a lot."



If you would like to get involved, call or text Juliette on:

**07825 117 381** or email  
**[juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk](mailto:juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk)**



# MOVING ON

Women  
&  
Theatre

**A 2-year creative project with Women & Theatre in partnership with Birmingham Children's Trust & Birmingham City Council**

**Do you want to share your experiences & work creatively to make positive change?**

**Do you want to be part of a Young Producers group to co-design a new project that will have lasting impact on services for care leavers & children in care in Birmingham & beyond?**

Women & Theatre want to collaborate with care leavers of different genders and cultural backgrounds to produce new creative work together. This might include making theatre productions, short films, podcasts and workshops.

Developed from research and informed by care leavers' lived experiences and expertise, the creative work produced will make a positive difference. It will help children in care to think about their options and choices as they approach independent living. By sharing with relevant professionals and policymakers, the project will also help to develop and improve future support services for care leavers.

We have a broad vision for the project, however detailed plans for deciding what we do and how, will be co-designed with care leavers. To make this happen, we want to recruit a Young Producers group who will meet regularly to create the project together. We do not expect people to commit to the full 2-year project and there will be lots of different opportunities to get involved in a range of ways.

**Join a Zoom session on Wed 28 October to find out more... Contact us for times & links**

**Gain experience in:**  
Project management  
Event planning  
Research  
Marketing  
Workshop facilitation  
Devising theatre & film  
Performing  
Music making  
Evaluation



We will run one-off sessions during **Autumn 2020** (likely to happen online) as a way of gaining early input into the shaping of plans before running regular project sessions from **January 2021**. All activity will be fully risk assessed in line with latest Covid-19 guidance.

**If you are interested in gaining skills & experience, please get in touch or attend one of our zoom sessions on Wed 28 October (day time or evening)  
Contact [jesspearson@womenandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:jesspearson@womenandtheatre.co.uk) or 07956 773 196**

# Making Lifelong Links

Lifelong Links is for young people who have experienced at least two years in care, aged between 14-25 years and do not live with their family.

It helps find and bring together people who care about you. This can be people you know well, or people you have not seen for a while.

In bringing together people who you want in your life it could support you in the future and be included in your Pathway Planning.



## This could be:

- Family members including parents, siblings, extended family and relatives you have never met.
- Friends that you have made and no longer see.
- Foster carers who you previously lived with who were supportive.
- Any other trusted adult who is important to you.

## Lifelong Links can also be an opportunity to:

- Learn about your family history.
- Help to develop your identity and sense of belonging.
- Look towards providing you with supportive and stable relationships during your time in care, and into your future.

## What will happen next?

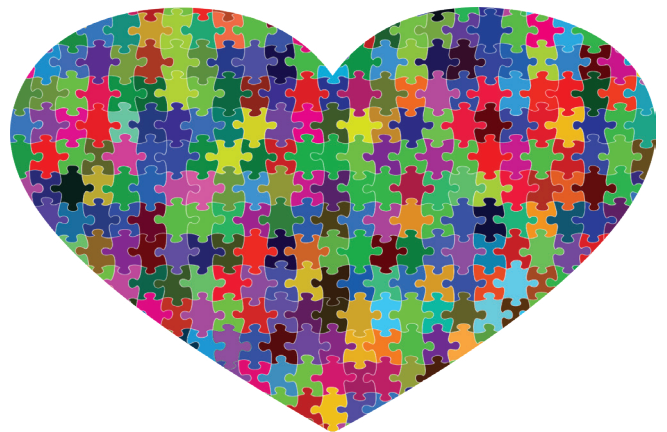
You will meet a Lifelong Links Coordinator who will:

- Talk to you about who you want to build a relationship with and be a part of your family group meeting.
- Help you to complete activities to learn more about your background. This might include drawing a family tree, where you have lived and where you go to school.
- Try and meet with the people you want to have in your life and who can support you, if it is safe to do so.
- Arrange a family group meeting with you and invite all the people you would like to come.

The coordinators are independent and don't make decisions about your future.

They will keep you, your carer and your social worker or personal advisor updated on their progress.

If you would like to find out more information or are interested in taking part in Lifelong Links ask your social worker or personal advisor to contact the Lifelong Links service on your behalf.



# Major job opportunity

This is a really good opportunity ring-fenced for Birmingham care leavers, offered by Birmingham Children's Partnership.

Please read all the information and email **Juliette.Walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk** or ring Juliette on **07825 117 381** if you are interested in applying.

**Post:** Transformation and Improvement Apprentice- Apprenticeship: Level 3.

**Number of posts available:** 2.

**Temporary post for:** 18 months.

**Salary:** £19,430.

**Location:** City centre with some home-working.

## The details

If you want a career in transformation, service improvement or public service management then this apprenticeship is for you.

We are seeking two enthusiastic Level 3 apprentices who are excited to explore a unique opportunity for training and progression as Transformation and Improvement Apprentices at Birmingham Children's Partnership.

The Transformation and Improvement Apprentices will work with national leaders in their fields in an ambitious programme of change and improvement — an excellent jump-start to the right person's career.

It will also give a fulfilling opportunity to work with children and young people and make their voices heard, influencing and redesigning services and support.

## Who will this post suit?

The Transformation and Improvement Apprentice posts would ideally suit a young adult with recent experience of the care system and/or young people who have spent a period of time as an in-patient in a mental health service and are keen to be involved in creating an excellent service for other young people.

You should be interested in listening to other young people, and feel able to represent those young people's views, keeping young people motivated and interested in using their voice and opinions to make a difference.

Visit <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/improvement-technician/> for information about the Improvement Technician Apprenticeship Qualification

Visit <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/bcp> for further information about Birmingham Children's Partnership and the work we are doing.

## Timeline of selection process

**Expression of interest deadline:** 19 October  
**Submission of supporting information deadline:** 30 October

**Interviews:** 11 November

**Starting date:** December 2020

There is no application form, but you will be required to write a piece of '**supporting information**' about why you think you would be good for the role.

Don't let this put you off – just tell Juliette if you are interested (that's your 'expression of interest') and she will help you.

# Youth Promise Plus+ diary

As you may have seen in recent newsletters, we've been asking our friends at CGL to write some diary entries about their experience working on Youth Promise Plus+.

## Victoria's diary

I am Victoria and I have recently started work with CGL on the YPP Programme supporting care leavers.

My role is to offer support to care leavers who are not in Employment, Education or Training to help them find their dream career pathway and begin the journey to making their dreams a reality.

Already I have seen the rewards that this job offers and how determined care leavers can be!

I recently took a young person to an interview to start building on her career in childcare.

She was desperate to get into this year's cohort but was concerned that she had left it too late.

After tracking down enrolment teams we managed to secure a place.

On the day of her interview Rhianne turned to me and said: "I am not leaving this college until I get a place on the course."

Although there were some barriers, throughout her interview she was amazing and her determination really shone through.

Through perseverance and will Rhianne got her place in college.

Rhianne has made an amazing start to the course and has caught up. I recently asked her what it meant to be in college.

She said "It means everything, I can't even tell you, just everything to have this chance."



She was so thankful for the support and said that if she hadn't been referred to CGL when she had been she would have missed out on enrolling this year.

She said that would have really knocked her back, she would have lost out and been waiting another year to start her career.

Rhianne is excited for her future, how it will benefit her and the life she can build for her two year old daughter.

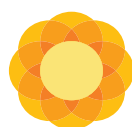
She is a superstar and has brought me some excitement in continuing to help other care leavers to progress."

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## The final word

Thanks to all of our contributors this month. We look forward to hearing all your good news in November 2020.

**Stay safe and keep in touch.**



**BIRMINGHAM  
CHILDREN'S TRUST**