



THE TRUST TIMES

18+ Care Leavers Newsletter

January 2021

HAPPY AND SAFE NEW YEAR

Hi everyone,

Happy New Year. Another month brings another lockdown and I know everyone is feeling very fed up but there is hope on the horizon! The Covid 19 vaccine has begun distribution, and hopefully that means that the world will soon be in a better place. Take this time to reflect on the experiences that this pandemic has brought us, the time we have had to focus on ourselves, our hobbies and interests, and the ability to work towards personal goals in 2021!

I myself have vowed to take every opportunity that comes my way.

Since experiencing the pandemic I have realised, like many others, that I did not do and see as many things as I should have done.

Keep positive and stay patient, and keep your eyes peeled on next month's edition where you will see an exclusive competition for care leavers.



Why not write down some goals for 2021?

If you have ideas for articles, or even want to share your 2021 resolutions, please email: **kirstie.cotton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk**

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

Thanks, and stay safe - Kirstie and the Trust team

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

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Claim your tax back - check eligibility



You may be able to claim tax relief for additional household costs if you have to work at home on a regular basis, either for all or part of the week. This includes if you have to work from home because of coronavirus (COVID-19).

You cannot claim tax relief if you choose to work from home.

Additional costs include things like heating, metered water bills, home contents insurance, business calls or a new broadband connection.

They do not include costs that would stay the same whether you were working at home or in an office, such as mortgage interest, rent or council tax.

Check if you are eligible by visiting:

<https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home>

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

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

Lifelong Links project

Lifelong Links is for young people in care. It helps find and bring together people who you care about you.

This can be people you know well, people you haven't seen for a while (like a former teacher or carer) and even relatives you've never met.

This can help you:

- By finding family and friends who care about you
- So you can learn more about your family history
- By bringing people together who you want in your life and who you can turn to for support

How does it work?

A trained Lifelong Links facilitator will work with you to find out about the people that are important to you.

They will then see if they can find those people for you and see if you want to invite them all to a meeting called a Family Group Conference. At your Family Group Conference there will be time:

- To talk about what you want and need
- For your friends and family to plan how they will support you
- To help you to agree the plan

Lifelong Links is YOUR choice.

It will only happen with your agreement. If you change your mind, just let your facilitator know.

It's that easy.

If you want to take part, you, or a supporter can contact the Family Group Conference Service on

familygroupconferencing@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

or call Emma on **07703 373999**

The Winter Hub

Birmingham Children's Trust's Winter Hub was set up last October to support vulnerable children, young people and families throughout Winter 2020.

With the help of our incredible partners and committed members of the local community, the Winter Hub has seen an unprecedented level of success.



In total our partners and members of the community have provided over 10,000 gifts for children in care and care leavers.

We are extremely grateful to each and every person who donated, the project was a huge success and we were able to give many children in care and care leavers some wonderful gifts!



Introducing Become

Become is a fantastic charity whose aim is to offer support and guidance to care experienced people and supporters of care experienced people.

You can get in touch with their advice line, Monday to Friday, from 10am to 5pm.

Freephone- **0800 023 2033**

Email- **advice@becomecharity.org.uk**

Or use the contact form on their website: **becomecharity.org.uk**

Start your year with



A little poem from CGL's (Change, Grow, Live) Employability Case Managers -

**We know 2020 was not really the best,
With the global pandemic, and all the rest!
We had a lot of time, to sit down and chill,
Some of us watched Netflix and some learnt
a new skill!
But now it's New Year and it's time for a
change.
To get a job, join a course, gosh there is just
such a range!
And here at CGL we can help you with it all,
We want to help you reach your goals,
whether they are big or small!
So, let 2021 be the year of the go getter,
And hopefully together, we can make this
year better!**

Speak to your PA or social worker for a referral to CGL today!

REMEMBER - If you need any info, advice or guidance about anything to do with work, training or education:

Call Juliette on 07825 117381 or email juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Young parents project

The Rights and Participation Service support the young parents project whose members are care leavers who are either pregnant or are currently young parents.

We think young parents' voices are sometimes not heard as much as others and young parents have told us that they would like to share their experiences.

The project aims to improve outcomes through access to support and guidance for young parents.

Currently the forum meets virtually on Microsoft teams. Young parents contribute to the agenda for the meetings and an annual plan of action is drawn up in consultation with the members.

Our new Head of Service Jake Shaw joined us at the last meeting in December 2020 and the young parents enjoyed asking various questions.

Jake is happy to support the project and look at ways to support our young mums and dads. At the meeting in December 2020 the members worked together to pick their logo together with their mission statement:

**'Our society built
by us not you'**

The project is in the process of devising a postcard and hope to have this in print in the coming months.

Some young parents have completed 'Interviewing Fostering and Adoption panel training' with the Reese Foundation.

These young parents have supported both Birmingham City Council and the Trust in successfully interviewing suitable candidates for various senior leadership and professional roles.



Mentoring update

Young parents spoke about the importance of having a mentor and how they would benefit from one. The Corporate Parenting Board are in the process of setting up the Mentoring scheme and aim to allocate suitable mentors to our young parents.

The project is continuing to add recipes to their 'cookbook' and would love to hear from you about any exciting and nutritional dishes you create for your little ones.

Issues being addressed are:

What is their favourite food to eat?

How do you get children to eat their greens?

If you wish to get involved or even share recipe ideas please contact Tasneem Akhtar in the Rights and Participation team.

If any young parents are interested in joining us please get in touch.

We are always happy to have new members.

Tasneem.akhtar@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk



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CHILDREN'S TRUST**