



THE TRUST TIMES

18+ Care Leavers' Newsletter

July 2022

WISHING YOU A GREAT SUMMER

Hi everyone,

We have all made it into July, hopefully plenty of Summer sunshine, and for those of you who are college or university students, a well deserved break from your studies.

For those of you who are working, we hope you are booking some time away from your day (or night) job to watch some of the **Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games** (28 July to 8 August).

The Summer holiday time will also be a major transitional time for many of you, as you may be preparing to start a brand new education, employment or training opportunity.

We want you to make sure you take some valuable time to appreciate all the incredible places to visit in Birmingham.

Please find some of the latest opportunities in this newsletter, as well as information about services and support available for you. Take care and if you are outside for long periods, don't forget the sun cream and a bottle of water.



Remember, you can have your achievements, however big or small, shared in this newsletter.

We love your good news.

If you have anything you would like to be considered for next month's edition please email it to Juliette Walton.

Juliette.Walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Always remember, you are never alone, you are a part of the biggest family in Birmingham, and we are here for you!

If you can't get hold of your PA, please call:
0121 464 1229.

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

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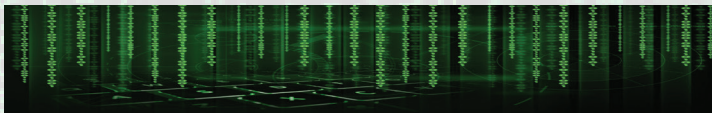
POWERFUL PERSONAL STATEMENT

Every year I have the privilege of helping some of you with your personal statements for university. Lots of you get help from your personal advisers as well. Remember to ask - and it's not too late to apply! You can apply directly to Universities or through UCAS, and Uni's are filling places right up to October. Sometimes a personal statement stands out and this one is so original, inspiring and interesting, we decided to share it via the newsletter. Enjoy this statement, written by **IS**.

Juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk 07825 117 381

I know it sounds cliché, but I mean it with complete honesty when I say that while I was a young boy living in Yemen, the most interesting things for me were computers and general technological devices.

It was like that for a large part of my childhood, whether I was watching a football game on a TV screen through a coffee shop or digging through trash hills in my town and finding pieces of broken electronic devices.



I'd imagine myself living in a big city with all of these big, bright screens everywhere and these complex lines of writing, in a language I did not even understand.

However, the place I lived in had no opportunities to learn anything that way, and having a conservative family that made me think it would be impossible to achieve that for people like us made it worse.

So, It ended up being something that I had put in the back of my mind and after some time, believing it was something I'd never be able to reach, forgetting altogether.

After some personal events in my life took place, I ended up travelling to the UK and moving into a foster home, where my passion for technology was reignited.

I was given my own personal laptop by my school and my interest developed even further.

Whether I was watching a video, opening a website or simply typing something into a search bar, I would often question how it was that these could be created, wondering what the process behind them was and thinking that I could do it myself.

I always enjoyed thinking that way as a hobby, but as I got older it became harder to ignore its presence in everyday life, so I decided that it was something I would take up in my studies.

That is why I have applied for this course. I feel that it has elements that greatly interest me and relate to it, and I feel that the career prospects are great, especially considering the prevalence of technology and digital data now.



I don't have the natural ability to see patterns or solve problems in the way that a lot of other people might. I have to process information for a while and look at in many ways before I can see a solution.

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So, as a sort of way to prove to myself that I can, I've always liked to challenge myself and push the limits of my mind.

I never want to learn something and remain static. I constantly want to innovate and better myself and my knowledge and this is a great opportunity to do that.

I think I am suitable for the course because of my ability to accept criticism and always use that as a means to grow. I constantly look to improve what I know and learn something new.

I do not have prior experience in this field, however, I do believe that I have general skills through my college course and also through working a few jobs with my foster brother.

They include, but are not limited to, good communication skills, my willingness to learn, my ability to work well on my own, my concentration skills as well as my ability to work well under pressure.

Although my previous studies have no relation to what I want to do now, I have picked up specific fundamental skills that would be of use to me in any course, such as literacy skills, inquiry and research skills and teamwork skills.

The science course I had been on involved elements of biology, chemistry and physics with different assessments across my 2 years in college.

Covid-19 and the lockdowns made it mentally taxing, especially since I had to move out of my foster home and live on my own, and I could not rely on my teachers and had to complete many tasks using my own initiative, forcing me to be independent.

I always strive to be the best version of myself and believe that I will go a long way given the opportunity to.

REES FOUNDATION JULY 2022 UPDATE

Rees Foundation run a number of groups called '**Let's Connect**', which allow you to connect with other members of the care experienced community. Rees find that these networks can lead to lifelong and empowering friendships.

The groups are facilitated using a team who may be care experienced or individuals who are experienced by profession, with the ultimate aim of creating a safe place where care experienced people like you can meet to discuss matters of personal interest.



Courses in July and August 2022

Dr Rachel's Trauma & Anxiety

Four-week course delivered by Dr Rachel, discussing anxiety and ways we can manage it better in the future.

11, 18, 25 July and 1 August - 1.00pm

Strengths & Identity in Care & Beyond

Mary-Ann Hodd explores the impact the care journey can have on developing strengths and identity.

4, 11, 18, 25 July - 1.00pm

To sign up to any of the groups, and to find out when sessions take place, please complete the form in the link below:

<https://form.jotform.com/203141499622353>

THERAPEUTIC EMOTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICE (TESS)

Come along and join the Trust's monthly TESS afternoon drop-in sessions for Birmingham's 18+ care-experienced young people, aimed at enhancing your emotional well-being.

Where will sessions take place:

TESS
67 Bournbrook Road
Selly Oak
B29 7BX

Phone: 0121 6751781

Dates: These will take place on the first Wednesday of every month starting from 7 September 2022.

Time: 12.00pm – 4.00pm.

What can I expect:

- A relaxing and welcoming environment with an outside garden and indoor area.
- Connection with the TESS 18+ team, which will give you the opportunity to talk and engage in activities, learn coping skills and strategies, that will help you to improve your emotional wellbeing.

Staff available on the day:

- Davinia Burrell
- Paul Campbell
- Vibha Jivan
- Sally Burgess
- Emily Kigonya



YOUR GOOD NEWS 2022

We are continuing to celebrate your good news in this newsletter. Congratulations to every one of you on your achievements.

- **AR** has just finished her BTEC course in Science, and will start her HNC this September.



- **AKS** has got a job working at Midland Heart on a very good salary working 9.00am to 5.00pm.

AKS is a single mother who has always strived to be the best for herself and her daughter, and she has always worked hard in care homes and other jobs in the past. Her hard work has resulted in **AKS** obtaining a new job on a lot more money and better hours. **AKS's** determination and drive is impressive and we are proud to see what she has accomplished.

- **MA** has passed her foundation year with an overall 69%, and has now been accepted onto the Architecture degree course.

MA recently received a Studentship award from Birmingham City University (BCU), along with £20 voucher. **MA** gained the award for being a good team player, being in good spirits throughout the year, and her dedication which overall she was classed as the best student for this foundation term. **MA** is also an ambassador for BCU, and has been working on the Summer camp at BCU.

ADVOCACY SERVICE

The aim of **Rights and Participation (RAP) Advocacy** service is to ensure that Birmingham children in care, care leavers and children on child protection plans (wherever they may live), are provided an advocacy service. You are entitled to have the support of an advocate and access to children's rights.

RAP Advocacy is the representation of your wishes and feelings, your views, and your voice, to professionals and services. This could be at meetings, through the complaints process, or wherever you wish us to do so.

RAP Advocacy is **ALWAYS** led by you the young person - our **BOSS**. Your advocate will work on your instructions alone.

RAP Advocacy is issue based, so it is provided for a particular purpose, and is there until there is an outcome for the complaint, or concern.

Advocacy referrals are normally allocated to an advocate within three working days of receipt. The advocate will then contact you and support you with your issue/s.

You can make a referral for yourself or anyone else can make a referral on your behalf.

To make a referral or if you have any questions about RAP Advocacy service please email **advocacy@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk**

Testimonials about the RAP Advocacy service

"Thanks so much my advocate - everything went the way I wanted."

"Thank you for helping me learn and grow as a young mum you stood up for me and believed in me. It's all paid off, you're truly amazing and I hope we can always stay in contact."

"My advocate helped me to have housing officials listen to my housing needs. Without her they would not have listened to me and fobbed me off."

MOVING ON UPDATE



We've been busy at **Moving On**, not making theatre this time - but films!

We have been working with our group to co-create a series of short videos, all designed to tackle topics which children in care may find valuable as they start to think about living independently.

They are short, TikTok style videos, designed to be snapshots into the types of things care-experienced young people want to know.

These videos were created by our group of care-experienced young people, and respond to topics they wish they'd known.

We will run workshops with children in care across the summer to share these videos, and have fun, engaging discussions to unpick the films further and to tackle big topics children in care want to know.

Want to get involved?

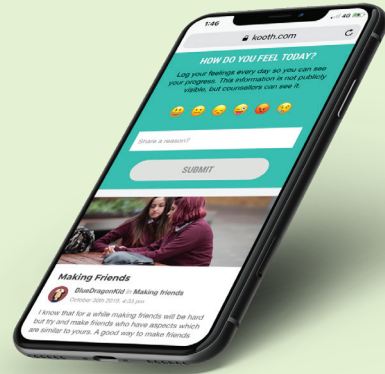
Great! If you're interested in hearing more or would like to co-facilitate our children in care workshops, it's not too late to get involved.

Contact

katiewebster@womenandtheatre.co.uk
07864 642970

Follow us on social media so you don't miss the videos! Follow **@MovingOnBum** on Twitter, Instagram and TikTok.

Give Kooth a try



Kooth offers free, safe and anonymous online counselling and support, with many different features and sections to offer you support such as:

- **Magazine** - helpful articles, personal experiences and tips from young people and our Kooth team.
- **Discussion Boards** - start or join a conversation with our friendly Kooth community. Lots of topics to choose from!
- **Chat with the team** - chat to our helpful team about anything that's on your mind. Message us or have a live chat.
- **Daily Journal** - write in your own daily journal to track your feelings or emotions and reflect on how you're doing.

Visit the **Kooth** website to see the features listed above and much more!

www.kooth.com

THE TRUST TIMES

Back issues of the 18+ newsletter

You can find the last two years worth of 18+ newsletters on the Birmingham Children's Trust website. Many of the feature articles, including those information and guidance are still valid.

Visit: <https://bit.ly/3yliug3>

Life Skills with Barclays

Barclays is inviting you to use their 'Digital Wings' support to better manage your money.

If you are a young person and would like money advice and tips please use the link below to register for 'Digital Wings' support.

<https://digital.wings.uk.barclays/register?code=BCT>

Trust Website Care Leavers' opportunities

The Trust care leavers' opportunities page will be full of opportunities for you to get your hands on very soon! It is still being developed but you can see it here, be sure to favourite the page to keep an eye out for updates!

<https://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/opportunitiesCL>

Child Trust Funds



If you were born in the UK, turned 18 after 1 Sept 2020 and don't have details of your Child Trust Fund (CTF), please use the online form below to find details and take control of your CTF.

<https://www.sharefound.org/ctf>

Any questions?

If you need to contact the Share Foundation regarding the online forms please email:

info@sharefound.org

Or call **01296 310400**

For further enquiries please contact:

Tracey.Britton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

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.

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



**BIRMINGHAM
CHILDREN'S TRUST**

Grab a cuppa with..



The Rees Foundation is proud to collaborate with a number of cafés across the country, offering a safe social space for care experienced people in the heart of the community.

The cafés offer affordable, high quality food and drinks and supportive staff who are mental health first aiders.



The Rees Guest Card is exclusively available to care experienced people and allows you discounted food and drink at any of our cafés. Please click here to apply for a Rees Café Guest Card

You'll find a full list of where you can use your card below. Rees Foundation website has a huge amount of information, resources and projects that you can get your teeth into.

<https://www.reesfoundation.org/rees-cafes.html>

Evolve Café in Birmingham

Evolve Café is based in Birmingham.

Evolve Café
201 Bradford Street
Birmingham, B12 0JD

evolve@aquarius.org.uk

01212 6228181



Suicide prevention

If you, or anyone you know, is feeling suicidal, there is always help available.

However bad you are feeling right now, there is help that you can get.

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