



THE TRUST TIMES

18+ Care Leavers' Newsletter

July 2024

GO FOR GOLD THIS OLYMPIC SUMMER

Hi everyone,

What a start to the Summer, a General Election, the Euro's and the upcoming 2024 Paris Olympics.

With everyone looking to become a winner, we want to make sure you are triumphant this summer, so make sure you read this newsletter to find out what is on offer.

We have advice and guidance about staying safe when attending festivals and events (**pages 15-16**), summer jobs tips (**page 5**) and plenty of other opportunities and top tips.

If you are working this Summer then well done you! Rees Foundation are holding a terrific social work taster day at The Willows on 25 July. Get full info and registration details on **pages 25 to 26**.

Many of you will have completed exams and are enjoying a break, just don't forget the sunscreen!

NEW DATES - We offer 45-minute drop-in sessions at The Willows to talk about careers - **see page 2**.



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

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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Careers **advice** and **guidance** appointments with Juliette at The Willows on Friday afternoons

- Do you have dreams and ambitions about what you'd like to do in the future?
- Are you hoping to get a job that will make you proud, connect you with people, earn some decent money, and give you independence?

Well everything is possible – you just need to know where to start.

If you would like a careers advice and guidance appointment, to talk through your ideas and options, work out where to start and which way to go, then book a 45-minute slot using Eventbrite.

Venue: The Willows, Emmeline St, Birmingham B9 4NG.

How to get there: Bus number 17 or 60 from Birmingham city centre.

Get off near the McDonalds by Bordesley Green roundabout, cross over the road and it is a three minute walk to The Willows.

Times and dates

Slots are available to book for the following times and dates:

- Friday 12 July 2024
- Friday 26 July 2024
- Friday 23 August 2024

- 1.30pm - 2.15pm
- 2.15pm - 3.00pm
- 3.00pm - 3.45pm
- 3.45pm - 4.30pm

Book a slot

To book a slot please scan the QR code below, and then click on the Eventbrite link for the day you wish to book, or ring Juliette on 07825 117381 to secure a slot:



USEFUL APPS AND WEBSITES

Here are four apps/websites that you can help you in daily life.



All Trails

- All Trails is a free walking, hiking and cycling route app that lets you browse routes in your area recommended by others. Perfect to find new routes for a run or plan a scenic walk through Lickey Hills or Sutton Park this summer.



Khan Academy

- Khan Academy is a free learning app that contains thousands of interactive exercises, videos, articles and more. You can brush up on everything from maths and economics to science and history, no matter your level. It's a really useful way to catch up in a subject or go further in one you're interested in. You can learn anything for free!



Clear Fear

- Clear Fear is an award-winning app specifically designed to help young people face and overcome their anxiety. This app will help you learn to reduce the physical responses and manage your symptoms of anxiety better. The reviews are exceptional and this is well worth a try if you find yourself feeling anxious.



Gutenberg Project

- Not an app but a website – and a very useful one at that. Project Gutenberg is a collection of over 70,000 free eBooks to download or read online. There's also a growing number of audio books if you prefer to listen.



SPOTLIGHT ON STEPHEN AT SPRINGBOARD



Stephen works for Springboard. He is a Birmingham care leaver and we were lucky enough to have him as a guest presenter at the conference on 30 May 2024. Stephen spoke really powerfully about his experience of being in care and leaving care. He told us how working in the hospitality sector had got him into a great career with people who became family to him. He now works with Springboard to help other young people get started in hospitality – which includes restaurants, hotels, and bars (back of house and front of house). Springboard offers work-based training and they have lots of opportunities in Birmingham. If you want to find out more, visit the Springboard website and get involved.

Find out more: <https://springboard.uk.net>

OUR OFFICE BASE FOR THE 18+ DUTY SERVICE

Below is some important information for young people about access to our 18+ duty service for care-experienced young people. We are here to help, either by phone or in person.

To contact the 18+ duty service, please continue to call our duty line, 0121 464 1229. There is always a Personal Adviser and 18+ Manager available to give advice or help.

Our office base

We are open:

- Monday – Thursday 8.45am to 5.15pm
- Friday – 8.45am to 4.15pm

You can call in at our new office, **One Avenue Road, Aston, Birmingham, B6 4DU** between these hours.

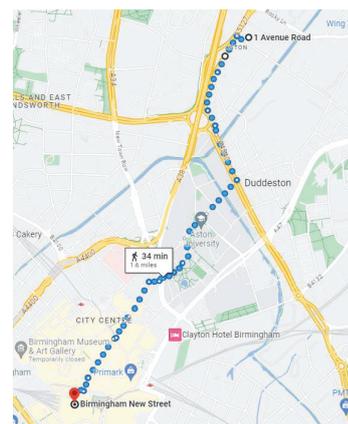
Ask the friendly reception staff, as you go in, to let the 18+ duty team know you would like to see a Personal Adviser. Reception will call us and a team member will come to reception to see you. We have access to a quiet space where you can speak in confidence.

Buses to use: The main bus routes are the Number 65 and 67, both go from the city centre. These buses will drop you right outside One Avenue Road, and the Number 8 route crosses nearby. The 65 and 67 buses go from outside the large B&M store in the city centre.

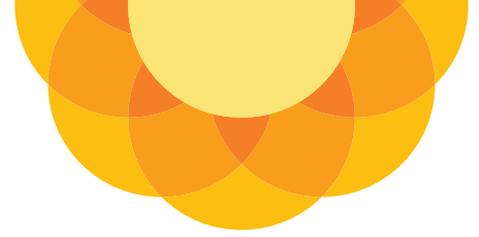


Walking here

From Birmingham New Street Station there are a number of pedestrian routes you can take from New Street Station to get to One Avenue Road. This is the most direct route that follows a designated pedestrian path from the station, all the way through to the office and is well lit.



ARE YOU LOOKING FOR SUMMER WORK?



Are you looking for work this summer?

Top five tips

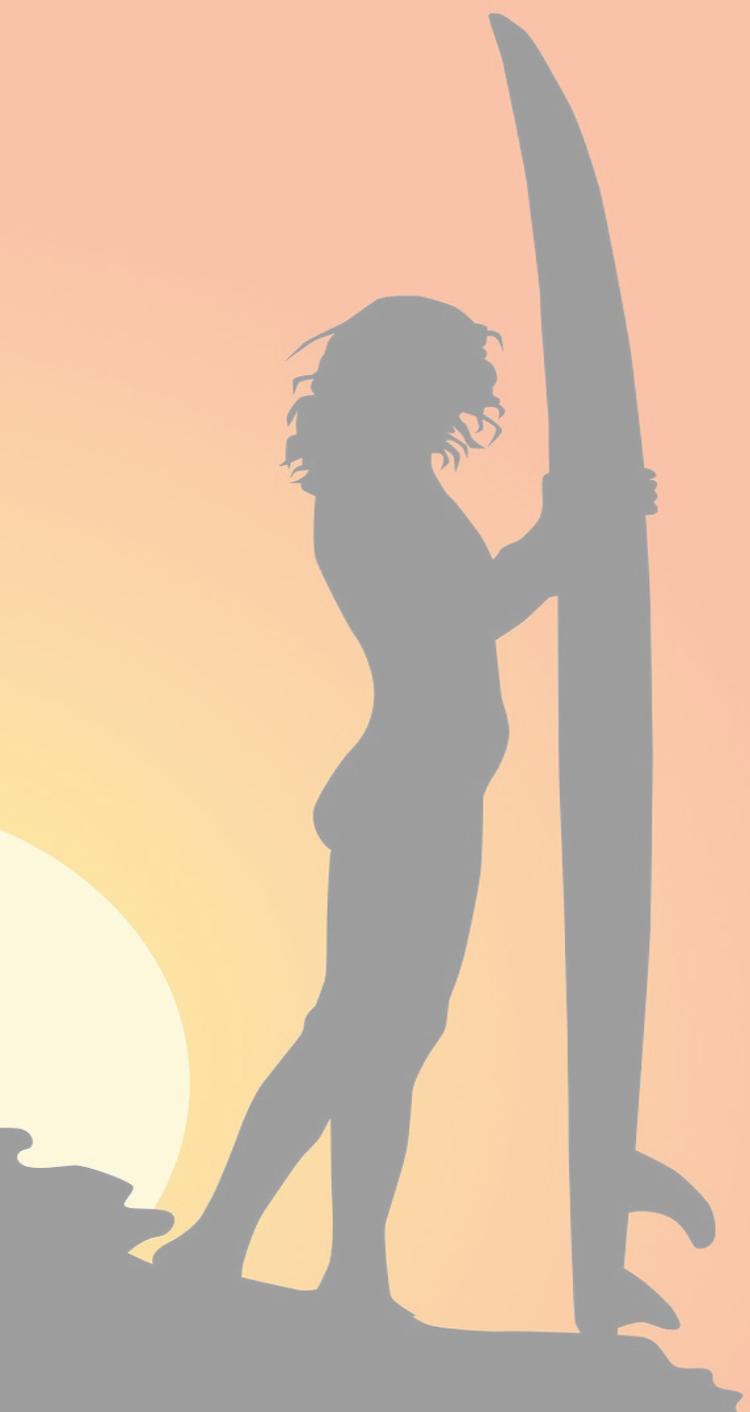
- Decide if you want career-related experience or just some extra cash - this will help you narrow your search.

- Research the companies and roles you're applying for – apply direct through company websites as well as on jobs platforms like Indeed.
- Don't be afraid to follow up after interviews – calling them shows you are keen and stops you wasting time waiting and worrying.
- Beware of taking on work that only pays on commission like door-to-door sales.
- Make yourself a CV and check vacancy websites daily or every week minimum.

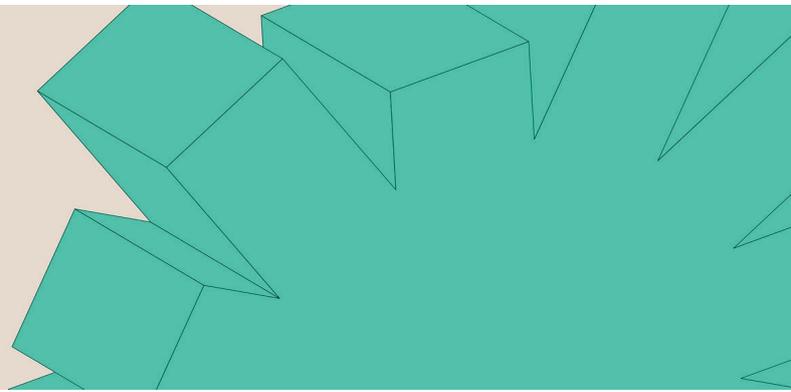
Top five places to find work

- If you are a student, there will be jobs on campus – ask at Student Services where and how to apply.
- Hospitality (bars, restaurants, hotels, pubs)
- Children's activities (playschemes like Holiday Activities and Food Birmingham Holiday Activities programme | Birmingham City Council)
- Holiday parks (caravan and camping) – if you can get to them, you can usually stay on site for the summer.
- Festivals and events

If you are based in Birmingham, you could get involved in the **Waitrose Project** (see page **6**). If you need any help and advice you can book a careers one-to one at the Willows (see page **2**).



BUILDING HAPPIER FUTURES



Waitrose Hall Green

Drop-in and tour of the store

Date and time: Thursday 18 July 2024, 12.00pm - 2.00pm

Address: 1332 Stratford Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, B28 9EF

- You are invited to take part in our **Building Happier Futures Drop-in and tour**.
- This is your chance to explore our shop, meet some of our Partners (our word for employees) and get a feel for what it could be like to work here.
- This opportunity is for young people with care experience.

Agenda

- **12.00pm** - Arrival
- **12.00pm - 12.30pm** - Welcome, housekeeping and introduction
- **12.30pm - 1.30pm** - Tour of the branch and meet staff.
- **1.30pm - 2.30pm** - Your chance to ask questions and say if you would like to attend work-experience.

Please wear comfortable clothing. When you arrive please go to the customer service desk and say you are here for the **Building Happier Futures Drop-in**.

If you have any questions, or would like to get involved, please contact:
juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk
or send a **WhatsApp** message to **07825 117 381**.



RECAP OF OUR LATEST CONFERENCE



by Tayla Hogan - Trust Apprentice

As the new Apprentice here at the Children's Trust, I was looking forward to attending the Care Leavers Conference and meeting other young people and seeing how much support we offer.

Every year, Care Leavers face unique challenges as they transition from the foster care system into adulthood. These young individuals often lack the support and resources needed to navigate important life milestones successfully. However, there is hope with our amazing events held to support those who need it most.

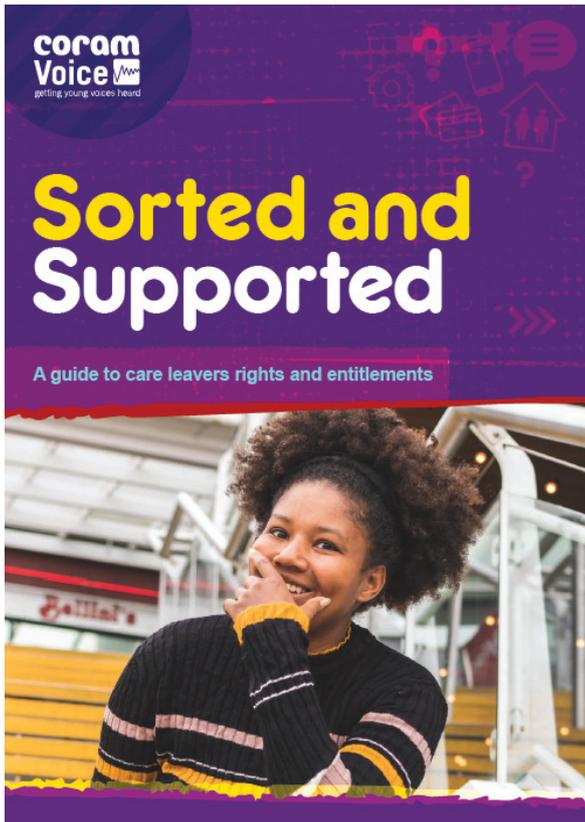
This event is dedicated to empowering and uplifting Care Leavers in our Trust. Providing them with a transformative experience that equips them with essential skills, connections and inspiration for a brighter future. With many stalls set up on the day, there were plenty of people to offer support and guidance.

Over the course of the day, we got to hear from many professionals about what help their companies offer for Care Leavers. This provided everyone with valuable insights, advice and opportunities with possible future employment.

Recognising the importance of emotional wellbeing is important at the Trust. We had stalls dedicated to offering help and support for those that need it. Care Leavers can access information about counselling services and coping mechanisms for dealing with the emotional challenge they may face.

The Care Leavers Conference is not just a gathering; it is a catalyst for change, providing care experienced young people with the right tools, inspiration, and support they need to navigate the complexities of adulthood successfully. By empowering them and creating a supportive network, we can ensure that every individual in the Trust regardless of their past, has the opportunity to thrive and reach their full potential.

SORTED AND SUPPORTED



Coram Voice produces a publication called 'Sorted and Supported'.

This is a guide for young people leaving care on their rights and entitlements.

'Sorted and Supported' explains what young people leaving care's rights and entitlements are and what to do if you don't feel that you are being properly supported.

'Sorted and Supported' also explains the support that should be provided by local authority Children's Services (sometimes called Children's Social Care or Social Services) and how and when you can get this.

To view the full 'Sorted and Supported' guide, scan the QR code below.



coramVoice)))
getting young voices heard

Suicide and self-harm prevention

If you, or anyone you know, is feeling suicidal, or wanting to harm themselves, 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

Also please see the **TESS offer** on **page 14**.



Aston University

BIRMINGHAM UK

Find out about opportunities with Aston University in Birmingham...

Aston University is a campus university in Birmingham city-centre. Everything you need, such as lectures, Student's Union, accommodation, sports centre and student support services are only a five-minute walk away from anywhere on campus, with the second largest city in the UK on your doorstep. You probably couldn't get more central - Birmingham New Street and the Bullring are only a 10-minute walk away too.

Aston Ready Contextual Offer

Aston Ready is our contextual Offer scheme that could reduce your undergraduate offer by one or two grades.

Assessed at the point of application, there are no additional forms to fill in.

Our Careers and Placements team support students throughout their time at university and up to three years after they graduate.

We can support students to choose the right career path and stand out in a competitive job market and help students write effective CVs, cover letters, and applications for interviews and assessment centres.

Show me the money

At Aston University there are lots of scholarships and bursaries to support you during your studies.

Care experienced support

The transition into higher education can be daunting for anyone, but being a care experienced student can present its own set of challenges.

Rest assured, there's lots of support you can access here at Aston University. This could include finance, accommodation, and other support services.

You might also be eligible for the Aston Support Scholarship or a Moving On grant.

Scan the QR code for further details about the complete offer from Aston University to care experienced young people.



Child Trust Funds



If you were born in the UK and turned 18 after 1 September 2020, and don't have details of your Child Trust Fund (CTF), please use the online form below to find your details and take control of your CTF (usually worth £250 or more): <https://findctf.sharefound.org>

Junior Individual Savings Accounts

If you turned 18 before 1 September 2020 (born since 3rd January 1994) you may have a Junior Individual Savings Account (JISA) set up with £200. To be eligible you must have been in care in the UK, continuously for 12 months or more, since 2 January 2012. Please use the online form below to find your details so you can take control of your JISA:

<https://myjisa.sharefound.org>

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

SIGN UP TO OUR NEWSLETTER ONLINE

We are looking to provide future newsletters in a different way for care-experienced young people like yourselves.

The plan is to move to using an emailer platform called Mailjet to send you updates direct to your inbox.

To do this we will need your permission to send direct emails from this platform, so we kindly need you to complete a short online form on our website. **Scan the QR code below** to go to the form. There are just eight quick questions.



Once you click 'Sign up' at the bottom of the form you will be sent an email to verify that you wish to sign up to future newsletters. Please make sure you accept this invite, and your name and email will then be added to our database.

You can of course opt out of receiving these newsletters at any time, using the 'unsubscribe' link, but we hope you will stay with us for future newsletters and bulletins.

A screenshot of a sign-up form titled "Sign up for our care-experienced news and information". The form asks for "First name", "Last name", and "Email address". Above the form is a small illustration of a diverse group of people, similar to the one at the top of the page.

Sign up for our care-experienced news and information

Please add your details below.

First name

Last name

Email address

YOUR GOOD NEWS IN JULY '24

We are continuing to celebrate your good news in this newsletter.

Congratulations to every one of you on your achievements in July 2024.



- **Peyton** has completed their nursing degree achieving a First grade. Incredible stuff!
- **Zobia** has successfully completed her BA in Documentary Photography and Visual Activism at the University of Wales with First Class Honours. Awesome!
- **Emily** has just achieved First Class Honours in her Animal Behaviour BSc (Hons) at John Moore's University in Liverpool. Superb!



- **Heather** has completed the first year of her Business NVQ Level 3 at Solihull college. Heather also won the 'Top Attendance' award and 'Student of the Year'. Heather lives a two hour bus journey away from the campus. A very determined young woman.
- **Paige** has passed her practical driving test!

Cash transfer scheme

Kings College London are doing a research project which involves making cash transfers to care experienced young people aged 18-25.

The purpose of the research is to see if the cash (which doesn't have to be declared to DWP because it is a 'gift') makes a positive difference to wellbeing.

To be part of the research you will need to complete an online survey - you will get a £20 voucher for completing.

Scan the QR code below to go to the survey:



NHS
Birmingham and Solihull

Care Leavers Prescription Form



NHS Birmingham and Solihull have published a form for you to apply for free prescriptions.

Simply scan the QR code below, complete the form, save it and send it to:

nhsbsolicb.childrenincare@nhs.net



You can get a copy of this form from your Personal Adviser or by sending an email to:

nhsbsolicb.childrenincare@nhs.net



WE NEED YOU

If you care about other care leavers and want to help make things better for them in Birmingham – we would love you to join our Corporate Parenting Board.



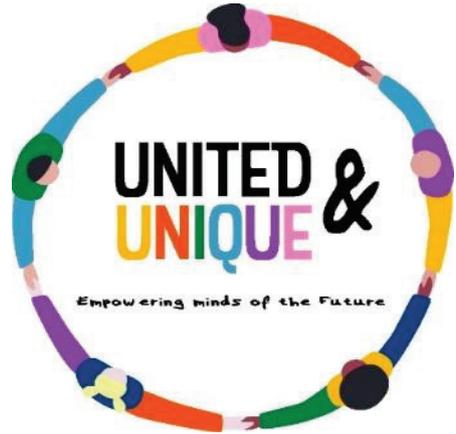
The Trust Corporate Parenting Board meets every two months in Birmingham (travel expenses paid).

Everything that matters is discussed, ranging from accommodation to funding, and mental health to opportunities, and much more.

Solutions are found and businesses and services are challenged to see how they can help.

It's a great opportunity to really make a difference.

If you'd like to get involved contact:
CorporateParenting@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk



Thanks to Trust apprentice Rakia Gayle we now have three new social media accounts to share the great work and news of all of our groups that represent different children and young people in Birmingham.

'United & Unique' is the collective name for the different groups, such as the Care Leavers' Forum and the Children in Care Council.



The new social media accounts are on 'X', 'Instagram' and 'Tik Tok'.

To find links to them all, please scan the QR code below:



Trust Apprenticeships on offer

Two fantastic Level 3 Apprenticeship opportunities are being advertised with the Trust's HR team.

They are not ring-fenced for care leavers, but we can give you advice and support through the application process.

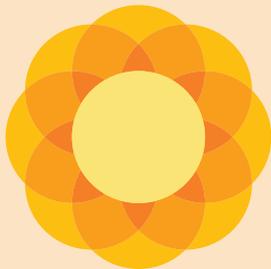
Please scan the QR codes below to find out more.

What if I want to apply?

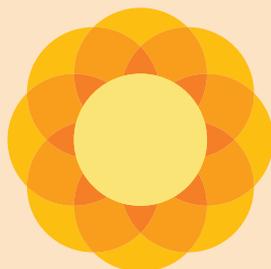
Please let us know if you want to apply:
Juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk
or
CorporateParenting@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

The closing date for applications is 21 July 2024 at 11.59pm.

Trust Apprenticeship Talent Acquisition Administrator



Trust Apprenticeship People Operations Administrator



Open University scholarships

The Open University are offering 6 scholarships for care experienced students to cover the costs of a full course starting in the 2024/25 academic year. The deadline for application is midday, 24 July 2024.

Information from the **Open University Website** can be found by scanning this QR code:



In the 2024/25 academic year, we're offering six further undergraduate scholarships to care-experienced young people aged 25 and under.

A scholarship covers OU undergraduate credit-bearing qualifications, paying for the full tuition cost of your qualification, up to 120 credits each seasonal academic year and 360 credits in total.

To be eligible, you'll need to meet all the following criteria:

- be 25 years of age or under on 1 September 2024
- be starting OU study for the first time in the 2024/25 academic year
- be ordinarily resident in the UK and eligible for a UK fee
- hold no existing higher education qualification(s)
- be able to demonstrate proof of your experience of being in care
- have a gross personal income of not more than £25,000 per year or receive a qualifying benefit

Need to know more?

Call **0300 303 5303** or email:
general-enquiries@open.ac.uk

Therapeutic Emotional Support Service (TESS)

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

Where will the sessions take place:

TESS, 67 Bournbrook Road, Selly Oak B29 7BX

Phone to book: 0121 675 1781

Dates: These will take place on the first Wednesday of every month.

The next session will be on

1 August 2024.

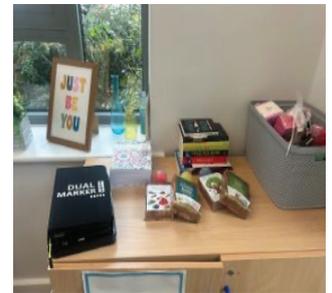
Time: 12.00pm – 4.00pm.

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.

Staff available on the day:

- Davinia Burrell • Paul Campbell
- Vibha Jivan • Sally Burgess
- Emily Kigonya • Rachel Quinn



Eid event recap

The Therapeutic Emotional Support Service (TESS) hosted their first ever EID party at Bournbrook House on Tuesday 18 June.



The need arose after a colleague shared with the service a care leaver she worked with had wanted to celebrate Eid but hadn't anywhere to go to do so. She didn't want to attend an event alone and also wanted to feel safe. So TESS planned an Eid party event.

Feedback from those who attended (and their children) was amazing, ranging from "I haven't been able to relax like this in days" to "This is the best day ever!".

Employment and Emotional Wellbeing

Why not explore volunteering opportunities to help build your self-confidence. There are lots of opportunities to volunteer with local charities, for example food banks or charity shops. Please click on this link for the Birmingham Voluntary Service Council for more information:

<https://www.bvsc.org/>

Returning to work provides you with a routine, gives you a sense of identity and purpose, opportunities to form friendships, better financial security and the feeling that you are playing an active part in society.

Please note the following links for tips on maintaining good mental health:

10 ways to maintain your positive mental health on Spunout - <https://bit.ly/495lqRK>

Top tips for care-experienced young people - IMO - <https://bit.ly/4ar0BCw>



HELP YOUR MATE

Summer Festival Safety Harm Reduction Advice

To make sure nothing gets in the way of you having a good time, CGL has pulled together some top tips on staying safe at this year's summer festivals.

You can get more help by scanning this QR code, that will take you to the CGL website.



Before you go out

Charge your phone before you go out - We all know that feeling when you see the dreaded 'battery low' notification pop up on our screens. It's not just about losing mates and trying to find them again; you might need it to help you get home or call for help.

You might be feeling your best self and take loads of photos for the 'Gram' but this will drain your battery faster. Try and split the selfies between everyone's phones so you all have some charge leftover. Closing down unused apps and turning down the screen brightness can also help your battery life. Now might also be a really good time to invest in a power bank.

Stay together and look out for each other - Losing your mates can be a stressful experience. Decide a meeting point and make a pact that you will all meet back there if you notice someone isn't with you. Use apps like What3words designed to identify any location within 3 metres.

Share your location - spend a little bit of time before going out to make sure that you know how to do this. It can help you find your mates if anyone gets lost but it could also save a life.

Have a plan for the end of the night - At some point, the party's going to end and you're going to want to head home. Create a plan for the end of the night before you've even left to make sure you get back safely. If your plans change, share these with your mates so that everyone is aware. Then you can make sure you don't leave anyone behind. Drop each other a message when you get home so you know everyone got back safely.

Don't forget to drink plenty of water, to keep yourself well hydrated.

5 tips for making the most of your summer

Summer is here, with sport and music events by the bucketload, hot weather and everyone out and about. But make sure you remember to look after yourself while you enjoy the sun. Here are five easy things to remember to make sure you have a good time...

1) Good footwear

If you're enjoying the outdoors this summer, whether at the local park or a festival, sturdy footwear is a must. Muddy, uneven surfaces mean one thing: sprained ankles. And nobody wants to spend the best months of the year on crutches!

2) Sun protection

Sunstroke and sun burn can ruin a great day in the heat. Make sure you wear a high SPF, reapply throughout the day and drink plenty of water! Whatever you're doing, bring a hat and take breaks in the shade, too.

3) Utilising your phone

Charge your phone the night before and bring it with you. If you're going to a festival or event remember to save battery throughout the day: power saving mode, turning off unused apps and not taking too many photos and videos are good ways to do this.

You can also share your location with friends if you get lost – just hit the paper clip and choose Location on any WhatsApp conversation.

4) Hay fever and insect bites

If you suffer from allergies take an antihistamine in the morning, especially if you know you're going to be outside. You can buy these from most shops and pharmacies. Insect repellent is also a great way to avoid bites and stings when outdoors.

5) Don't mix drugs and alcohol

Not using substances is the best thing to do to ensure you have a good time. If you do take drugs, mixing them (including with alcohol) can lead to harmful side effects. Also, drink plenty of water! To learn more about different drugs and how to minimise your risk, go to: <https://www.changegrowlive.org/help-your-mate>



Dear Trust Times reader,

As you have now reached 18 years of age and are soon to leave care of the Local Authority you will no longer be a child in care.

We would like you to know that there will still be a Nurse available to you for advice on **Monday to Friday 9am-5pm**.

You can contact the **Duty Nurse** on **0121 466 3640** choose **Option 3**. You can also text us between **Monday to Friday 9am-5pm** on **07725 223686** and someone will call you back.

The following emotional/mental health support services are available to all young people;

- There is a place called **PAUSE** in **Digbeth**, if you register with them, they will get back to you.
<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/young-peple/ell-being/services/pause> or askbeam@childrenssociety.org.uk or ring **0207 841 4470 (10 am to 6pm)**. We have been told that the quickest response is to email. Alternatively out of our office hours phone **0300 300 0095 (6pm to 10 am)**.
- Kooth is a new free, safe and anonymous service to support young people's emotional and mental health in Birmingham.
The online self-referral is available at www.kooth.com

Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board will provide care leavers aged 16-25 years, who were supported by Birmingham and Solihull Local Authorities and are not eligible for free prescriptions, with a 12 month pre-payment prescription certificate. For support with applying see **Page 11** of this newsletter, or contact nhsbsolicb.childrenincare@nhs.net.

If you are unwell access: <https://111.nhs.uk> and complete the online checklist. This will direct you further should you need to call **NHS 111** or **999**.

You can also access support from the following:

Social worker duty line 0121 303 1888

Care Leavers duty line: 0121 464 1229

Kind regards.

Nurses for Children in Care



STUDENTS ACHIEVE GOALS!

What a win for the care leaver students of South & City College Birmingham's Bordesley Green campus.

June 2024 saw the epic finale of a five-week enrichment football tournament starring the college's care leaver students from the Trust - organised by the college's enrichment team and sponsored by GMI Construction.

It was an exciting finale and the care leavers had an amazing time, with many students praising the facilities and saying that they had made new friends, grown their confidence and just had lot of fun over the tournament.

This is just one part of the great work the college's enrichment team does for student physical and mental wellbeing including annual sport days, trips and student hobby groups.

An all-star team of representatives came to cheer on the finale and support the day.

Birmingham Children's Trust reps provided refreshments, while GMI Construction made sure every student had an engraved trophy, sponsoring the event as part of their Construction Cares programme. Finally, the awards were handed out by Matthew Gordon, CEO of the Care Leaver Covenant (of which the college is a part).

Dawn Crooks, Apprentice Coordination Manager at Birmingham Children's Trust said: "Events like this are amazing for young people and the community.

"It provides a safe space for them to come play football, make friends and just be their full football fanatic selves.

"I'm really grateful to South & City College Birmingham and GMI Construction for supporting this event for our young people, it's been absolutely fantastic."

Care Leavers' Forum

We are a group of care leavers who work together to use our experiences to make things better for other children in care and care leavers.

We feel that the group:

- Stops us feeling alone and isolated
- Makes us feel like we are making a difference
- Builds up our confidence
- Builds up skills, such as speaking in front of other people

What we do:

- Interview new Trust staff
- Use our experience in producing and delivering training
- Discuss issues – what works and what needs to change, and make changes happen

We tell people what we need and get people to work in a different way. We don't share anything that is painful or private and have lots of support for you. Some of this work is paid (in vouchers). We also organise days out – like a trip to Drayton Manor.

How we do this:

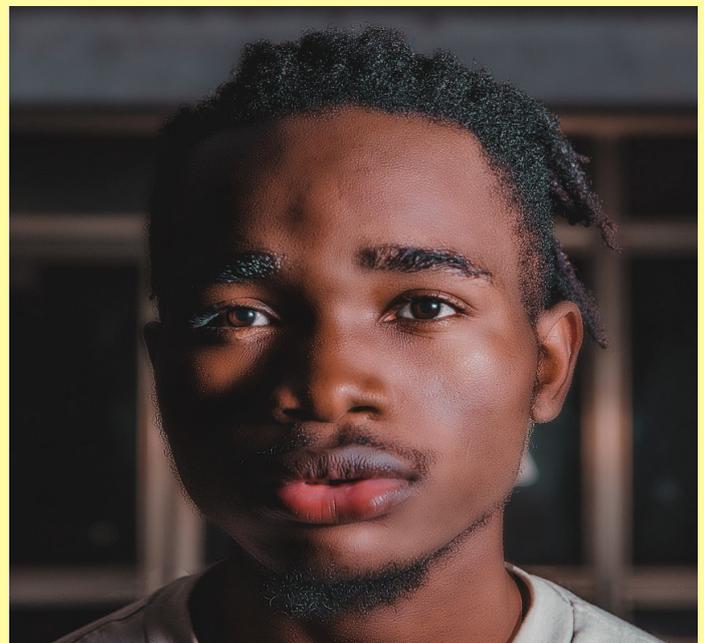
- We meet every month, sometimes face-to-face and sometimes online
- When we meet face-to-face we have food together
- We get help with transport to the meetings if we need it

Over the next few months we are particularly going to look at **HOUSING** (including the state of housing, repairs and semi-supported) and **HEALTH** (including mental health, in-patients, autism and neurodiversity).

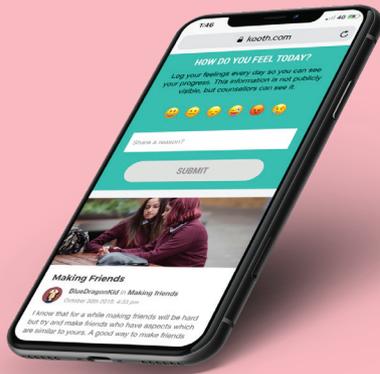
We have work to do for the city council and NHS on these topics, so if you have experience please get in touch.

Contact us today

Email:
advocacy@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk



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 providing information and guidance, are still valid.

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

REES FOUNDATION Summer 2024 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.

Website: www.reesfoundation.org

The groups are facilitated using a team whose members 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 August 2024

Dr Rachel's Summer Survival Workshop

Date: 6 August 2024
Time: 10.00am - 1.00pm



Dr. Rachel's Summer Survival Workshop offers essential guidance to navigate the hectic summer months. Learn how to achieve psychological rest amidst the busy season and prepare effectively for the upcoming rigour of autumn

Circle of Support

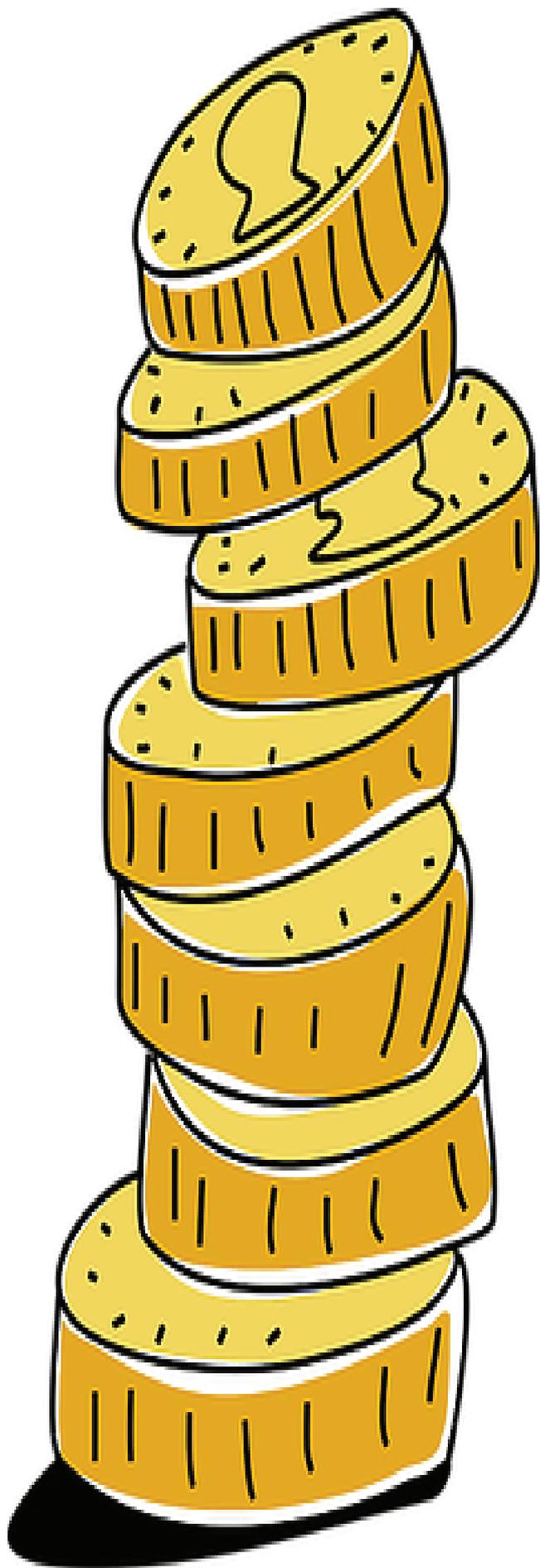
Date: 7 August 2024
Time: 7.00pm - 8.00pm



Group for care-experienced people of all ages to discuss a range of topics. Each online session focuses on something different.

To sign up to any of the groups, please complete the form in the link below:

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



The **Money House** is an award-winning workshop that helps young people, 16-25, prepare for independent living and adult life through a three or five-day workshop in our flat-style space in Digbeth.

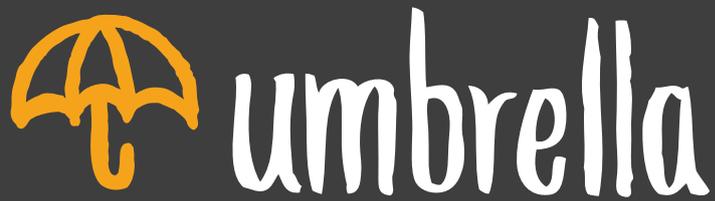
You get vouchers once you finish the course (£30 or £50), AND you can also apply to the **MyBnk** grant scheme for £100. Since December 2023 we've awarded almost £5,600!

We reimburse you for your travel each day, there's breakfast and hot lunch, Wi-Fi, free hygiene and period products, a mental health first-aider on site, chill out spaces, a signposting board, gender-neutral toilets and a fully stocked kitchen!

It's much more than money management though – young people tell us that they like going to a new place, the routine is good for them, they never thought they'd like something like this, sometimes they make new friends, and they feel safe and respected. The money bit is often secondary to the overall experience for them!

Find out more and sign up

Speak to your PA, or contact us on **TMHMidlands@mybnk.org** or **07562 665234** and ask for **Danielle**.



Sexual health and wellbeing services for young people (up to 25)

Did you know that Umbrella provides dedicated counselling and support for people up to 25 years with any issues that may impact on your sexual health and wellbeing.

This includes support around:



- Sexuality
- Relationships
- Pregnancy
- Body image and self-confidence
 - Sexual assault and abuse
- Problematic pornography use
 - Gender identity
 - Domestic abuse



You can expect a safe, non-judgmental and confidential environment

umbrellahealth.co.uk

0121 237 5700

Monday 9.00am - 5.00pm
Tuesday 10.15am - 5.00pm
Wednesday 9.00am - 5.00pm
Thursday 9.00am - 5.00pm
Friday 9.00am - 4.30pm

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."





CLEANSING OUR DATABASE

We are cleansing the newsletter mail-out group. Young people who are 26 or older will be taken off the group unless you tell us you want to stay on it. If you are aged 26 or older and would like to stay on the email group, please let us know by emailing:

garry.james@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk



OUR OFFER TO YOU

This is our support offer to you, so you know what to expect as you leave our care and beyond. Our website contains information you need about our support offer to you. Scan the QR code below to go to the offer page.



Care Leavers' opportunities

The Trust care leavers' opportunities page contains opportunities for you to get your hands on!

It is regularly updated, so be sure to favourite the page to keep an eye out for updated opportunities.

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

DO YOU WANT FREE BT BROADBAND?



We want to give you an update on the BT care leavers' broadband project where you can apply for a 24 month broadband contract with BT. Birmingham Children's Trust will pay for using funding from an HSF grant.

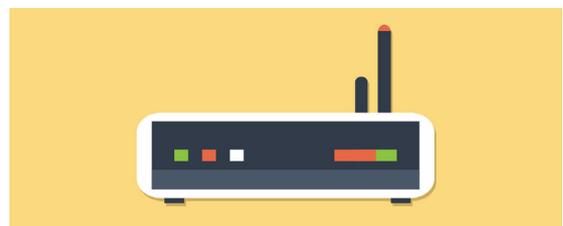
We have the finance to pay for 1,000 young people to have broadband fitted by August 2026.

Since August 2023 we have had 66 young people referred to BT for a broadband connection, and 40 now have an internet connection.

The average wait from sending BT the order to the order being completed was four weeks plus when we started the project in August 2023. For the majority of young people, the wait is now just 2-4 weeks

How do I find out more?

To find out more about this terrific offer, please contact your PA (personal advisor), and ask them to support you in applying for a BT Broadband line where you live.



COME ALONG TO THE SOCIAL WORK TASTER DAY

If you're thinking of a career in social care but don't know where to start, join our Social Work Taster Day!

Hear from social care professionals about the reality of working in the social work field, hear from a care experienced social worker about his experiences and have an opportunity to ask questions to a panel of social care professionals.



FREE EVENT



The Willows Centre, Emmeline St,
Birmingham, B9 4NG



Thursday 25th July 2024



11:30am - 2pm (lunch provided)

FUTUREME

Have you heard about Future Me? **Here's what you need to know!**

We know there's a big world out there, and you might have questions about employment, education, or your wellbeing and not know where turn. Future Me is for care leavers aged 16-25 who might need help with any of these things. From CVs and understanding the next steps to making new friends - we're here to help.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO ATTEND, EITHER SPEAK TO YOUR PA, OR BOOK YOUR PLACE USING THE QR CODE!



COME ALONG TO OUR SESSIONS!

We are holding a lot of exciting events over the next couple of weeks so make sure you don't miss out!



Social Work Taster Day
The Willows Centre, Birmingham
Thursday 25th July 2024
11:30am-2pm



Team Building & Intro to Bushcraft
Spennells Valley Nature Reserve, Kidderminster
Tuesday 30th July 2024
12-2pm



Bushcraft
Warley Woods, Smethwick
Wednesday 14th August 2024
11am-2pm



**DON'T
MISS OUT!**

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www.reesfoundation.org ● contactus@reesfoundation.org