

Your Care Space

The Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum continually said they get confused with who is who and what is what within Looked After Child services. So, they decided to do something about it! In partnership with decision makers, they created a postcard series of short pieces of information and summary animations to match.



BACKGROUND

In 2017, Participation People were asked to engage with and support young people in care to improve services across Dorset.

After 3 activity days and 1 user satisfaction survey, it was clear that young people were often confused about what was happening to them, the social services process and how they could have a say.

So we recruited 8 Care Leavers and 12 Children in Care to help us design "Your Care Space", a pack of information broken down into bitesize chunks with accompanying videos. The idea, to distribute this to every child in care across Dorset.

THE PROBLEMS

The big ones were:

1. Creating a shortlist of topics that young people wanted broken down! There are so many!
2. Asking experts in those topics to attend our meetings in the evening.
3. Breaking down complex terms into language everyone can understand.
4. Always putting across a positive message about being in care without being insensitive to young people's situations.
5. Helping professionals look at the language they use to match.
6. Finding funding to print and distribute them.
7. Supporting teams to distribute them on our behalf.
8. Ensuring Dorset's website was up to date enough to showcase the videos!



THE SOLUTIONS

1. With young people's help at Children in Care activity days, we shortlisted our long list of topics into priority themes.
2. We tried to make our meetings accessible, but encouraged professionals with the bribe of pizza!
3. We also created a Youth Proof Charter along the way. A set of rules to help professionals think about the language they use when they speak to us.
4. We tried to make fun of technical jargon in our summary videos.
5. We helped Dorset repurpose funding for an app they were going to invest in, towards the cost for printing these packs.
6. We put in a question to our annual user satisfaction survey on whether young people have received their Your Care Space Pack to help hold teams to account for distributing them.

More please...

In 12 months, the Children in Care Council made postcards and films on: 1. Managing Expectations 2. Looked After Child Review 3. Independent Reviewing Officer 4. Personal Education Plan 5. Have Your Say 6. How to complain 7. The Dorset Promise

Professionals helped us spot a few topics that we had missed, so with their help, we then made 3 more postcards that include: 8. Health 9. Moving to adulthood 10. What is a Social Worker?

The Children in Care Council presented Your Care Space at a Diagonal Slice meeting to 100 professionals who work with Children in Care. Comments from participants included:

"I have learnt more in the last 3 minutes about services than 3 years of working here."



1000



493



289

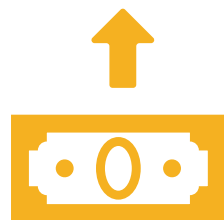
- No. of packs printed
- No. of young people in care
- No. of young people and professionals involved in the project

What's next?

The Children in Care Council are looking for funding to repeat this process to help those on Child Protection Plans or who are Children in Need.

They have also developed a Youth Proof Charter, that they are asking decision makers and professionals to sign - to help everyone communicate in a way that everyone can understand.

Finally, they are redesigning the training offer to foster carers, social workers and corporate parents to make sure everyone is on the same page when it comes to working with and for young people in care.



- Money
- Charter
- Training



The Participation People

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