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The magazine for CELCIS – the Centre for  
Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland

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## Foreword



A warm welcome to our latest issue of Reach. The focus for this publication is an ambitious improvement in young people's experience of

throughcare and aftercare services; this focus coincides with the passing of the Children and Young People Bill through Parliament. As you may know, the Bill contains important proposals to increase care leavers' experience of meaningful support and we discuss these proposals throughout this issue. You can read the detail of the main elements of the new legislation and how the changes contained in the Bill will affect children and young people who are looked after later in the magazine.

Kenny McGhee is our Throughcare and Aftercare Service Consultant who is leading our work in this area, and he will tell you more about his engagement

with local authorities throughout Scotland and the partnership work going on with the Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum (STAF). Examples of the work being done to improve the outcomes for our care leavers in Scotland show innovative partnerships and a shared vision to continually improve and share good practice across the country.

Scotland has an enviable reputation internationally when it comes to caring for our looked after children, but there is still much to be done. The aims of CELCIS' international work is to expand our knowledge about the way countries around the world meet the needs and realise the rights of children and young people who are looked after. We learn from others and inform our work in Scotland in order to genuinely and rapidly improve things here at home; we are committed that CELCIS' growing reputation internationally ensures we

can sustainably re-invest in Scotland.

I have just returned to CELCIS after a short spell developing these international partnerships on behalf of the University of Strathclyde at New York University. This work has enabled close engagement with UNICEF and other members of the international NGO Group for the Rights of the Child in New York, as well as exploring what the 'therapeutic justice' in the problem-solving courts of New York State might have to say to us in Scotland as we work to promote the best possible experiences and outcomes for looked after children.

Jennifer Davidson  
Director, CELCIS

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For more information, visit [www.celcis.org](http://www.celcis.org)

CELCIS is the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland. Together with partners, we are working to improve the lives of all looked after children in Scotland. We do so by providing a focal point for the sharing of knowledge and the development of best practice, by providing a wide range of services to improve the skills of those working with looked after children, and by placing the interests of children at the heart of our work.

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# Increased rights for care leavers

2014 is a big year for Scotland and it's one where I have big ambitions for all of Scotland's children and young people, including care leavers.

One of my first ministerial engagements of the New Year – and a personal highlight so far – was to meet young care leavers along with organisations supporting them, to confirm new measures in the Children and Young People Bill.

As I heard at first hand, Christmas can be a particularly tough and challenging time for care leavers. Most young people who live at home are not cut adrift at this age but rather leave home in a gradual and planned way and we must strive to achieve no less for care leavers.

That is why I was so pleased to be able to give some good news to the care leavers and their supporters who have worked so hard to raise awareness of the challenges they face and to improve the support available.

I have met many care leavers and their supporters while consulting on the Bill and on every occasion the key message has been the same – that care leavers have different experiences and priorities.

So, from April 2015, teenagers in residential, foster or kinship care who turn 16 will be entitled to remain looked after until the age of 21 under new provisions in the CYP Bill. It means that all children in care who were born after 1999 will have a right to remain in their placements if they choose to do so. We estimate that as many as 500 looked after children will be newly eligible for this entitlement from April 2015. This is in addition to our other commitment to provide support to care leavers up the age of 26, again from next year.

We all know that Scotland's looked after children have poorer outcomes than their

non-looked after peers and there is no doubt the journey to improve that remains challenging. It is thanks to the efforts, commitment, resilience and voices of young people themselves, together with Who Cares? Scotland, Aberlour Trust, Barnardo's, CELCLIS and many others that we are in a position to change those outcomes. As others have said, these strengthened rights to care and support can transform and save the lives of many young care leavers and I'm particularly pleased that among those who stand to gain from the new legislation are the people who have helped shape it.

**Aileen Campbell**  
Minister for Children and Young people

**Supporting Transformational Improvements in Quality of Life for Young Care Leavers**



# Throughcare and aftercare work at CELCIS

As the lead for throughcare and aftercare work within CELCIS, I work closely with many local authorities and other key partners and stakeholders providing advice, guidance and support to staff and managers in relation to service design and provision.



This can include designing and delivering tailored consultancy workshops, or learning and development to single service or multi-agency staff groups. We also access various resources, assist with research or facilitate the sharing of good practice.

A key objective is to support local authorities and corporate parenting partners to deliver improvements in service provision to looked after young people and care leavers, with the ultimate aim of improving outcomes.

Much of my time is spent on direct engagement in consultancy with local authorities and from this work we plan to develop and introduce a 'blueprint', a future operating model for throughcare and aftercare services and provisions, and we will then engage with local authorities to support implementation. The blueprint will be a collection of statements, each describing a part of the operating model, such as process, organisation, technology or information. The aim is to assist local authorities to better align their local policy and practice with national objectives.

The publication of our National Study into Throughcare and Aftercare Services in Scotland's local authorities highlights the

many challenges facing the sector, but also identifies the commitment and dedication of practitioners and managers. Our aim is to ensure that work with care leavers is given the priority it deserves and that best practice becomes available to all looked after young people and care leavers regardless of where they live.

As a member of the Looked After Children Strategic Implementation Group (LACSIG) Throughcare and Aftercare Hub, I worked closely with the Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum (STAF), Scottish Government, Barnardos, Care Inspectorate, and Who Cares? Scotland along with various local authority and third sector partners who provided good practice examples, on the production of the two national guidance documents. These documents, Staying Put Scotland and the Housing Options Protocols for Care Leavers, were launched by the Scottish Government in October last year. These important guidance documents have been influential in informing and assisting local authorities and other partners to reconsider how looked after young people transition from care to adulthood. The central messages of encouraging, enabling and empowering young people can equally be applied to carers, practitioners and managers, emphasising the importance of all partners working to improve outcomes for our looked after young people. The guidance documents have been enthusiastically received across Scotland as well as generating interest from further afield. The combined focus on having a strong underpinning philosophy of care as well drawing on existing good practice examples – the principles in action – have helped set the tone for the new proposals within the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill.

As the Minister for Children and Young People mentioned in her article earlier in this magazine, changes introduced to the Children and Young People Bill have clarified the age at which a young person can qualify

for aftercare. We know that in terms of improving outcomes for looked after young people and care leavers, probably the most critical factor is the age at which they move on from being in care to living elsewhere. Therefore the introduction of this right to remain in a positive care placement until they are ready to move towards more independent living begins to close the gap between the experiences of care leavers and their non-looked after peers.

The Minister also talks about young care leavers receiving local authority support up to the age of 26. This extended support into adulthood begins to mirror experience that most young people take for granted in terms of support and assistance for their own families.

These changes will have an immediate and long-term impact on the lives of care leavers in Scotland. Offering this kind of support and safety net to some of the country's most vulnerable teenagers will help to improve their life chances. We know how challenging the transition is for care leavers and these proposals will ensure our care leavers feel safe and secure.

This is a critical time in the development of throughcare and aftercare services in Scotland and we welcome the renewed focus on how we effectively support this very vulnerable group of children and young people. However, the implementation of these changes will be challenging and some key questions about the practical application have still to be addressed. We are looking forward to working with the Scottish Government and other partners on the Expert Group which will be set up to consider and address the implementation issues. This group will also have an important role in developing proposals around a 'right to return to care'.

**Kenny McGhee**  
Throughcare and Aftercare  
Service Consultant  
CELCIS

# Life Changes Trust – Young care leavers: the challenge

The Life Changes Trust was established in April 2013, as a new, independent charity with a 10-year, £50 million endowment from the BIG Lottery Fund (BIG) Scotland.



**The Trust was set up to support transformational improvements in the quality of life, well-being and inclusion of two key groups in Scotland: young care leavers and people affected by dementia. Here Maddie Halliday, the Trust's CEO tells us about the challenges ahead.**

Most readers will know a great deal about the challenges experienced by looked after young people and care leavers in Scotland. However, I would like to highlight some key challenges to clarify why the Trust was established and the context for its investment strategy and priorities.

There are looked after young people and young care leavers in almost every community in Scotland but, sadly, they are one of society's most vulnerable groups. Many of these children and young people have already experienced trauma and difficulties before they were looked after and the consequences may not have been resolved before they leave care. Then, in addition, looked after young people often find the transition to independence very difficult.

This transition happens between the ages of 16-18 for looked after young people compared to 18-25 for other young people. Many young care leavers tell us that they do not receive

sufficient support during this transition and feel isolated and vulnerable. The consequences of this experience can be devastating.

- Many young care leavers experience poor physical and mental health and reduced life expectancy.
- Only around 3% of care leavers gain any higher education qualification compared to 34% of all school leavers and only 1% go on to university compared to 37% of all young people.
- Young care leavers experience high levels of homelessness and a disproportionately high number of young offenders have been looked after.

The Trust is totally committed to working with others to transform this shocking situation over the next 10 years and beyond. We have developed the following multi-strand, strategic approach to ensure we invest wisely and in ways which will deliver the best results.

- Listening to young people in care and young care leavers, practitioners and researchers so we understand needs, priorities and what will or is likely to deliver positive outcomes.

- Involving young people in care, care leavers and other key stakeholders in the work of the Trust.
- Providing funding to organisations which can support genuine empowerment of looked after young people and young care leavers.
- Piloting an individual grants scheme for looked after young people and care leavers and continuing this investment if effective.
- Providing funding to organisations and initiatives which show they can deliver positive outcomes for young care leavers and create the conditions for their long term wellbeing.
- Ensuring effective evaluation of the Trust's work and investments.
- Sharing learning and working with others to influence positive and sustained improvements to policy and practice, which will benefit looked after young people and young care leavers.

[www.lifechangestrust.org.uk](http://www.lifechangestrust.org.uk)  
 Twitter: @LifeChangesTrst  
 Facebook: [www.facebook.com/LifeChangesTrust](https://www.facebook.com/LifeChangesTrust)

# Now that the goalposts have moved, how do we ensure we hit the target for our young people in and leaving care?

The year got off to a great start for young people in care with the announcement that they can remain in care until the age of 21



Some wanted it to start immediately and not have to wait until 2015. However it is fantastic news, as it moves some way towards creating the same opportunity and positive future that their non-accommodated peers enjoy.

## The first question we now need to ask is: will they stay?

Jenny Kane, Team Manager, Leaving Care Service, Falkirk Council, says: *"We had a young people's event recently and their concerns were around placements being able to adapt flexibly to adjust to the changing needs and lifestyles of older young people in respect of staying out overnight, holidays, relationships, alcohol, etc."*

This is a real challenge that has been acknowledged in a variety of reports as far back as Sweet 16 and addressed by some of the best practice highlighted in Staying Put Scotland which we worked in partnership with CELCIS and Scottish Government to produce.

As a membership organisation, the Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum (STAF) was set up to develop and empower practitioners.

At the heart of everything we do is the voice of our members who feedback both their own and young people's experiences. What is coming back loud and clear is that there is much to be done to succeed in meeting expectations.

In many ways the recent Government announcement represents a seismic shift in national policy but just as Ralph Waldo Emerson observed that "We learn geology the morning after the earthquake" the challenge facing us now is to bring into focus the true scale and nature of the task ahead.

Loop holes around 16th birthdays have been closed, £5 million a year for five years has been committed by the Government to help implement the change and this is on top of their existing intended commitment through the Children and Young People Bill to extend the right to aftercare support to 26.

This puts Scotland at the forefront of commitments to care leavers, vindicates the existing good practice of many practitioners and strengthens the corporate parenting agenda.

The reality is we can no longer hide our light under a bushel but instead we need to get out there and share what we know works.

Staying Put Scotland advocated "building relationships between services to enable, empower and encourage positive care settings and transitions". Later this year we hope to facilitate this through a series of dinners throughout the country. Known as "Dinner and Dialogue", we intend to bring together those who can influence and enhance culture within leaving care services to learn from one another and add to the mix those from other services who have also experienced such a change in emphasis.

There remain a huge number of practical questions unanswered. For example:

- There are obvious challenges in terms of 'beds' particularly in residential settings. Will this result in a move to 'older' young people units? If so, will it mean another move for those young people?
- As we all know the foster care service currently does not have enough placements. How do we deal with the increase? Could Supported Lodgings be the answer? If so does that then become a care resource of necessity and does Supported Accommodation fall into the same bracket?
- £5 million is a huge sum of funding but is it enough?

However, throughout all the practical discussions and activity that will now take place, we must be mindful of the fact that there is no substitute for good relationships. Love, confidence and belief in our young care leavers are what will help them succeed and that cannot be legislated for.

**Norma Corlette, CEO, the Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum,**

**Burghhall Business Centre, 12 Fortrose Street, Glasgow G11 5LP**

[www.scottishthroughcare.org.uk](http://www.scottishthroughcare.org.uk)

# National TCAC research published

*Leaving Care: Throughcare & Aftercare Services in Scotland's Local Authorities Stakeholder Survey* is the first national study into throughcare and aftercare services in Scotland since *Still a Bairn* (Dixon & Stein, 2002).



Together with the Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum (STAF), CELCLIS carried out and published this research to provide evidence and inform the debate around improving services for care leavers in Scotland. The report provides an updated picture of throughcare and aftercare (TCAC) provision across Scotland's local authorities, outlines examples of good practice and discusses current challenges. This information will help policy-makers, service providers and others to ensure that all care leavers receive the support they need to help them make a successful and positive transition into adulthood. In total, 27 of the 32 local authorities took part in the research.

The research found that while there is growing recognition that care leavers need greater support over a longer period of time, the current financial environment is posing very real challenges for the TCAC sector in maintaining, improving and extending services. This includes concerns around meeting responsibilities under the soon to be enacted Children and Young People Bill which extends the age care leavers are able to receive support.

Findings highlight a wide variation in prioritisation and engagement of care leavers. Some local authorities offer support to all eligible young people, whether looked after at home or away from home. Other local authorities prioritise young people placed in residential houses or external placements and do not offer services to young people looked after at home, regardless of need or vulnerability. There are therefore significant numbers of eligible young people who do not currently access a service.

Such wide variation in practice raises questions about the overall consistency of the services offered to care leavers, and the affect this has on the welfare of those young people who are eligible, but do not receive help.

Many local authorities were reorganising services; sometimes changes were driven by the needs of care leavers or in response to the Children and Young People Bill but in many cases reorganisation occurred for unrelated reasons. While there were some notable exceptions, many local authorities could be considered not to be proactive in terms of TCAC service provision, both in terms of capacity and specialist knowledge and skills. With CYP Bill on the horizon, with all its potential implications for services to care leavers, some authorities have been reducing staffing and dispensing with specialist staff and managers. In many instances this has been budget-led, however in others this has been with regards to approaches to service delivery which has been in line with a priority focus on early years and child protection.

There was a general lack of evidence in terms of impact of services and support delivered and outcomes for care leavers. The lower status and lack of priority given to care leavers and their services was evident in many authorities. However, there were equally numerous examples of innovative and person-centred practice by committed professionals.

Around two-thirds of authorities raised corporate parenting as an important and relevant issue. While some felt corporate parenting was quite advanced, others felt that TCAC teams had to adopt a championing role, repeatedly informing

partner agencies and organisations of their duties and the issues that care leavers face. At times participants were frustrated by their inability to influence or secure real change.

A major concern across the sector is the difficulty of accessing and collating accurate data. There is no consistent recording of 'meaningful data' and there is little evidence that young people's outcomes are successfully recorded.

The research has found that there are a number of difficult challenges apparent across the sector. There is real concern about the viability of continuing to provide services at current levels in this financial climate. Legislative changes such as welfare reform, extending provision to care leavers until their 26th birthday and the lack of resources to meet the needs of all currently eligible care leavers are seen as a real worry. While there were concerns regarding the resource implications in terms of fulfilling both current and proposed duties, there was universal support for the principles of the Staying Put Scotland agenda and the need to care for and support looked after young people into adulthood.

Participants emphasised that many of these challenges could be viewed as opportunities, which, if adequately resourced and supported, would allow authorities to meet their responsibilities to care leavers and contribute to improved outcomes for these vulnerable young people.

**You can read the full report on the CELCLIS website at:**  
[www.celcis.org/resources/entry/tcac](http://www.celcis.org/resources/entry/tcac)

# Staying Put Scotland good practice guidance

CELCIS, in partnership with the Scottish Government and other key stakeholders, produced *Staying Put Scotland: providing care leavers with connectedness and belonging* practice guidance aimed at local authorities and their corporate parenting partners.

The guidance supports looked after children and young people to remain in care as part of a staged transition towards adulthood and independence. Despite high-profile reports such as SCCYP's Sweet 16 report, the age at which the majority of young people leave care in Scotland is still between 16-18 years of age.

This is well out of step with the average age at which their non-looked after peers leave the family home, which is averaging mid-20s. Care leavers are expected to make the transition from care to independence in a more accelerated and abrupt manner, often lacking the practical

and social skill, and the personal maturity and support networks to make this a positive and successful transition. This has a huge impact on their health, wellbeing and life chances.

Building on the work of pilot initiatives in other parts of the UK, Staying Put Scotland informs a cultural shift to ensure it is the norm for looked after young people to remain in supportive nurturing care settings until they are ready to move on; and that their transition from child to adulthood and care to interdependence is gradual and phased over realistic timescales, with an emphasis on the continuity of

supportive relationships.

Work has continued with the rollout of the Staying Put Scotland guidance with numerous workshops to a variety of stakeholders. This is further supported through integrated training and consultancy support with a number of local authorities.

You can download the document at [www.celcis.org/resources/entry/staying\\_put\\_scotland](http://www.celcis.org/resources/entry/staying_put_scotland).

## Learning exchange summit brings three local authorities together

Shetland, Glasgow and Falkirk Councils have come together to pilot a learning exchange summit that provides opportunities for co-learning and the sharing of good practice within throughcare and aftercare teams.

Supported and facilitated by CELCIS, this initiative brings together a small island authority with two mainland authorities, which although quite different have shared challenges.

Shirley Brown from Shetland will spend time working alongside colleagues in the other authorities.

Shirley said: "The Shetland Island Council TCAC service is a relatively new service and I am keen to draw on the learning experiences of more established leaving care services as well as sharing the lessons we have learnt over the previous three years.

"I hope to share good working practices, have the opportunity to examine alternative models of recording and gain an insight into ways of increasing engagement and participation of the young people to whom we provide the service."

In addition, recognising Shetland's rural location, which may limit opportunities for young people, Shirley is keen to learn of innovative and alternative training opportunities which may be supported or provided to increase young peoples' self-esteem, life skills and career prospects. Peer mentoring is one area that she is keen to explore.

Jenny Kane from Falkirk Council's Leaving Care team, which was recently awarded grades of six in all areas from the Care Inspectorate, welcomes the opportunity to share best practice and continues: "We are looking forward to finding out how Shetland do things, which we can learn from.

"Participation of young people is at the heart of everything we do and as a result we have very high levels of engagement. We hope to establish an ongoing, mutually beneficial relationship with the Shetlands TCAC team and have committed to providing longer term support through the use of a peer mentor

who will maintain contact with Shirley."

Kenny McGhee, TCAC consultant states: "From the outset we have been greatly heartened by the enthusiastic response from the number of local authorities who were approached to assist with this learning exchange opportunity. There was a genuine enthusiasm and commitment to share knowledge and experience, and all the staff involved have gone out of their way to make this a really positive experience for all concerned."

At the end of the learning exchange CELCIS will evaluate the project and this will be shared with the three authorities. If successful, it is hoped this model can be rolled out and offered to other local authorities.

**Shirley Brown, Senior Social Care Worker, Shetland Council**

**Jenny Kane, Team Manager, Falkirk Council**



# National Housing Options Guidance for care leavers and their corporate parents

New guidance has been published to help local authorities and their community planning partners develop and implement local housing options protocols for care leavers.



Accommodation for care leavers is about much more than finding them a place to stay. Care leavers should be made aware of the full range of options available to them, including having the opportunity to remain in care until they are ready to move on. Corporate parents need to ensure that care leavers have the skills and support they need to be successful during this important and challenging transition.

A number of local authorities already have these protocols in place, although not all do. Existing protocols can be variable and inconsistent in their content and application in practice and initial feedback from many local authorities suggested that they would welcome a standard national protocol and guidance.

CELCIS in partnership with the Scottish

Government was involved in writing and compiling a *Housing Options Protocol for Care Leavers, Guidance for Corporate Parents: Improving housing and accommodation outcomes for Scotland's care leavers*. This should be read in conjunction with Staying Put Scotland guidance as part of a comprehensive philosophy of care for care leavers. These documents can be downloaded at [www.celcis.org](http://www.celcis.org).

The LACSIG TCAC Hub compiled this guidance protocol, underpinned by a strong corporate parenting ethos and philosophy of care and drawing from existing practice examples. The impact of this guidance has already seen a number of local authorities reviewing and amending their housing protocols for care leavers.

## Access All Areas (Scotland)

*Overall, being a 'good parent' is not cheap but the longer term costs associated with poor parenting and outcomes - both personal and financial - are far greater.*

(Professor Mike Stein, University of York) taken from the Access all Areas document.

Many care leavers have to cope with major changes in their lives, such as setting up home, or entering work or college, at a much younger age than other young people. If they are to succeed and prosper, care leavers need continued practical and personal support in the years after they leave care, from a wide range of services.

The Access All Areas campaign report calls on central government departments to improve the support they offer to young people as they leave the care system and in their early years after leaving care; and calls on each central government department to scrutinise their own policies suggesting six key areas for attention:

1. Explicit recognition of the needs of care leavers aged 18-25 and prioritisation of them in policy documents.
2. Automatic entitlement for care leavers aged 18-25 to provisions addressing the needs of vulnerable adults.

3. Where a discretion exists in definitions of vulnerability or in giving priority access create a favourable supposition that these are exercised in favour of care leavers up to the age of 30.
4. Create or maintain robust systems of information and data sharing between different government departments and local services.
5. Ensure joint working and protocols are in place between different government departments and local services and leaving care services.
6. Responsive, personalised services to care leavers.

This UK-wide campaign has received the support of the Department of Work and Pensions. However, given the nature of devolved government in Scotland, there are key areas which require to be addressed

within our own national context. Kenny McGhee, our Throughcare and Aftercare Lead represents CELCIS on the UK Access All Areas policy group.

CELCIS, in partnership with other key stakeholders, is aiming to develop the Access All Areas approach within Scotland and has already identified policy areas which are key to improving outcomes for care leavers into adulthood. One key policy area which has already seen progress is in relation to housing and accommodation, with the publication of the Housing Options Protocols mentioned earlier in this magazine.

CELCIS is currently engaging in discussion with partners to consider the best way to develop and progress the Access All Areas concept and approach taking account of the Scottish context.

# Glasgow City Council's Commonwealth Apprenticeship Initiative

The Commonwealth Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI) was introduced by Glasgow City Council in 2009 as a way of coordinating the perceived increased apprenticeship opportunities for Glasgow's school leavers that would be created in the run up to Glasgow hosting the Commonwealth Games in 2014.

The initiative has presented a significant route for employment opportunities for young people in the past five years.

CAI has now been in operation for four years. In 2009 (the first year of CAI), looked after and accommodated young people who were eligible for CAI were competing on an open basis with other school leavers for opportunities, and few care leavers were successful in gaining a place.

In 2010, Leaving Care Services secured an agreement to work in partnership with CAI to coordinate, identify and address the specific employability needs of the looked after population. A crucial element of this agreement was to apply an age exemption enabling looked after and accommodated young people and care leavers to submit CAI applications

up to age 20, in recognition that many care leavers mature later than their peers.

This partnership approach has given greater access and success to Glasgow's care leavers in relation to CAI. A key element to the partnership is the active ongoing involvement of the employability support services that specifically target care leavers in Glasgow (care leavers employment services with social work services, Skills Development Scotland, Action for Children Transitions and the Activity Agreement Team) to support care leavers through the recruitment and selection process. Then, once an apprenticeship is secured, continue to provide support to enable the care leaver to sustain the apprenticeship.

The table below demonstrates that a total of 49 care leavers have gained an

apprenticeship in the past four years.

In 2012, care leavers were successful in gaining apprenticeships in construction (five), health and social care (three), sports development (two), administration (two), hairdressing, stonemason and welding. Glasgow City Council, together with partner organisations, employed 10 of the 16 apprentices (63%), with City Building (four apprentices), Social Work (three apprentices), Glasgow Life (two apprentices) and Cordia (one apprentice). The remaining six are employed in the private sector.

Also in 2012, four care leavers were nominated for the CAI Apprentice of the Year and two care leavers successfully beat off competition from other successful Commonwealth Apprentices to be awarded Apprentice of the Year.

Glasgow City Council has delivered life-changing outcomes for many of its care leavers in its role as corporate parent.

**Peter Finn, Senior Officer, Care Leavers Employment Service**

CAI Year	Care leavers submitted to CAI	Target of care leavers successfully accessing an apprenticeship via CAI	Care leavers successfully gaining an apprenticeship via CAI
Year 1- 2009	No records kept	No targets set	1
Year 2- 2010	24	8	11
Year 3- 2011	47	12	21
Year 4- 2012	37	12	16



# The Social Care Modern Apprenticeship at South Lanarkshire Council

South Lanarkshire Council has established an employability tracking group for care leavers, in partnership with social work, regeneration, self-directed support and integrated children's services.

This group meets every six weeks and looks at all young people looked after away from home and those who have left care, to identify possible employment opportunities and sources of funding to support them. The group also identifies trends or issues and ensures these are fed back into central planning groups as required.

Young people, who are identified as being job ready, are considered for modern apprenticeship programmes or employment. Their CVs are

prepared and sent to personnel managers.

During the past 18 months, six young people looked after away from home or care leavers have had the opportunity to try out some of the Council's modern apprenticeship programmes. Two of these young people secured employment and a further three continue to receive introductory support to try and establish them on the modern apprenticeship programme. One young person after initial trials is looking for

employment support out with the Council.

While an encouraging development, it is still a very complex time for care leavers as they learn to balance working life with managing their tenancies and taking full responsibility for financial management of their income. South Lanarkshire Council is working to address these significant factors.

**Debbie Kennedy, Senior Child Care Officer, South Lanarkshire Council**

## Our first Modern Apprentice at CELCIS

In June 2012, Saffron Rohan became the first CELCIS Modern Apprentice. Here she tells the story of her journey and the experiences and challenges she has faced.



I started my apprenticeship here at CELCIS in June 2012, and since then I feel I have matured and grown both professionally and as a person. This apprenticeship has helped me gain valuable work experience across a whole range of areas and my confidence has grown.

CELCIS has helped me overcome many challenges and adjust into working life, a transition that has not always been easy; I have many new skills ranging from working on computer software packages and administration work to giving me an insight into the wider looked after children sector.

This apprenticeship is a fantastic opportunity for any young person. You will learn and develop skills and knowledge as well as having an opportunity to meet and work with some very skilled and talented professionals here at CELCIS. I have worked with all parts of the organisation on a range of different activities. I really enjoyed helping out at events and conferences, meeting people and learning about different aspects of business and how the organisation works.

I have had an excellent mentor here at CELCIS who has helped, guided and supported me as I worked towards and gained my SVQ level 2 in Business and Administration. I am now working towards my level 3 and I have been encouraged to start on the path to further education and look towards my future. I am hoping to be accepted on the Diploma of Higher Education (Business) course at Glasgow College and after two years of study there I will be eligible to apply to enter third year of the University of Strathclyde's BA Business course. I am also now taking night classes at the University, something

I would never have contemplated before.

CELCIS has taught me about work ethic and given me important employability skills.

**Nyree Tobias, Saffron's line manager, reflects on this journey and explains why having a modern apprentice has shaped our thinking here at CELCIS**

Working alongside and mentoring Saffron in this role has been a huge learning curve for both of us. I have been working with someone with no workplace experience, teaching from scratch and providing a mentoring role. Guiding Saffron as she works towards valuable qualifications has enriched me as a manager as well as the wider organisation. Together, with the support and guidance from other members of CELCIS staff, we have put in place many processes, including a valuable modern apprentice process folder that will help the organisation going forward. It has been a pleasure working with Saffron, steering, mentoring and helping her on the next stage of her journey.

**CELCIS will shortly be advertising for our next modern apprentice. Applications will open in early April. Full details will be available at [www.celcis.org](http://www.celcis.org).**

# Scotland, the best place in the world for children to grow up

The Scottish Government has a vision for Scotland to be the best place in the world for children to grow up, and the recent leaps forward in developing foster care in Scotland that have already come this year are very welcome.

Firstly, in a move that can and will change lives for the better, young people and their foster carers will be supported to maintain their relationship until the age of 21 if both parties agree. This will allow young people to remain with their foster family and be supported and encouraged to embrace opportunities that come their way, such as education, employment or training. Additionally, teenagers who leave their care placement will, if they choose, be able to return to care and to remain until age 21, enabling gap years and other adventures to be possible, or to gain support if they move out before they are ready and wish they had not and want to return. Allowing young

people to stay put is proven to improve outcomes, and we are confident that, given the chance, the young people of Scotland will excel at whatever positive route forward they choose to take.

Secondly, a limit of three fostered children per household, except in exceptional circumstances, will be introduced meaning that foster carers will be able to devote a fair amount of time to each of the children in their care, giving them more support and a better chance for a positive future.

Placement limits will mean that fostering services need to recruit more foster carers, but we're confident that given their successes in the past at meeting their recruitment challenges, they can attract more skilled foster carers to the fold.

In addition, the Scottish Government is looking at introducing a core fostering allowance which would put Scottish foster

carers on a par with their peers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Currently across Scotland the allowances given to foster carers vary hugely, leaving some out of pocket as a result of fostering. It's crucial that a minimum allowance is introduced across Scotland to ensure this is not the case.

We applaud the Government for setting out a clear long-term vision for foster care in Scotland. But in the short-term the delay in implementing their Staying Put plans will mean that young people who are currently 15 or above may still face an abrupt exit from care. We are urging the Government to ensure that no one in a stable foster placement is forced to leave, and to make clear to local authorities that they have a responsibility to continue to provide homes for these young people.

**Sara Lurie, Director of The Fostering Network Scotland**

## Listen to us

Looked after young people and care leavers across the Dumfries and Galloway region shared their views and experiences of being looked after with a wide range of Council, NHS and other officials at a Listen2Us Celebration and Launch event in February.

Over the past few months, several young people who form part of the Listen2Us consultation group have been gathering feedback from a wide range of looked after young people and care leavers on their experiences of being looked after.

The event brought together looked after young people and managers to present some of the initial findings from the consultation and to look at ways of improving or implementing changes to services in the future.

The programme included input from Chief Executive Gavin Stevenson and social workers, and involved activities such as quizzes and role-play scenarios acted out by the Listen2Us young people as well as the showing of a Listen2Us DVD, poetry written by young people and the presentation of accredited certificates to some of the group.

The project will receive Council funding to continue for a further year. For further details on this project visit [www.dumgal.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=12738](http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=12738).



# Sector News

## Food for thought

Food for Thought provides food-based training, assessment and intervention tools for carers of looked after children and young people. The resources provide residential staff, foster carers and their managers with tools to look at the ways in which food and the practices around it are being used in the care of children and young people and reflect on how food is used socially.

Food for Thought is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council in partnership with the University of Stirling, Aberlour, Foster Care Associates Scotland, Perth and Kinross Council, IRISS and CELCIS. The project was led by Drs Ruth Emond, Samantha Punch and Ian McIntosh of the University of Stirling. Its purpose was to develop a set of resources that builds on the findings of a previous study on food and children in residential care (Food and Care study – FaCS).

**You can find out more about the project, and download free resources, at: [www.foodforthoughtproject.info](http://www.foodforthoughtproject.info).**

## Falkland school

Falkland House School has received the prestigious United Nations award, becoming one of the first independent schools in Scotland to achieve the accolade.

The Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) recognises achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) at the heart of a school's planning, policies, practice and ethos. The CRC is a comprehensive human rights treaty that enshrines specific children's rights in international law. These rights define universal principles and standards for the status and treatment of children worldwide – no matter who they are or where they live – to allow them to grow up safe, happy and healthy.

## New guide helps children understand their rights

Getting the most out of school can sometimes be a challenge for children and young people who are looked after.

They may be unaware that they have the right to extra support with their learning if they need it. Enquire has produced a new guide to help them understand their rights and find out more about support for learning.

The guide:

- helps looked after pupils understand the kind of support they might get if they need it (such as extra time with a teacher, help with homework and exams, or learning out of school)
- explains that they can be involved in making decisions about what they learn and the support they need, and that they can appeal to a tribunal if they're not happy with this support
- highlights their rights to have an advocacy worker at meetings
- provides information about the planning that should take place to prepare them for leaving school

Created with help from young people at a children's residential care home in Dumfries and professionals at Spark of Genius and Kibble, the guide is an essential tool for adults who want to support looked after children and young people through school. It can be used as teaching resource for a whole class or with individual pupils who are looked after.

Enquire is the Scottish advice service for additional support for learning, offering advice and information to parents, carers, professionals, children and young people.

**Extra Help at School when you are looked after can be downloaded from Enquire's website at [www.enquire.org](http://www.enquire.org) or by emailing [info@enquire.org.uk](mailto:info@enquire.org.uk).**



## Sector News continued

# Supporting young people's equal participation in the referendum

On 18 September 2014 the decision on Scotland's future will be placed in the hands of voters and, for the first time, the electorate will include 16 and 17-year-olds.

For the referendum to be fair and produce a result which is accepted by the Scottish people it will be important to ensure that all voters have an equal opportunity to participate regardless of their age or life circumstance and this will include working to ensure that 'looked after' young people are given any additional support they need to realise their right to vote.

For young people to participate in the referendum they will need to be registered to vote at their current address by 2 September. For most young people this will be a one off process as long as they remain at their

current address. However, looked after young people subject to placement moves might typically have to re-register a number of times to ensure that their registration remains current. Carers and support workers can ease this process and help safeguard a young person's right to vote by making a discussion on voting a routine part of any new resident's induction and by having registration forms readily available for young people to complete there and then.

While access to the young voters register is tightly controlled in order to protect young people's details, there may be some young people who could be at risk in the event that their address is disclosed. There are provisions in place to enable these young people to either register by giving an address where they have previously lived

or to register anonymously. Depending on the young person's individual circumstance, it may be helpful to make them aware of these options during any discussion on registration and voting.

Many looked after young people will have experienced stigma and feelings of powerlessness on multiple occasions in their life and the chance to vote in the referendum can offer a positive counter-experience. The Electoral Commission and CELCIS have committed to work together to identify and address any barriers to these young people's participation. This includes developing accurate, neutral and accessible information materials for both the young people, and those who work to support and advise them. Further information on these resources will be available in April.

## Early assessment and support for families scoops national award

Congratulations to the Scottish Borders' Early Years Assessment Team (EYAT) who recently won first prize in the Royal College of Midwifery (RCM) Award for Partnership Working at the Annual Midwifery Awards.

This is the second time the EYAT has had its work recognised by an award, having come joint third in the Team of the Year category of the British Journal of Midwifery Practice Awards 2012.

EYAT was established in 2010 as a co-located team of family support workers, infant mental health workers, midwives and social workers. Professionals work closely together in order to identify early those families who need extra support during pregnancy and to develop and provide one-to-one personalised antenatal and postnatal care and support to these families.

Since 2013, CELCIS has been working with EYAT in order to document and evaluate the model of early intervention and assessment they have developed and the work they carry out with vulnerable families across the Scottish Borders.



## Family Decision Making

CHILDREN 1ST, in partnership with One Parent Families Scotland and the Scottish Child Law Centre, supports separated and separating families by helping them to deal with difficult issues and make positive decisions that benefit the family through the Family Decision-Making Service.

Parents are supported by a helpline, online resources and family group meetings. Skilled family support practitioners can provide a range of supports tailored to meet the specific needs of the individual family situation such as emotional support, legal and benefits advice.

Ultimately, the service is designed to reduce family conflict, improve communication and cooperation between family members and ensure the child or young person is better cared for within their family.

# Knowledge hub for sector launched by Care Inspectorate

The Care Inspectorate has launched The Hub – a new website dedicated to providing ‘one-stop-shop’ access to a range of resources aimed at supporting the social care and social work workforce, including residential care workers.

Here they focus on some of the key features of The Hub that can help you keep up-to-date with all the latest policy developments and resources available to support your work.

## Knowledge – a central library, wherever you are

Also available as a mobile version on mobile phones and tablets, The Hub’s Knowledge section is the perfect online library for when you are out and about.

It provides a visual library of good practice and policy documents, with a user-friendly search function that allows you to search the library for the publications most relevant to your work. The Hub includes a series of

portals with information on the latest policy developments currently impacting on services for looked after children in Scotland.

The Knowledge section also features the weekly Children and Young People Bulletin that is full of the latest news in the sector, and has a built-in newsfeed from the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social services (IRISS).

This complements a range of research tools to help you carry out your own research, including an embedded Social Services Knowledge Scotland search portal and a series of IRISS resources to support evidence-based work practice.

## Innovation – hear the voice of people using services

The Hub’s Innovation section features a collection of video case studies that showcase innovation and good practice taking place in care services across Scotland, highlighting the positive experiences of people using these services. These videos will be regularly updated over the coming months.

One of the videos currently featured includes a focus on the importance of continuity of care for children and young people in residential care, and interviews young people talking about their experience in care. Anyone who has experienced excellent care or services that believe they are delivering something innovative can submit their story to The Hub for consideration.

## Improvement – supporting continuous improvement

Aimed at supporting continuous improvement in the delivery of care services, The Hub’s Improvement section features information on Centres for Excellence courses and training, including links to CELCIS.

It also has toolkits and resources produced by the Care Inspectorate and close partner organisations. This includes links to the Care Inspectorate’s online resource Meet Sid which recently launched a computer game aimed at children in care, and Involve to Improve, a microsite dedicated to promoting and sharing effective practice in involving children and young people in services.

Visit [www.hub.careinspectorate.com](http://www.hub.careinspectorate.com) today to find out more about what it can offer you.



# CELCIS News

## From Act to practice

In partnership with Cl@n Childlaw, CELCIS will run a series of 13 full-day events between April and December on behalf of the Scottish Government to support the implementation of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011. This is the second phase of our Act to Practice learning sessions. The seminars are aimed at all those who come into contact with the Children's Hearings System and include a symposium for strategic managers, four practice development seminars for middle managers and eight practice development seminars for frontline practitioners and carers. The events will take place across Scotland and dates will be announced soon.

## Learning exchange summit

We recently facilitated a Summit to explore residential child care in Scotland and England and considered how we can make improvements in what we do, wherever we work. Working closely with Jenny Malloy of Hackney Child, the Summit brought together participants from Scotland and England from government, national bodies, services and academics with an interest in residential child care. The Summit was organised following Jenny's participation in the SIRCC Annual Conference last June and explored four main themes: claiming, belonging, caring and skilling. A summary report from the event is available on the CELCIS website at: [www.celcis.org/media/events/Learning\\_Exchange\\_Summit\\_Event\\_Report.pdf](http://www.celcis.org/media/events/Learning_Exchange_Summit_Event_Report.pdf). A follow-up event, to be held in London, is planned.

## Applications for new online MSc in Child and Youth Care now open

The MSc in Child and Youth Care Studies by Distance Learning recently welcomed its first intake of students onto two pilot modules. These modules were offered free of charge with students providing feedback on what worked well and what needed further development.

Developed within CELCIS, this programme has a fresh, engaging curriculum that covers globalised childhoods, international policy contexts, the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), bringing up children and research methods.

The two-year course which is delivered entirely online is now open for applications and we expect a high level of interest. Further details are available on the University of Strathclyde's website at: [www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/courses/socialwork/courses/mscinchildandyoungcarestudiesbydistancelearning/](http://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/courses/socialwork/courses/mscinchildandyoungcarestudiesbydistancelearning/).

## The Scottish Journal of Residential Child Care

The latest edition of the SJRCC has been published (Volume 12 number 3) and includes articles from Duncan Dunlop of Who Cares? Scotland and Jenny Malloy a lecturer, adviser, trainer and author of Hackney Child, who gave a keynote at the 2013 SIRCC National Conference. Editors are currently running a short survey to get your thoughts on the Journal and inform the next stage in its development and you can take part at [www.celcis.org/journal](http://www.celcis.org/journal). The call for papers for future editions is also live.

## PACE

The Scottish Government has asked that Renfrewshire and Aberdeen City provide leadership and support to roll out the Permanence and Care Excellence (PACE) programme. This is being carried out in partnership with the CELCIS Permanence and Care Team (PaCT).

The PACE change programme is bringing stakeholders together to improve outcomes for looked after children by tackling drift and delay in the child's journey to permanence. The programme is using improvement methodology to test changes locally which can then be applied across Scotland.

To date there have been local events in Aberdeen and Renfrew attended by multidisciplinary groups of senior managers and front line staff. They have identified the key elements of change that need to happen locally to bring improvement.

## Action Plan on Justice for victims of historic abuse of children in care published

CELCIS, in partnership with the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC), has published an Action Plan, the product of a year-long InterAction process where those affected by historic abuse of children in care gave their views on how justice and remedies for survivors could be achieved. The purpose of the Action Plan is to agree and coordinate steps to implement the recommendations in the SHRC Human Rights Framework, based on the outcomes from InterActions.

The Action Plan has two overarching outcomes:

- Acknowledgement of historic abuse of children in care and that effective apologies are achieved
- To uphold accountability for historic abuse of children in care.

The Action Plan is available on the CELCIS website at: [www.celcis.org/news/entry/action\\_plan\\_on\\_justice\\_for\\_victims\\_of\\_historic\\_abuse\\_of\\_children\\_in\\_care](http://www.celcis.org/news/entry/action_plan_on_justice_for_victims_of_historic_abuse_of_children_in_care).



# Report on tackling child sexual exploitation in Scotland published

We were commissioned by the Care Inspectorate to undertake a research project into the Sexual Exploitation of Looked After Children in Scotland.

It is difficult to establish clear evidence in this complex area; sexual exploitation is something which by its nature tends to be hidden and official data is scarce and may underestimate the scale of the issue. Looked after children are such a diverse group and their risk of being sexually exploited can depend on a range of factors including their gender, age and disability. However, the report found that children and young people who have experience of the care system can be particularly at risk from sexual exploitation. This report gives us urgent insight and raises critical questions about the sexual exploitation of a particularly vulnerable group.

There has been a focus of effort and

planning recently in relation to child sexual exploitation by local authorities, Police Scotland and third sector organisations. We hope the information within this research will strengthen this important work and inform their tailoring of systems and processes, supporting the work of practitioners across Scotland in protecting our looked after children and young people. To read the research report visit the CELCIS website at: [www.celcis.org/resources/entry/the\\_sexual\\_exploitation\\_of\\_looked\\_after\\_children\\_in\\_scotland](http://www.celcis.org/resources/entry/the_sexual_exploitation_of_looked_after_children_in_scotland)

In July 2011, the Public Petitions Committee at Scottish Parliament received a public petition from Barnardo's Scotland calling for new research into the nature and scope of

child sexual exploitation (CSE) in Scotland and new Scottish Government guidelines. As a result of this petition, the committee decided to undertake an inquiry and in January 2014 it published its first report, which has been informed by the CELCIS research. The overarching recommendation from the report is that the Scottish Government should develop a National Strategy for tackling child sexual exploitation. You can read the report on the Scottish Parliament website at:

[www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/71818.aspx](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/71818.aspx)

## Response to the Findings by the Foster Care Review

The Foster Care Review was established by the Scottish Government to assess a range of potential reforms and provide direction on a number of policy questions.



The proposals put to the Review related to three specific areas of fostering:

- the organisation and management of foster carers
- carers' learning and development
- the financial and practical support offered to carers

A total of 159 individuals, made up of foster carers, looked after children and the sons and daughters of foster carers took part in an online survey run by the Review.

The findings of the review were published in December 2013 by CELCIS and in January this

year, the Scottish Government published its response and accepted the recommendations in full. A number of short-life working groups will now be established to help the Government get the detail right before new regulations and guidance are issued. However, even at this early stage it is fair to say that these reforms represent some of the most significant change to fostering in Scotland for many years.

You can read the final report and the Government's response on the CELCIS website: [www.celcis.org/news/entry/scottish\\_government\\_response\\_to\\_the\\_findings\\_by\\_the\\_foster\\_care\\_review](http://www.celcis.org/news/entry/scottish_government_response_to_the_findings_by_the_foster_care_review)

# Spotlight on Policy

## Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill 2014

With the most significant child welfare legislation being debated by the Scottish Parliament since the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, CELCIS explains how the key parts of the Bill affect children and young people who are looked after.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill is an important piece of legislation and one which has found widespread support across the sector. CELCIS is delighted by the commitment to improving the outcomes of looked after children and care leavers, shown by civil servants, MSPs, local government and the third sector. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill was passed on 19 February 2014 and will become an Act following Royal Assent. We will continue to work hard to ensure that this legislation has a positive impact on the lives of all looked after children, young people, care leavers and families.

**Understanding the main elements of the new legislation for Looked after children, young people and care leavers:**

### Part 7: Corporate Parenting

We believe that public bodies have a responsibility for promoting the wellbeing of looked after children and young people. We therefore welcome the Bill's provisions which place Corporate Parenting on a statutory footing. We are particularly pleased to see the inclusion of Health Boards in the Schedule of Corporate Parents, as they have a critical role in securing positive outcomes for this vulnerable population. The current Bill provides clarity around the list of corporate parents (in Schedule 3), removing some bodies and exempting others from the duty to comply with directions issued by Scottish Ministers. This is helpful and appropriate. There is further flexibility should Ministers wish to add a new body to the list and the means with which to exempt some from Ministerial direction where required. The Bill provides for adjustment to the list of Corporate Parenting duties, and modification of their application to particular Corporate Parents. This should enable specific duties to be applied to an individual or groups of Corporate Parents, allowing Government to refine the responsibilities of specific organisations.

However, despite the availability of guidance and training on what it means to be a Corporate Parent, the concept is still inconsistently understood across Scotland. The Bill will go some way towards clarifying organisations' roles and responsibilities, but success will depend on continued effort over the next coming years.

### Part 8: Aftercare

We welcome the changes made to Part 8 of the Bill, introduced by the Government at Stage 2. These helpfully clarify the age at which a young person can qualify for aftercare provision and ensure that young people can continue in their care placement up to 21, if their needs require it and they wish to do so. The issue of recording and reporting on the death of care leavers is also addressed.

At present some 16-year-old care leavers are not eligible for aftercare support because they leave care within certain months of the school year. The Bill will redress this anomaly by changing the eligibility criteria to all young people who leave care after their 16th birthday. Section 60 of the Bill amends the 1995 Act to provide young care leavers with the opportunity to receive local authority support up to and including the age of 25. Care leavers will have a right to request advice, guidance and assistance from a local authority, and that authority will be under a duty to conduct an assessment of the individual's needs. If they are found to have eligible needs, the local authority will have to provide support to meet those needs. It is important to note that the care leavers will still have to request this assistance and be assessed as eligible. Local authorities will still retain discretion as to what is eligible and then provide what they deem necessary.

### Part 8 A: Continuing Care

We welcome this new entitlement for young people who cease to be formerly looked after aged 16 or above. This change, which introduces a new Section 26A to the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, will allow (from 2015) a new cohort of 16-year-olds in foster, kinship or residential care to remain in their placements until 21 years. The intention is to roll out entitlement to additional groups of young people over coming years. We have always maintained that effective aftercare is built on young people's opportunity to 'stay put' in the placements they feel comfortable and secure in, until such time as they are ready to move on. The transition to independence is

challenging for many care leavers and Corporate Parents must ensure that the right support is in place. It is important therefore that these provisions link into new guidance on Corporate Parenting.

### Reporting the death of a care leaver

We welcome the introduction (in Section 60) of the requirement on local authorities to notify Scottish Ministers and the Care Inspectorate about the death of a young person in receipt of aftercare services. However, we believe this should be extended to include the deaths of care leavers up to the age of 26. We propose that a new requirement is placed on the Procurator Fiscal to ascertain whether or not that child was a 'care leaver' (ceasing to be 'looked after' at the age of 16 or above, or any other eligibility criteria), and if so, to inform the local authority. The importance of recording and notification around the deaths of care leavers lies in the fact that it is only when we know of and understand the tragedies that we can design improvements that will safeguard the lives of future care leavers.

### Part 10: Kinship Care

In our original submission to the Parliament we raised concerns around the kinship care order, stating that it was unclear what this would add to current provisions. We must ensure that local authority support provided under the Bill's kinship care order is based on the needs of the child, not resources or a child's legal status. The assistance to be provided under the Order will be prescribed by Ministers in secondary legislation and we hope that all kinship carer groups are fully involved in discussions before decisions are made. Much will depend on the detail of the regulations, and how the provisions are turned into reality.

### Part 11: Scotland's Adoption Register

We are committed to working with Scotland's Adoption Register to secure nurturing permanent placements for looked after children. The changes in the Bill may help to speed up the process by which a young person can be adopted. We also appreciate the clarity provided at Stage 2 on the issue of when consent from a parent is appropriate when information is provided about a child.

**For further information of the development of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill see: [www.celcis.org/resources/by/category/children\\_and\\_young\\_people\\_bill](http://www.celcis.org/resources/by/category/children_and_young_people_bill)**

# Health and Sport Committee's Inquiry into health inequalities in the early years

In March 2014, CELCIS provided a response to the Scottish Parliament's Health and Sport Committee's Inquiry into health inequalities in the early years.



The Committee's attention is focused on early years interventions and current early years policy in addressing health inequalities, the barriers and challenges faced by early years services when working to reduce these and the role that the health service can play.

We made the point from the outset that most of the causes of health inequalities are related to wider societal inequalities and socio-economic position, so policies and measures which address these issues are important and likely to be successful. We noted that while looked after children and young people share many of the same health risks and difficulties as their peers, this is often to a greater degree and their long-term health outcomes are considerably worse. We stated that preventing health inequalities for looked after children requires investment in both population-based programmes as well as in more targeted services.

A key point made was that exposure to early adverse life events can affect the developing brain, exerting powerful effects on neural structure and function which can affect a child's life course. We felt that there is often a mismatch between child development timeframes in the early years and timeframes or decision-making in children's services.

We noted that young people tell us that that stable placements and consistent, supportive relationships with carers had a huge influence on their emotional wellbeing, their achievements at school and their motivation to lead healthy lifestyles and stated that appropriate support should also be provided to care givers in the early years. This is particularly important for those caring for children with disabilities.

We stated that the health service has a key role in addressing health inequalities and

ameliorating the health damage caused by disadvantage. Where looked after children have access to specialist health practitioners, their health outcomes improve. The barriers we pointed to which are faced by early years services include: limited quantitative information on looked after children's health; short term funding and support for initiatives; limited understanding about the role of the corporate parent and a lack of understanding of children's rights and what this means in practice.

**All of our written responses to consultations, proposing how these may affect looked after children, young people, care leavers and their families can all be found on our website: [www.celcis.org/resources/entry/celcis\\_policy\\_consultation\\_responses\\_2013](http://www.celcis.org/resources/entry/celcis_policy_consultation_responses_2013)**

## CELCIS LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT DIARY

CELCIS has a full diary of seminars, events and workshops running throughout the year. Full details of all events and booking details for those shown below can be found at [www.celcis.org](http://www.celcis.org).

### SIRCC National Conference: Changing lives through learning

10 - 11 June 2014,  
Hilton Grosvenor, Edinburgh

Booking is now open for the SIRCC National conference. The conference will explore how we can build ambition as a residential child care sector, recognise the role we have in shaping the learning and creative abilities of our looked after children and help them to realise and achieve their aspirations.

You will have the opportunity to join speakers, including Keynote Kriss Akabusi MBE, participate in workshops, learn and share good practice and enjoy a wide range of networking opportunities.

### CELCIS 2014: We are family

Wednesday 8 October 2014,  
Perth Concert Hall, Perth

This one-day conference will explore how our looked after children and care leavers can feel part of a nurturing family. We will examine what it really means to be looked after at home by parents, or looked after away from home with kinship, foster and residential carers. The conference will also examine the application of the Getting It Right for Every Child agenda and the soon to be enacted Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill.

### Would you like to submit an article or story to Reach?

Email us at  
[celcis.comms@strath.ac.uk](mailto:celcis.comms@strath.ac.uk)

# Recent publications and useful resources

### HE handbook for care leavers

The Who Cares? Trust has created the HE Handbook for Care Leavers to give young people who are in or leaving care information about the support available to them at higher education institutions in Scotland.

[www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk/hehandbook](http://www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk/hehandbook)

### Report: mapping parenting information resources

CHILDREN 1ST has published a report mapping current parenting information resources as part of the Scottish Government's commitment in the National Parenting Strategy to assess information and advice provided by parents in Scotland.

[www.children1st.org.uk/what-we-do/our-services/search-our-services/parentline-scotland/factsheets,-information-and-resources/parenting-resources-report/](http://www.children1st.org.uk/what-we-do/our-services/search-our-services/parentline-scotland/factsheets,-information-and-resources/parenting-resources-report/)

### Children's rights resource

Aileen Campbell MSP, Minister for Children and Young People, commissioned Education Scotland to develop a national professional development resource for adults working with children and young people.

The resource *Recognising and Realising Children's Rights*, which is available to download from the Education Scotland website, promotes that all staff should have a confident knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC with the purpose of supporting rights-based values, attitudes, skills and practices among those adults who have a duty of care for children and young people.

[www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/r/childrensrightsresource.asp](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/r/childrensrightsresource.asp)

### Workforce data website

SSSC has launched a dynamic workforce data website that gives access to all workforce data and reports published by SSSC to the social service sector in Scotland. This is an important resource for workforce planning and is well worth a close look.

[www.data.sssc.uk.com](http://www.data.sssc.uk.com)

### Draft National Youth Work Strategy

'Our Ambitions for Improving the Life Chances for Young People'

The Scottish Government, Education Scotland and YouthLink Scotland working together have published a draft National Youth Work strategy which outlines the recommended approaches to help make Scotland one of the best places in the world to grow up in.

[www.educationscotland.gov.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/youngpeople/youthwork/strategy/index.asp](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/youngpeople/youthwork/strategy/index.asp)

### Positive messages from young care leavers

Recently, members of the Young People's Benchmarking Forum, facilitated by England's Catch22 NCAS, worked with ITV Fixers to make a short film to challenge negative statistics and stereotypes of care leavers.

[www.celcis.org/news/entry/positive\\_messages\\_from\\_young\\_care\\_leavers](http://www.celcis.org/news/entry/positive_messages_from_young_care_leavers)

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