Pathways Beyond Care:

Lessons from the UK and Ireland

Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare



National Adviser for Care Leavers

Department for Education

Points to cover

- The 6 Golden Threads
- My role as National Adviser
- Corporate Parenting Principles
- The local offer
- Extending support to care leavers up to 25yrs
- Corporate Parenting Duties
- National Offer

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The 6 Golden threads

If we apply the following threads:

- In everything we do we ask ourselves - **is this good enough for my child**
- **Co-production** - be driven by CiC and care leavers to achieve change
- **Be ambitious!**
- Be their **lifelong champion** – Remember it is a journey and mistakes will be made. You take a wrong turn – we get you on the right road!
- **Is it a 16yrs to 25yrs proactive approach for everyone.**
- Are we joined up enough – **a multi-agency approach?**

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The National Adviser for Care Leavers In England

My role is to:

1. Work closely with Commissioners across the devolved nations – their span is all children and young people.
2. My focus is specifically care leavers 16yrs to 25yrs as we know they have the poorest life chances and outcomes in the UK.
3. Advise The Prime Minister and all Secretary of States/Ministers across all Govt Departments on issues facing care leavers – this is done through face to face meetings and in a Care Leavers Inter Ministerial Board that reports to The Prime Minister yearly.
4. Critical Friend to all local authorities who deliver services to care leavers. I have access to 153 local authorities covering 92K care leavers. Aimed at getting them to be the best in the country – the local offer.
5. Meetings with most Stakeholders, NGO, charities, research tanks.
6. Talking to the Kids is the big one. I represent their VOICE Nationally and advocate on individual issues on their behalf
7. I also produce and publish Bi-Annual Reports to highlight good practice and challenges.

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Corporate Parenting Principles

In 2017 we introduced through legislation three key aspects:

1. A set of Corporate Parenting Principles

- to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well being, of those children and young people
- to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
- to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
- to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
- to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
- for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
- to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living

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Local Offer – Statutory Duty to co-produce and publish

- It is expected that every local authority and partners – housing, health, mental health, adult transition, benefits agency, etc set out their offer to care leavers 16yrs to 25yrs.
- That this will inform the delivery of services to care leavers.
- The local authority will be regulated against it.
- It gives a clear offer to care leavers i.e. their rights and entitlements in their own area or if they move across boundaries.
- Hold services to account.
- Promoted better joined up services.

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Extended Support to all up to 25yrs

- All care leavers can receive support from a Personal Adviser up to 25yrs.
- They are deemed as ‘returners’ and have a right to an assessment if they have been closed to services.

Why?

- Late entrants to education – 2nd chance learning
- Trauma never leaves you
- Specialist support to prevent high adult costs
- It’s the right thing to do – I didn’t stop supporting my kids at 21yrs.

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Corporate Parenting Duties

1. Principles were not strong enough – in the summer we are introducing a set of duties on all local authorities, every Govt Department and other organisations.
2. They will have to understand their data and the outcomes for care leavers.
3. To produce three yearly plans that will reduce the inequalities and improve the outcomes for care leavers. A real push towards developing multi-disciplinary leaving care services.
4. This will also be regulated against at a local level.
5. The Care Leavers Inter Ministerial Board will be the reporting mechanism for each Govt Department.

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A National Offer

The Local offer is good but it still promotes a ‘post code lottery’ – depends on where you live…….

We have accepted that this is not good enough. We are therefore:

- Making it illegal to make a care leaver homeless
- Care leavers get priority in housing
- Get a £3000 bursary when take up an apprenticeship role
- Free precriptions, dentistry and eye care
- A Staying Close Offer
- Leave care with more than one trusted adult.
- Reconsider Protected Charateristics

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Thank you

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